

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 6 No. 11 4th April 1987

Be Grateful To Palmyrah

During the Fuel ban and food shortage Palmyrah Palm stood by you yielding food and fuel.

In return plant a Palm or make a Palm produce an item of your daily use.

That will help the Palm to feed you back.

When terror and trouble deprive you of food and shelter

The Palmyrah will take care of you.

WEEKEND SYNDROME

The Sri Lanka Government has never carried out military operations against civilians nor ever will.

That closes the chapter up-to-date.

Thus spake Zarathustra alias J. R. Jayewardene, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka at the opening of the 7th Sessions of Parliament on 19th February 1987.

President Jayewardene is, Constitutionally, the Commander of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

On Monday (30th March) Security Forces based at the Jaffna Fort Army Camp (constitutionally under the command of President J. R. Jayewardene, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka) took on not merely the civilians but also the patients warded at the Jaffna General Hospital. (See page 3 for details)

Their shells hit wards No. 19 and 20 of the Jaffna General Hospital run by the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Ward No. 19 is a Medical ward where heart patients, for example, are warded.

One such patient had been Warded in Ward No. 19 for bed-rest, much against his wishes. He was a heart-patient who wanted to stay peacefully at home. On medical advice—bed-rest—he was taken and warded at Ward No.19.

On Monday, 30th March around 6.30 a.m., a shell fired from the Jaffna Fort Army Camp turned him into a bloody mess minus the lower half of his body.

This is just one of the instances of the bloody battles that the Armed Forces of the Democratic Socialist

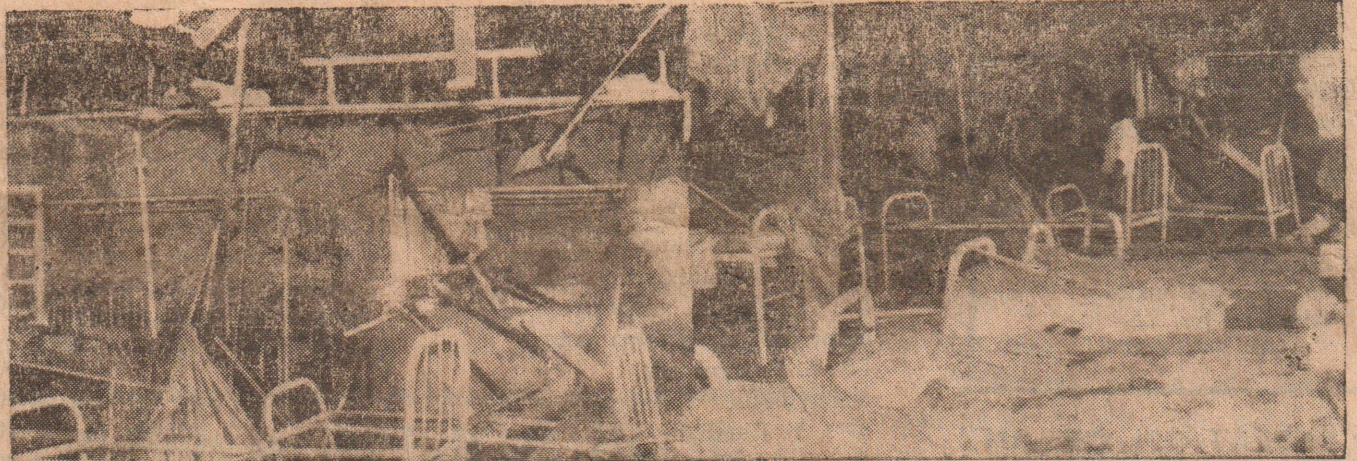
SERK ON WEEKENDS. AS FAR AS THEY ARE CONCERNED—A LOST WEEKEND; A GORY WEEKEND FOR EVERYONE ELSE.

Round about mid-day on Saturday (28th March), the tranquillity of a seemingly peaceful Jaffna was shattered by helicopters which fired rounds after rounds for nearly 4 hours.

The planes overflew Jaffna Town in rehearsal runs and one of them released bombs killing civilians in Nallur.

The sortie over, the planes vanished but the people's troubles were just beginning.

Even as the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC) started the



Ward No. 19 after shell attack

Republic of Sri Lanka is fighting against the civilians in the North and East.

Apparently the Security Forces are not battling merely the patients warded at the Jaffna General Hospital.

THEY ARE ALSO FIGHTING CIVILIANS. THE BEHAVIOURAL PATTERN OF THE ARMED FORCES SEEMS TO BE TO GO BER-

At the same time the Mandaitivu Army Camp opened up with shell-hitting, killing and injuring people living at the Government-sponsored Gurunagar Housing Scheme on Beach Road, Gurunagar, Jaffna. (Prime Minister Premadasa, please note).

When the Jaffna people thought that the sound of helicopter music was over, bombers suddenly appeared over Jaffna Town round about 4 p.m. on Saturday.

regular 6.30 a.m. news bulletin, at least 4 bombers swooped down on Nallur and dropped several bombs (fortunately some bombs did not explode—Parliament please note).

A little while later the bombers hit Neervely.

On Monday morning the Jaffna Fort Camp shelled the Jaffna General Hospital:

Commander-in-Chief-how about this? Has someone opened a new chapter?

FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

For long, there has been a yearning among many Tamil people in Sri Lanka and abroad that India would intervene militarily to bring about a settlement of the ethnic problem.

We had always taken up the position that India would intervene only if its "vital interests" were threatened.

We have been proved right, judging by certain recent developments.

"The Times of India" reported on 17th March that "The Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's special emissary, Mr. Dinesh Singh warned the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene that India would take action to help the Tamils" (by sending "humanitarian aid", in the face of the two-and-a-half-months-old economic blockade of Jaffna).

It said that Sri Lanka Government officials "reacted with alarm,

saying any Indian relief supplies sent to the Island's Tamils would have to cross Sri Lankan blockade lines, giving the operation military implications.

"Sri Lankan officials described Mr.Dinesh Singh's message as a virtual ultimatum by India to lift the blockade".

The next day, in the Lok Sabha the Minister of State for External

Affairs, Mr.Natwar Singh declared that "India kept its options open on providing food and other essential supplies to the Tamils in Jaffna in case Sri Lanka did not lift its economic blockade."

The assurance was given while the Minister was replying to a two-hour debate on the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka.

The Minister said there were indications that the Sri Lanka Government was attempting to 'unwind'

(Continued on page 12)

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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GAMINI NAVARATNE

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500 estate workers went on strike at Oliphant, Nuwara Eliya, following the assault carried out on two of their colleagues by Armymen recently. The crime they are said to have committed is just the simple act of appearing in front of the Armymen when they had gone to collect some firewood.

Perhaps God should bless the hapless workers, with the olfactory sense to smell of evil in time so that they may save their skins.

COURTESY:— "Mawali" 1st March, Journal of the National Union of Workers.

Shells Persist

Persistent shell-fire from the Army Camp at Kankasanturai from the morning of 31st March has resulted in considerable damage to churches, schools and the People's Bank. From Kankasanturai to Myliddy the cadjan fences were set on fire, along with many houses. St Antony's Catholic Church at Urany was also damaged. The damage is estimated to be nearly 3 lakhs.

The historic Temple at Maviddapuram and the Maha Vidiyalayam also suffered extensive damages.

Judging from what is going on in the Jaffna Peninsula, the question on everybody's lips is "Is the killing game activated again?"

Following the show-down at the Army Camp at Jaffna Fort following the capture of eight Sri Lankan soldiers the Army Camps in Jaffna appear to be hell-bound in expressing their anger and frustration.

For over a week, the Navatkuli Camp has been lavish with various types of shells, firing them into residential areas right round the camp. Very often helicopters are strafing the area around Navatkuli and operational areas are extended to Koppay. The latest victims are two school girls who were seriously injured.

On Tuesday, 24th March, Valvetiturai and Thondamannar Camps expressed their wrath with shells throughout the night. On the night of Wednesday 25th March, Palaly and

Harbour View Hotel Camps were firing shells which fell even into Sandilipay, Mahiyapitti, Alaveddy and other areas which are over eight miles away. Several people were injured and houses have been damaged.

During the early hours of 26th March Point Pedro Camp fired Artillery Shells which rocked Point Pedro. Two houses have been badly damaged and another house suffered substantial damage. It was a miracle that two infants—twins less than two months old and their mother escaped death in one of the badly damaged houses. Two assistants at the Sivan Temple who were fast asleep were injured—one losing a finger of his hand and the other suffering a serious injury on the shoulder.

At Kattuwan, incessant firing of shells were heard during the day time of 26th, Thursday.

On Wednesday a helicopter attempted to land on the Jaffna Hindu College grounds at about 6.30 p.m. when people in the neighbourhood started running for safety. But soon the helicopter took off.

Kurumbasiddy too did not escape the wrath of the Security Forces at Palaly. On the 26th they went into the area all of a sudden and in the random shooting that took place eight persons died but only three bodies were discovered; 10 other persons are still missing, according to representations made by the Myliddy South Citizens Committee to the Government Agent, Jaffna.

Nothing is known of the Tharmalingam (55), T. Theivendran (46) P. Somasunderam (53), V. Sinnathangam (65), and Thangamar (45).

SR Editor's Refugee Relief Fund

List Of Donors

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Mr. P. Sithanathan	1,000.00

DISBURSEMENTS

Drugs supplied to Trincomalee Refugees.	10,000.00
—do—	10,000.00
Milk food and drugs supplied to Kokkaddichcholai Refugees	20,000.00
Milk food supplied to Kilinochchi Refugees.	5,000.00
Milk food supplied to Social Development Society, Jaffna.	3,000.00
Drugs supplied to Uruthirapuram Refugees.	5,000.00
Milk food supplied to Trincomalee Refugees.	10,000.00
Refugees Rehabilitation Committee, University of Jaffna	
Neidalnagar and Palanagar)	5,000.00

OBITUARY

MATHAVAR SEVANTHINATHAN, retired Grama Sevaka, Chankanai East, Trustee of Chenkatpaddai Mathevapillaiyar Temple, Chankanai Expired on 21st March.

