

# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

Vol. 5 No. 48 20th December 1986

# THE FINAL ROUND

(By a Special Correspondent)

The question of setting up inter-provincial ministerial committees, as an alternative to the linkage of the Northern and Eastern Provinces demanded by the Tamil militant groups, was discussed at the meeting between representatives of the Sri Lankan and Indian Governments in Colombo this week, the SATURDAY REVIEW reliably understands.

As part of this process, the establishment of one High Court for the two provinces — another form of linkage — was also mooted at the talks, the SR understands.

What has been proposed, in the latest formulations between the two Governments, is no less than granting ALL the nine provinces in Sri Lanka the same powers enjoyed by all the states of India, including Tamilnadu, the SR understands.

The carving out of three districts in the Eastern Province—Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Amparai — into three district provinces to satisfy the aspiration of the Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese communities was also dis-

cussed but it was described as impracticable because of the vehement opposition displayed by all three communities, the SR understands.

President Jayewardene led the Sri Lanka delegation at the talks held on 18th and 19th December. On the Indian side there were Mr. P. Chidambaram (Minister of State for Internal Affairs and Defence) and Mr. K. Natwar Singh (Minister of State for foreign affairs), along with the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka Mr. J.N. Dixit.

The Indian Ministers had intensive talks with leaders of the militant groups based in Madras before they arrived in Colombo.

The Colombo talks took place in an atmosphere of both tension and great expectation among the Tamil people.

At Bangalore last month, President Jayewardene and Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi explored ALL the possibilities of bringing about a settlement that would satisfy ALL the communities in Sri Lanka.

Will the Tamil militants groups accept this package that has been wrapped up by the two Governments?

Unlikely, because they are insisting on the acceptance of the principle of a Tamil homeland.

They have been kept informed at every stage of the negotiations.

A pity is that representatives of the militant groups were not present at the talks, to directly express their views.

(Something which the SATURDAY REVIEW has always been saying is essential if the negotiations are to be brought to a successful conclusion.)

What if the latest round of talks also leads nowhere?

The Sri Lanka Government's position is that the latest proposals made by it "EMBODY THE MAXIMUM CONCESSIONS WHICH CAN REASONABLY BE MADE".

We believe there is still a chance to retrieve the situation — provided both sides act sensibly.

Otherwise, there is going to be chaos in Sri Lanka.

## CREMATION COSTS

The spiralling cost of firewood has led many people in the Jaffna Peninsula to a re-thinking on the process of cremation.

Earlier the price of a hundred weight of firewood was Rs. 41/25. The lorry owners have lodged a complaint to the Chief of the Timber Corporation in Colombo that the price of Rs. 250/ paid for a metric ton of firewood is inadequate to meet the cost of transport. In keeping with this complaint the Jaffna Timber Corporation has upped the price to Rs. 375/- per metric ton and the consumers have to pay Rs. 61/60 per cwt. as from 16th December. So the consumers will have to pay the piper while the Corporation and lorry owners call the tune.

With human cadavers so cheap in the Peninsula, prospective cremation-seekers will probably have to evolve a cheaper way of cremation. Burials may be cheap but there is so little space even in the cemetery.



Capt. Jayantha Kotelawala

## TWO FOR TWO

In a dramatic development while the final stage of the talks on the ethnic issue were on in Colombo, there was, for the first time in the 10-year conflict a simultaneous exchange of prisoners-of-war between President Jayewardene's Government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Two of the hundreds of Tamil youths held in captivity for long periods by the Government in Welikade were brought to Palaly and handed over to representatives of the LTTE. They were from a list of 15 names submitted by the LTTE.

Those released were Selasami Kum-ar alias Kunju, and Gamini Anestine alias Tiru.

In return, the LTTE yesterday released the two Sinhalese soldiers who had been held captive by it since 12th October. (See SR of 25th and 1st November.)

Second Lieutenant Ajit Chandrasiri and Private M.H. Bandara were handed over to Capt. Jayantha Kotelawala by a LTTE delegation led by Captain Raheem at the Jaffna Fort Camp at 8-20 a.m. yesterday.

Capt. Kotelawala played a key role in securing the release of the two soldiers.

## LTTE REIGNS SUPREME

On the eve of the Colombo talks on Sri Lanka's ethnic problem this week, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has asserted its position as the main militant group which is open for business, serious business.

One by one, the LTTE has succeeded in decimating or liquidating or paralysing all the other groups operating in the North, except the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS).

The LTTE moved against the EPRLF on 13th December.

Within two days, the EPRLF cadres surrendered or vanished from the scene.

There were some casualties in certain areas (Mannar, Mullaitivu

and Kilinochchi) where there was some resistance to the LTTE onslaught.

Some LTTE members also died but we do not have reliable information about the casualties on both sides, though it has been rumoured that at least 40 youths died in the struggle for power.

Sources close to the LTTE have adduced four reasons for their action.

The incident at Choolaimadu in Madras, where the EPRLF militants were involved in a "fracas", had alienated the Government of Tamilnadu. This action has sparked off the seizure of arms and equip-

ment from the militant groups by the Tamilnadu police.

Further, the EPRLF had reportedly brought in the rump of the TELO group from India, numbering about 200, with a view to "destroy" the LTTE.

Rumours were said to have been set afloat by the EPRLF calculated to tarnish the image of the LTTE in the eyes of the people.

Finally, covert attempts had been made to eliminate the area commanders of the LTTE so that the EPRLF could gain control of the rank and file of the LTTE.

The truth will surface some time. By which time all of us may be dead.

## SR ON HOLIDAY

There will be no issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW on 27th December 1986 on account of the intervening holidays. The next issue will appear on 3rd January, 1987.



## Saturday Review

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## Computer Programming

The DATACENTER will start its next week-day computer programming course on 6th January 1987 and the week-end course on 10th January 1987.

Three students from adversely affected families will be selected to follow each course free. The selection criteria, besides the above stipulation, are average intelligence and knowledge of English.

Those eligible should apply to:  
The Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW,  
118, 4th Cross street, Jaffna.

## NOVENA PRAYER

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved, praised and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus have mercy on us. St. Jude helper of the helpless pray for us. Say this prayer 9 times a day for 9 days or till favour granted. It has never failed. Favour granted. Published as promised.

U. K.

J. N.

# VADAMARADCHY REFUGEES GET PALTRY RELIEF

We reported the war-games exercise performed by the Security Forces in Vadamaradchy when they attempted to move out of the security camps at Thoadamannar, Valvettiturai and Point Pedro simultaneously on 11th and 12th November.

Air, sea and ground attacks were intensified. In consequence over 3,000 families have left their homes, in these areas leaving behind their valuables and cattle, poultry etc.

and are living in various places as refugees.

The Government gave relief by way of dry rations for two weeks to only 1,000. These relief items were given through the respective Assistant Government Agents recently.

Those concerned are said to be pressing the Govt. to grant relief to the rest of the displaced refugees also and continue relief until

they are able to settle down in their own houses.

It is learnt from normally reliable sources that the Vadamaradchy wargames exercise figured at the Bangalore meeting. Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi reportedly expressed his concern over the incidents to President Jayewardene especially the strafing and bombing of the Base Hospital at Manthikai.

## COMMEMORATIVE MEETING

A Commemorative Meeting to mark the 13th Death Anniversary of the late Rev. Fr. P. A. J. B. Antoninus, O.M.I. Founder of the Socio Economic Training Institute, Kandy (SETIK) will be held on 20th December 1986 at 4.00 p.m. at the SETIK, Hall in Kandy.

Rev. Fr. Oswald B. Firth, Director, SETIK, Mr. P. C. C. de Almeida, and Rt. Rev. Dr. Vianney Fernando will be the speakers.

