

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 5 No. 36 27th September 1986

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SINKING FISH?

Fishes did sing and honey flowed in abundance.

We call Batticaloa the land of the singing fish and honey.

That was long ago. Now, instead of honey, blood overflows and paints a tragic and horrendous tint that looms large over Batticaloa, the cultural treasury of the East.

For those who opt for a final military victory, letting the singing fish out of hands is very difficult to perceive.

Then what?

Find a scapegoat; kill; massacre. Then hartals, curfew will follow; Again kill.

Now an uneasy calm prevails over Batticaloa. People hardly venture out in the streets, occasional bomb blasts were heard, Tyres were burning at the street corners.

A lonely crow flies over the once busiest bazaar.

For five days from 20th September, Batticaloa observed a hartal to protest the indiscriminate shooting by the Security Forces on 19th September, following a Lebanon-styled

car bomb blast, for which the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has claimed responsibility.

An unofficial 18 hours curfew was clamped down within the limits of the Batticaloa Municipal Council area.

According to official version, "A jeep was damaged and seven policemen riding it, were injured. None of them was critically hurt. Three passengers in a private bus that caught fire as a result of the blast, died of burn injuries." It further adds: "Nine more civilians at the bus stand had died due to the explosion". (The Daily News, 24th September).

But the facts and truth however must be hiding somewhere between the lines.

The 11 bodies which were identified by the relatives had bullet marks.

How come the bullet marks though the 'civilians' had died due to explosion?

Among the victims, there was a one and a half years old child Bar-thelot. He too had a bullet mark.

Hours after the car bomb blast the special task force (STF) had come to the spot and gone on a search and cordon operation, with a shooting spree. They had gone into a private tuition centre and shot at the students. Their wrath did not spare the St. Anthony's Church. They killed S. J. Antony (67) a watcher there.

The Citizens Committee of Batticaloa, the Gandhi Seva Sangam, the Hindu Youths' Society, and the Mothers' Front of Batticaloa have requested President Jayewardene to appoint a commission to inquire into the incident.

Mr. Chandra Fernando, Vice-President of the Citizens' Committee at an emergency meeting of the Citizens' Committee of Batticaloa has condemned the Security Forces for their "blind and blatant attack on civilians in the heart of the town."

The bodies of the following were identified by relatives.

Sundararajah (15) of Koolavady;
Sivanesarasa (27) of Pullumalai;
(Continued on page 12)

Bishop's Anguish

The Bishop of Batticaloa and Trincomalee, Dr. Kingsley Swampillai has outlined in a letter to His Excellency President, J. R. Jayewardene the 'dark happenings' in Batticaloa last week.

"Terrorism should not be welcome in any form.

It is the duty of the security forces to provide protection to the people. They are paid by the state exchequer from the taxes levied from the people. Those very forces are killing the people without remorse or pity and this is a cause for censure.

Three days ago (19th September) the security forces in a 'gunning spree' killed 8 innocent people in Batticaloa town.

A worker attached to the Church of St. Anthony's was individually down by bullets.

Aerial bombing, bullet spraying have been undertaken by security forces under the cloak of security. The hapless victims in this type of action have been innocent civilians.

It is, therefore, necessary that suitable action acceptable to all be formulated to bring an end to these "inhuman acts".

50-Cent Fund

This week we sent Rs. 50 to Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali as a further part payment of the legal costs of Rs. 1,575 awarded to him by the Press Council in a case filed against the SATURDAY REVIEW.

We have asked Readers to contribute only 50 cents each to meet the bill as a means of expressing their solidarity with the SR.

But there appears to be a dearth of coins in Jaffna, so it will take some time before we collect the full sum.

Sorry Mr. Athulathmudali.

TIME FOR RE-THINKING

There comes a time in the life of a nation, just as in the case of any man or woman, to make a re-appraisal of its performance.

The re-appraisal may be agonising—past mistakes must be noted, lessons learnt and steps taken to avoid any repetition.

The time has come for Sri Lanka for all of Sri Lanka—to make an agonising re-appraisal of the policies and goals and achievements of the past four decades.

What have we as a nation achieved? Where are we, after 38 years of

so-called independence? Where are we heading?

These are questions particularly for our political leaders of all hues, green, blue, red and ultra-red.

The North has been burning for a long time. The South is simmering.

Who wants this situation? The politicians? Who else?

The politicians of all shades have messed up our lives in their quest for power and glory.

But, then, it is our collective fault. We have selected them, supported them, bloated them. Made demigods of some of them.

Oh, God.

The time has come for the people of Sri Lanka to also think seriously of their future.

Think individually and collectively. So much is at stake. And we must leave room for outside forces to decide, our future. For the vultures are there, waiting for an opportunity.

We can take the high road or the low road. It is all up to the people of Sri Lanka. May the divine guide them correctly.

Release All The Political Prisoners in Sri Lanka Jails

Saturday Review

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Grateful Thanks to Almighty
God, Sacred Heart of Jesus and
St. Jude for favours granted.

A. K.

NOVENA PRAYER

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus
be adored, 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.

MATRIMONIAL

Up-country Tamil, Hindu, 27
years, employed in a multi-national
firm in Colombo drawing a
salary of approximately 5,000/-
per mensem, wishes to marry an
educated girl from a respectable
family in Jaffna or Batticaloa.
Religion immaterial. Dowry not
essential. Horoscope may be fur-
nished, if necessary. Write to 96,
Sellar Lane, Nallur, Jaffna.

'SAVE MY SON'

I wish to bare my grievances to
you and to your readers after all
my efforts to rescue my innocent
son from his captors have failed.

In early March 1985, my son
Chelliah Karunakaran (Yanthottam,
Navindil, Karaveddy) was taken in-
to custody by the Security Forces
while he was in Batticaloa on a
business engagement of buying paddy.
Later he has been transferred to
Boosa Army Camp.

My son is 22 years old. His father
is dead. He studied at St. John's
College, Jaffna, where he qualified
at the GCE (OL) Examination. Later
he joined Hartley College, Point
Pedro, where he qualified at the
GCE (AL) Examination. After his
college career he registered himself
for the Institute of Cost and Mana-
gement Accountancy (ICMA) Exa-

mination. During this period (1984/
1985) Jaffna peninsula was under-
going a big crisis. It is at this
juncture that my son decided to
engage himself in a business venture
in order to brighten his future.
He left for Batticaloa where his
uncle was residing. At Batticaloa,
he was arrested by the Security
Forces.

It was very unfortunate that my
son was taken into custody when,
In fact, he was on a genuine busi-
ness trip. My son has not been in-
volved in any illegal activity under
the Prevention of Terrorism Act or

any other law. His arrest and det-
ention are without warrant, both in
fact and in law. The only reason
for his unjustified arrest and deten-
tion would appear to be his youth-
ful age.

It is submitted respectfully that a
youth actively engaged in studies and
later in business to improve his
future would not have lent himself
or got involved in any illegal acti-
vity under the law. I shall be grate-
ful to the authorities if they look
into the matter with the least pos-
sible delay. I wish to urge that the
future of this young boy should not
be ruined.

Mrs. Kanagamma Chelliah.
Karaveddy

Philanthropist Par Excellence

Pensioner's Day is a great day
in Jaffna. For there are a great
many pensioners and the life of a
vast number of families depend on
the retirement benefits received from
the Government.

But I have not met a greater
pensioner than Mr. R. Somalingam.

Every pension day, he walks into
the SATURDAY REVIEW office and
makes a contribution to our Refu-
gee Relief Fund.

It may be Rs. 100, Rs. 50 or
Rs. 25. But the thing is that he
makes a contribution every month,
whatever he can afford in that par-
ticular month.

He worked in the Railway for
15 years as a Class II clerical servant.
He served in many areas in the
South before coming to his home-
land, Jaffna.

Now a spritely 86, a great grand-
father, he could be seen traversing
the streets of Jaffna on various
personal missions, like taking his
grand-child to school, unaided ex-
cept for a walking stick.

After retirement he functioned as
Secretary of the Kannathiddy Com-
munity Centre and also formed an



association named "ACHARYS" to
help goldsmiths, blacksmiths and
carpenters.

A great soul. The SR wishes that he
live long.

—EDITOR

"CANCEL THE TRANSFER"

The Chavakachcheri Bar Associa-
tion on 11th September has resolu-
ted that "the Association obser-
ves with appreciation the untiring
efforts of Mr. V. P. Sundaralingam,
District Judge, Chavakachcheri in
restoring normality in judicial pro-
ceedings in the District Court after
the destruction of the Court build-
ings in January, 1985 and unani-
mously resolved to request the Judi-
cial Service Commission to cancel
the order transferring Mr. V. P. Sun-
daralingam as there are several part-
ly heard cases and sudden transfer
of the District Judge will cause
immense hardship to both litigants
and practitioners and result in dis-
ruption of work of the Court."

"Mr. V. P. Sundaralingam took a
firm step in getting back the Records
from High Court and started work
in the Court. It is a loss for all
of us to lose Mr. V. P. Sundaralingam
at this juncture," said Mr. C.
Balakrishnan, President of the Bar
Association.

The exhibition about which we
wrote on Page 2 last week under the
headline "JAFFNA ON SHOW"
was held at St. Patrick's College
from 12th to 20th September.

It was organised by the Jaffna
Renaissance Society and the Students'
Front.

Two whole paragraphs had been
dropped out from the article, we
do not know by whom.

The printers devil at work?

Computer Scholarships

The next week-day and week-end
courses in computer programming
conducted by a reputed computer
Centre in Jaffna will commence
on 13th and 18th October respecti-
vely.

The SATURDAY REVIEW has
been requested to select six deserv-
ing candidates from families ad-
versely affected by the disturban-
ces for free training under these
courses.

Interested students are requested
to Send their Bio-data to the Editor,
SATURDAY REVIEW before 10th
October.

They should have an adequate
knowledge of English.