He is the beloved husband of Annaletchumi, father of Mrs. Chelvanachchiar Nagarasa, Ariyakumar of A. R. Trading Company, Colombo, Ariyasekaram of West Germany and Miss. S. Selvaranee. He is the brother of Mrs. Rajeswari Velayuthan, Mrs. Kanagammah Mylvaganam and Mr. M. K. Kanagarajanayagam, retired Bank Executive of the Hatton National Bank, Governing Councillor, SATURDAY REVIEW and Mr. M. Rajakunanayagam, retired Bank Shroff, Hatton National Bank.

He is the father - in - law of Mr. V. Nagarajah, Principal Hindu College, Pandateruppu. His cortage left residence on 22nd March at Periyavalavu for cremation at Chankanai, Vilavelli.

PRAYER FOR FAVOUR

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored and glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and for ever.

Sacred Heart of Jesus — Pray for us St. Jude worker of miracles. Pray for us.

St. Jude help of Helpless Pray for us.

Thank you Jesus.

Thank you St. Jude.

Say the prayer 9 times a day for 9 days.

It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised.

Jaffna Hospital Staff Determined To Brave Shells

(By A Special Correspondent)

Jaffna hospital was shelled for the 7th time on the morning of 30th March. This time the shell fell into the centre of wards 19 and 20 killing 8 patients and wounding several others. A nurse and an attendant were badly injured. The attendant succumbed later.

Dr. Nageswaran, Consultant in charge of ward 19 showed me the bloodstains of a patient whose skull had cracked. He told me in a broken voice that two of the patients who died had wanted to go home on Sunday. Nothing was left of the ceiling. The wall clock had stopped dead at 6-25 A.M. The long room which was shared by wards 19 and 20 was a mess of broken steel beds, broken asbestos pieces together with remains of thermos flasks, bottles and bathroom slippers, reminiscent of past human habitation. The floor had a hole one yard in diameter where the shell had exploded. The shell then fell into the children's ward below narrowly missing a mother tending to her child. Only two children now remained behind in the ward. Another shell had fallen outside the building disrupting the water-main.

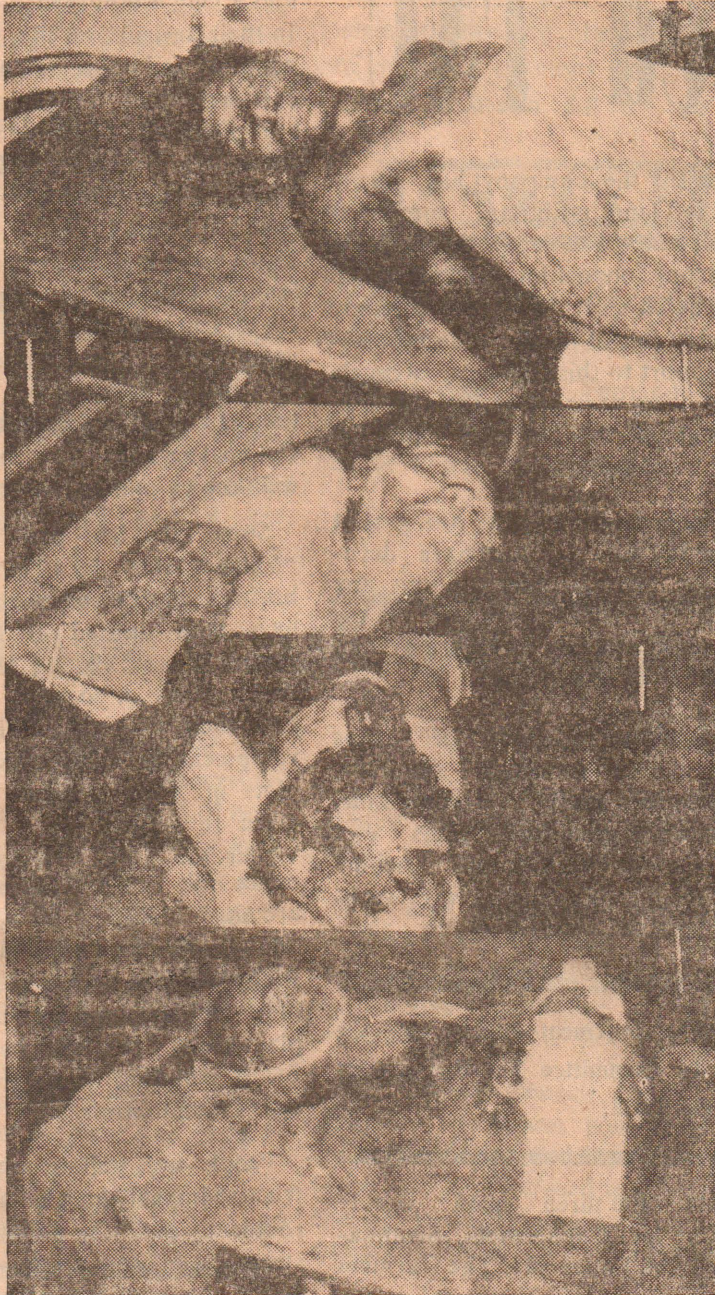
Dr. Nageswaran said that details of wounded patients were hard to get as patients had fled home. "They come to hospital because they need urgent care", he said "what can you expect if their chances of dying in hospital are significantly high?" He said that the upstairs building had such a bad shaking that it will have to be demolished. All patients in the hospital have been taken to ground floor wards for the benefit of concrete protection.

"It was a very deliberate and unprovoked act", said Dr. Nachinakinari, the Medical Superintendent. "I had been trying to contact the army by phone since the early hours of the morning on my being told that there was shelling around the hospital. I tried various numbers. In one instance the phone was picked up and was put down after I said who I was when I tried to contact the Brigadier after 8-00 A.M. Capt. Majid answered and took down the details, telling me that the Brigadier was at an important conference. I was asked to ring half an hour later. When I rang around 1000 A.M. Capt. Majid told me that the conference was still on. But he said that he had checked with the Fort Camp and they had said that they had not fired after 6-00 A.M. I told him that it was a damned lie and everything indicated that the shell which hit wards 19 and 20 at 6.25 A.M. had come from the Fort. I also said that my business was also urgent as I had to decide whether to keep the hospital open. When I tried the Brigadier at 2.00 P.M. I was told that he had gone on a tour of Palaly camp. I said that I was going to put all this on record".

Dr. Nachinakinari said that with all their problems they were going to keep the hospital open. Asked about the position of the Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA) he said that the GMOA believed them. The GMOA had reported the complaint concerning the shelling by the Jaffna branch to the AIR correspondent asked about the position of the International Red Cross, he said that it was left to the public and the press to make representations to them. Dr. Nachinakinari gave a specific assurance that he had questioned the staff and was satisfied that there was absolutely no provocation to the government forces to shell the hospital and no one had fired at Government forces from the vicinity of the hospital. Asked if communication with the army had broken down, he replied, "not completely".

Dr. Nageswaran and Prof Ganeshwaran referred to the claim by the state television that the army had been fired upon from behind Jaffna hospital. All this they said amounted to a conspiracy to close down Jaffna hospital. This was a case of a government army firing at a government institution and killing government servants. It was said the consensus of the hospital staff that even at risk to their lives they were going to keep the hospital open. The alternative hospital at Tellippalai and Pt. Pedro were themselves badly affected by military action and were too far away as a result of transport difficulties resulting from the fuel ban. "We feel a heavy responsibility towards those needing medical care," they said, "it will be a breach of our humanity and our professional honour for us to pack up and go home".

(Continued on page 11)



VINTAGE ABSURD THEATRE

Location: Jaffna General Hospital
Time and date: 10 a.m. approx. - 31st
March, 1987

Occasion: Enquiry into the shelling of Jaffna General Hospital around 6.45 a.m. on 30th March which caused the death of 9 patients and injured 22

Magistrate: Will it be possible for the Police stationed in the Jaffna Fort to enter the Army Quarters in the Fort and conduct enquiries in respect of this incident?

Constable: No, We are not allowed to enter the Army Quarters but Senior Officers could do so.

Magistrate: Is any Senior Police Officer present here?

Constable: No, but a C.I.D. Officer rushed to the spot and made enquiries.

Magistrate: Have you informed any Senior Police Officer about this incident?

Constable: The ASP at Head Office informed the D.I.G. and I.G.P. over the telephone.

Magistrate: At the enquiry held by you who do you think was responsible for this incident?

Constable: According to witnesses it is believed that the deaths were caused due to the shelling from the Fort.

Magistrate: Is it possible for you to go the Army Quarters in the Fort and arrest those who were responsible for this incident?

Constable: No, I cannot arrest them but findings in such cases will be sent to the Senior Officer.

Magistrate: I hereby authorise you to arrest those who were responsible for this incident and produce them in Court.

Note by Editor: Can there be more vintage Absurd Theatre than this?

Monaragala Peasants Battle

Govt-Backed TNC

The peasants of Monaragala have been struggling for the last three years to protect nearly 22000 hectares of fertile agricultural land, from being given over to Monaragala Sugar Company for large scale sugar plantation and setting up sugar factory.

This company is a joint venture between the Government of Sri Lanka and Meta International—a large TNC mainly dealing with sugar cane planting and sugar processing. It is said to be an Indian-African company with business centred mostly in African Countries such as Kenya and Uganda.

The land to be given over is populated, and has been well utilized for centuries by the villagers for growing food crops for themselves and for the rest of the population in the country. Altogether there are 48 large and small villages occupied by nearly 850 families with a population of over 4500 with in this area.