## SILVER JUBILEE

Three and a half years ago we accorded one of the warmest welcomes, involving a 25 mile long motorcade meandering through 25 decorated pandals with the assistance of many police personnel, to a small-made frail looking new Bishop of the Diocese of Trincomalee-Batticaloa, Rt. Rev. Dr. Joseph Kingsley Swampillai. Thousands of people who gathered at this reception could not guess the importance of this new leader except that he was

receiving a rare welcome. I was privileged to head this Reception Committee and certainly it was my pleasure to obtain assistance from so many people to receive our new Bishop.

The last three -and -a-half years has seen much trouble and turmoil in this part of the country due to many unsettling factors—mainly violence, death destruction. Hundreds of people were rendered homeless and many were driven to desperation. Yet this small, frail looking Bishop of the Diocese stood up to all these as a real leader of the people answering the cries of them all, as the need arose.

Expanding and accelerating the work Eastern Human and Eco-

We publish this article as a tribute to Bishop Kingsley Swampillai, who celebrates the Silver Jubilee of his priesthood today.



The Staff of the New Era Publications Ltd. at the traditional S.R. Editor's lunch held at Hotel Gnanams on 12th December.

## SR EDITOR'S REFUGEE FUND

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions to the S R Editor's Refugee Relief Fund.

### LIST OF DONORS

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nomie Development (EHED) and the creation of Eastern Rehabilitation Organisation (ERO) were two marvellous contributions of the new Bishop to this Diocese. Thousands of affected people who either lost their homes, property or their loved ones found solace and comfort in this person. He raised his voice against injustice and excesses perpetrated on the people. And thus the people realised the massive reception given to this religious did not go waste and that they had one the right thing for he is their leader and friend.

With his firm will and generous heart he has brought the clergy of the Diocese together as one body; has rejuvenated the religious communities and lay groups working in this Diocese. He is ever simple and kind when he is approached for help and advice. He has fully lived up to his motto Service of faith and fellowship."

Let us thank God that He has given us a good Bishop whose hallmark is order and beauty. Let him grow from strength in his Diocese and to the country as whole. We wish him well on his 25 year service as priest which falls on the 20th December, 1986.

—Fr. T. Pius Pathmarajah



# From Tamil Liberation To Class Conflict

The General Secretary of the Nava Sama Samaja Party, Dr. Wickramabahu Karunaratne, in a press statement has said:

The "Daily News" (from its New York reporter) reported on 9th November that Mr. A. Amirthalingam has expressed fears of replay in the North of what happened to Kam-puchea under the Pol Pot Regime. The Report also says that Dr. Winston Panchacharam, the organizer of three World Tamil Eelam conventions, told the "Daily News" that he is throwing in his lot with Prabarakan. Another report which appeared on 8th October says the Eelam Tamil Association of America is seeking to set up Eelam Liaison Offices to promote the establishment of a Tamil National State, with the help of Lakshmi Naganathan and Dr. Subramania Swamy.

We have to place these reports in the context of the conflicts and clashes taking place between the different Tamil armed organisations. Clearly the question who will dominate the liberated areas has arisen. Property owners in Jaffna, backed by the bourgeois outside of Jaffna, are attempting to woo whichever the dominant group in order to face the threat of a social revolution. At least a substantial section of the Tamil bourgeoisie has lost faith in the TULF and the possibility of a settlement within a unitary Sri Lanka. These capitalists (disregarding the Pol Pot scare of the TULF) are passing the dominant group to act as the defender of

the "Tamil private property" within the liberated areas. They have realised that the TULF has no politico military power in Jaffna and is completely dependent on a settlement reached between Rajiv and JR.

The question of "Tamil private property" was raised in the previous clash where large number of Tamil militants were killed. It was claimed that they were behaving like hoodlums, robbing goods, encroaching on land and taking over houses belonging to Tamils. We do not believe that any of the Tamil militant organisations are genuinely Marxist or really proletarian. However, though anarchic and infantile, the tendency for land and property distribution was there. We have no doubt that the organisations closer to the lower classes were accused of instigating and condoning such acts.

A section of the Tamil bourgeoisie has realised that a settlement with JR is most unlikely. By making the offer of Provincial Councils, J. R. is planning to win the international opinion to his side, so that he could isolate and attack the Tamil Liberation Movement with imperialist support. Already the United States has pledged to support JR's fight against terrorism. In this context the above-mentioned Tamil bourgeoisie is determined to make the Eelam movement a non Marxist Tamil National movement which can make a separate deal with imperialism. They have realised that this is a sure way of containing the social revolution, while strengthening their position in relation to JR's regime. Thus the way out seen by the Tamil bourgeoisie in the present crisis is either agree to a settlement given by JR - Rajiv and help to crush the arm-

ed organisations, or win over a section of the armed organisations to a separate deal with American imperialism.

Power struggle within the Tamil Liberation movement has started. The outcome does not depend entirely on the balance of power in the Jaffna society. The brutal oppression of the JR's regime and the conspiracies of the Tamil bourgeoisie can be defeated by the united effort of the working masses both in the North and in the South. We must explain to the members of the main Tamil Liberation organisations the conspiracies of the bourgeoisie and press them not to succumb to these machinations. We must campaign among all Tamil militants to accept the authority of the elected workers and peasants committees. This is the only way out for the Tamil Liberation struggle.

## Institute's Wide-ranging Activities

The Eleventh Institute Day Celebrations of the Jaffna College Technical Institute was held recently bringing to a climax the three-day Exhibition organised by the staff and students of the Institute. This Exhibition of Engineering Science and Technology displayed the achievements and skills of the students.

The activities of the Institute range from Research and Production

work to Sports and Students' Union Activities. The staff and students of the Mechanical Engineering Department and Workshop are involved in research, design and manufacturing of engineering components as part of the Industrial Level training offered at this Institute. All steel fabrication units required in the New Building were fabricated by the Welding Department. New Designs of water pumps are being manufactured by the Foundry Department. A small cast-iron cupola was designed and constructed by the staff and students of the Department and it was commissioned in May, 1986. A series of tests of different types of locally available moulding sands are being conducted helping the local industries involved in foundry production work. Agricultural machinery and equipment are being designed and fabricated at the Machine Shop.

Research studies are being carried out by the staff and senior students on development projects such as utilisation of bio-gas, Satellite-TV signal receiver, low-cost partition wall, clay-bricks, agricultural implements etc. Work in progress is being tested for commercial production and utilisation.

A Radio Club was started by the students in the Electronics Course undertaking repairs and servicing of electronic equipment and appliances.

Wiring and installation work on the new buildings in the Campus and at Jaffna College were under-

taken as job-training for Craft Course students.

During the Academic year 1985-86, the Institute offered 13 different courses of study—Professional Engineering Part I, Technical Diploma Course, Technician Certificate Course, Craft Courses, in Foundry Practice, Welding Practice, Machine Shop Practice and Electrical Installation Practice.

E. C. E. Part II, Trade Courses in Masonry and Carpentry and a short course in Computer Programming for school-leavers will form part of the 1986-87 Curriculum.

The Director of the Institute is M. G. Pillainayagam, B.Sc. (Eng.) M. Sc (Ag. Eng.) M.L. Mech. E. (Lond.) and the Asst. Director, (Dean) is Dr. T. Vinayagalingam, B.Sc (Hon.), M.Sc. Ph. D. Birm., M. ASME, MAIAA (USA). They have the assistance of a team of Qualified Engineers, Graduates and Technicians.

## Silver Jubilarian

The Silver Jubilee of the ordination of Rev. Fr. M. E. Pius falls today (20th December).

Fr. Pius hails from an illustrious Catholic family in Karampan, Kayts.

He has served in parishes and institutions in both Jaffna and Mannar. He is now serving as Director of the Jaffna Diocesan Human Development Centre which involves itself in the Social Apostolate.

A Thanksgiving Eucharist will be celebrated today at the Church of St. Sebastian, Karampan, Kayts.