Vacancies

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

We are looking for a Mechanical Engineer with ability to
handle design and development of machinery independently. A degree
in Mechanical Engineering is desirable but those with JTO/NDT or
equivalent qualifications and relevant experience will also be consi-
dered.

FIELD OFFICER

Technically oriented persons willing to work both within and
outside the Jaffna district may apply for this post. Part time basis
also could be considered.

All applications will be treated confidentially. Apply with com-
plete bio data and quoting two referees before 11th October, 1986.

Dynamic Engineering Ltd.,

476, Main Street, Jaffna.

The group Asyi e.v in West Berlin was founded in October 1983. At this time 750 Palestinian families were threatened to be deported into Lebanon. Finding shelter in the rooms of a protestant church community and public action forced the West Berlin government to renew the deportation stop. Since that time we have been contacted by the people who fled from their native countries with the hope of finding shelter in the Federal Republic of Germany as a democratic country. Most of this refugees are Palestinians, Tamils Lebanese, Kurdish, Turkish, Iranians, and some from other countries. Our first step was to

WEST GERMANY:

US BRIDGE-HEAD IN EUROPE

ies. (A big establishment producing machine guns and electric goods)

The involvement of FRG in persecution and oppression of National Liberation Movements :-

Those who flee to the FRG run into the lion's den. The FRG including West Berlin is deeply involved in the international imperialism

Ms. Sylvia Laube was recently in Madras. She along with two other representatives from ASYL. E. V. participated in a seminar, organised by the Asian Students Association (ASA) and the General Union of Youths and Students (GUYS).

She is actively engaged in looking after the welfare of "Political refugees" in West Berlin.

We publish here excerpts from her talk:-

fit up a regular advice service with the presence of asylum right engaged lawyers. The above named church communities was supporting us by giving a room and paying our telephone. Co-operation in particular points exists, we are independent in our work. This room is a possibility to meet and discuss too.

Our work is also to improve the bad situation of refugees in West Berlin and elsewhere.

Several nations have been fighting for liberation and for their rights. Coming to West Berlin and the FRG their persecution is continued with different methods which are evidently linked to the same system of imperialism which massacres them at home.

Efficient support of refugees must begin at the roots of their persecution. It is necessary to support the national liberation movements. That is why we participate in the international solidarity actions with the national liberation movements. Examples of our solidarity work in the last year were:

Participated in protest actions against the presence of Ceylon, Israel South Africa at the international Tourism fair in West Berlin. Those regimes declare their countries as tourist paradises though there is blood shed.

Participated in a demonstration "Hands off Palestine refugee camps" after the attacks at Sabra and Shatila in June '85.

Publicity work; Released a poster on "German weapons, German money for the murder all over the world" in front of the AEG factor-

i. e. being a member of NATO, the European Economic Commission (EEC) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It is the US bridge head in Europe against Socialism. The FRG Stations US Cruise Missiles and Pershings which are able to reach a circle beginning in southern coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

The FRG is producing lots of weapons which are exported to reactionary regimes. the chauvinist Sinhalese regime receives G-3 from Heckler and Koch., a West German establishment.

So the FRG is producing refugees itself. Also the FRG is involved in direct support for the fascist and Zionist regimes by its financial and economical aids. Another example how the imperialist regimes try to overthrow socialist countries is the development aids. In Nicaragua the aid was refused by the FRG but country receives support by Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. (It is a foundation of the FRG government majority party CDU. Every party got foundations to support their view, projects and serving also as money washing institutions. Named after the first chancellor of FRG. It is necessary to add that West Berlin is one of the most important training centres for counter-insurgency in Western Europe. The allied forces (USA, GB, France) keep ghost villages and military shoot training areas at West Berlin i. e. ; British troops are entrained there to fight against the IRA in Northern Ireland. Also interception stations versus the east are kept.

Sovereignty over parliament affairs lies on the allied forces. Laws and edicts by West Berlin's parliament

must be accepted by them. The Allied Forces may intervene. In April 86 after an explosion. In a discotheque in West Berlin (A Turkish woman was killed) the police was ordered to control intensively the public transport trains passing the station where one of the GDR-checking point is located, to check up unwanted foreigners. (To add: this explosion was to protest the US-attack at Tripoli in Libya.)

An imperialist propaganda strategy—creation of Rascism—aimed to consider every foreigner as a 'Terrorist' and so erecting separation between Germans and foreign people of West Berlin.

In the basic Law of the FRG ("GRUNDGESETZ") the article 16 is fixed, pronouncing "politically persecuted persons can enjoy asylum." Fixed after the experience of German Fascism.

The highest Administration Court concluded that torture in one's native country is no reason for asylum, if torture is a legal method of interro-

gation (concerning Turkey) The regimes of the FRG and persecutive countries cooperate intensively. The FRG prepares the deportation of Tamils to Ceylon, declaring that there exists terrorism in the North and East but being assured by the Ceylon government, that the south would be a safe area. There is also cooperation between the secret services, the Federal Office for acceptance of foreign refugees and Interpol. Asylum seeking details are transferred to the native countries secret services as well as there is co-operation in extradition. In 1983 Kemal Cemal Altun (a accepted refugee from Turkey) jumped out from the 5th floor window of a High Administration Court in fear of extradition to Turkey and died. Before he declared to his lawyer preferring to die this way than being murdered under torture in his country. Other methods force the persecuted to leave the FRG voluntarily. This treatment leads psychological destruction (becoming depressive and apathic by living in permanent insecurity without any perspective in that land where one looked for shelter) and physical destruction (deportation and death) The strategy of the imperialist circles aims always the same: Oppression and exploitation of the people.

It is necessary for the people to fight against Racism, Imperialism and Fascism.

MEDIA WORKSHOP ON CSD

Media can help create a demand for simple and affordable technologies which are the key elements of the global campaign on child survival and development. (CSD).

This was underscored in a five-day Media Workshop on Child Survival and Development held in Hong Kong recently under the sponsorship of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Press Foundation of Asia.

During the workshop, UNICEF officials and leading Asian paediatricians stressed the enormous potentials of these simple and cheap technologies in preventing death and illness among children.

The technologies include immunization, oral rehydration therapy, breastfeeding and growth monitoring.

Kunio Waki, deputy UNICEF regional director for East Asia and Pakistan, said some 15 million children all over the world die each year from the consequences of disease, poverty and malnutrition. Another 15 million are permanently disabled from the same causes.

However, while the technologies to prevent these tragedies exist, knowledge and demand for them are often lacking.

Tarzie Vittachi, UNICEF deputy executive director for external relations, New York, said people must

be informed and convinced of the benefits of these technologies and stimulated to demand for them.

Pointing out that the health and well-being of the child is the shared responsibility of families and communities, Dr. Nafsiah Mboi-Walinono, an Indonesian paediatrician, asked media's support in promoting widespread acceptance of child survival and development (CSD) initiatives.

She cited in particular the need to get mothers to accept the CSD initiatives. Dr. Mboi, head of the community health services division, Department of Health, Nusa Tenggara Timur, Indonesia, said doctors cannot do much for a child if mothers refuse to cooperate.

Howard Coats, editor of *Asia Magazine*, expressed the view that the media do not really need strategies to meet the call to support CSD activities.

What can be done, he said, is to create a growing awareness in the media about the significance of child survival and development. Journalists can pass on this awareness to the readers.

UNICEF, Mr. Coats said, can establish contact with media people and let them know what stories can be generated, provide them with background on activities, policies, programmes, etc.

The Hong Kong workshop was attended by media executives from Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, and Sri Lanka.

—(Pressasia)

The United National party in 1977 won the General Election with an unprecedented majority, routing the Opposition parties in the South and almost entirely eliminating Left party representation in Parliament. It was only the other day that the sole Left voice in Parliament, the voice from Kalawana, was stilled unexpectedly, by a cruel death.

With such a convincing victory and an abundant fund of goodwill, it was reasonable for any peace-loving, and law-abiding ordinary citizen to expect the Government after the initial excitement of the election triumph had quietened, to settle down to the sacred business of governing the country.

But what did we witness? The U. N. P. Government unleashed upon its defeated and demoralised political opponents a demonic onslaught, comprising a wide tangle of offences, which included mischief with fire, house-breaking, grievous hurt, rape and murder, and in many cases, these offences were committed by well-organised unlawful assemblies. Watching approvingly, these cruel and cowardly attacks, were the Police, who also served, by standing and waiting, readiness to give protection to the assailants if the unfortunate victims had dared to act lawfully, in defence of person and/or property. It is difficult for one to escape the conclusion that the Police had been, before hand, retained by the Government to watch the interests of the attackers. This brutal attack continued unabated for half a month or so. This was undisguised TERRORISM perpetrated by the Government, intended to terrorise the already humbled political opponents, especially the members and supporters of the S. L. F. P. Thus we note that in its very inauguration itself the Government sowed the wind of terrorism.

Then again in 1977 the Government used the U. N. P. mobs to launch terrorist attacks upon the Tamil minority community. Special treatment was meted out to the Tamil plantation workers of Indian origin, living mainly in the hill country. This attack was similar to the one earlier described. Once again crimes like house-breaking, arson, hurt, rape and murder were committed. This shameful attack was a sequel to the attitude of the T. U. L. F. to the Government's thinking on the Tamil Problem.

The Government soon crowned itself with a halo of infallibility and did not brook any type of criticism from any quarter of the community. Religious leaders, University professors, teachers and others were subject to physical assaults for any

valid criticism of the Government's behaviour. It was clear that the Government, Hitlerlike, had put on iron boots to trample upon the common people and rub their noses in the dust. Such was the authoritarian and repressive disposition of the "Dharmishta" Government.

Even after these crude wild adventures, the Government did not settle down to the serious business of ruling the people righteously. It soon

which we as Christians must endeavour to follow, whatever would be the consequences. One such tene is we ought to hunger and thirst after the Righteousness of our Lord. At the very first opportunity that was afforded me to make a public statement on my refusal to accept office under this Government, I, by the grace of God, stated.