The people have been aware of the impact of the project on their land, cultivation, life style and environment. Assisted by peasant organisations they have understood the disastrous effect of being reduced to seasonal labour or contract farmers under the company. Therefore over the last three years these people have engaged themselves in a strong struggle to protect their land and their freedom. Understanding the national significance of this struggle many groups, almost all opposition political parties, peasant and labour unions, religious groups, clergy and lay, women's organisations, human rights organisations and intellectuals have voiced their opposition to this move and the general policy of the Government inviting multinational companies for large scale agribusiness and industry. They have supported this peasants' struggle in various ways.

The resistance had retarded the company's efforts over the last three years to displace the villagers and clear the land. People have met the Government officials at district and national level, launched peaceful protests preventing the company's advance. Peasants have been arrested and taken to courts, when they expressed strong protest.

Recently the company has intensified its land grabbing, supported by the state machinery disregarding the strong opposition expressed so far. Therefore it has now become necessary to call for the widest possible support to this peasants' struggle and to bring pressure on the Government against this intrusion into the life of the people.

The peasants oppose the project because the land that they have developed for many decades without any form of Government support is the only means of living for them and for their next generations.

They grow a variety of crops such as maize, kurakkan, sorghum, cowpea, green gram, vegetables, lime, plantains, mangoes and yams etc. They get an additional income (apart from food) almost every week-throughout the year, by selling their

Text of a statement issued by the Solidarity Committee For the Peasants of Monaragala.

products in the three main weekly fairs (in Dombagahawela, Siyanbalanduwa and Pallepola). The farmers in this area are the foremost suppliers of maize to the Fats and Oils Corporation. During the lime season 12 lorry loads of lime (approximately 400,000 limes) go out to Colombo and other cities. Similar quantities of plantains, manioc and vegetables are sold every week during the respective seasons. Under the company the farmer incomes would be much less and only once a year or so; each farmer family cultivates between 3 to 5 acres of land surrounding the villages; the valuable forest reserves such as the Haddawa (2000 acres) protected so far by the people to preserve their water sources would be cutdown by the company's project.

They would be reduced to seasonal labourers under the company or contract farmers growing only sugar cane. Even those to be settled in nearly 4 acre sugar cane plots each will not have land ownership, but could be removed if they do not adhere to the company's conditions and accepts its prices.

The people have a long history and a long established cohesiveness, in their agricultural life, mutual understanding and cooperation in social, economic and religious activities. Out of the 48 villages that come within the project area 22 are traditional villages having a history of over 100 years, 17 have existed for 25-40 years and the remaining 9 have become settlements during the last 10-15 years. Villages such as Madugama and Polgahagama are said to have been key centres in the 1818 rebellion against the British Colonial regime, that produced its well known military leaders.

Some land had been declared as "Village land" by 1930 with villagers having rightful ownership. Others have been allotted by Land Settlement Officers visiting the area once in 10 years or so, after investigation into their long occupation and development as villages. Other small plots of 2 acres each have been given to settlers on 99 year lease Under the Land Development Ordinance for village expansion. There are also villagers having obtained annual permits, renewed every year. Many Buddhist temples, some very old, will go under the company plantations or will be surrounded by it isolating them from the village Communities.

People are well aware of the destructive impact on the natural environment and the danger of large stretches of sugar cane being abandoned, by profit motivated companies due to fall in profits, as it happened in places like Negros Island in the Philippines.

The companies have obtained a guarantee from the Government for a 14.5% profit irrespective of World Market sugar prices. Thus already all the people in Sri Lanka pay a much higher price for sugar (Rs.15 per kilo) compared to the price possible for imported sugar (around Rs.5/- per kilo). Since international prices are bound to remain low the people will have to continually subsidize the company. The predicted prices of sugar produced in Pelwate (by a similar Government MNC joint venture) will increase further upto about Rs.20 per kilo.

This struggle forms an important part of the bigger struggle against the general policy of inviting foreign MNCs. Government has recently decided to invite big foreign and local companies to the developed areas under the huge Mahaweli Diversion

Scheme—constructed at a cost of nearly 42 Billion rupees, mostly for eign loans and aid.

Already MNCs such as the British—American Tobacco—operating through its branch the Ceylon Tobacco Company controls a very large area of agricultural land, through controlling production and marketing of small farmers. Food production is being replaced by tobacco. The National Milk industry has been recently given over almost completely to Nestles Ltd., who collect milk throughout the country from small producers. The danger of this being replaced by imported milk powder,

(Continued on page 10)

APPRECIATION

Jimmy Nicholas

The late Jimmy Nicholas who passed away peacefully at his residence in Windsor Avenue, Dehiwala on 13th March, was a man of many parts, a rolling stone which gathered moss through passage of time. His varied facets of activity may be seen in the places he served with credit and won friends and admirers by his geniality, humour and ready-wit.

He was Superintendent, Government Firewood Depot, Manager, Patrician Book Depot, Manager of the Canteen at Kankasanturai Air Port, Air Ceylon and during the course of World War II served in the Air Raid Precaution Service.

Although English was very much his forte, he was good in Tamil as well. He edited the Parish Magazine of the Church of Our Lady of Refuge, Jaffna together with the late Mr.F.N.C.Saverimuttu. He played a major role in many a spiritual retreat and his meditations on the Holy Rosary were a gem which he dedicated to his beloved mother, Susan. In Tamil he was a popular reader of the Lenten Psalms like his late father which he read with great emotion which was most edifying to the listeners.

During his last years he was sickly but he carried his illness with courage and fortitude. One is sure that "he is safe in the hands of Jesus".

A Mass will be sung at the Church of Our Lady of Refuge on 5th April (his birthday) at 7 a.m. for the repose of his soul.

—W.Alexander

The text of the key resolutions passed at the 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress held in Kandy on 14th and 15th March to mark the CWC's 46th Anniversary.

CWC President S. Thondaman is Minister of Rural Industrial Development.

ARRESTS OF YOUTH

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress views with alarm the indiscriminate arrests of plantation youth on suspicion, false tip-offs and information which has created growing apprehension and discontent in the plantation areas that the Police and the Security Services have embarked on a witch-hunt that can have far-reaching consequences; conscious that the unwarranted arrests of youth on suspicion and their detention for long periods will have the most deleterious effects on the entirety of the plan-

country in terms of educational facilities; notes that very little progress has been made in the filling of vacancies in the teaching staff and in providing educational facilities such as buildings, equipment and furniture for schools in the plantation sector; deplores the total lack of facilities for teaching Science in Tamil Schools in estate areas, and calls upon: the Minister of Education and other authorities concerned to (1) To involve a scheme of recruitment to fill all vacancies in the teaching staff of plantation sector schools from within the plantation community. (2) Remedy the serious shortages and shortcomings in the provision of educational facilities in the plantation sector schools without delay. (3) To provide for the teaching of Science with adequate facilities in estate sector schools.

EMPLOYMENT

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress notes that plantation workers still continue to be

the laudable efforts of Prime Minister R. Premadasa in undertaking the Million Houses Programme and other Self Help Housing Schemes; regrets: that the plantation community has so far been excluded from the benefits of such Programmes, and calls upon: the Government to (1) Take immediate steps to give effect to the resolution adopted in 1976 by vesting the ownership of the living quarters and their appurtenant lands in the plantation workers. (2) To extend the Million Houses and Gam Udawa Programmes to the plantation sector and other state aided programmes which would uplift housing conditions on all plantations.

WOMEN

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress recognise that women constitute over 50% of the workforce on the plantations and are engaged in arduous and

arising from a painful lack of opportunities in education, training and employment; cautions; that if this state of affairs continues it would lead to the escalation of youth discontent and the accentuation of socio-political tensions resulting in disastrous consequences, and calls upon: the Government to initiate crash programmes to meet the education, training and employment needs of plantation youths.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress conscious; that in general industrial relations in the plantation and particularly those relating to suspensions, dismissals and Management attitudes have failed to achieve industrial harmony and peace; deploring the drastic action taken by the managements on plantations by meeting out different forms of punishment including dismissal on the slightest pretext without providing for consultation and grievance-handling procedures preceding such action; mindful: that such actions by the Management have compelled workers to seek recourse to industrial forums with attendant consequences such as protracted hearings and delays, coupled with appeals by employers despite orders for redress provided by industrial tribunals after adjudications; recognising the urgent need to devise suitable consultative and grievance handling procedures which would help reduce industrial strife and promote peace and harmony and in particular meaningfully involve the trade unions as co-partners in the prevention and settlement of labour management disputes.

TRADE UNION RIGHTS

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress expresses concern that the Government of Sri Lanka, though a member of the International Labour Organisation, has not yet ratified the basic Conventions of the I.L.O. No. 87 and 144 on the Freedom of Association and Tripartite Consultation which constitute the bedrock of the I.L.O. and are of vital concern to workers and their organisations; stresses that the ratification of these Conventions and the enactment of legislation to give effect to them are imperative for the fullest participation of trade unions in national economic and social development, and calls upon the Government of Sri Lanka to ratify these Conventions and enact the necessary legislation without delay.

'Growing Apprehension, Discontent In Plantations'

tation youth and Community; mindful that such arrests infuse a spirit of resentment and indignation in youth that can push them to the paths of violent resistance and activity, calls upon the the Law-Enforcement authorities to (a) desist from unwarranted arrests, detentions for long periods, assaults and inhuman treatment of those in custody which will undermine the confidence in them and in the Government, (b) Adopt a humane and pragmatic approach to these problems of a sensitive and delicate nature, (c) expedite investigations and release all those against whom no cases have been filed in Courts, (d) Desist from using the PTA in all cases which could be investigated and charges framed, if any, under the Penal Code or the ordinary Law of the land, (e) review police-public relations and refurbish the image of the Police, and urges the Government to initiate procedures which will provide meaningful consultation and co-operation of workers' representatives in matters involving the maintenance of peace and order in the plantation areas.

EDUCATION

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress reiterates that the community of plantation Workers of Indian Origin continues to be the most backward in the

discriminated against in that they are deprived of benefits and conditions of Employment which are made available to State Corporation Employees and calls upon the JEDB and the SLSPC to grant to plantation workers in their employment the same rights and privileges, benefits and conditions of employment which employees of other State Corporations enjoy.