## Greater Glory

Man proposes  
but God disposes;  
that was  
the old system.  
Now, in the North  
the LTTE proposes  
and disposes  
Gone is TELO  
in a bloody orgy.  
Gone is PLOTE  
without a fight.  
Gone is TESO  
without a whimper.  
Now EPRLF  
is also going.  
Can EROS hold out for long?  
The LTTE is supreme  
as far as anyone can see.  
One Party,  
one Voice,  
one Flag,  
for the Tamils  
Great glory  
if that be so.

But will it be so?  
Or blood, blood,  
and still more blood?  
The law of the jungle?  
Mothers weep,  
fathers despair  
as the fight  
for all-conquering power  
takes its toll.  
A oncepeaceful land,  
a thriving people  
wedded to Ahimsa,  
and all that's good.  
Now, oh God!  
The leaders have fled.  
The youth have taken over,  
to build a new order  
on a grand design.  
But the pitfalls, the mistakes?  
Oh, forget them.  
After all,  
Boys will be Boys.

— ANON - XI



There is a keen legal debate going on in Sri Lanka. Our giants of law battle with technical brilliance, not to say elegance. But before we get lost in their lawyerly attention to legalistic forms (that mystify more than they illuminate), we should root ourselves firmly to the ground. For the real question has come not from theory but from the battleground where our young men die. The question is whether the Government's proposals for provincial autonomy to end the ethnic conflict violate the Constitution and therefore require a referendum?

Constitutions are drawn up, or changed, because people want to make a fresh start in how they wish their society to be. They recognise that the old forms need to be replaced. For the people do not live for the sake of the constitution. Rather, the constitution exists to make their lives better. When it ceases to do so, the people, or their elected representatives, either change the constitution or create a new one.

By now, most of us are aware that constitutions are not sacred, unalterable documents. Perhaps the United Front Government thought that its 1972 Constitution was quite a wonderful one. They were so proud, they used the word "autochthonous" to describe their creation. But the new United National Party Government was not impressed. They dumped that Constitution and replaced it with their own. But only the Government was impressed with its efforts. No one else voted for this new Constitution. So it is clear that our Constitution is not something very special, and does not need to be preserved in its present form at all costs.

When the problems in society grow acute we automatically know something serious is wrong. We are then entitled to look at our Constitution. Especially at our Constitution. For it represents in a summarized document, a vision of what a good, law-abiding society should be, and how it should be achieved. It should be based on a national consensus. ours is not.

We may disagree about the ultimate causes, but no one can disagree that Sri Lanka is going through its biggest crisis in modern history. And that the old vision of a good and law-abiding society does not exist as a real thing today. We need a new way to achieve it. Therefore, we need to change our Constitution which contains the old, and failed, ways of thinking. But there is a big constitutional problem, say opponents of the present peace proposals.

Ours is a unitary Constitution. Being "unitary" has nothing to do with being a united country. For instance, Yugoslavia and Switzerland are not unitary. But they are united. Cyprus, on the other hand, has a unitary constitution. But it is divided. "Unitary" is a legal term.

According to legal theory, the parliament (legislature) of a unitary country is the supreme law-making body in the country. It may permit provincial parliaments to exist and exercise their power. But it has the right to overrule or get rid of them.

## RE-UNITE OR FURTHER DIVIDE?

The Tamil negotiators are worried about this legal theory. They are afraid that what this Government gives in terms of provincial autonomy, some future Government might take away even without giving a good reason. So the Tamils seek certain guarantees that this will not happen, and that laws passed by the Provincial Councils will not be arbitrarily overruled by the Centre.

Some Sinhalese, opponents of provincial autonomy, on the other hand, rejoice in this legal theory. They say that the Government's proposals are illegal because parliament's power cannot be given away. Having made this severe legal point they argue that the Government's proposals cannot be implemented at all because the Supreme Court will strike them down unless they are approved at a referendum.

by

Jehan Perera

However, the best constitutional law is both grounded in theoretical ideals and practical reality. When theory and practice collide, they must either be reconciled or else practical reality must prevail. For constitutional law is meant to facilitate the governance of society. That is its first goal. The second goal is to hold fast to theory and precedent.

Most of us admire Britain as the source of much of our legal traditions, and look to British precedents for guidance. Let us now look at what the British once did when theory

bequeathed by the past collided with reality.

In the heyday of the British Empire, the Parliament at Westminster had, to use the then prevailing legal theory supreme power" to make laws extending to the overseas parts. These laws had supreme force, and could override laws made by the dominion and colonial governments. But times changed. And so did law and legal theories.

The problem was to reconcile the supremacy of the British Parliament with the desire of the dominion governments to be self-governing. Recognising this, the British

Parliament, in 1931, passed the Statute of Westminster.

There were two components to this new law. First, the British Parliament agreed not to make laws for a dominion unless the dominion government requested it. Second, even if the British Parliament did make such a law the dominion parliament could amend it. In other words, when times changed, the law changed and the British Parliament divested itself of its supremacy in the old sense.

The problems of Britain in 1931 are, of course, different from Sri Lanka's in 1986. And the British solution need not be Sri Lanka's. The British situation concerned an empire, whereas Sri Lanka's concerns a single country. But the point about how law and legal theories should cha-

nged for violating the Constitution by suspending the right of habeas corpus. He had ordered certain dissidents arrested, and held them without trial. Lincoln's answer was straightforward. Amnesty International would not like it. (But this is not to condone the well documented and needless torture that takes place in our prisons) Lincoln said that if he did not detain (illegally) these enemies of the Government, the Government itself might be overthrown. "Are all the laws but one to go unexecuted, and the Government itself go to pieces lest that one be violated?"

Earlier we noted that "unitary" is a legal term. And also that having a unitary constitution is not a guarantee against being divided. Rather, the spirit behind a unitary constitution is national unity. The spirit (or ultimate purpose) behind Sri Lanka's unitary constitution is the preservation of Sri Lanka's national unity. It is certainly not to satisfy legal theorists who read the words in the Constitution in a literal sense, and on that basis insist on a referendum. (Those who read the Bible literally insist the universe was created 6000 years ago in six days).

A referendum on the Government's proposals would, today, not unite Sri Lanka but divide it. Sinhalese will be pitted against Sinhalese, Tamil against Sinhalese, Muslim against Muslim, and Muslim against Tamil. A referendum at this time would violate the spirit of our constitution. That is very clear. For a referendum would be an invitation to chaos and further national disunity.

To conclude all the clauses of a constitution are not of equal importance and value. There are times when a Government, and the Supreme Court, may have to decide what is to be saved and what is to be lost. Law is created to respond to the needs of society, not in a vacuum. Likewise, law must be interpreted in accordance with the needs of today's society, not the society of 20 or 200 years ago, or of an imaginary society in a vacuum. It will require both wisdom and technical competence to fashion a contemporary theory of Sri Lanka's present unitary Constitution to solve Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. Our Supreme Court possesses both.

### APOLOGY

The Head of the Israeli Interests Section in Colombo has sent a letter to the Speaker apologising for taking down notes in Parliament when the External Affairs Ministry votes were being discussed recently in Parliament.

The matter was raised in Parliament by Attanagala M.P. Lakshman Jayakody who had asked the Speaker whether it was proper for foreign diplomats to take down notes of parliamentary proceedings.

The Head of the Israeli Interests Section told pressmen at a conference that in Israel there was no bar to taking down notes of parliamentary proceedings. He had not been informed that it was improper to do so here.

During the American Civil War, President Lincoln was harshly cri-



# TAKE BACK THE NIGHT

As soon as it gets dark, the freedom of millions of women disappears. Why is violence towards women so much the norm that half the population cannot walk down a well-lit street after dark without attracting assault?

Ms Kalpana Sharma is Editor of Express Magazine, the magazine section of Sunday Express, India's largest English-language newspaper.

Delhi: On March 8, celebrated the world over as International Women's Day, the Delhi edition of the Indian Express carried a front page story which is but a mild illustration of the reality millions of Indian women must daily face—the spectre of violence and sexual harassment directed towards them merely because they are women.