"The appointments were not made by the Government in accordance

Government Terrorism and the Ethnic Problem

got busy to harass the leader of the S. L. F. P. (who publicly claimed that she had rejected an invitation by the then Prime Minister to join his U. N. P. Government). After much mud-slinging she and two others were deprived of their civic rights of course, recently restored, and in one notable case, posthumously.

The Government next turned its eyes in the direction of the Superior Courts. The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka was certified on the 31st of August 1978. The enormous provisions of Article 163 of the said Constitution incised and severed the very root of the inviolability of the enure of office of the Judges of Supreme Court and the High Court. In one stroke the Judges of these two Courts, from the Chief Justice to the last Judge of the High Court, during good behaviour, were summarily dismissed. When the appointments to the new Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal were made the Government disregarded questions of seniority and order of precedence. Several Judges of the former Supreme Court and High Court were not offered any judicial appointments. All this exercise was not merely an heinous crime committed against the Judges concerned, but was also a general attack upon the independence of the entire Judiciary. It was intended to Terrorize the judiciary as a whole and pack its higher echelons, with discriminatory appointments of Judges.

Two Judges of the former Supreme Court, declined to accept office as Judges of the Court of Appeal, one of whom is myself.

There are certain imperatives in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ

with the righteous laws of Jesus Christ. Who is the Source of all righteousness." (Sunday Times September 24th 1978)

During this critical period we heard only one voice of protest, coming out of Hulftsdorp. Where were the ex-Presidents of the Bar Council, the President and ex-Presidents of the Bar Association and the large majority of Queen's Counsel, some of whom a short time before were mouthing loudly, slogans like, "Judicial Independence", "Independence of the Judiciary", and "Let there be Justice" and such like? Sadly, they were only seen and not heard. The Christians should particularly note that the voice we heard was a voice in the

by

Malcolm Perera

wilderness, the voice of a prophet, and it was the voice of a Marxist the ever vigilant, historian, lawyer and politician, the former Minister for Constitutional Affairs in the earlier regime, the much loved and respected present leader of the L.S. S.P. He wrote a booklet with a title most devastating to the Government "Monkeying with the Judiciary" In four brief chapters he has said enough.

A more recent incident may be mentioned when certain "lewd fellows of the baser sort." from among the supporters of the Government travelled in C.T.B. buses up to the door-steps of the residences of some Judges of the Supreme Court and threatened the inmates and abused them in filthy language. The Judges concerned had made judicial order which was adver-

se to the Government. If this was not terrorism what is?

Reaping the Whirlwind

What a Government sows it reaps, sometimes tenfold, sometimes hundred fold. This is a Divine law. This Government sowed the wind of terrorism, and it is now reaping the whirlwind of an insurrection. An insurrection by the Tamil militants, who have launched their armed struggle for the establishment of an independent political state (Tamil Eelam), with a certain geographical area, with clear-cut boundaries precisely the Northern Province and the Eastern Province, which includes one of the finest natural harbours of the world, that of Trincomalee. This struggle is in the form of guerilla type warfare. The Government which had earlier battered its unarmed and helpless political opponents in the South, now believing that it could give similar treatment to the Tamil militants, began to flex its muscles and proudly and loudly announced, that if it was war that the separatists wanted war they can have. Soon, some of the Government's strongmen spokesmen began to go round the country, recounting their illustrious part in the boxing ring, while some others spoke of dropped catches at cricket practice. After this bragging campaign was over, the people soon learnt that the boxers were only clumsily beating the air, while the cricketers were pathetically letting off bokus to the delight of the militants. To recount one sad incident, at Anuradhapura, where innocent and devout silmathas were shot and killed at the foot of the Sri Maha Bodi, and the Bo Tree precincts sacred to the Buddhists the world, over was desecrated and damaged by the Tamil guerillas, for the sheer want of adequate security arrange-

ments. This was a scandalous dereliction of duty, by the Government, which had with meticulous care strengthened security arrangements at the residence of the President and his Cabinet Ministers. No proper atonement has been made by the Government for this grave lapse, not even an adequate public statement on the incident which hurt the feelings not only of the Sangha and the Buddhist people but also of the Christians, who love their Buddhist brethren.

Meanwhile policemen and security personnel untrained in guerilla warfare and with outdated arms, were sacrificing their lives in ill-matched battles. The Government soon woke up to the stark reality, that it was unprepared to fight the war of which it boastfully said to the Tamil militants "If you want war you can have war."

(Continued on page 10)

THE 'CROSS' QUESTIONS

The Catholic Bishops Conference of our country has hurriedly "disassociated" itself from the recent statements made by Bishop Deogupillai of Jaffna. But I am unable to disassociate myself from the Catholic Bishops Conference and the rest of that ecclesiastical coterie which comprises the Christian "leadership" in our country. I admit that when I first heard of this act of "disowning", my own selfish instincts and puritanical pride suggested I should wash my hands of this betrayal. But this is not possible. Humility and responsibility moves me to remain in my place within the institutional Church as a committed Church worker and Christian activist.

Hence, I have no option but to confess. As a person born into the social group practising the Christian religion, I have inherited this citadel of obscurantism, reification, superstition and repressive ideological manipulation which goes by the name of the "Church". Fortunately (for me), subsequent to a nominally Christian upbringing, my own deliberate, conscious acceptance of Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour has enabled me to make the necessary distinction between the mundane social apparatus that is the Established Church on the one hand and the creatively moving (not easily recognisable) Spirit that is the ecumenical Church on the other. Notwithstanding this discrimination, I still belong to the Established Church.

So I confess: I belong to a social apparatus in the religious sector which claims but only very rarely proclaims. The claim is to being 'Christian', and to being the 'Church'. But 'Christians' are supposedly people who "love one another" as the historical Jesus loved (Gospel of John 13:34-35 New English Bible): people who would powerfully serve others as Jesus served (John 13: 14, 15): people who at the first sight of corruption, exploitation or any other sinful inhumanity, respond with all the Creative force possible, just as Jesus acted (Mathew 21:12, 13/ Luke 11:37-46), even unto the Cross as the Christ risked death. The 'Church' as an institution would then supposedly use all its organisational power, its vast intellectual and material resources, and, its capacity for leadership, in taking this Christian Witness forward most effectively as one Body. Most importantly, according to its own claim, surely it would be the 'Church', more than anything or anybody else, which

would be most sensitive to injustice and suffering and, which would possess the most comprehensive and so phisticated vision of justice, fairplay, equality, democracy, sharing and all other expressions of Love.

If all these qualities were true of we who claim to be 'Christian' and the 'Church', then it should have been the 'Church' which was in the forefront of action in Sri Lanka in resolving the suffering of the exploited working masses and, in redressing the discrimination against minority ethnic groups by an ethnocentric State. Surely the 'Church' should have more just and democratic solutions to these sufferings than the extra-'Church' political parties which have squabbled over governing power in the past 35 years of 'independence'? Surely the 'Church' would have been proclaiming the Word in all these ways?

But what is the reality? How, in the past 35 years of independent Sri Lanka, have the more than one million 'Christians'—so highly organised in parishes, circuits, dioceses, denominations, congregations, seminaries, convents etc.—been acting? Which has

by

Lakshman Gunasekara

been the more general, predominant behaviour of 'Christians':

has it been mere ritualistic (performing the vital repressive function of mystification/obscurantism) practices: or,

has it been highly organised mass actions (as one Spiritual Body in eucharistic victory over human alienation) of Love in response to the suffering in our society?

I confess that the conventional religious practise of 'Christians' in Sri Lanka has been of the former kind and not of the latter kind.

Rather than being in the forefront of the struggle to restore citizenship to the Hill Country Tamils: rather than responding creatively to the gradual marginalization of the ethnic minorities by an increasingly Sinhala Buddhist dominated State: rather than prophesy against economic iniquity and exploitation: the 'Church' in Sri Lanka has largely indulged in the opium of "pilgrim-feasts" and "sacred ceremonies" and similar escapist mumbo-jumbo all of which are categorically "spurned" by the Creator-God who is more interested

in the wondrous creativity of human righteousness and Justice (Amos 5:21-27 New English Bible).

By President J. R. Jayewardene's own admission, politicians in both the leading political parties (beginning with SWRD Bandaranaike in 1926) have been aware of the need for constitutional arrangements to prevent the marginalisation and alienation of the ethnic minorities (President's statement to PPC 25-6-86). In 1977, the United National Party, quite unashamed about its prevarications in the entire post-Independence history, won a general election on a manifesto which recognized the "grievances" of the Tamil people and promised an all-party consultation to resolve the matter. However, for six years after 1977 the UNP government did not initiate such a process. Neither, of course, did the 'Church' do anything significant about the problem. In fact, it was only subsequent to the launching of a military struggle by the Tamil separatists that, in 1980/81, the government began to even talk about the need for a "political solution". This (in 1980/81) was after hundreds of people had been killed in anti-Tamil riots and scores more had been detained, tortured and killed

led in government suppression of Tamil dissent. Finally, of course, the holocaust of July 1983 had to take place before the UNP government reluctantly held an All-Party Conference. The APC failed because the UNP and SLFP as well as other opportunist elements in our political establishment gave more importance to their own power aspirations over justice. These prevarications, of course, are only possible on the basis of further repression and suffering (e.g. Anuradhapura massacre) and this is continuing today.

What has been the Church's Witness in this regard? Has the 'Church' demonstrated its divine inspiration by being in the forefront of the action in solidarity with the poor and oppressed; in witness against injustice and other evils? A survey of recent history shows us very clearly that the light of the Truth has not been shining brightly from within the 'Church'. Of course, the infrequent usually belated and non-committal pronouncements made on issues by the ecclesiastical coterie (including those statements drafted but not publicised) may fill a filing cabinet. But what else?