HOUSING

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress recalls, the resolution adopted by the 25th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress held in Kandy on 14th and 15th February '76, urging the separation of living quarters of the plantation workers from the control of the managements of estates and the vesting of ownership of such living quarters and their appurtenant lands in such workers; welcomes the acceptance of the principle contained in that resolution by His Excellency President J.R. Jayewardene; Notes that the year 1987 has been declared by the United Nations as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (TYSH); recognises

and exhaustive work extending beyond 8 hours; considers that women are burdened with dual responsibility of bringing up children and attending to household chores which leaves them little hours for leisure; convinced that health problems faced by the women plantation workers in their working life is caused by fatigue and exhaustion; reiterates the earlier demand of the Ceylon workers' Congress for the re-scheduling of working hours of women, and calls upon; plantation managements to reprogramme without delay work schedules of women workers so as to enable them to attend to their functions as working wives and mothers and to provide them sufficient leisure hours.

YOUTH

This 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers' Congress considering the importance of education, training, and employment for youth in a rapidly changing society; keenly aware of the sense of frustration and disillusionment among youth on plantations

Demarche, a word pregnant with explosive possibilities was used by India last month in a diplomatic despatch to Sri Lanka when she went back on her December 19 position. Asia awaited developments with bated breath after an initial flutter in their diplomatic dovescotes. The immediate effect was contrary to expectations. It escalated military offensives in the North which the demarche signal was meant to discourage. India's initiatives in the

pire much confidence in the proposed negotiations. The Tamil people's negotiations commenced in 1956 when the draft Sinhala Only bill was tabled in Parliament. Talks have gone on intermittently on ethnic issues since 1956. Nothing ever came out of these talks except broken promises. The 1983 holocaust and the continuing holocausts since then only gave a new impetus to more vigorous talks but nothing tangible has

India's role as a mediator is, either by voluntary self-abnegation or by the constraints of international power configurations and South Asian regional power alignments, reduced to that of an honest umpire. Active mediation and tight-rope walking as a neutral party are two incompatible functions. For example, India as a mediator can neither stop the employment of mercenaries in

governments since 1956 have made the survival of the Tamil people impossible without it.

The observance of agreed settlements raises many tangled issues, such as a tripartite agreement including India as a party, the presence of a peace-keeping force as an interim measure and, in the last resort, the imposition of sanctions against offending parties. These issues take a long time to resolve. Effective mediation is possible only within a short time frame.

The failure of the UN and other world organisations to abate the violations of human rights in South Africa and many other countries in the last few decades has cast serious doubts in the minds of the Tamil people whether India can by herself, or even with the support of a few humanitarian countries, stop the mounting carnage in Sri Lanka, let alone the violation of human rights.

It is doubtful whether a mediator who takes on a neutral posture can do anything more than offer his good offices to bring the disputants together to sit round a table and talk, seek clarifications, offer advice and record their commitments. In fact this is all that has happened in the past. It is time for India to make a thorough reappraisal of her strategies, however agonising it may be, and identify more effective strategies, because time is running out. She will have to honestly ask herself the question, is India's neutral stance and mediation

INDIA MUST RE-APPRAISE ITS STRATEGY

UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva brought forth, though not a reprimand a warning to Sri Lanka. Then the demarche signal worked like a circus whip. Sri Lanka changed course and accepted her earlier commitment. She also had to comply with India's three conditions for resumption of the peace process.

The lifting of the ban on fuel supply to the North had to be the first move. Sri Lanka went through the paces of officially lifting the ban. They turned out to be sham paces because the procedures of supplying fuel were beset with impossible conditions. The vehicle owners did not go to Army camps to draw their petrol, not because their automobile petrol tanks had not run dry of petrol three months ago, but no one dared to venture out anywhere near an Army camp for fear of their lives.

On March 23, 1987 India announced that she would hold talks with Sri Lanka with a view to negotiating a settlement which would do justice to the Tamil people. It appears that India has accepted Sri Lanka's token gesture of lifting the ban on fuel supply and has probably waived the other two conditions. The intentions of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi are beyond question good and honourable. He probably wants to force the pace before more people die or before Sri Lanka has time once again to go back on her December 19 position. Critics would not be justified in interpreting his actions as appeasement.

India has however to be wary of the wiles of seasoned negotiators. The record of Tamil people's past negotiations with successive Sri Lankan Governments does not ins-

come out of them. During this period however the experiences of the Tamil people were disastrous. The respite was used by the Sri Lanka government for purposes only too well known to the world.

The Tamil people's misgivings on the prospects of further talks arise from the fact that Sri Lanka's denial of a Tamil homeland is rigid and inflexible. This stance will give rise to almost insuperable problems like the ownership of land in the proposed provincial units, land settlement and above all the devolution of powers from the People to the various tiers of governmental authority up to the central government. All power inheres in the people and only they can delegate powers to their chosen leaders. The process cannot be inverted by devolution of power from an alien centre to the people or their representatives. It could take many more years to unscramble these constitutional tangles. In the meantime the ethnic problem may disappear with the people.

Besides the misgivings regarding procedural delays in the proposed talks, there is a lurking fear that if and when a settlement is arrived at, it will not be honoured. There is no guarantee, and there is none who can guarantee, compliance with the terms of the settlement by either party, far less by a sovereign government. The mediator himself, being neither an Arbitrator nor Adjudicator backed by executive power, be it his own or that of a world body, has offered no guarantees. On the contrary he has abjured all compulsive options. The peace process will then fall back on voluntary observance of the terms of settlement by both parties.

the Indian Ocean region which endangers her own security, nor can she as a neutral power, recognise the Tamil militants as a fighting force. Secondly, India's mediation efforts are stymied by the conflicts between her external interest, her security in the Indian Ocean etc. and her commitments to South Asian Regional Co-operation and the Non-aligned Movement. Thirdly India's conflict of interests between the need to maintain friendly relations with Sri Lanka in order to prevent foreign power incursions into naval bases and the need to placate the Southern States of India and all opposition parties by condemning and stopping human rights violations in Sri Lanka has imposed severe restraints on her initiatives.

India voluntarily undertook to stop the carnage in Sri Lanka, not merely on humanitarian grounds, but also to pre-empt other foreign po-

by

wer interventions. Now she cannot let herself be paralysed by these conflicts of national interests nor can she betray the trust reposed in her by the comity of nations and the people of Sri Lanka nor allow the Sri Lankan Tamils to die by economic strangulation.

The Tamil people are wary of any settlement which will not guarantee them lasting peace. The generations of people born after 1956 have always lived with blood, sweat and tears. They will not easily buy any settlement which does not guarantee the security of their homes in their homeland. The Tamil homeland was a historic reality but now successive

S. R. Asirwatham

promoting or impeding a settlement? Could her withdrawal from neutrality and mediation give her new options which could hasten a settlement? Is India's approach to Sri Lanka's problem as a human rights problem the best approach in her own national interests? Or would not the safe-guarding of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace outside the arena of foreign power incursions and rivalries be a more appropriate approach in India's national interest?

The answers to these fundamental issues should be framed within specific time dimensions because time is the essence of the problem.

ETHNIC CRISIS

New Chapter Or Tragedy?

The Sri Lankan ethnic problem seems to be as far away from solution than it ever was. The relationship between Sri Lanka and India seems to have reached its lowest ebb.

India has refused to mediate in the dispute unless the Sri Lankan Government agrees to its three pre conditions, namely (1) A halt to the military activity against the Tamil militants in the North and East, (2) the withdrawal of the economic blockade against the Jaffna peninsula, and (3) a firm declaration by the Sri Lankan Government in support of the 19th December proposals i. e., to create a new Eastern province without Amparai district, thereby giving the Tamils a greater majority in the Eastern province.

In fact, there are no negotiations going on at the moment. The two Indian Union Ministers who were in charge of conducting these negotiations have gone abroad and are unlikely to return for sometime. In the meantime, the Sri Lankan Government is both following its military option by increasing its military activities with consequent huge

civilian losses, as well as economically squeezing the Jaffna people with a tight economic blockade which has caused scarcity of food-stuffs as well as lack of transport. While the Sri Lankan President pompously declared at the recent opening of Parliament that his Government had never and never will murder innocent civilians, such wholesale murders were taking place in the North and the East. How the President could make such a blatantly false claim in the face of

by

the recent murder of 27 employees of the seafood project at Kokadi-cholai, is beyond understanding!

Supporters of the Sri Lankan Tamil cause, both in Sri Lanka and in India, are faulting Rajiv Gandhi and the Indian Government for having done nothing positive to solve the problem. They accused Gandhi of having fallen into the trap set by the Sri Lankan President in agreeing to endless negotiations over three years without anything being achieved. This costly deal has won

for the Sri Lankan Government the time it needed to strengthen and modernise its Army with help from such anti-Indian forces as Israel, Pakistan, China etc.

From the very beginning Rajiv Gandhi started off on a false ideological note. Although India openly declared her support of the Sri Lankan Tamil cause and even turned a blind eye to the use of Tamil Nadu as a virtual base area by the Tamil militants, Rajiv Gandhi declared himself as being against the creation of a separate state of Eelam.

N. Sanmugathasan

But he has never given his reasons for this declaration. Those of us who have not supported the demand for a separate state have done so because we stand for a future socialist Sri Lanka where the workers, both Sinhala and Tamil, shall rule; and therefore we do not desire separation. But why is Rajiv against a separate state? Has he forgotten that in 1971 India carried out a war of aggression against the Sovereign State of Pakistan in order to liberate Bangladesh and create a separate state?

Rajiv Gandhi blundered still further at Bangalore at the end of last year when he declared that he was against linguistic states forgetting completely that the whole of India was divided on the basis of linguistic states.

Most people faulting India point out to the lack of consistency on its stand on the Sri Lankan Tamil problem. This inconsistency has been blamed on the fact that there has not been a single individual on the Indian side who has handled these negotiations continuously.