The incident took place on a well-lit road in New Delhi at 8-30 at night. A woman reporter from the Indian Express was walking towards her home, after having bought some medicine from a chemist, when a thick-set man grabbed her hand and proceeded to twist it till she cried out in pain. Once she recovered from the initial shock, the woman slapped the man. He retaliated by hitting her hard on the head.

All this took place within a few feet of a taxi stand; a number of the taxi drivers could see what was happening. When the woman turned towards them to ask for help, the man pursued her and hit her again. Despite her pleadings, the taxi drivers refused to drive her to her home; instead they suggested that she waited for the police patrol van.

When this did not appear for 25 minutes, one of the taxi drivers finally consented to walk her part of the way home.

In a letter to the Indian Express, another woman who lives in Delhi, Selvi Subramaniam, writes; 'The bitter truth is that there is no respect for women or womanhood. To find this out one should get into a DTC (Delhi Transport Corporation) bus. It is only an example.

She goes on to describe her own recent experience of being pursued by a man on a motorcycle making obscene suggestions as she and another woman walked down Parliament Street, in the heart of New Delhi, one evening.

When they turned for help to two policemen, the latter smirked at them and insinuated that they were probably waiting to be picked up but might have asked for too high a price of the man on the motorcycle.

For many women, specially those living in Delhi and other north Indian towns, incidents like these will not shock because they are a fact of daily existence. As soon as it gets dark, the freedom of millions of Indian women—old and young, living in towns or villages—is automatically restricted. The worst that they fear is rape, there are other forms of harassment short of rape that are commonplace and have almost become the norm.

These daily incidents of sexual harassment are often dismissed as petty, not requiring the attention they deserve. But they symbolise the

violence women have to face. They also expose the fact that half the population of this country is denied a basic fundamental right—the freedom to walk on the streets without fear.

Despite the daily trauma attached to those occurrences, the media continues to trivialise sexual harassment by referring to it as 'eve teasing'. Thousands of 'eves' are mercilessly 'teased' during Holi, a festival of some dread for women in many parts of the North.

Routinely the Delhi Police conducts campaigns against this, only to repeat the routine the following year. Clearly, greater policing and more stringent laws, although necessary, cannot touch the root of the problem.

Sexual harassment of this kind is only one part of the range of violence women have to face, from rape and dowry deaths to battering and incest; a solution requires a change in society's deeply entrenched gender attitudes.

To what extent is the media responsible for legitimising sexual harassment and violence against women, especially the commercial film media? Recently I spent a most sickening half hour at the Censor Board watching choice cuts from the latest Hindi films. In that half hour I witnessed several gang rapes, each sequel competing with the next in

depicting the most horrific kind of violence being inflicted on women.

Despite such excessively violent portions of the film being cut, the violence content of Hindi films remains undiluted and the so-called 'eve teasing' is such an integral part of the Hindi film script that people are innured to it, just as they are becoming innured to rapes and sexual violence on screen.

That such a depiction women affects male attitudes hardly needs discussion or proof. Stand outside any cinema hall showing this kind of masala film and watch the hordes of men coming out when it ends; the expression on their faces speaks louder than words.

The gender ideology that justifies violence towards women and makes it the norm is a fact of life for all women—in developed and devel-

the injury that it entails—is underestimated by society. As Elizabeth Wilson, a British feminist points out, 'In daily life women are routinely defined by sex, and if not all men are potential rapists, all women are potential victims.' However, although this explains the fear that forces women to stay off the streets, it does not explain the aggression and violence in men. For that, one has to look deeper into gender roles defined by the family into the psychology that governs male-female relationships, and the fact that a male-dominated society has determined that to be aggressive is the natural right of the male and to be submissive is the duty of the female.

Any woman trying to turn this belief on its head must face the consequences. At root also is the concept of woman as property: so long as the woman is one man's property, he protects her, even deifies her. But if she is someone else's property, then she is fair game.

In all the rhetoric about 'protecting' women somehow these uncomfortable questions about women's status are being sidelined.

It is easier to discuss the finer points of law, or the mechanics of law and order, than to honestly answer this question: Why, in a free democratic country, whose constitution guarantees all manner of rights for women, can a woman not walk safely down a well-lit street in the nation's capital at 8-30 at night?—Third World Network Features

by

Kalpana Sharma

oping countries, irrespective of their economic status.

On leading American campuses, for instance, the threat of rape for women students is a daily reality. Most campuses have to provide an escort service, even for women students to walk or bicycle from the library to their hostels at night.

March 8 in many parts of the US is observed by women taking out a candlelight procession singing 'Take back the night'. It is a symbolic protest against a society which denies them the freedom to walk without fear.

The tyranny of this fear of rape—the trauma, the violence, the shame,

## Army Grenades In Black Market

Grenades used by the military and purchased by the Sri Lanka Government are being freely sold in Colombo. State controlled media themselves have spotlighted this.

How safe is Sri Lanka with grenades freely available in the hands of thugs and hooligans? The Law and order situation will deteriorate to such an extent, there will be a time when peace-loving citizens of Sri Lanka will be bumped off for the slightest difference of opinion with hooligans or thugs.

The Dharmadipa will be turned into a Adharmadipa under a Dharmista

Government. What a great achievement! In time to come Sri Lanka will be a Paradise for Criminals.

## HOW THE MONEY GOES

The money spent on defence today is more than enough to finance five Mahaweli Schemes.

This was President Jayewardene's rueful admission when he spoke at a meeting in Akuressa on 8th December.

Lamenting Sri Lanka's present state, the President compared it with Japan, which had been virtually destroyed and bankrupt at the end of the Second World war.

It'll take twelve, if not twenty five years to put Sri Lanka on its feet again, he added.



**M**R. Ibrahim the Secretary of the Pottuvil Farmers' Association in the Eastern Province, has brought out salient points against dividing the E. P. into three, Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim Provincial Councils. He stresses the fact that the lives of the Muslim community in the E. P. has been closely knit with those of the Tamils, by language, trade and socio-economic affairs. In fact the E. P. has been the homeland of these two communities for well over eight centuries. A separate Provincial Council (as proposed by the Government) for them in Amparai, will never help them to progress and will eventually lead to their disintegration, as cogently stated by Mr. Ibrahim. The so-called concern for them by the Sinhala politicians and of some Muslim M.Ps of areas other than the E. P., reminds me of the tears of the wolf for the rain-drenched sheep.

He has also rightly stated that before Independence the majority of the people there were Tamils and Muslims. I substantiate this statement with the statistical caption "Correct Figures" given in the Lanka Guardian of 15th November 1986, page 20.

Year and District	Sinhalese	%	Tamil	%
1921 — Trincomalee	1501	4.4	18,586	54.5
1981 — Trincomalee	86341	33.6	93,510	36.4
1921 — Batticaloa (including Amparai)	7243	4.6	84,665	53.3
1981 — Batticaloa (including Amparai)	1,57,017	21.8	315,941	43.9

The sudden escalation of the Sinhalese population in these areas after the independence was precipitated by the systematic state-aided colonisation campaigns. Thus, the majority of the recent Sinhalese settlers after independence is comparable to the recent voluntary

Tamil settlers from the North to the South.

The urgent need is to make the units less in number, but larger in area and contiguous. Ibrahim has also pinpointed the fact, that the recent Gal-Oya and Kantalai de-

of archaeological finds, tamashas over renovation and new construction of Stupas and Viharas as in Seruwila, a stratagem to claim Trincomalee for the Sinhalese?