Due to the prevarications and machinations of the secular political leadership neither the oppression of ethnic minorities nor the oppression of socio-economic classes has been resolved and, consequently, thousands of people are being killed, tortured, detained and intimidated. The 'Church' is conscientious in patching up things after the destruction because that is the function of the established Church as a social apparatus complementing the political establishment of the ruling class. For the past 35 years the Sri Lankan 'Church' has stood by watching while refugees were created and people massacred and suppressed. In response the 'Church' has ostentatiously handed out "refugee relief", performed rituals for "peace" to ease the trauma of suffering and, furthermore, by means of religious propaganda distracted people away from aspirations to justice and a full life.

Even in this late post-1983 hour, the 'Church' has dutifully joined the Government's political negotiations circus in utter subservience to the forces of oppression. Why were the proposals submitted by the ecclesiastical coterie to the 'All-Party Conference' kept confidential? Was the 'Church' hierarchy afraid of its own religious constituency? Why was not the 'Church' delegation's proposals (even at that late hour) the product of a systematically and publicly discussed and, carefully considered strategy for Witness of the entire 'Christian' community? Why has not the 'Church' hierarchy even now used its powerful propaganda machinery (the pulpits, publications, etc.) to mobilize its constituency on its proposals for a solution? Why do the Sinhala and English language texts of the statement on the ethnic conflict issued recently by the Catholic Bishop's Conference differ in content? Buried amidst the religious rhetoric of the English language statement is at least a brief call for justice and equality for Sinhala and Tamil as State languages. However, the Sinhala language statement issued simultaneously, has no such call and is quite different in content being merely full of some pietistic 'prayer' rituals mechanically mouthing the need for "peace" and "repentance" but giving no guidance as to how the parishioners could repent and achieve peace. Obviously the 'Church' hierarchy is not serious enough about its proposals to want to mobilize its constituency into action.

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ON PLOT

The PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ORGANISATION OF TAMIL EELAM (PLOT) was formed to liberate the Tamil people. We want to give protection for the Tamils. We don't want minor hit-and-run operations. Our aim is to work among the masses at the village level. Our organisation has been working among the masses in the rural areas where we have to build up our base, which we feel is essential.

ON CHAUVINISM

Our struggle is against imperialism. We must identify the enemy

UMA MAHESWARAN SPEAKS

Some of the Tamil people think that they are heroes, born with swords, bows and arrows. If the majority take up arms we must be careful in defending the minorities and

Mr. K. Uma Maheswaran, Secretary-General of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOT) was among the participants of an open forum at the World University Centre in Madras recently.

PLOT had a set back in July this year when most of the Senior members from the Land committee decided to expel Mr. Uma Maheswaran and some of the central committee members. This led to a split in the movement and now there appears to be more than one PLOT in the scene.

This open forum was sponsored by the General Union of Youths and students (GUYS) and the Asian Students Association (ASA).

At the Forum, the LTTE was represented by Mr. V. Thilagar EROS was represented by Mr. V. Balakumar and Mr. E. Ratnasabapathy, and Mr. Selvam and Mr. Kirupa represented the TELO.

The answers and opinions of other leaders will appear in our next issue.

and we must educate the people. The enemy not only tries to divert our struggle but also tries to mobilise chauvinism on both sides. Killing innocent civilians also nurtures chauvinism on both sides. We do agree the present Government is chauvinist. Chauvinism cannot be defeated by chauvinism. Fascism cannot be defeated by fascism.

We must be more careful than the Sinhalese. We should not allow our people to be fried in a chauvinist pan.

ON 'NORTH - SOUTH' DIALOGUE

We should be able to mobilise the working class in the South.

we must enlist the support of all the anti-imperialist forces and the progressive forces in the South.

First of all, I want to make it clear that we could not go and mobilise some other nation. We must give a chance to the Sinhalese working class to mobilise them. Revolution cannot be exported. It is the duty of the Sinhalese working class to mobilise themselves. But in Sri Lanka the working class has been diverted against the Tamils by the ruling class for the purpose of their class interests. Immediately after in-

dependence they have deprived the rights of the plantation workers by disenfranchising them. Not because they are Tamils but they are workers and they would be the vanguard for the revolution. The first step against this was not properly taken up by the leftists. They know the Tamils were the Trump Card. A Chauvinist card indeed. It is our duty to explain to the Sinhala working class how they had been misguided.

ON IDEOLOGY

Our ideology is based on Marxism-Leninism and our strategy differs from the other groups just because the arm struggle doesn't mean taking up a few arms, going around police stations and army camps and letting off "fire-works". There is no need to adopt the Soviet, Chinese or Cuban model of revolution in Tamil Eelam.

Of course, we have to read and learn the experiences of others. We must mobilise and educate the people and they should know who is the enemy.

unite with those who fight the ordinary Sinhalese people.

ON INDIA AND TAMIL NADU

Regarding Tamil Nadu and India I want to say something. Our struggle is against imperialism. We do need certain help from the Government of India and Tamil Nadu. That does not mean that we fully depend on the Indian Government.

ON WOMEN'S QUESTION

We accept that in our liberation struggle women also should have equal participation. In fact, they have equal participation. We have a women's organisation with a programme that has been incorporated into the general programme of the struggle.

ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT

First of all, we don't think that there would be a negotiated settlement under this capitalist set-up. We have had several talks; several pacts had been signed, which were thrown away. Everytime we go for the negotiations only to become the losers.

ON PLANTATION TAMILS

The up-country Tamils are the well-organised working class. They have well-organised trade unions, un-

by a Special Correspondent
in Madras

ON UNITY

We have been trying to bring out a United Front for three or four years. For the sake of our people and for the betterment of our land we all should unite and draw up a minimum working programme and continue the struggle. But we can't

like the working class in the North and East. What we say is the plantation Tamils must be politicalised correctly. They have to identify the enemy. Who are we to go and organise them? All that we can give them is political education and support by every means for their upliftment.

Cruelty and Gentleness

RAN, a film written and directed by Akira Kurosawa.

For Sri Lankans, Akira Kurosawa's Ran will be a deeply moving experience. Ran is very Buddhist film. It preaches the values of love, detachment and non-violence by over-exposing the viewer to greed, lust and brutality. At the end, a torn picture of the Buddha falls from the hands of a blind prince and is blown away by the wind.

I saw Ran in New York City at the corner of 69th and Broadway. Across the street, on top of another theatre was a larger than life poster of Sylvester Stallone as The Cobra. A cigarette hangs out from the corner of his mouth, his exposed biceps are tattooed, and he holds a chain in one hand a revolver in the other.

Dark sunglasses cover his eyes, and black boots with spurs grow out of his skintight jeans. Crowds queued and chattered excitedly in front of The Cobra: only a handful crossed the street to see Ran.

Western critics have all pointed to the fact that Ran is really Kuro-

For me, the Shakespearean connection was perhaps that most insignificant aspect of the film. Here, instead, was the portrayal of a classical Asian dichotomy: the brutality of Asian politics unrestrained by the gentle metaphysics of Asian religions. And yet, Akira Kurosawa cannot be possessed by any one culture. He combines the wealth of world civilisation to tell a tale of human suffering and pain. The details of

by

Radhika Coomaraswamy

sawa's adaptation of Shakespeare's King Lear. His Throne of Blood, made in the 1960s and based on Macbeth, was also a memorable experience. By emphasising this link, Kurosawa becomes understandable to Western audiences. The themes show relevance and the personalities are recognisable, even though transformed by culture.

the Japanese countryside do not lead to a parochial value. His is a universal vision about human condition and human destiny. "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods, They kill us for their sport," says Gloucester in King Lear. In Ran the words are spoken by Hidetora's jester in a heartfelt appeal to the Japanese pantheon.

Ran is set in the period of Japanese history when samurai clans, engaging in fratricidal battles, killed thousands and ravaged the Japanese country side. Hidetora, a cruel but powerful lord, having extended his rule to cover vast areas, divides the kingdom among his three sons. Though in his politics the cruel lord never trusted a single friend, his love for his sons compels him to believe that they would rule as a collective, ignore their differences and not betray each other. The first two sons accept his suggestion with a false sense of deference, but the third, Saburo, does not. He calls his father an old fool, and reminds him that the king and the samurai have taught the values of greed, lust and power, and only a senile man would expect his mortal sons to rise above such a reality and become saints. Saburo is banished for his truthfulness, and only returns to save his father from the ruthlessness of his brothers.

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JAFFNA: Past and Present

— A REVIEW

(Continued from last issue)

This is the text of the Pavalar Thuraiappapillai Memorial lecture given at Mahajana College, Tellippalai on 24th June. This lecture is a review of Pavalar's Article, —JAFFNA: PAST AND PRESENT — By Prof. A. Veluppillai

It is quite possible that the earliest Tamil rulers of Jaffna were Murkuka chiefs. They belonged to the fishermen caste of north Kerala which was originally a portion of the Tamil Chera Kingdom. In his book, *Tamil Culture in Ceylon*, M. D. Raghavan has pointed to the immense influence of Kerala in the Jaffna Tamil Culture. In his unpublished paper entitled "*Commonness Between Malayalam and Jaffna Dialect*" presented to the First World Conference of Malayalam and Kerala Culture, Veluppillai has shown that the closest similarity for Jaffna Tamil is with the northern-most regional variety of Malayalam. The names of Murkuka chiefs like Vediaracan, Vilankudevan and Viranaranan, found recorded in Kovalanar Katai / Kannaki Valakkurai, were probably historical figures who dominated parts of Jaffna, maybe many hundreds or even thousands of years ago.