Perhaps the best choice was Indira Gandhi's selection of Mr. G. Parthasarathy — not because he was a Tamil but because he had been an able representative of India as its Ambassador at the United Nations, Peking and several other important capitals. He proved his ability by being the main author of Annexure-C which, if Sri Lanka had not gone back on it, could have been the basis for the solution of Tamil problem of Sri Lanka. One of the first acts of Rajiv Gandhi on coming to power was to remove Parthasarathy from this crucial position and to substitute him with a never ending series of diplomats who have proved incapable of delivering the goods.

Most critics point out that India by its inept handling of the negotiations with Sri Lanka, has only created a mess which has strengthened the arm of the Sri Lankan

Government, caused reverses in the field to the Tamil militants and brought down the reputation of Indian foreign policy. To make matters worse, at the latter part of last year the Indian authorities not only humiliated the leaders of the militant groups in Madras by arresting them but also confiscated their arms. It is yet not quite clear whether it was the states Government or the central Government that ordered this stupid move. This action was something like that of the man who spat while looking upwards. The spit only fell on himself. But, undoubtedly, the action seems to have been undertaken to placate the Sri-Lankan Government.

What can the Indian Government do to pressurise the Sri Lankan Government? We are not among those who advocate a military intervention by India. It will create more problems than it solves. But, short of military intervention, a big power like India has access to several other steps by which it can demonstrate its displeasure of Sri Lanka. But it would appear that Rajiv Gandhi does not have the heart for any such step.

On the other hand, the Tamil militant groups now operating in the North and East of Sri Lanka must seriously reconsider their strategy and tactics. Notwithstanding the truth or otherwise of the Government claims of their victories, there is no doubt that the militants have suffered reverses in recent months. A part of the reason for this can be traced to the disunity in their ranks. There are thousands of trained Tamil youths in the North and the East. But it is only one group that is fighting the army.

For its part, the Sri Lankan Government must decide on what it wants to do. If it is genuine in desiring a settlement, there is no need to go on bended knees to India. It can find a solution within the context of a united Sri Lanka (This is not the same thing as a unitary state) by declaring its acceptance of full regional autonomy (which should mean a regional parliament with full powers over everything except such central subjects as defence, foreign-affairs, finance, communication etc..) for a Tamil homeland comprising the Northern and the Eastern provinces. It should stop its military offensives, withdraw the Army from the North and East, withdraw the state of Emergency and the Prevention of Terrorism Act, release all the political prisoners (Sinhala and Tamil) and start a completely new chapter in Sri Lankan history!

The alternative is tragedy!

People Must Protest Injustice, Repression

—C. M. U.

The Ceylon Mercantile, Industrial And General Workers' Union (CMU) passed the following resolution at a Public Meeting held on 5th March.

This Public Meeting of the CEYLON MERCANTILE, INDUSTRIAL AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION (CMU), held at De Mel Park, Colombo, on 5th March 1987, endorses the view of the General Council of the Union that the time has come for people to protest openly against the injustice and repression that prevails in Sri Lanka and to struggle actively for DEMOCRATIC and HUMAN RIGHTS and PEACE and JUSTICE in this country:

This Meeting, at the same time, condemns the Inspector-General of Police, without explanation, of the distribution of leaflets among the public and affixing of posters in

places visible to the public, in relation to the Union's "Day of Action", in order to prevent the vast majority of the people from being made aware of this action and its purpose.

This Meeting also condemns the prohibition by the Inspector-General of Police, of a procession by the CMU, following the stoppage of work by members of the CMU this day, from the Union Headquarters to the venue of the Meeting, also without explanation.

This Meeting resolves to pursue the struggle for Democratic and Human Rights and Peace and Justice in Sri Lanka, despite the conditions of repression prevailing under the 'State of Emergency' and to strive to build a broad-based mass movement amongst the people to that end in association with trade union and other organisations.

The People And The War

The pace of events is such that it is hard to keep in touch. By the time this appears in print many more tragedies, public and private, are likely to have taken place. Hardly a day passes without the deafening roar of shells fired from land and air. Anxious mothers and screaming children rush for cover — to that side of the house away from the shelling, under a concrete roof or a water tank. Shivering dogs cower beside their mistresses or whoever at home appears steady and protective. What follows gives some glimpse of the anxieties with which ordinary people live and sometimes die — often with courage and dignity.

No one trusts the repeated assurances of the National Security Minister that the war is against terrorists and not against Tamils. When questioned by Juliet Ricks (BBC, 24 hours, 20th March 1987) the Minister admitted that there are bound to have been civilian casualties when the army opened fire with cannon from Jaffna Fort earlier this month. He went on to say that it was because of concern for civilians that he had told them 'please go'. Juliet Ricks pointed out that people cannot simply pack up and leave a city that is so central to civilian life. The Minister's assurance is in effect, 'I am shooting at you, please keep away from the bullet?'

Cement Factory Evacuated

On Friday, 27th March, around 9.45 A.M. the sound of exploding landmines ripped through the KKS Cement Works of the Cement Corporation and Lanka Cement Limited (LCL). Word came through that an army patrol had been attacked nearby. The Harbourview army camp and the Magazine camp near the quarry are almost part of the Cement works. A telephone call came from the army at the magazine camp asking factory personnel to take shelter in a safe place. Soldiers were observed assembling near the western boundary of the factory premises.

A crane driver attached to the corporation and a heavy vehicle driver attached to LCL were in the quarry at that time. They wished to drive the crane to safety and did so with the approval of the army at Magazine camp. On reaching the entrance of the vehicle maintenance section they were unexpectedly and inexplicably fired upon. The heavy vehicle driver sustained a leg injury and the injured crane driver was taken to Tellippalai hospital.

The hollowness of such assurances was demonstrated on the morning of 23rd March in the wake of the LTTE's attack on the Police quarters adjoining the Fort Camp. Jaffna was subject to a barrage of missiles fired in anger, fulfilling the civilians' worst expectations.

HOSPITAL HIT AGAIN

The hospital was shelled for the second time in the month. Shortly after 1-30 A.M. a shell descended through the ceiling of Ward 19 into the nurses' duty room. The nurse had left the room a few minutes back. Dr. Nageswaran showed me the 2½ ft. long shell. "Miraculously

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this monster did not explode", he explained, "had it exploded, I hate to think what would have happened to my patients and those in the children's ward below. I say, the staff on duty behaved superbly. Not one person deserted his post. They brought all the patients to the relative safety of the lobby. Those unable to walk were carried on stretchers. Ward 1 was kept ready for emergency cases. It was then that the nurses and attendants thought about their own safety. One shell fell in the drain outside Ward 10, splashing mud into the ward. Another demolished the SHS's office across

By 11.00 A.M. the commotion having been joined in by a naval vessel and helicopters, the management decided to evacuate the factory. It was also decided to evacuate the families living in executive quarters close to the Harbourview camp. The wife of an executive was taken away on the bar of a bicycle for the first time in her life. Factory workers later went to look for the husband who had gone to fetch his children from Nadeswara College and reunited them with the anxious wife.

Some maintenance and operational personnel remained behind to effect a smooth shutdown of plant. This was done, as rapid cooling can result in damage to machinery that function at high temperatures. When these personnel were leaving the premises a shell fired from the naval vessel fell just a few yards behind them. But no one was injured.

Factory sources expect normalcy to return within a few days.

the road. We have lost all our records." Suddenly, Dr. Nageswaran's voice took on a note of alarm, "I say, these shells sometimes have timing devices that make them explode much later. This technician fellow is a bit of a thick skinned rascal". He urgently phoned for the technician. The young technician arrived with a grin and assured us that the exploding device had been removed.

A young lady, Dr. Rubini Philipupillai, was amongst those in the hospital when the shelling started. She said that they went to the tea room after seeing to the safety of the patients.

The front wall of the hospital had a gaping hole. Hospital road, like First Cross St. was a mess of

Rajan Hoole

broken telephone and electric wires as if a tornado had hit the area. Several houses were damaged in First and Second Cross Streets — Dr. Sabaratnam's Vembadi Clinic, Rev. & Mrs. Solomon's outhouse was blown off, six shells fell inside Vembadi Girls School causing damage to the Mabel Thambiah block and to the Lower School. Mrs. Sivapakiam Nadarajah, Mrs. Sivarajah and Dr. (Miss) Ananthi were living in a house in a lane in front of the hospital. Splinters from a shell which fell inside Vembadi Girls' School smashed the glass pane in the room in which they were taking cover. Nicholas Saverimuttu and his sisters family of 2nd Cross St. took cover in the street drain, until a neighbour with a flat roof invited them in.

One shell hit the water tank of Bishop's house, 20ft. away from Bishop Deogupillai. Prof. Tharmaratnam who was at Oddumadam junction at 6-30 A.M. saw a bomber dropping bombs into the Muslim quarter of Navanthurai. Crowds dispersed when a helicopter came firing. Enough has been said to show that the firing was pretty indiscriminate and mistakenly vindictive. Surely, the authorisation for such a use of airpower must have come from fairly high up. A young Engineer observed, "it is by the grace of God that all that destructive power unleashed resulted in only two deaths. We must not try his patience through our misdoings".

PRESERVING UNITY

It is alleged that the government is doing all this to preserve the nation's unity and integrity. To many Tamils this is not an important issue. They would accept that one way or the other we have to live with the Sinhalese, unless the Government continues to be suicidally bent. "I am mainly interested in democracy so that I can continue to serve my community in my own quiet way", says Dr. Mohanadas who lectures in Chemistry at the Univer-

sity of Jaffna. Dr. Mohanadas lives in Ariyalai where shells fired from the Navatkuli camp have fallen close to his house. An ardent conservationist and promoter of palmyrah trees, he says, "thanks to the palmyrah trees of Ariyalai. But for them the damage from shelling would have been severe".