Another point which I like to bring to your notice is Mr. Reggie

# WHY DIVIDE THE EAST?

by

Annam

development schemes that have surreptitiously brought the sudden influx of the Sinhalese from the South to the E. P. and that it has affected adversely the Muslim population in Amparai and the Tamils in Trincomalee and Batticaloa. Mr. Kariapper another son of the Eastern province and a veteran parliamentarian has

Siriwardene's statement on behalf of the committee for Rational Development (CRD) in the "Island" of 27th November and the Lanka Guardian of 1st December, 1986, that a referendum may be held in the Tamil areas of the E. P. to find out whether they would like a merger with the North. When the need of the hour is to sink all minor differences and bring about

a general Sri Lankan identity, it is surprising that this suggestion should come from the Committee. Soon after independence there was the cry of the hill country or Kandyan Sinhalese for a separate unit of identity from the low country Sinhalese. This was, however, discreetly soft-pedalled and kept in abeyance by the Senanayake, Kotlawela and Bandaranaiques. So why rake up these trivial differences among the Tamils, who are already discriminated due to their unfortunate minority status by birth. Are we harking back to the past and taking a leaf from our colonial masters of divide and rule?

Finally, unless there is a sincere and genuine change of attitude by the Government and the Sinhalese by and large towards the militants, labelling them as down right terrorists, criminals as if they are the scum of the earth, there can never be a lasting solution to this ethnic cancer. Are our militants any worse or more terrorising than the Freedom Fighters of Nicaragua or Palestine? Just as the President alleged that he feels deeply for the innocent victims from either the soldier's or militant's bullet, so do we feel deeply grieved and saddened when ever the separatists militants are viciously referred to as "TERRORISTS".

## Peace Talks - Any Point?

V. Prabhakaran, the Leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has in an interview with the Indian periodical, "The Week" said that as long as the Sri Lankan Government does not concede "the inalienable right" for a "Tamil Homeland" no useful purpose could be served by continuing the "peace process".

He has further stated that it would not be possible for the Tamils to co-exist within the framework of a unitary state. In Sri Lanka there are only two languages, it should there-

fore be more than feasible to settle the ethnic issue on a linguistic basis. If, as the President claimed all the people in the country were Sri Lankans, how could he square this position with the army excesses against the Tamil-Speaking people, Prabhakaran asked.

It is a well-known fact Prabhakaran said, that the Government of the U. S. A. supplies arms and equipment to the Sri Lankan Government through countries like Pakistan, China and Israel with the avowed intention of crushing the freedom struggle of the Tamil-speaking people and obtaining Trincomalee as one of their bases. He added that it must be clearly understood that Trincomalee will be the capital of Eelam and will not be surrendered to any foreign country.

## Behind A Barred Window

Behind  
a barred window  
behind a high wall

watching  
a blood red  
Transvaal sun

rise  
brilliant through  
a distant bluegum

you fly  
high  
very high

— Hugh Lewin

## POEMS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

### First Day After The War

We heard the songs of a wedding party.  
We saw a soft light  
Coiling round the young blades of grass  
At first we hesitated, then we saw her foot prints,  
Her face emerged, then her eyes of freedom!  
She woke us up with a smile saying,  
'What day is this that comes suddenly?'  
We said, 'It is the first day after the War.'  
Then without waiting we ran to the open space  
Ululating to the mountains and the pathways  
Calling people from all the circles of the earth.  
We shook up the old man demanding a festival  
We asked for all the first fruits of the season.  
We held hands with a stranger  
We shouted across the waterfalls  
People came from all lands  
It was the first day of peace  
We saw our Ancestors travelling tall on the horizon

—Mazisi Kunene

## 'Tender'Inquiries

Representations have been made to Brigadier Kobbekaduwa of the Vavuniya Army Camp that the main concern of some members of the Security Forces attached to the Army Camp at Omanthai on their 'search operations' is to make 'tender' inquiries at some houses they entered about young women. The Army Commander at Omanthai and two officers have been directed by the Brigadier to see that their charges desist from such activities in the future.



# NON-VIOLENCE: THE NAKED TRUTH

I read with interest the reflections on Non-Violence by Rajan Hoole appearing in the SR of 1st November.

In normal life no sane man will prefer violence. It is in the context of public struggle that it becomes an option. There again, non-violence is obviously the first choice. Strikes are a common form of non-violent action, which often succeeds, though even here it sometimes fails, as it did after this government came to power and as did more recently the long miners' strike in the U.K.

When force opposes force the result will depend on the relative strength of the opposing sides. In non-violent action, strength will come only from moral force. In a national struggle the moral force of a whole people will be pitted against the physical force of the ruling State-machinery. Has this succeeded anywhere in the world? The closest it came to success was in the hands of Mahatma Gandhi, the Apostle of Non-Violence. He was a unique politician who embraced poverty and lived and worked with the poorest of his people and won their complete confidence. They actively followed him in his campaigns against British rule and waited impatiently for his assent to go into mass action. But there was an incident and Gandhi fearing an outbreak of violence, called off the campaign. This is one of the irremediable defects of a non-vio-

lent campaign. It is always possible for hostile elements to infiltrate and provoke incidents, which will justify State reprisals and the non-violent character of the campaign will go up in smoke.

As proof of the power of non-violence it is claimed that Gandhi's non-violent campaign compelled the mighty British Empire to give independence to India. A pretty story but not true. After World War II the British decided to dismantle their far-flung empire which they did by handing over power to suitable persons. Before giving independence to India,—it was divided into

and has a straightforward explanation. The Sinhalese who live and work in the fertile parts of the island did not bother about government jobs and the Muslims found occupation in trade. It was the Tamils, living in an arid country, who were compelled to earn a living by passing examinations and taking government jobs. Fortunately there were good Mission Schools which gave them a sound education and made them proficient in English. They won their place in Government service in open competition. After independence they were smothered with Sinhala only and weightage against them for 'Varsity' entrance.

and death. But unwillingness to use violence when needed can cause far greater harm, injury and death. For example if a people are denied their basic rights, discriminated against, exploited, any eventual struggle to overcome these is good—even if it means violence for a period of time.

Is it seriously suggested that non-violence is going to make the Sri Lanka Government give the Tamils the right to look after their own internal affairs in their homelands, when they have lived for thousands of years? In the unlikely event of the government doing so, the Sri Lanka Opposition led by the SLFP and the Buddhist clergy will fight against it. Though the Tamils were following the policy of non violence they were attacked in 1958, 1961, 1974, 1977, 1981 and the bloody massacre of 1983, which raised a world-wide stench.

Since then we are in constant conflict, losing the flower of our youth. None of these killings of the Tamils seemed to affect the Sinhalese people. It was only when some Sinhalese were killed in Anuradhapura that the Sinhalese people woke up. One day of action brought more awareness than twenty years of non-violent suffering!

The naked truth, as I see it, is this: If we were dealing with a government composed of men of the stamp of Gandhi, then non-violence will work.

Alas!

by

Kumar

Pakistan and India—vivisection which remains a festering sore to this day. Sri Lanka was also given independence about the same time without any campaign for independence—non-violent or violent.

By the way, it is now the fashion in some circles to say that the British followed the policy of divide and rule in Sri Lanka. Divide and rule is needed when there is opposition. In Sri Lanka there was no opposition to British rule and no need to divide and rule. The divide and rule bogey is raised only to justify the repression policies followed since independence against the Tamils, who got disproportionately higher government jobs in British times. This is true

Educated, unemployed, frustrated youth is first class incendiary material.

To get back to non-violence. Those who advocate non-violence in a national struggle must show how it will achieve success. Chelvanayakam, the leader of the Tamil National Struggle, was a believer in non-violence and practised it for near thirty years. Though he wanted federalism he was willing to accept much less offered both by the SLFP and UNP. At the end he was completely frustrated and opted to separate, though he no doubt knew it would provoke violence. It is true violence causes pain, injury

## Seminars On South Asian Studies

A Seminar programme on South Asian History and related fields has been initiated at the Evelyn Rutnam Institute for Intercultural Studies by the new Director, S. Pathmanathan, Professor of History, University of Jaffna. The first in the series was held on 13th November when Dr. Peter Schalk, Professor of Comparative Religion at the University Uppsala, Sweden spoke on 'Contemporary Buddhism in Sri Lanka'. Prof. Schalk, being a specialist on Sri Lankan Buddhism as one who has worked on this particular subject for his doctoral and post-doctoral researches, impressed the audience with his profound knowledge of the trends in contemporary Buddhism.