Pavalar refers to the oppression of Jaffna Tamils by the Sinhalese twice. The first oppression is said to be in the legendary past, immediately after the death of Yalpadi. The majority of the Tamils are said to have left Jaffna. History seems to be repeating itself even now. Nearly one hundred thousand Tamils have gone to Tamilnadu as refugees. About fifty thousand have gone as refugees to countries in Western Europe. Many thousands still look for an opportunity to escape to Australia and other countries but those countries are reluctant to accommodate the refugees. The suffering of the Jaffna Tamils under the Sinhalese for seventeen years have not been properly recorded. From corroborative evidence of other sources, it is now established that what happened in about 1450 A.D. was an invasion of the Jaffna kingdom, led by Sapumal Kumarayya and organised by Parakramabahu VI, king of Kotte. Between 1250 A.D. and 1815 A.D., this seems to be the only period when the whole of Sri Lanka was united under one ruler. But the references to oppression by the Sinhalese during this period might have no foundation in fact. Even though

Parakramabahu came in the line of Sinhalese kings, the Tamil influence in his court seemed to have reached an all-time high. His only daughter had the Tamil name Ulakudiyal and her husband too had a Tamil name. Even Sapumal Kumarayya is a Sinhalesized form of Sempakapperumal who was said to be of Kerala extraction. So just as Mahavamsa and other chronicles of the Sinhalese have painted dark pictures of some Tamil rulers in Sinhalese areas, Yalpana Vaipava Malai too has painted a dark picture of Sinhalese overlordship in Jaffna.

Pavalar has correctly observed that the Vellala elite in Jaffna admires the past mainly with the boast of the purity and highness of certain families which are said to have come from South India. These families are said to have come on the invitation of king Singai Arayan. In another context, Pavalar states that these families came about 650 years ago. It is not known how he arrives at the date but this calculation will refer back to the thirteenth century which is now acknowledged to have seen the beginnings of the Jaffna Kingdom. It is quite possible that leading families in South India emigrated to the Jaffna Kingdom in the fourteenth century. That century was a dark age in the history of Tamilnadu. After heavy destruction suffered at the hands of Muslim invaders, the Sultanate of Madura came into being when persecution of the Hindus occurred. When the Muslim rule was replaced by that of Vijayanagar, there was large scale migration from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh and again, the Tamils suffered. It is quite possible that during that confused period, the leaders of the Tamil elite emigrated to the Jaffna Kingdom of the Tamils. But Pavalar rightly points out the need for the Jaffna man's patriotism in a broader sense to suit the modern concept of nationalism.

Pavalar has some interesting views on the physical condition of the people of Jaffna.

1. In times gone by, even so recently as but 50 or 60 years ago Jaffna seems to have been peopled by an entirely different class of human beings. The extra-ordinary physical strength of our fore-fathers, the invariable longevity they attained, the paucity and mildness of the diseases to which they were subject,....., the health, strength

and vitality of our ancestors appear incredible..... The son is of a weaker build than the other, and of a much weaker constitution than the grandfather, and this sad process of physical deterioration has been going on.....

2. Their inherited vitality, their hardy and constant physical exercise, which a sterile soil compelled them to take for wringing out their uncertain crops from it, their simple habits and freedom from many vices prevailing now, gave them the strong bodies and excellent health which were their heritage.

3. When our people are abandoning their simple habits for the luxurious ones of the West,..... when Kurakkan and Varaku and Odiyal and their appendages are spoken of with contempt.....when the costly wines and spirituous liquors of the West have come to reinforce the native toddy and arrack of our country, when agriculture is considered an undignified work....

4. Our women in olden times whether of the higher or lower classes not only took an active part in all household duties, but also helped their husbands in the farming operations, and the work they had to do gave them plenty of physical exercise which made them strong and healthy mothers of strong and healthy children.

5. Partly by the severe strain of studies, in which it is folly for us girls to endeavour to be fully equal to men,.....partly also by want of regular and adequate physical exercise... they came out...utterly unfit as far as their physical powers are concerned to be wives and mothers.

6.the white man.....always adjusts his diet to the needs of his system and never fails to take regular bodily exercise...

7. A society for the promotion of physical culture should be started without any further loss of time. The Department of public Instruction has an excellent channel here along which to direct its energies.

These thoughts of Pavalar can be passed on without much comment. The situation has not changed considerably since his time. The reviewer of this paper has across most of the above views from other sources too. Though there seems to be some truth in the gradual weakening of the race, it should not be assumed that the earlier generations were always much better off. This view of Pavalar

might owe something to the "golden age in the past mentality". Anyway, an organised attempt to promote physical culture among Tamils is very desirable.

Pavalar then turns to the matter of intellectual culture.

1. But the education of the present day in spite of the multiplicity of schools, multiplicity of schoolmasters, multiplicity of rules and regulations and all the other paraphernalia of an ever improved and ever faulty system of education does not produce minds which can be called truly educated and enlarged.

Now, the one predominant feature is cram, cram, cram.

3. Our boys are not taught the studies to which they show a predilection or the trades for which they have a natural taste. Many of our educational institutions are mere trading shops where students are taught the art of passing examinations.

4.when after nearly a century of English education, there is not among us a great thinker, a great author, a great poet, a great orator a great painter, a great artist or a great musician.

The views of Pavalar remain appropriate even to the present day. There is a change in the medium of education to Tamil but otherwise the picture remains the same. Because of educated people unable to find suitable employment, the youth of Jaffna wants to pursue professional courses. In order to facilitate selection for professional courses, hundreds of tuition centres have mushroomed throughout Jaffna to facilitate students passing examination with high aggregates of marks. Since 1970 Sri Lanka governments use some device or other to restrict the selection of Jaffna Tamils for professional courses. The frustration of the Tamil Youth is one of the contributory causes for the present unrest in the country.

Pavalar had some views on female education.

1. Our literature gives abundant proof of the high state of intellectual refinement which Hindu Ladies rejoiced in, in olden times. Avvai, the famous Tamil poetess, a pure Tamil, whose name is a household word in the Tamil world, whose poetical works have deservedly earned the highest encomiums from even European savants,..... But I have never heard of a poetess in any of the many

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JAFFNA: PAST AND PRESENT

(Continued from page 7)

European countries who can equal our glorious Tamil poetess.....

2. There are among us vociferous advocates of indiscriminate female education, who demand that our girls should receive an intellectual training equal in every respect to that given to our boys. I do not know whether it would be beneficial to our girls to weaken their systems.

3. I am of opinion that all that our girls require is a sound education in Tamil and English literature, with a good knowledge of Sanskrit, House-keeping, Elementary Mathematics, Elementary Science, Needlework Music and Home Medicine. We must all endeavour to make our girls become ideal mothers....

What Pavalar says about keeping our women soft and fit need some consideration, but his ideas about having a separate course for female education are not relevant to the present situation. Females have gone headlong into the education which

The 'Cross'.....

(Continued from page 5)

I thank the Lord that at least other people, belonging to the wider ecumenical Church, are doing something to "pursue justice and champion the oppressed" (Isaiah 1:17). Here I am referring to the 'Lamb' or the vulnerable but courageous prophetic community which is deeply rooted in the 'hapiru' (the masses of oppressed people).

So very categorically I must confess that compared with what it can and should do (according to its own claims), the established Church has done **virtually nothing**. Therefore, there is blood on my hands and I sob with shame and fear of retribution, for I hear the Lord's anger.

The Bishop of Jaffna cries out desperately against the massacre of innocent civilians (of course, having done little previously to prevent such death). But the overall 'Church' hierarchy merely tries to make technical distinctions about appeals to the United Nations. If, as the Bishops' Conference response to Bishop Deogupillai implies, the official guardians of Law and Order have massacred innocent civilians, why is not the 'Church' leadership risking death to protest and resist such barbarism? We claim to be 'Christain' but we do not **proclaim**. Such is the denial; such is the betrayal.

My fervent prayer is: let us humble ourselves, let us strive to know the Lord, whose justice dawns like the morning light, and its dawning is as sure as the rising sun. For the Lord says "Hear this, you priests, and listen, all Israel; let the royal house mark my words. Sentence is passed on you.....Turn, turn from your offences, or your iniquity will be your downfall" (Hosea 5:1; Ezekiel 18:30:).

was earlier thought to be appropriate for males only. In fact, males find it difficult to compete with the females in the schools and Universities today. For example, there is a clear majority of women students over men students in the University of Jaffna. But the views of Pavalar find an echo in **Pennin Perumai** of V. Kalyanasundaramudaliyar who was a later contemporary of the author.

The author also points out a serious defect in traditional Tamil scholarship.

1. Rejoicing in such high sounding names as Pulavar, Panditar, Vittuvan, Vittuvasiromani, etc., and professing to possess a sound knowledge of our mother tongue, they seldom show any originality in their works in and for Tamil.

2. The utmost they attempt is writing of notes to portions of the Mahabharata, or to Ramayana or to one or other of the many puranams, or the composing of Antati, Kummi. Tamil educated men must write original works in Tamil.

3. The Tamil prose is poor in works, and our Tamil scholars will confer a lasting benefit on the Tamil Language, if they remedy the defect by writing prose works in Tamil..... I think an influential association with the avowed object of encouraging local talent as shown in original works in Tamil will accomplish much.

The defect has continued upto the present day. The curriculum for studies in traditional Tamil scholarship has been modelled on Sanskrit, a classical language. The curriculum for a living language has to be different from the curriculum of a classical language. Since Pavalar's times, Tamil prose has made tremendous progress. The language or for that matter even prose, cannot be developed in a vacuum. Since Tamil is a national language both in India and Sri Lanka, and an official language in Tamilnadu and Singapore, Tamil is being used for various purposes which results in the development of the language. The Sri Lanka government instituted prizes for standard original works in Tamil. From 1965 to 1977, prizes for original works were awarded regularly. After 1977, Tamil books are given awards only occasionally. Due to various factors including rising costs of production of Tamil books in Sri Lanka has come down to an alarming extent. Authors of Tamil books in Sri Lanka usually arrange to have their books published in Tamilnadu. If India were to loosen its restrictions on the import of Tamil books from Sri Lanka, the situation may improve. Further, as in

Tamilnadu, the government here can purchase a few hundred copies of each publication for distribution to libraries in our country. This policy will encourage authors and publishers of Tamil books in Sri Lanka. The Government also should award annual prizes regularly.

The author has also called for modernisation of agriculture and industrialisation of Jaffna.

1. The industries of Jaffna when compared with those of the past have made very little progress. The enterprising spirit of our people has carried our young men to various quarters of the world undreamt of by our forefathers, but our industries have not progressed.