Whilst the realism of the old can weather a severe beating the impressionable young learn some indelible lessons. My brother and I were talking to a 14 year old school boy near Kandasamy Kovil in the evening after the aerial shelling of 7th March. His sister was thoroughly shaken and kept very close to the mother. The apparent target had been missed. A school master living a few doors away had narrowly escaped with his family by going to the house across the road a little while before a missile hit his house. The boy showed us pieces from a shell which he said fell into their house after exploding overhead. From the marking FTA on the remnant he had concluded that it was of American manufacture. He was convinced that they had been saved by ground fire from the LTTE. After the first few bombing runs, the bombers had to break off in mid air and give up further attempts when the ground fire got organised. This the process by which the young learn who are their friends and who their enemies.

As Prof. Tharmaratnam says, "the Tamils have to live somewhere. And if they are to live with the Sinhalese mutual trust must be established. Few Sinhalese recognise that this mutual trust is far more important than concessions and the nitty-gritty of peace proposals".

This requires from the Sinhalese some courage and an approach radically different from the present one. For a start it must be recognised that the present war is not about the unity of the country nor is it for the honour of the Sinhalese. But it is about the egos of a morally debased ruling class. The social origins of the Sinhalese prisoners of war in Jaffna should give some hint of this. One lad is an orphan from Matara seeking means to look after his three sisters. The war is not fought by Richard the Lion hearts going on crusades. But it is rooted in social injustice and uses far more tragic and material.

What happens in Jaffna is bad enough. But it must be said that worse things happen elsewhere in the peninsula especially around Palaly and far worse things happen outside. What has been written points to a far bigger problem and signifies the writer's geographical limitations.

A QUESTION OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

Apropos the letter of Mr. R. N. J. Jordan of Etul Kotte appearing in the Daily News of 20th February under the heading 'Controversial' regarding "an act of this illustrious gentleman (the late Mr. S. Nadesan Q. C.) which raised some controversy of ETHICS in a criminal case in 1961", it appears to me that since a quarter of a century has elapsed since the alleged interview took place, memory must have played false by Mr. Jordan, as would appear from the following passages quoted from page 472 of the New Law Reports volume 63:- "27157 Q — Your Counsel (referring to Mr. N. Satyendra) visited you during this week end?

A — Yes

27158 Q- How many such hours did you spend over this week end?

A — I think about four or five hours

27159 Q- How many hours did you spend with him on Saturday last?

A — About two hours

27162 Q- Yesterday, Sunday, was he there with you, both in the morning and in the evening?

A — Yes

27165 Q- This is in the middle of your being cross examined by me?

A — Yes

27166 Q- Discussing with him, were you not, the evidence you were giving?

A — Yes, I discussed the evidence with him"

The above facts were elicited from Mr. Newton Perera (the 5th accused in the Bandaranaike Assassination case) whilst being cross-examined by Mr. Phoenas Quass, Q. C.

Pray, Mr. Jordan, why did you not raise the question of ETHICS of the profession when Mr. Nadesan was alive, with the Bar Council?

A. Sanmuganathan
Jaffna Attorney - at - law

(This is the letter Mr. Jordan wrote to the Daily News)

CONTROVERSIAL ?

Many are the encomiums showered on and tributes paid to the late eminent lawyer Mr. S. Nadesan, Q.C.,

An act of this illustrious gentleman which raised some controversy of ethics in a criminal case in 1961 comes to mind.

The Supreme Court trial in that year of the accused in the Banda-

ranaike Assassination case had progressed considerably when the late Q.C. whilst not appearing as defence counsel in the case, had a long interview lasting several hours with the fifth accused Inspector Newton Perera in the New Magazine Prison.

As a Senator at the time he was legally empowered to enter any prison at any time under prison regulations.

He signed the lawyers' register in the prison desiring the interview with Newton Perera and as permitted by the relevant rules, the visit was allowed out of hearing but within sight of the supervising Jailer.

Newton Perera was later acquitted after he himself had entered the witness box.

EXPLAIN YOUR BAN, IGP

Dear Sir.

We refer to your letter of 2nd March 1987, refusing permission for us to conduct a procession of our Union on 5th March 1987, your letter of 19th February 1987, refusing permission for the pasting of posters (in public) or distributing a hand bill (among the public), copies of which we attached to our letter of 14th February 1987.

In terms of a decision of our General Council, that met last afternoon, we have to place on record our strong protest against your prohibitions on the exercise of our democratic rights of publication and

The General Secretary of the Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU) sent the following letter on 3rd March to the Inspector-General of Police, asking him for the reasons for 'your prohibition of the exercise of our democratic rights of publication'.

The CMU has yet to receive a reply.

procession in connection with our proposed action on 5th March 1987, without any explanation.

Shortly, before we received your letter yesterday, we received a letter from the Secretary to President J.R. Jayewardene, stating as follows: "Regarding the public procession and the public meeting which your Union has decided to organise you may address the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence and the Inspector - General of Police as these subjects fall within their purview".

As the undersigned informed you over the telephone last afternoon, after we had received your letter prohibiting the procession, there is no Emergency Regulation that directly empowers either the Secretary to the

Mr. Satyendra, the late Q.C.'s son, defended Inspector Newton Perera.

Mr. Phoenas Quass, Q.C., Senior Defence Counsel of the other accused protested to court and, on grounds of ill health, left for the Uni-

LETTERS

ted Kingdom before the trial was concluded.

Mr. Justice T.S. Fernando was the trial judge and I happened to be the Prison Superintendent.

R. N. J. Jordan
Etul Kotte

Thank You!

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

I am very glad to inform you that I have successfully completed the Computer Programme (Basic) Course followed at Data Centre, Jaffna and obtained the Certificate.

This Scholarship Course offered to me by your goodself is, in fact, a great help to fulfil my desire.

I am, indeed, very much grateful to you for having guided me through your esteemed announcement to send my application and offered this Scholarship through the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Thanking you.

Kondavil Miss. P. A.A. Joseph

THIRD MONTH REMEMBRANCE



OUR BELOVED SON & DARLING BROTHER TIMOTHY RAVINDRAN SIVAM

Born : 01-12-56 Demise : 04-01-87

*Three months have passed away
Still you are deep alive in our hearts
No goodbye, no farewell*

*A son so loving honest and true
A brother in whose love we grew
Gentle and noble were your deeds
Always caring for everyones needs
Incredible to think you are gone
Your place no one can fill.*

*That fateful day you were wrenched
apart*

*From those so dear to your heart
Your loss just cannot be borne
And grief too great to be told
It aches to think what have been denied.*

Your life is a beautiful memory

*Your absence a silent grief
Time cannot heal the heartache
For the son we loved so dear.
Almighty God, please give eternal rest
and comfort him in the shadow of thy wings.*

*Greatly missed and fondly
remembered by your loving
Daddy, Mummy, Sisters and Brother
In Law*

36, THOMBAL STREET,
UDUVIL EAST,
CHUNNAKAM.

---CMU

Ministry of Defence and/or you to prohibit the holding of a public procession or a public meeting.

We are aware that Emergency Regulation No. 12, now in force, empowers the President, "by order" to prohibit the holding of public procession or public meeting."

Our General Council decided last afternoon to request you to let us know immediately, under what provision of law, refused to grant permission to our Union to conduct a public procession on 5th March.

We shall be glad if you will also let us know your reasons for refusing to grant us permission to distribute the hand bill or display posters in connection with our proposed action on 5th March, and your reasons for refusing to grant permission for the holding of a public procession of our Union on that day, as notified to you in our letter of 21st February 1987.

We enclose herewith for your information copies of messages we have received from organisations abroad in connection with our action on 5th March 1987, which may serve to show you why you should explain the reasons for your prohibitions of the exercise of our democratic rights of publication and procession, as you have done.

Yours faithfully,
THE CEYLON MERCANTILE,
INDUSTIAL
AND GENERAL WORKERS'
UNION (CMU)
Bala Tampoe
General Secretary

Buddhist Monks, Christian clergy, Intellectuals Trade Unionists and Activists have issued this joint appeal to the People of Sri Lanka:

We have learned that approximately 80,000 acres of land in the Monaragala District are to be brought under sugar cane cultivation by three joint companies in which the main partners are to be foreign multinationals.

The allocation of the land is as follows:

The Jt. Co. and the foreign collaborator	Acreage to be acquired for sugar cane cultivation by For. Co.	Acreage of farmers' land on which sugar cane has to be cultivated
1. Monaragala Sugar Company: major share-holder- Mehta International Co., and Indian - African joint venture	12,000	42,000
2. Pelwatta Sugar Company: major share - holder - Bookers International Agricultural Co.-a British Company	12,000	12,000
3. Nakkala Sugar Company: major share: - holder - H.V.A.- a Dutch Company	6,000	

Accordingly, the farmers living on the land which is to be cultivated by the companies, their houses and cultivations, will be removed. On the rest of the earmarked land, the farmers will be forced to cultivate only sugar cane and nothing else. The greatest asset and the only wealth of the farmers this country is their traditional lands. Their very lives are dependent on this land. Their traditions and economy are intimately related to this land. Hence the loss of land will lead to the destruction of the

Monaragala....

(Continued from page 4)

rejecting the locally produced mills is visible. Consequences of such happenings in other Third World countries are well known.

The Agribusiness MNCs almost totally control the paddy sector, through the "Green Revolution" strategies started in Sri Lanka since 1960s. Paddy production has become almost impossible for poorer small farmers who form a majority of Paddy farmers in the country. Large profits flow out to these MNCs, while small farmers are compelled to mortgage, lease out or sell their plots, caused by very high cost of agricultural inputs and simultaneous high cost living. Rapid worsening of poverty among the rural population has led to over 42% of children and a large number of mothers be-

'Back Monaragala Peasants'

very fabric of their lives. A few may be able to survive as wage slaves of these plantations. But the future of these people and their descendants will undoubtedly be tragic.