The second in the series was held on 5th December at which Prof. Pathmanathan delivered an address on 'The Interaction between Hin-

duism and Buddhism in Sri Lanka, circa A.D. 1300-1600'. It was well attended despite rainy weather and short notice and the conference room of the Institute was crowded to capacity. The event which commenced at 10 a. m. and was concluded at 1 p. m. provoked a most stimulating academic discussion. Prof. A. Velupillai who presided over the seminar introduced the speaker and the theme at some length.

Some of the main points stressed by the speaker with the support of historical evidence are: (1) The Hindu and Buddhist religious and cultural traditions which shared a common background were not entirely mutually exclusive and were in some respects complementary (2) They interacted in many and often different ways in the countries of South and South East Asia;

(3) The effects of this interaction were manifested in the changes in religious ideology, religious beliefs and practices, traditions of kingship and court ideology, literary motifs and themes, folk plays, architecture sculpture and the arts of music and dancing; (4) Buddhism in the form in which it had come down to the modern era, in Sri Lanka, had attained some of its distinctive and principal characteristics during this period (5) The devale institutions and the concept of 'the four guardian gods of Lanka' developed within the fold of Buddhism were inspired by Hindu influences operating chiefly through the Hindu communities and institutions established in the Sinhalese kingdom as a result of trade connections with the contemporary Hindu Kingdoms of South India; (6) At this stage, Theravada Buddhism had cast away its exclusiveness and entered on a phase of development characterized by a sp-

irit of accommodation and adjustment in respect of some of the traditions of Hinduism; (7) Hindu gods were accommodated alongside Buddhas, Iodhisattvas and devaleities in the architectural and iconographic scheme of Buddhist establishment besides being mentioned along with the 'triple-gem and the guardian gods' as objects of deep veneration; (8) Hinduism and Buddhism interacted in an atmosphere harmony and close cooperation among their adherents.

## HR Day Celebrated

To mark the U. N. Human Rights Day in Sri Lanka this year the Bhikku Organisation for Humanity organised a Poster Exhibition at the Colombo Public Library Hall on 8th December from 10 a. m. to 8 p. m. On 9th December a seminar on the topics of National Unity, Peace and Human Rights was addressed by prominent speakers. A national programme consisting of Sinhala and Tamil cultural items was also included.



# Christmas and the Poets

To generations of English speakers the coming of Christmas brings to mind the majestic (reverberating) language in which the King James Bible tells of the mystery of Christ's birth. It is the shepherds who are first told of this event, by an angel "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night... And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men". This has set the scene for much of the poetry about Christmas and these words have retained their charm over men even when they have lost their faith. They seem to bring out men's longing for all that is good and beautiful for the realisation of which the dreary world has no answer.

Rodert Bridges undoubtedly had the King James Bible in mind when he wrote these lines in "Noel: Christmas Eve, 1913" on hearing Christmas bells and music:

But to me heard afar  
it was starry music  
Angels' song, comforting  
as the comfort of Christ  
When he spake tenderly  
to his sorrowful flock:  
The old words came to me  
by the riches of time  
Mellow'd and transfigured  
As I stood on the hill  
Hearkening in the aspect  
Of th'eternal silence.

Long before the King James Bible, in medieval Roman Catholic England where learning was largely confined to clergy, simple bards wrote lyrics for simple people in language rich in austere beauty, conveying a faith of childlike simplicity:

O my dear heart, young Jesus sweet,  
Prepare thy cradle in my spirit,  
And I shall rock thee in my heart  
And never more from thee depart.

The late Sir John Betjeman was a modern poet of Anglo-Catholic persuasion who combined wit with a language of patent simplicity. The cliché "modern poetry is written for modern poets" certainly does not apply to him. His response to the mystery of Christmas is not far from that of his medieval forebears.

And is it true? And is it true,  
This most tremendous tale of  
all,  
Seen in a stained — glass window's hue,  
A Baby in an ox's stall?  
The maker of the stars and sea  
Become a Child on earth for me?

Christmas to many is a time of remembrance. Remembrance of past joys that are no more, of companions missed. Kind folk whose earthly course is run. For the young it brings to close a period of heightened activity in preparation. Perhaps many a young lad will stare at the starry heavens contemplating a private smile exchanged between him and an angelic face apparelled in white sari across the choir stalls. Tennyson while gazing at the Christmas hearth grieves over the loss of his dear friend Arthur Hallam:

The yule-log sparkled keen with frost,  
No wing of wind the region swept,  
But over all things brooding slept  
The quiet sense of something lost.

by

## FAITH

Faith in the Christian sense is an encounter with the divine in the depths of human despair—like God's own lifeline to the man sinking amidst the turmoil of the world. That God ordains strength through utter weakness is revealed in the birth and crucifixion of Christ: God of his love was born a refugee and was crucified amongst criminals. This is the short Christian answer to suffering, that it is in the nature of God himself to suffer for the folly of his creatures.

Faith is as real for the faithful as numbers are for the Mathematician, and both equally underfinable. Yet both are meant to be used. The former to order the disorderly universe of hearts and minds and the latter to order the bewildering interpenetrations of phenomena that comprise the physical universe.

The loss of faith on the other hand casts its shadow in the despairing cries of the more sensitive minds of the Romantic Movement starting from Shelly in the early 19th century, through Tennyson Clough and Arnold to Hardy and Bridges in the

early 20th century. This movement coming on the heels of the French revolution believed that when the human mind is unshackled from religion and superstitious traditions, human ingenuity and science will carry it to worlds and heights undreamed of. A beautiful expression of this hope is found in the words Oceanus in Keats' 'Hyperion':

So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,  
A power more strong in beauty,  
born of us  
And fated to excel us we pass  
In glory that old darkness:

It is this idea that gave birth to evolutionism the philosophies of Hegel and Marx and its charm still haunts us menacingly in the form of Nationalist and Revolutionary creeds.

These lines from Bridges' 'Nightingales' published in 1890, 70 years after Keats' 'Hyperion' can be considered a dirge for the burial of Romantic hopes.

Nay, barren are those mountains  
and spent the streams:  
Our song is the voice of desire,  
that haunts our dreams,  
A throe of the heart.

## Rajan Hoole

Whose pining visions dim, forbidden hopes profound,  
No dying cadence nor long sigh can sound,

For all our art.

A longing for the unquestioning faith of one's childhood is expressed in Hardy's poem 'The Oxen' written in 1915 when Hardy was 75. At mid-night on Christmas-eve an elder tells those who are gathered around a fire that the cattle outside are kneeling in worship:

We pictured the meek mild creatures where  
They dwelt in their strawy pen,  
Nor did it occur to one of us there  
To doubt they were kneeling then...  
If someone said on Christmas Eve,  
"Come; see the oxen kneel

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb  
Our childhood used to know,"  
I should go with him in the gloom,  
Hoping it might be so.

## MILTON AND VAUGHAN

John Milton (1608—74) lived in the century of the King James Bible and received at Cambridge the best education available at that time.

Ancient Greek lore and Platonic philosophy first brought to Europe by Arab and Jewish conduits were in post Renaissance Europe the mainstay of higher education and Milton's poetry revels in it. This caused some unease amongst his puritan circles of Cromwell's republic which he served 11 years as Latin Secretary.