2. But our farmers preferred to stick to their own primitive methods of irrigation. The same conservatism characterises our People in all other industries... as years roll on, the number of educated young men increases at an alarming rate, and our country will soon be full of young men all eager to enter Government service.... the salvation of our young men cannot any longer be in the straits settlements but in our own farms and factories.

3. It may look impossible for any single wealthy man of Jaffna to start any industrial enterprise; but if all Jaffnese join with a full heart, factories for the making of several things can be started.

Pavalar's dream of industrialisation of Jaffna had not been fulfilled. Growing number of youth were knocking on the door of government jobs. The Sri Lanka government dominated by the majority community began to restrict more and more government jobs for the Tamils. This is another cause for the present unrest in the country. If Jaffna were industrialised, the Tamils need not have gone in large numbers to the South to look for employment. The major political parties need not have taken to communal politics and the history of our island might have taken a different turn.

The author also speaks of Tamil youth going to various quarters of the world. The reviewer doesn't think that Pavalar could have envisaged the present situation where the flower of Sri Lanka Tamil youth has been dispersed in all the open spaces of the earth. Let us all hope that this is only a temporary situation and vast majority of Sri Lanka Tamil Youth can come back to their homeland to live with honour and dignity. Let the Tamil youth make use of their enforced stay abroad to learn new talents and new technology so

that on their return, their mother land can rise up again with new vigour and vitality.

Let us now turn finally to the authors views on social reform.

1. The Tamils.. the customs and manners of our forefathers were essentially Hindu. These being influenced by successive conquests of the country by the Europeans and also by the contact and colmingling with the Sinhalese people have lost much of their pristine purity and been changed or modified according to circumstances.

2. Instead of common names of Velu, Murugar, Kantar, Ayampillai, etc., he will hear at every turn strange names in Tamil or even names utterly foreign to him like Spencer and Huntingdon, and underwood and Carrol...foreign language... the most puzzling variety in the matter of costume... many dissimilarities and modifications in the manners.

3. I wish (to condemn) in the strongest terms the indiscriminate giving up of many of our excellent national customs and manners, and the blind imitation of everything European. For example, the custom of taking a bath... after attending a funeral is a very good social custom, founded on purely sanitary laws.

4. Our young men and women should be taught to take a noble pride in those of their countries social customs which are really good, instead of running mad after everything European, instead of earning for themselves the utterly undeserved opprobrium of being the descendants of a barbarous race of people.

5. ...Social Reform Society is a great desideratum in Jaffna.... Social reform, to be successful, should be based on the broad lines of nationality, and the element of religion should be strictly excluded.

Pavalar was first and foremost a social reformer. His focus on social reform will be quite apparent from the above quotations. He viewed the Tamil nation as a distinct one and so he wanted social reform applicable to the entire community, without being confined to followers of any one religion. Complete denationalisation in favour of Europeanisation does not enhance one's respect even by Europeans. Pavalar had rightly observed that the Europeans had only contempt for the ancestors of such people. He wanted to have inspiration of the past to model the future. Thuraiappapillai wanted to blend the best of the past and the present to plan for the future. Most probably, his views did not find favour in the environment of the mission school at Tellippalai.

Pavalar T. A. Thuraiappapillai was undoubtedly a great 'Jaffnese'. His views have much relevance even for today. The reviewer feels privileged to have been able to quote and comment on one of his most important writings.

THORN IN THE SIDE OF DRUG MNCs

It is four years since Bangladesh introduced its essential drugs policy. However, as M. Iqbal Asaria reports, while progress to date is encouraging opposition is mounting, not least from people related to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the architect of the idea.

Ever since the creation of Bangladesh, a concerned group of doctors and teachers of medicine had started active work on the problems of providing an adequate health-care system for the people. In broad outline, they argued that resources had to be shifted from curative to preventive medicine in the long term.

Pending that, they argued the manufacture, distribution, marketing and utilisation of drugs in the country needed to be examined with a view to rationalising the drug policy of the country.

The appointment of a committee by the World Health Organisation following the declaration of Alma-Ata in 1977 and the publishing of its findings, together with the *Essential Drugs List*—were just the kind of initiative the group was looking for.

Thus by the time General Ershad came to power in Bangladesh in 1981, the group had already done a considerable amount of work on a rational drug policy for the country.

Members of the group realised that a change of government provided one of those rare occasions to catch the established bureaucracy and vested interests off guard. An approach was made to General Ershad and the basic elements of the WHO doctrine on essential drugs outlined. The General expressed great enthusiasm, but in true military fashion demanded a report in a matter of days.

The eight-member committee of experts commissioned on 28th April 1982 had doctors who had participated in the advanced preparatory work, and thus was able to submit its findings by 12th May 1982 (14 days later).

Later, this short duration between the commissioning and submission of the Experts Committee's findings would become one of the main planks of a smear campaign against the drug policy of the country.

As soon as the intention of the government was announced, the drugs lobby and their associated interests began to stir. It is learnt from reliable sources, that even the US ambassador called in to see General Ershad at short notice. She tried to persuade him to postpone the implementation of the policy until he had a chance to discuss the matters further during his forthcoming visit to America.

But the members of the Experts Committee had got their act together, and pushed for the General to sign the bill promulgating the policy before his departure for the US.

Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury, a member of the Experts Committee, said that at a key point the use of mexasform was being discussed. The General pointed out that he himself was using the drug. Noticing his newly made spectacles, Dr. Chowdhury pointed out that one of the side-effects of mexasform was poor eyesight. That clinched the argument.

by

M. Iqbal Asaria

General Ershad signed the ordinance before his departure for the US and the Bangladesh Drug policy was born.

The Bangladesh Drug Policy was not particularly ambitious in its scope. The WHO in its *Essential Drugs List* maintains that some 250 drugs are sufficient to meet a majority of the needs of developing countries. Before the introduction of the new policy some 4,500 drugs were marketed in Bangladesh. The Committee recommended that 1,700 of these were useless or harmful and should be banned. Thus after the policy was introduced, a total of 2,500 drugs were still marketed. Whilst this is ten times the WHO list, it is minuscule compared with the over 65,000 drugs marketed in neighbouring India.

The more relevant part of the new drug policy was in its attempt to alter the nature of the drug industry in Bangladesh. The market was characterised by the production of drugs which were banned in many developed countries; by over-emphasis on the production of vitamins/tonics which had high added value and less on antibiotics; and by careful parcelling of the market between leading companies who rarely produced more than one antibiotic. Thus 84% of the market was controlled

by eight leading multinationals, the balance by local companies.

The new policy contained the following major provisions:

0 Companies were allowed to make only single-ingredient products (except in exceptional cases). This made monitoring easier.

0 Companies were required to have a manufacturing base in Bangladesh.

0 The number of liquid preparations was cut down. These were found to be more expensive, less effective, and not suited to the environmental conditions.

0 No multinational company was allowed to manufacture vitamins/tonics or antacids. These were left for the local companies.

0 Banned drugs were required to be destroyed and not rechannelled to other Third World markets.

Three years on, the effect was dramatic. The total drug market had

astically promoted the whole idea got cold feet very early on and its Director General, Dr. Hafdan Mahler gave only belated and luke-warm support.

Then in 1985 the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association, the apex organisation of drug multinationals world-wide, recruited a Sri Lankan lawyer to write a book attacking the policy.

D. C. Jayasuriya uses his former WHO consultancy status to give this sponsored study, 'The Public Health and Economic Dimensions of the New Drug Policy of Bangladesh', an air of legitimacy.

The document is now being passed about as a WHO document on the Bangladesh drug policy and copies of it have been posted to the personal addresses of drug controllers health ministers and other influential administrators in all Third World countries.

In April 1986, the Third World Network based in Penang, Malaysia, sent a letter to Dr. Mahler, warning him of the drug industry's campaign to discredit Bangladesh's new drug policy. It urged the WHO to distance itself from the Jayasuriya study and conduct its own independent evaluation of the Bangladesh drug policy.

The Network also called on governments in Third World countries to be cautious about accepting the Jayasuriya study and other biased propaganda which the drug industry may put out against the Bangladesh drug policy.

'The requisition of a Third World individual to attack a socially useful policy in another Third World country, at the obvious behest of the drug MNCs, is deeply disturbing,' said the Network.

The Bangladesh drug policy is not perfect. There are administrative and infra-structure problems as well as smuggling of banned drugs from India. But it is a bold start on the part of a poor Third World country with major health problems.

And it is catching on. Dr. Zafrullah Chowdhury was called to see Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi recently to give advice on India's attempt, to formulate a rational drug policy.

—Third World Network Features

Opposition was not long in coming. The WHO, which had so enthusi-

The Sunday Observer of 22nd June 1986 had this news item in its front page:

Terrorist Revenge

"Terrorists shot dead an Indian Christian Brother close to Atchuvally church on Friday, security forces said. They said it was believed that the person identified as Brother M. Wenceslaus was suspected by the LTTE of giving information to the forces."

The Sinhala media would have given as much coverage to this garbled version of events taking place in Jaffna. All Jaffna knows that the murder of this Catholic clergyman was perpetrated by the security

WHO SELLS LIES?

with no pretensions to the morality of means or ends. Truth, of course, is the hapless victim of this organised pattern of misreporting with a sinister purpose. But the harm done by the government media to the fabric of Sri Lankan Society, to which the government is equally privy to, is as great as the havoc wrought by the militants as well as the storm troopers to life, limb and property in the country.

V. A. Philipupillai

A great wall of silence, suspicion and mistrust has been erected by the government media between the people of the North and the South with the obvious intention of keeping the people in the South unaware of the intimidatory tactics adopted by the government's confrontational approach to the ethnic problem in its enforcement of the notorious repressive PTA laws. The people in the South have consistently been given a distorted picture of events in Jaffna or a complete news blackout has been scrupulously obser-

ved when the culprits behind the unseemly events happened to be the state security forces. For instance the burning of the Jaffna Public Library and the sacking of the city of Jaffna in June 1981 or the complete burning to ashes in April 1984 of the only decent supermarket store in Jaffna, situated opposite the Jaffna Hospital and owned by the Jaffna Co-operative Stores Ltd., a private limited liability company, were never mentioned by the Colombo based media. Such events are swept under the carpet, as it were, for such startling disclosures would perhaps embarrass the government not a little, since it depends on foreign aid for its sustenance.