On the 54,000 acres which are not directly acquired by companies, but on which they can compel the farmers to grow only sugar cane, the variety of crops now existent will be no more. Hence the only income for the residents of this area will be that obtained by the sale of sugar cane to the companies. Since

ing seriously malnourished (officially admitted figures).

Over the last 10 years huge foreign loans obtained and spent for massive infra-structure development projects and for liberalized imports etc. Have cast tremendous burdens on the poor, and led to high cost of living low social welfare and subsidies to the poor etc.

Suppression of Trade Union and democratic rights to extract these from the people, by keeping wages low, and silencing protests and political activity in general is an intensifying tendency.

Thus the peasant struggle is Monaragala is of national significance as part of the over-all resistance to the economic strategy imposed by international capital and their local collaborators.

there is no possibility of finding alternate outlets for the sale of their crop of sugarcane, the prices of sugarcane would be controlled by the sugar companies. The companies, naturally aim at the greatest profit. Hence the promise, a higher price for sugar, given by both the companies and the government officials will be a myth. The state says that lands are given to these companies to enable Sri Lanka to become self-sufficient in sugar. We too, are not opposed to making Sri Lanka self-sufficient in sugar. We, too, are not opposed to making Sri Lanka self-sufficient in sugar. But to assign this task to foreign companies, whose sole aim is maximum profit, or in other words exploitation of capital, while the sugar factories at Kantalai and Hingurana, started by the government, are deteriorating day by day thereby to bring the lives of the peasants of this country to the brink of destruction, this we strongly oppose.

There are several temples in the land to be acquired by the companies. Can a temple be maintained,

isolated amidst gigantic sugar cane cultivations?

By arranging for the destruction of both the village and the temple, the damage caused to the cornerstones of the traditional religious way of life of the peasantry is immense. Not only that Hotels and holiday resorts for the rest and recreation of the foreigners will make their entrance. The havoc caused by the destruction of culture already evident in areas dominated by foreign companies and around the tourist hotels, will visit this area too.

'Haddawa' is a shrub jungle in the midst of the land to be cleared for sugar cane cultivation. This ancient forest too would be cut down with disastrous results from the consequent drying up of water resources. Hence we appeal to the government to stop allocating land in the Monaragala District, or in Mannar and Vavuniya Districts, which have been named as 'open' to foreign investment, or any other area of the country, and to safeguard the traditional lands of the peasantry of this country.

We also appeal to the people of this country to extend their fullest cooperation and support to the farmers of Monaragala who are fighting to safeguard their land.

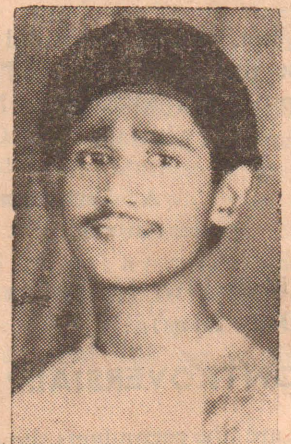
WORRIED PARENTS' PLEA

Mr. and Mrs. F.B. Francis of Kilinochchi have appealed to the SATURDAY REVIEW to find their son who had been arrested by the Security Forces and disappeared since then.

It is nearly one year since my son Basil Ravindran Francis was arrested by the Security Forces at Kilinochchi Town when he was on his way to buy an exercise book on 30th March 1986. At the time of his arrest, he was studying at Kilinochchi Maha Vidhyalayam in the Advance Level (Maths) Class, and he was due to sit for the Examination in July - Aug. 1987.

No sooner he was arrested I contacted the Co-ordinating Officer Brigadier Denzil Kobbekaduwa. He made me understand that my son had given valuable information and that he had been sent on special mission, with a man named Simon. I had been visiting the Kilinochchi Army Camp several times to inquire about the whereabouts of my son. But at every visit I was told that my son and Simon had not returned and that both are missing.

I appealed to Regional Director of Education for Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, Mr. Mansoor, through the principal of the school. He too was given the reply by the Army Authorities. I then appealed to the



Secretary to the Minister of National Security. But I did not get even a reply.

Finally I made a written appeal to the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE). They have filed a Habeas Corpus Application on my behalf. The case was taken up on 15th January 1987 and the Govt. has been given four weeks time to file answer.

'TAMILS FACE MOST CRITICAL PERIOD'

Text of a [statement issued by the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF).

The Tamil people in Sri Lanka presently face the most critical period in their long history. The only silver lining in this catastrophic situation, is the hope that they may yet be redeemed from the brutal repression they face through the just efforts of India. It is in this hope that we write to you.

India first expressed concern for the oppressed Tamil people, when Shri P. V. Narasimha Rao, the then Minister for External Affairs was sent to Colombo by the late Prime Minister Shrimathi Indra Gandhi on the 29th July 1983, at the height of the anti-Tamil racial pogrom of June - July 1983.

August 1983 witnessed the offer and acceptance of India's good offices, and the commencement of the negotiatory process, to find a final solution to the Tamil ethnic problem with India's good offices.

The period between August and December 1983 witnessed the evolution after concerted efforts of certain written proposals later entitled Annexure 'C', as a basis for the commencement of negotiations, at the All Parties Conference convened by the Sri Lankan Government for 10th January 1984.

The T. U. L. F., representing the Tamils, attended the All Parties Conference, on the basis of the solemn assurance given by President Jayewardene to Shrimathi Indra Gandhi at New Delhi in November 1983, that he would, at the All Parties Conference, extend his fullest support to the said proposals, and also not obstruct any suggestions made by the T. U. L. F. at the conference, for the creation of a single Tamil Linguistic Unit.

1984 witnessed the prolonging of the conference throughout the whole year, the total retraction by the Sri Lankan Government from even the most basic elements in the said proposals, and ultimately its total abandonment.

1985 witnessed the Tamils being offered nothing more in substance, than what was offered in 1914, which the T.U.L.F. had already declared to be totally inadequate. Though in 1985, through the intense efforts of the Indian Government, the Tamil militant organisations, albeit with genuine misgivings, participated in the negotiatory process at Thimpu, so as to ensure the durability of any peace package, the Sri Lankan Government continued to be intransigent, demonstrating its total lack of sincerity in the evolution of a just and peaceful political solution.

In a situation of impasse, the T.U.L.F. submitted to the Indian Government in [December 1985, a detailed set of proposals substantially on the pattern of a state in India. The Sri Lankan Government's response in January 1986, was a rude rejection of the said proposals.

Consequent to further Indian mediatory efforts with ministerial participation, in April May 1986, and based on certain proposals that emanated the T.U.L.F. again held detailed negotiations with President Jayewardene and his Ministers in July and August 1986. Despite a measure of progress, the negotiations remained inconclusive in vital areas.

In September - October 1986, the T.U.L.F. delivered to the Indian Government its full response, based on the negotiations held in Colombo in July and August, to certain draft formulations, received from the Sri Lankan Government. The draft formulations received from the Sri Lankan Government revealed retractions even from positions accepted in Colombo, and discrepancies between accepted positions and new formulations. The response of the T.U.L.F. outlined the minimum Tamil position.

In pursuance of India's efforts, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi held several rounds of discussions with

President Jayewardene at Bangalore in November 1986. Both prior to, and after the meeting between Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and President Jayewardene an Indian Ministerial team visited Colombo and held discussions with President Jayewardene and his Ministers. At the final discussions held with President Jayewardene on 19th December, certain proposals emerged.

Almost immediately after the return of the Ministerial delegation to New Delhi, President Jayewardene resiled from the said proposals. India has since sought an unequivocal commitment from the Sri Lankan Government to the said proposals, as a basis and starting point" for further negotiations.

Despite the most strenuous efforts of the Indian Government, with which efforts, the T. U. L. F. has always actively co-operated, the Sri Lankan Government, while maintaining a pretence of negotiating, has procrastinated, evaded and repeatedly reneged on accepted positions so as to gain time, and utilise the time so gained to prepare itself to deal with the Tamils militarily.

While the tortuous process of negotiations have continued during the past three and a half years, the Sri Lankan Government has since the formation of the Ministry of National Security under Minister Lalith Athulathmudali in March 1984, unleashed unbridled state terror and violence against the Tamil people in both the Northern and Eastern Provinces. In support of its policies of State repression of the Tamil people the Sri Lankan Government has inducted Israeli and Pakistani Military personnel, and mercenaries from the United Kingdom and the United States in addition to the purchase of an assortment of sophisticated military hardware, including Helicopter Gun-ships, Bomber Planes, and Naval Gun Boats, from various sources mainly South Africa.

In brief, the Sri Lankan Government is waging a war against the Tamil people of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The victims of this aggression have mainly been the non-combatant Tamil civilian population.

JAFFNA BISHOP IS 70

The grateful flock of the Jaffna diocese is contributing tribute to their beloved Pastor Rt.Rev.Dr.B.Deogupillai on his 70th birthday on 9th April.

A man of indomitable character, steadfast in his conviction, firm in his actions, always ready to raise his voice against injustice, social and spiritual evils, pleading the cause of the poor and downtrodden and ever ready to breathe in the gentle breeze of loving kindness into the souls of those who seek his presence he had successfully tended the flock for the last 20 years. His quality of penetrating into the deep recesses of human problem has resulted in bringing solace, hope and relief to the otherwise despondent citizens of Jaffna. His forthright utterances, bold exposition of the atrocities perpetrated on the helpless Tamil people has brought him the sense of his brother Ecclesiastics. Yet he sails on undaunted calling a spade irrespective of consequences.

As a priest he had ably chartered the ship of education and fash-

ioned the character, discipline and career of many a youth who adorn a professions as well as as other careers. He was Rector of St.Joseph's College, A'Pura, Sacred Heart College Karaveddi, St.Hentry's College, Ilavai and had guided the destinies of the members of that nobles profession as the Rector of the Teachers Training College, Colombuthurai,

Providence had destined Bishop Deogu to mount the higher rungs in the Ecclesiastical stairways. This resulted in his being elevated to the pedestal of auxiliary bishop of Trinco-Batti on 9th Feb 1967 and subsequently he became bishop there 11th May 1967. When the Episcopal Chair in Jaffna fell vacant after the demise of the Eminent and ever loving Pastor Rt.Rev. Dr.J.Emilianuspillai no worthy successor could be found other than Bishop Deogu.