Despite his faith and fortitude, and constant renewals of his pledge to serve God in his work, he was far from being the idyllic hero of romantic novels who can only go from glory to glory. If heroism is the word, his was more along the lines of Job—the sort of irony captured in Jane Austen's novels. Milton went into courtship and marriage with the expectations of many a youth in love with love. Soon after, his wife went to visit her parents and did not come back for two years. Diplomacy then was not the polite art it is today. Milton's work as Latin Secretary involved writing vituperative epistles in Latin. This exacerbated his eyesight and made him completely blind at 44. He then had to get others to read to him and to take down his words. His daughters were understandably peeved at being made to read in languages they did not understand. Besides his blindness Milton suffered from gout. Despite these irritations, in his poetry Milton has soared to some of the heights of devotion and majesty ever reached in the English Language.

What in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That to the highth of this great Argument  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the wayes of God to men.  
(Invocation to paradise Lost)

Milton's was an age when faith was not in question and people more readily acknowledged God's providence and mercy in their day to day lives. Perhaps his life is an illustration of how God really uses men:

The ensuing verse is from Milton's 'On the morning of Christ's Nativity' composed when he was 21, fresh from the Platonic lore of Cambridge:

Ring out ye Crystall spheres,  
Once bless our human ears,  
(If ye have power to touch our senses so)

And let your silver chime  
Move in melodious time;

(Continued on page 10)



Thiruvembavai is a festival specially meant for the observance of unmarried ladies to invoke the aid of the deity to procure for them good husbands and for the prosperity of the country. It paints in vivid colours the kind of life which ladies lived in these far off days. The observance of this ten day festival is known as Pavai Nonpu.

The old order has been changing fast in every sphere, but there are still a large number of Hindus who continue to cling to the age old rituals and traditions handed down from generation to generation. In this context, Hindus attach great significance and importance to "Thiruvembavai" which consists of twenty hymns, composed by the Tamil Saint and poet Manickavasagar, who flourished in South India.

## SR's 5th Anniversary

If all Hell does not break loose in Jaffna soon, we propose to bring out a bumper issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW on 24th January, 1987 to commemorate our 5th Anniversary.

Readers' contributions to this special issue must be received by 10th January the latest. These should not exceed 1000 words.

All advertisements should also be received by 10th January.

Because of the uncertainties of the present situation in the North, the publication of a sister Tamil weekly —YUKAM—and an English daily have been deferred, though plans are in advanced stage.

## Former D. D. C. Member Writes In Anguish

May I be permitted to place the following facts for your Excellency's merciful and sympathetic notice on the activities of the security Forces in Amparai District. Nothing of the inimical to the interest of the Government has happened in this area. Dangerous and serious activities of "terrorism" are few, when compared with the other Tamil Districts. In short, there is peace in our area. But, Tamil villages are rounded up every minute and then village by village. Every males who are seen are arrested and put into the prison at the STF Camps, out of them few are released after severe beating. Most of the people arrested are Farmers, Labourers, Work-

ers, Masons and Carpenters, including students and business men, who have nothing to do with terrorism at all. Pathetic conditions of the wives,

**MR. A. VELMURUGU, FORMER MEMBER OF THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, AMPARAI HAS SENT THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO PRESIDENT JAYEWARDENE.**

mothers and sisters and females and relations are beyond description.

I appeal to your Excellency to visit this area in person and see

# Thiruvembavai

When the king of the Pandyan Kingdom came to know of the genius and learning of Manickavasagar, he made him his Prime Minister and conferred on him the title 'Tennavan-Brahmarayan.' Many of Manickavasagars poems are remarkable for their great wisdom which sways our emotions and are full of figures of speech and allegories. "Thiruvagasam" is a verse full of pathos and piety. In that hymn are

by

**S. K. Thiruchitrampalam**

enumerated the evolution of life from grass, worm, and beast to superman.

"Thiruvembavai" is said to have been composed by the Saint for the use in particular by women at dawn, among whom it was the tradition to celebrate a festival in honour of God Siva and the Goddess Sakthi in the month of Markali between the second half of December and the first half of January. The verses are in the form of an address by one lady to her companion and vice versa. During this time the ladies of the village irrespective of age and caste barriers rise before dawn, walk through streets arousing their friends from door to door and proceed to bathe in the holy tank. The month of Markali is also a sign of the awa-

kening of the universe from its long slumber. It is the dawn of a new way of life, a turning of our hearts and minds towards a better way of life in which religious and noble ideals play a prominent part, the triumph of mind over matter or good over evil.

The hymns depicting the scenes during the festival where ladies go from door to door of their neighbourhood testify to the great gift and

command of the Tamil Language of the Saint.

It awakens the nobler part of our nature to a high pitch and exhorts us to live the truly religious life, a life of Service to all. To quote one or two instances in the poet's hymns from "Thiruvembavai" will not be out of place here. Some maidens immediately they get up from bed before dawn go to their friends houses in their neighbourhood and finding their friends still asleep exhort them as follows: "Oh Lady of the bright eye! - Are your ears dull and deaf? Have you not heard the sound of praise that We prayed for the providence".

In another place the maidens explain:—

"Oh Lady radiant with pearl like smile—Have you not come to dawn".

To this as a reply the lady quite ignoring the call from her friends

directs a question at them as to whether all the other sweet voiced ones had come. She puts this question on account of her laziness to get up from the bed. Pat comes the really from the maidens:—

"They all have come - Don't sleep in vain. Awake and ascertain your self and if they are not here - you may go and sleep again for ever".

In another context the ladies exclaim and address the Lord and make a vow!

"We are your children— We have taken refuge under you- O God' we make one prayer. Let none but thine own lovers true our joins embrace and shall not serve anyone except thyself. Our eye shall

not see anything except thyself in day or night.

The maidens in another place remind their fellow companions as to how she promised the previous day that she herself will come and put them up but now she herself will come and put them up but now she herself will come and put them up but now she herself is fast asleep. This is expressed in beautiful verse in the following manner:— manner:- "O fawn, but yesterday than said'st at dawn I come to rouse you up, but now, all unabased.

Tell us, what quarter didst thou seek? is't not yet dawn?

In all parts of the country every devout Hindu, men and women, old and young, group themselves and go to the nearest temple in the village or town, to offer prayers and pay homage during Thiruvembavai. When the twenty hymns are sung in the temples, other devotees too join in the singing of hymns in soft and subdued voices as is in awe of the deity. Every hymn sung is followed by short rituals. To the peeling of bells, beating of drums, the blowing of conch shells, and amidst the cries of "Arohara" men and women show their religious devotion, which the magic of the songs and rituals had inspired in them, by prostrating on the ground. The language and the music of the songs fill one's soul with so much awe that one forgets one has a body and is conscious of the existence of mind and soul only. A very solemn atmosphere is created by the enchanting songs, time stands still as it were and one feels the presence of the deity himself. The devotees pay homage by lighting camphor and joss sticks.

The language used in the songs by the poet is so majestic that becomes of the existence of soul and the greatness of feels the evanescence and van life and longs for a higher and better life.



# Upholding Civilised Norms In Wartime

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

During the last world war, one of the star battle-ships of the German Navy, Graft Spee, was encountered by three British Warships in the South Atlantic. In the ensuing naval battle, the German vessel was heavily damaged. It started limping into the port of Buenos Aires in neutral Argentina.

This incident was reported to London by the three British warships, who waited for further orders. The reply from London was that, they could, if they wish, pursue the injured enemy vessel, but in doing so, they should keep a respectful distance.

This highly revered British tradition should be a lesson to both Tamil Eelam Freedom Fighters and the Sinhalese Armed Forces fighting in the North and the East.

We are happy and grateful to Area Commander Kittu and Captain Rahim for the highly commendable act of handing over the bodies of the nine dead Sinhalese soldiers to the Sinhalese Army. This is in accordance with the prescribed norms adhered to by military circles of all civilised nations throughout the world.

This war, in the North and the East between the Sinhalese and the Tamils, is nothing strange to this world, and is not going to last for ever. But one day, when it comes to an end, both Sinhalese and Tamils,

should be able to show the world that they are on par with any other civilised nation on earth in war as well as in peace.