The news reports of events in the North and East are turned and twisted to suit the government policy of all out confrontation in the North and to create the climate of war hysteria in the South in a mighty effort to obscure the many pressing economic problems dogging

the common people who cannot aspire to be super rich to make the most of the market economy. On the other hand, under the benign PTA and Emergency laws, the Tamil people virtually live under a team of suspended life or death sentence. The uniformed thug parading as Home Guards is the judge, juror and executioner, all in one, of any peace-loving citizen in the North and East with no questions asked and with no right of appeal against his erratic judgement. The so-called "search and destroy" operation of the security forces is only an euphemism or cover-up of the government's determination to exterminate the Tamil youth for having dared to challenge the government's discriminatory and intimidatory policies ever since it came to power. It is martial law for the Tamil people in the North and East and parliamentary democracy for the rest of the country.

(Continued on page 11)

by

forces on 20th June in the premises of the Tholagatty Monastery.

It was a case of cold-blooded murder by the security forces," was SATURDAY REVIEW'S comment on the incident and it quoted excerpts from the evidence led at the inquest in its issue of 28th June.

However, all the people in the South of the country including the Catholics there are blatantly told that this outrageous murder was committed by the Tamil militants

Government,

(Continued from page 4)

Smarting under the severe onslaught of the militants the Government was running in all directions, like a man who had fallen into a grove of kahambiliya looking for help. Under the effects of this kahambiliya syndrome, it despatched emissaries in all directions seeking help. Some went to Washington D. C. and London, others to Paris and Bonn, still others to Beijing and Tokyo, while yet some others to New Delhi, Islamabad and Dacca, and where not? Unlike in 1971, when the then government received help and assistance, from many bigger nations, the present Government does not receive aid or supply of arms from the Western Nations to fight the separatists. The U.S.A. has cut our aid in half. Does it buy any tea from us now? The Government must take full credit for this situation.

The Government which had its cock-eyed glance Westwards all these years, now appears to look towards the Eastern part of Europe. It has been announced that the President is due to leave for Moscow to have talks with the leaders of the U. S. S. R.

Govt's Credibility

The Government has a serious problem. Its statements on the

ethnic issue are not convincing to many in Sri Lanka and disbelieved by more abroad. The Government has lost its credibility.

Further, thousands of working people, whom it has harassed in its mad career of repression and authoritarian rule, are skeptical of its good intentions to settle the Tamil Problem. These workers will no doubt influence the leadership of their political parties.

The Christian community of Sri Lanka, though small in numbers, is pretty influential here and in Councils abroad. This community does not look at the Tamil problem from a narrow racist angle. It has always stood for a fair and negotiated political settlement. It has always offered to the Government the right hand of co-operation to work out such a solution. But a good many Christians ask the question, "Does the Government want truly, a negotiated settlement, acceptable to both sides?"

It is most unfortunate that the Government, by its misanthropic behaviour has succeeded in alienating the S. L. F. P., the major, opposition political party in the South, having its base mainly in the Buddhist Sinhala rural masses, who in particular situations are not altogether insusceptible to take a Sinhala racist line. If such a situation does arise it would not be conducive to arrive at an equitable solution. The S. L.

F. P. has announced that it will not participate in the Political Parties Conference on the 24th of June. A question arises: can the Government which cannot persuade the S. L. F. P. to attend the P. P. C. be capable of persuading the separatists to accept its proposals even with modifications?

A news item in one of the daily papers says that the M. E. P. will not attend the P. P. C.

The T. U. L. F. also has decided not to attend the P. P. C. According to news reports the All Ceylon Tamil Congress will attend. We are glad to note that the Government has invited the N. S. S. P. Why has the Government which has invited the T. U. L. F. not invited the J. V. P? What is the Government's problem?

It is quite clear that in the present circumstances, the Government, cannot by itself convince the separatists to accept any proposals it makes, unless India endorses them and persuades the militants to accept them. Such is the plight of Sri Lanka under this Government. How long India can endure Sri Lanka Government's vacillation one cannot tell. The Tamil problem has spilt over to India and has created refugee problems there. The Tamil nadu politicians are getting impatient. The Sri Lanka Government must act swiftly and wisely, shedding its Machiavellian scruples and obstinacy.

We respectfully submit that the Government be pleased consider taking the following measures:

- (1) Adequate steps to regain its lost credibility on the Tamil problem.
- (2) To create a conciliatory atmosphere among the sections of the community, from whom it has alienated itself.
- (3) Reconcile with the large mass of workers who it has antagonized by giving reasonable redress to their grievances.
- (4) Take early steps to settle differences with political parties like the S. L. F. P. and the J. V. P.
- (5) Act expeditiously to repeal the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution.
- (6) Desist from indiscriminately sending on leave Tamil employees in the public sector.
- (7) Ensure the cessation of Hostilities. We believe that no two contending parties can discuss peace terms with loaded guns in their hands. Mutual trust is the starting point of negotiation for a peaceful solution.

It would be helpful to us all to meditate on the following passage of Scripture from the Holy Bible:

Whom the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice:

But when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn"

(Proverbs 29.2KJV) Are the people of Sri Lanka rejoicing? or are they today mourning?

(Courtesy "Christian Worker")

WHITE DESPAIR GROWS

"1986 will see the independence of Namibia", pledged President S. Nujoma of Namibia's liberation movement, SWAPO. South African President P. W. Botha declared before parliament that the 1st of August 1986 could be the starting date of a pull out of South African troops from Namibia and for implementing the transition to independence. But President Botha's "offer" has a cynical historical background to it in the creation of the South Africa dependent Territorial Defence Force, the Police and special killing unit (Koevoet), and the infamous Cuban linkage (withdrawal of Cuban troops from neighbouring Angola), while President Nujoma's promise is based on Namibia's united majority struggling against continuing occupation and oppression.

Statistics released by the South African created National Assembly in Windhoek speak of a population increase of one third by the year 2000, bringing Namibia's population to about two million, almost double the amount of 15 years ago! Of the two million Namibians in that year, only 50,000 will be white. More importantly, 50% of the population will be younger than 30, meaning that the employment problem will be almost unsolvable by traditional means. Furthermore, mounting evidence of over-exploitation and plundering of Namibia's mineral riches and fishing resources in the present colo-

nial context, take on catastrophic dimensions for the country's future.

South Africa is stepping up its propaganda machine in order to sell its Namibia "solution" both to the international community and to the Namibian population itself. For the outside world Pretoria conjured up a coordinator in Sean Cleary, a former employee of the South African Foreign Affairs Department and one time military attache in Washington. He heads the Windhoek-based "Transcontinental Consultancy" and controls the propaganda network in Western Europe, which consists of "Strategy Network International" with a Namibia Office in London; Namibia Information Office in Born; "L'Association des amis du Sud Ouest Africain in Paris"; the legal firm Shipley and Smoak in Washington.

Within Namibia, the "hearts and minds operation" organised in two movements called "The Sun" (Etango and Ezuva) tries to ensnare the minds of some people, unknowing of what is going on in the country, on their doorsteps, or even within their homesteads thanks to these same troops: banditry, ransacking, destruction, arson, assault, arbitrary detentions the most cruel torture imaginable, rape, killing of civilians, assassination of detainees.

The population rejects these vulgar propaganda tricks with mockery and indignation. For them the soldiers are "omkakunya", bone pickers, parasites, absolutely rejected and despised beings.

Recently, Mr. Kalangula, prime minister of the bantu homeland Owambo, revealed that behind these two pseudo-cultural propaganda organisations, "Etango" and "Ezuva" stands a member of the Afrikaner Broederbond. This is quite understandable. "The Sun" has been created to instill into the northern Namibian population tribal pride and Christian nationalism, the two essential ingredients of the white Afrikaner national brewery.

But Namibians do not drink this sort of beer. They see what is being perpetrated. A highranking churchman in northern Namibia reports: "We live through a terrible escalation

of violence, a policy of irrationality. In the statistics of Pretoria, every massacred person counts as a "SWAPO Terrorist", even a one year old child. Assassinated-terrorists are being dragged by South African military vehicles through the villages. The South African Soldiers shoot like mad again and again into the dead bodies. And our people look at the faces of those assassinated, to see whether they are their sons, brothers, husbands. In the church-run high school of Osdigambo, soldiers ordered the pupils to assemble on the sports field. There they showed them the dead bodies of SWAPO soldiers hung up on an army truck. Some time ago a dead SWAPO man was shown off through the Rundu hospital, in each room and ward for the sick, in order to convince everybody that resistance to South Africa is senseless".

But resistance grows. And the white despair continues to grow because they know that they have lost, yet still they do not have the courage to acknowledge what they know. But almost one-and-a-half million Namibians remind them every day: you are the losers.

Cruelty and,.....

(Continued from page 6)

The two elder sons of Hidetora then begin a campaign to assert supreme power. They do so against each other and at the expense of their father. In the end, the eldest son is killed, and Hidetora is banished, living in the outskirts of the kingdom with his jester and a dutiful servant, finding refuge in abject huts and the 'killing fields'. The king is forced to come to terms with the viciousness of his life and the cruelty of his acts, and finally escapes into madness. His only moments of lucidity are when Saburo, the prodigal son, returns to rescue him. But life in *Ran* as in *Lear*, has no redemption. Saburo is killed, and the mad king collapses over his dead body.

For Shakespeare, the lack of redemption and the cruelty of human life were self-evident truths. For Kurosawa they are much more. They are a reconfirmation of his Buddhist ideology. Throughout the film there is always a gentle Buddhist presence. Hidetora's daughter-in-law, a Cordelia-like figure, remains loving, even though Hidetora has brutally murdered her parents and blinded her brother. She worships the Buddha, and practises detachment even at the height of fratricidal war. Her blinded younger brother gives Hidetora shelter from a storm, but movingly plays his flute to subdue his immature heart from feeling hate and resentment. The reproach of the flute sends Hidetora racing from the shelter into the rain.