The grateful, faithful and the public of Jaffna implore all heavenly blessings on him on his 70th birthday in order that he may give of his services for many more years to come

AD MOTUS ANNOS

—M.B.Gnanaratnam

(To be continued)

Jaffna Hospital....

(Continued from page 3)

On a reflective note Dr. Nageshwaran said, "I am very sad for the state of this country. Communal hatred has been allowed to reach such levels that this country is drifting out of control. The violence has now an impersonal character. The army just fires shells and doesn't care who dies. We ourselves are guilty in many ways. When Sinhalese soldiers or civilians are killed, our first impulsive reaction is that some justice had been done. Of course we then check ourselves and are ashamed. But we have all become party to this immoral drift in this country. We were not given to such feelings in the old days. If there were earth-slips or flood disasters in the South, we felt genuinely concerned. Our leaders should never have allowed this to happen. They had the best of education and the wisdom of the world before them. They should have known better ways to tackle problems."

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

MINI CAMP OVERRUN

A mini camp at Mailiyathanai in Valvettiturai was over run by the Tiger militants on 2nd April. The Government said two soldiers were killed. According to the LTTE, ten soldiers were killed. The LTTE also lost six of its cadres. In the meantime Naval Gun Boats stationed off Valvettiturai and Point Pedro started shelling. Helicopter gunships also strafed the entire Valvettiturai area while shells from all the camps

fell indiscriminately on civilian targets.

HELI BOMBS AMBULANCE

A helicopter dropped an incendiary bomb on an ambulance transporting patients from the Manthikaj Hospital (Pt. Pedro) to Jaffna on Thursday (2nd April).

The ambulance and a patient were charred.

Two patients and an attendant who escaped from the burning ambulance are now warded in the Jaffna Hospital.

GORY WEEKEND VICTIMS

Saturday, 28th March—shelling from Jaffna Fort.

Dead: 1. Rasathurai Solomon (27), (2) Francis Periyathamby (19), (3) N. Yogam (28)

Sunday, 29th March: Bombing at Nallur and Neervely.

Injured at Nallur:- (1) K. Saratha (13), (2) Sivagnanasundaram Umapiya (2), (3) Markandu Ruparasa (28).

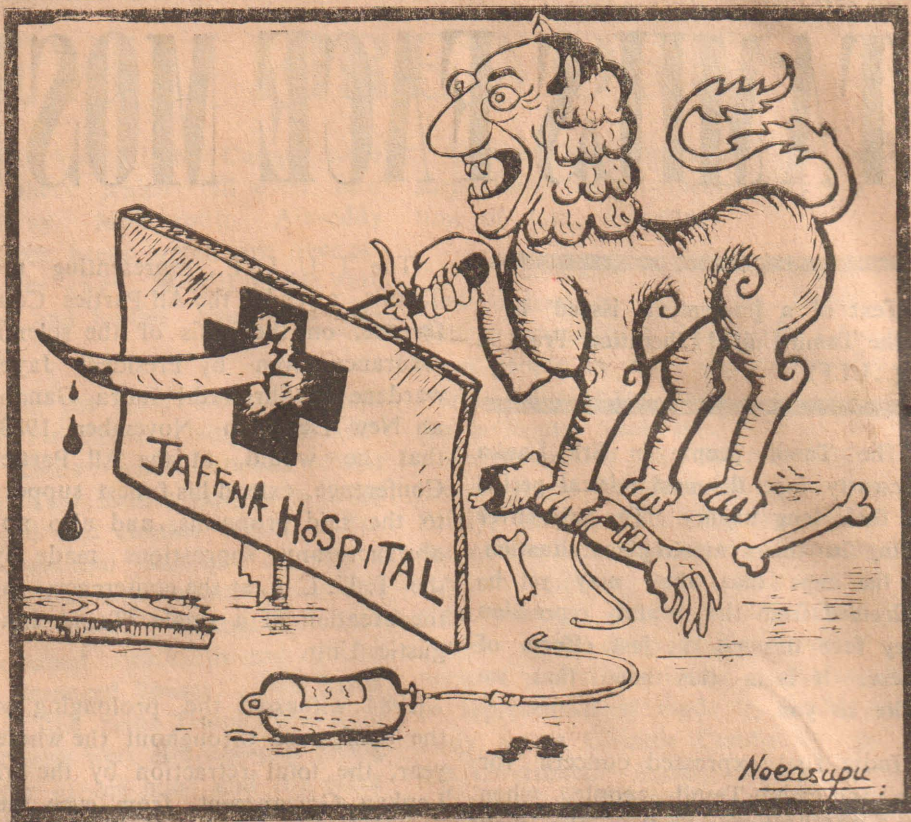
Neervely Injured:- Subramaniam Sivakanthan (29), (2) Ponniah Pooranam

Sunday 29th March (evening)-shelling from Jaffna Fort:- Family of 3 injured—Francis Jebanesan (47), Sathiamalar (38) and Danian Jebanesan (5).

Monday, 30th March:- Shelling of Jaffna General Hospital from Jaffna Fort Army Camp:-

Dead- (1) N. Navaratnam (37), (2) Jesuthasan (37), (3) Mohanakumar (22), (4) N. Visvalingam (47), (5) Ponnampalam (64), (6) Rasanayagam (18), (7) Balasundaram (53), (8) Senthivel, (9) Dharmapalan.

Seriously Injured:- (1) Mrs. S. Parramsothy, nurse (2) Anpu (24), (3) J. Sylvester (22), (4) N. Ganesan (50), (5) P. Krishnasamy (58), (6) Velu (58), (7) Thambirasa (51), (8) N. Subramaniam (52), (9) Markandu (20), (10) M. Veerakathy (46), (11) S. Sinnady (45), (12) R. Sinharajah (32), (13) P. Suppiah (64).



FROM THE HORSE'S....

(Continued from page 1)

the economic blockade and reduce military actions against the Tamils. Indications had also been given that Colombo now wanted to adhere to the 19th December proposals. We will see how things are shaping. Since Sri Lankan Government has gone back earlier on what it initially said about the proposals, we have to treat very carefully."

The Minister said "India could not be indifferent to what was happening in Sri Lanka. If the blockade continued and people were killed it was bound to have its repercussions. Something might happen to Sri Lanka that will also affect our country."

"One obvious effect was that several hostile countries were getting involved in the Sri Lankan situation. This may affect the security environment of India.

The Prime Minister's special emissary had conveyed to the Sri Lankan Government India's concerns, especially in view of the deteriorating security environment in the region.

rating security environment in the region.

"We cannot agree to an Eelam. A solution will have to be found within the constitutional framework of Sri Lanka.

"It would be inappropriate to internationalise the problem since the foreign agencies were often known for introducing extraneous issues in such situations.

"Ideas are translated into force through words. However, if certain things happen, then this country and this Government cannot be indifferent."

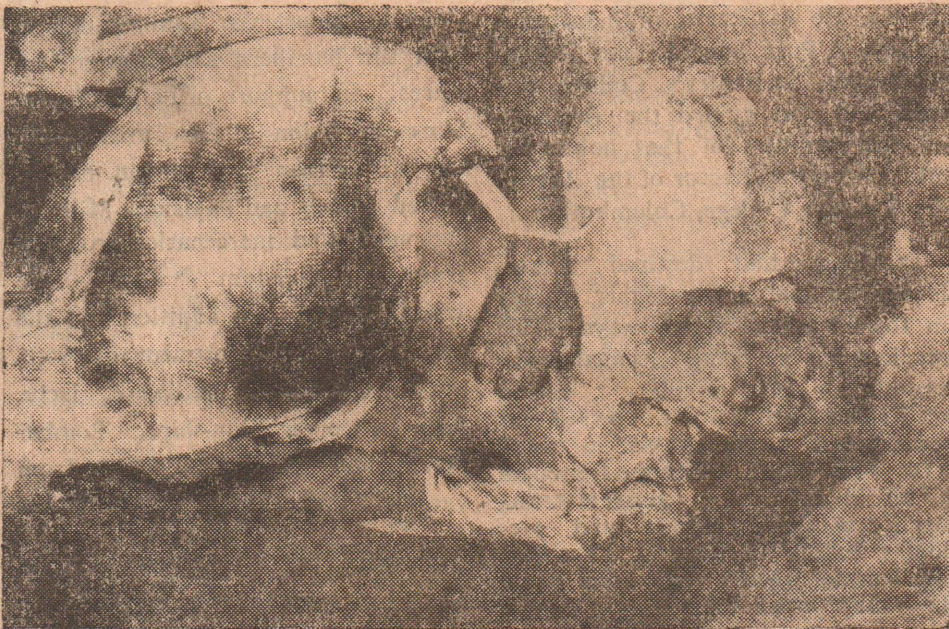
There you are, from the horse's mouth.

'SUBTERFUGE'

Dr. Antion Balasingham, spokesman for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in a statement to the "Front Line" on 24th, March has declared that 19,000 of Sri Lankan's armed forces are concentrated in the North for a major attack on the Tamil People. He said that the Indian Government was fully aware of the machinations of the Sri Lankan Government but he enlisted the support of India to compel the Government of Sri Lanka to enter into a dialogue with the Tamils. He added that even arrangements purportedly to lift the embargo on fuel was a 'subterfuge' to lull the Indian Government into a false sense of complacency.

Prayer Week Ends

The Prayer Week which was organised under the auspices of the Mass Movement for Human Rights whose President is Mr. Seevaratnam, Attorney-at-law ended at the Kachtheri on 3rd. March. There was a large gathering of peoples of all denominations and an ecumenical service was held to invoke blessings on the people especially those in the North and East.



Here lies the body of Kandiah Balasundaram (52) who was killed at Ward 19 of the Jaffna General Hospital on 30th March.