The violence of the film, the horrific scenes of war and brutality, are done on a panoramic scale, but they are in slow motion, like repeat-

ed patterns, unending destinies. One becomes slowly detached from the intensity and the pain. The futility of hate and destruction seep into the consciousness of the viewer, not from a sense of blood and gore but from exhaustion.

Kurosawa's power as a director is that he moves the audience towards love and detachment without being doctrinaire or heavyhanded. His message lingers; especially for a Sri Lankan taking a break from our own ethnic war.

The only weakness in the film is its stereotypical portrayal of women. Kurosawa's first daughter is Circe, Kali, the she-devil. She has absolutely no redeeming qualities. She is sexually loose and politically ambitious. Her vengeance knows no bounds. When her husband is killed, she seduces her brother-in-law and forces him to marry her. Finally, she demands the head of her saintly sister-in-law, Zue. Zue for her part is the Madonna, Sita, the Virgin Mary. She can do no wrong. She is chaste, loving and kind. Ironically, she is killed while looking for her brother's flute, Kurosawa's symbol of the Buddhist message. Though the female characters are stereotyped in this manner, the actress who plays the first daughter gives a brilliant performance of the Shrew. She powerfully combines the facade and style of Japanese etiquette with a vicious ambitious personality. Audiences trained to accept the "Geisha model" of the Japanese woman will never be as innocent again.

Kurosawa's *Ran* is a classical film with an eternal message. Using the technology and style of modern cinema, it takes us back to basic principles. One is exhausted by life at the end of the film, and when one emerges from the darkness into the light, Sylvester Stallone looks even more like an overgrown punk who should have gone to school.

Who Sells.....

(Continued from page 10)

The compassionate activities of the various citizen's committees, in the absence of their elected representatives, seem to be like the pleadings and beseechings of a conquered people from the conquerors for more humane treatment of the prisoners of war, namely the many thousands of Tamil youth who are languishing in detention camps in Boosa and other places for their crime of being born as Tamil in this country, an accident of birth over which they had no control. It is now reported that they are victims of scabies and other infectious diseases due to insanitary conditions in the prison camps. The Tamil people will ever have to be grateful to the many blessings and little mercies bestowed on them by the UNP government during its long and unending reign of misrule.

Overshadowing the government's militarist approach is the much publicised but painfully slow peace process that has agonisingly dragged on for well-nigh three years with no end in sight. No one can overlook or miss the contrasting styles in the two track approach to a simple political problem that has been magnified and blown up into a mighty racist war bringing in its wake death, destruction and

disillusionment to the many thousands of common people who have perforce to eke out their existence in refugee camps within the country as well as outside it. The well orchestrated peace process bordering on the mock heroic has been a time consuming exercise with the government media playing it up with pictures and interviews of the many actors in the seasonal drama each year. The war though waged with dynamism has meant a heavy toll of lives and a heavier drain on the nation's exchequer with a seeming hopelessness and helplessness. The government clearly lacks a sense of urgency and seems to be insensitive to be the many human problems it has created by its dilly-dallying strategy.

Now a decree has gone out to the civil authorities in Jaffna that refugees from Trincomalee, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Kilinochchi districts flooding the refugee camps in the North are not to be issued any food stamps or food relief till they document their status as "refugees" by cross-checking with the co-ordinating authority in the various districts. What heartlessness on the part of a government of the people! Are these unfortunate people to live on air till the red tapism of the slow moving government machinery is satisfied that they are "genuine refugees" and not people who have landed from the moon or from Tigerland? Will a people flee their homes and hearths for the mere fun of it?

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

THE BOOSA BELSEN

On 16th September we got a letter by post.

An unusual letter from an unusual quarter in an unexpected time. But depicting the usual sordid situation.

The letter is from a detention camp, signed by the political detenus.

Volumes in a piece of paper.

Letters of this type have somehow managed to reach the proper hands. They elude laws, restrictions and vigilance.

No wonder, in future, letters of these types may also be labelled as 'terrorists'.

The political detenus in the said detention camp passed the message to the people in home that fifteen Tamil political prisoners are on a hunger strike.

On the same day, a young Tamil accused under the Prevention of Terrorism Act made a fervent plea to the Colombo High Court Judge, before whom he was produced. The accused, Tharmaratnam Thayalan pleaded on behalf of the detenus of the Boosa detention camp where he was an inmate earlier. He said that twenty detenus unable to bear the torture and ill-treatment were on a hunger strike for the last thirteen days.

He gave a detailed account of the torture he underwent.

The Boosa detention camp was started on 9th August 1984 specifically to detain those arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

There are about 14 enclosures 70 feet by 20 feet where nearly 2,500 detenus are in preventive custody.

The Security Forces conducted a "blitzkrieg" in the Eastern Province and rounded up a large number of persons. They were brought to this camp and placed in preventive custody. Among them were mentally retarded and maimed youths, old men and women.

Although at the Thimpu talks assurances were given by the Govern-

ment that these detenus would be released nothing was done. On the other hand many more were taken into custody in Trincomalee and detained at this camp.

It made world headlines when 600 of them were said to be released. But it turned out to be a farce.

"These camps are no different from the Nazi concentration camps for the following reasons", allege the detenus in the letter:

Merciless torture in the form of crushing of vital organs.

Hanging naked upside down and hit with S-lon pipes and batons.

Sending metal wires through genital organs.

Intermittent electric shocks.

Pouring melted rigifoam over the body.

Sex torture —high officials of the Security Forces forcibly taking young boys for homosexual purposes.

Mental torture through long detention without trial Forced confession obtained by torture.

Poor food given at irregular times. (Some detenus are not even given their prescribed diet).

Inadequate water for drinking and ablutions.

Food and medical supplies given by visitors to the camp not delivered. Some supplies have been misappropriated by high officials.

Relations of detenus who visit Boosa despite of the many obstacles are sometimes set upon by security personnel.

False propaganda through T.V., radio and newspaper media on the state of the camp.

Detenus allegedly trained "outside" are separately tortured.

In October 1985, when the Cease-fire Monitoring Committee visited the camp, they were duly apprised of the atrocious conditions prevalent.

Although the Cease-fire Monitoring Committee undertook to ensure

Jaffna was the scene of another protest demonstration on 24th September. This time on behalf of those fasting at Welikade and the detenus at Boosa. The demonstration was more than 10,000 strong comprising the Eelavar Front and students of

that some form of relief would be afforded to the detenus, it was common knowledge that they gave a version in favour of the Government that "there were no meat stalls in Boosa".

In view of this loss in faith in the Cease-fire Monitoring Committee the detenus in the camp undertook a fast to death. This initiative was broken by the authorities when they took revenge on ring-leaders of the fast and those who lodged complaints with the Cease-fire Monitoring Committee.

Complaints made to the Minister of National Security when he visited the camp were of no avail.

On 15th July, a memorandum on other forms of torture practised in the camp was brought to the notice of the Political Parties Conference (PPC).

After the submission of this memorandum, conditions at the Boosa camp deteriorated so much so that the detenus were forced to make a non-violent protest.

This can be seen in the fast that on 4th September, 11 detenus undertook a fast to death and again on 8th September, four detenus joined the fast.

There are now 15 detenus who have resolved to fast to death. The condition of five detenus is grave. They have even refused to take glucose and honey administered by the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB). If the present trend continues, all are likely to join the fast unto death.

The major demands put forward by the fasting detenus are:

Immediate release of innocent detenus; Those detained for more than 18 months should be released or brought to trial; Torture of detenus should be stopped forthwith; All medical and foodstuff provided by the visitors should be supplied to the detenus All detenus; should be given a balanced diet; Those

the Jaffna University. The placards carried among others protest against the violence of the indisciplined security forces in Batticaloa, torture of Tamil youths in detention camps. A memorandum handed to the Government Agent for transmission to the authorities.

allegedly "trained in India" should be transferred to prison authorities.

Nearly ninety percent of the Tamil detenus at Welikade are from the Boosa Camp. Therefore concern and solidarity shown to detenus at Boosa is natural.

In December 1985 a memorandum was submitted to the Cease-fire Monitoring Committee by the detenus that there were human rights violation at the camps.

On 15th July 1986, a further memorandum was submitted to the Political Parties Conference (PPC). In view of the inaction on the part of the Government regarding Boosa detenus a protest fast was taken at Welikade on 7th September. Consequently, from 8th to 10th September 90 detenus fasted in turn. Earlier, there was a token fast on 7th, undertaken by 267 detenus out of 293.

As the protest fast did not move the Government, ten detenus undertook a fast to death on 12th September.

According to information, still more are to undertake this fast in batches of 100.

Several mass organisations in the North have begun their solidarity actions with the fasting detenus.

Jaffna University Students have started a week long protest fast on 23rd September.

Sinking...

(Continued from page 1)

Panchalingam (20) of Puliadikuda; Ravindran (19) of Saththurukkondan; Ponnuthurai (37) of Kotaikallaru and one-and-a-half year old child Bartlet of Batticaloa; James Jayakumar (17), Rajendram (18), Arulanathan (22), Suppiah (40), Amirthalingham (35) of Selvanagar and Nallaratanam (42) were van drivers, reportedly burnt with their vans. A young woman's body is still lying in the mortuary unidentified.

The following injured were hospitalised: Rev. Fr. Ananthan (37), Luxmy (15), Sinnathamby (65), Nathan (16), Soosaipillai (40), Sirisena (28), Lingarajah (29), Jesuthasan (43), Nagalingham (35) and Rajendran (15).

According to report made by the Citizen's Committee the following were reported missing.

Thayaparan (20), Rajeswaran (18), Sivaseelan (28), Cheran (26) Panchayuthan (30), Sivakumar (20) and Vijayan (20).