If Japan and America (with Pearl Harbour and Hiroshima) can be friends, if England and Italy can be friends, and if France and Germany can be friends, it will not be a strange phenomenon, if the Sinhalese and Tamils, who are at war today, will be friends some day.

And when that happens, both nations, as well as their respective Armed Forces, can be proud that they have maintained the highest military traditions observed by Armed Forces of all civilised countries throughout the world today.

Talawa Premadasa Punchihewa

## LETTERS

### Ashamed?

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

The Sinhala-Thuppathi controversy, between the Sinhalese gentry and their hybrid brethren, would appear to be spilling into your pages too. It was amusing to see Mr. Jehan Perera claim to be more Sinhalese than even the President. But why this shame among the Silvas and Pereras to acknowledge their Portuguese forbears? Why seek to smudge history by putting this new theory

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

A most eloquent picture of peace, alas, to which the culinary preparations for Christmas show scant respect. Can we who long for peace condone this wanton butchery of 'meek mild creatures' human or otherwise? I shall close with these lines from 'the Book' by the mystical poet Henry Vaughan paraphrasing Isaiah's prophecy. Vaughan was a contemporary of Milton.

Thou shalt restore trees, beasts and men,  
When thou shalt make all new again  
Destroying only death and pain,  
Give him amongst thy works a place,  
Who in them loved and sought thy face!

that the Sinhalese are a fair-skinned race?

The Mahavamsa consistently, and very proudly, claims the Sinhalese as being "kalu" (black). Vijaya's grandson, the father of the redoubtable Dutugemunu, bears the cognomen Kaka-Varna Tissa, meaning that he was black as a crow. And King Valagambahu, in whose time the Tripitaka was compiled is described as stocky and black, "Mah-Dandu Kalu".

The Sinhalese, as also the Maldivians, who share the same basic dialect, are the pre-Dravidian people of this region. Buddhism has Palicized the Sinhalese language, while Islam has Arabicized Maldivian. But neither are the Sinhalese Aryans nor the Maldivians Semitic.

Vaddukodai K. R. Chellappah

### Rigmarole

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

I read with great interest Jill F. Newsham's long RIGMAROLE—a grief-stricken ALLEGORY—which might have moved a congregation to the point of tears, perhaps during the Colonial era. Her ALLEGORY, in defence of the Methodist Head is full of quotations from the scriptures. This reminds me of a frail Sunday School Teacher (madam) who used to din it into our little heads then that even the DEVIL could quote scriptures.

With reference to Jill's statement in para two—"THERE IS NO WAY MR. KIRUPARAJ CAN SUBSTANTIATE THAT REV. HAROLD FERNANDO WAS ELECTED WITH THE UNSTINTED SUPPORT OF THE NORTH AND EAST", may I be permitted to remind the GOOD GOSPEL WORKER that Rev. Harold Fernando was elected President of the Methodist Conference by the barest majority of a single vote. His closest rival, Rev. Kingsley Muthiah was most unfortunate in having lost the PRESIDENTIAL RACE by a mere whisker, a solitary vote. The CRUCIAL VOTE—the DECIDING ONE—was cast in favour of Rev. Harold Fernando by none other than a Padre, near and dear to me, and presently posted as a Minister in North. Aren't facts stranger than fiction, Jill? This TRUTH and nothing but the TRUTH did really come out of the horse's mouth. If I could meet in you in person I may then be able to reveal this name to you. Doesn't this SECRET BALLOT of my Padre brother reveal the UNSTINTED SUPPORT FROM THE NORTH, Jill?

There was yet another, perhaps from the East, who had figured prominently with the aforesaid Padre in the PRESIDENTIAL STAKES. In this context, may I remind our good Jill that it was a quirk of fate—a well conceived and deliberate plan—that 'pushed' the unfortunate Rev. Kingsley Muthiah to accept the post of Secretary to the Methodist Conference. Had Rev. Kingsley declined the post of Secretaryship, nothing—not even the manoeuvres and dilly-dallying of the aforesaid 'two'—could have prevented him (Kingsley) from holding the prestigious position of Chairman of the North-East Synod today.

As for Jill's reference to a METHODIST TRADING PUNCHES STRAIGHT AND TRUE," I wish to state that if John Wesley were to be living at this hour, to witness the SORRY SPECTACLE within our Methodist set-up, I am sure, he wouldn't certainly have grudged my utterance, Jill!

I was, as a school-boy of six, fascinated by the tale, JACK AND THE BEAN STALK. But now, at sixty, I seem to have taken a real fascination for "JILL AND HER ALLEGORY"

Victor S. Kiruparaj  
Jaffna.

### Truth Will Out

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

The President of Sri Lanka at a ceremony where artists, writers and others were honoured said every citizen of Sri Lanka, whether Sinhalese Muslim or Tamil is being treated alike! What a wonderful, hopeful and encouraging statement! If that is so, can he explain why there is this ethnic problem and why so many innocent lives are being destroyed by the army which is under his command.

The people in authority think that they are clever and they can fool the people all the time but, one day people will come to know the actual truth.

Jaffna John

### Artful

Editor  
SATURDAY REVIEW

I read with great sorrow the two news items - 'SHELLS SHATTER LULL WADAMARADCHI WAR GAMES—in your 22nd Nov. iss. - not because anything worse than those had not happened before in Jaffna, but, because they have taken place just after a very moving speech at the SAARC in Bangalore where it was said in sadness, "Every time a bullet kills a person, whether it is a terrorist bullet or a bullet from the Security services of my country, it goes deep into my heart."

How artful we could be in making heart-melting speeches abroad and taking thoughtless actions at home! Let us not forget that action speaks louder than words even in our peace process.

Puttalam Angela Anthonypillai

## Christmas and...

(Continued from page 8)

And let the base of Heaven's deep  
Organ blow,  
And with your ninefold harmony  
Make up a full consort to th'  
Angelic symphony.

Milton was also a competent musician whose poetry has inspired recent musicians Parry and Vaughan-Williams. The 'music of the spheres' has the same reference as in the memorable discourse on music which Lorenzo gives Jessica in Shakespeare's 'Merchant of Venice'. The Biblical fall of man is represented in Platonic terms as a breaking of that ancient universal (musical) harmony in the soul of man, the harmony that is now to be found in the orderly motion of distant celestial bodies (spheres). Milton returns to this theme in, 'At a Solemn Musick.'

One of the most attractive themes at Christmas is the foretelling of the birth of Christ by Prophet Isaiah:



CUDDLED on a sofa in the entrance hall of a transients' hostel in Zurich, the airforce officer from Iran, the warehouseman from Ghana, and the student from Zaire have one thing in common. Nine months ago none of them ever dreamed they would be sitting in the German-speaking part of a small European country, cut off from their friends and families, and with no idea where they will be in another nine months time.

Like victims of a long-drawn-out hijacking, they look numbed and uncertain, with the listlessness and boredom of people for whom waiting has become a daily routine. These are the "new refugees" a handful of the roughly 100,000 people from the Third world who have come to Europe in the last 12 months to seek safe haven. The fact that they left their homes voluntarily does not alter their status as victims of circumstances beyond their control—civil war, racial persecution, political oppression and economic collapse.

The response of most Europeans has been indifferent or ungenerous. While a few voluntary organisations have worked hard to help individuals and lobby for their cause, European governments have reacted coldly. Many have tightened their laws against the refugees or are in the process of doing so. They argue that the bulk of them are economic migrants, and therefore undeserving of sympathy.

Only in Switzerland have a few ordinary citizens dared to defy their government and secretly shelter refugees threatened with deportation in a move modelled on the Sanctuary movement that protects Central American refugees in the United States.

Western Europe has accepted hundreds of thousands of refugees since 1945, first those who were displaced by the war, and subsequently successive groups of Hungarians, Czechs, and Poles fleeing from the East.

"The only thing which has changed in recent years is where they are coming from," says Philip Rudge, secretary of the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles, an association of the main national voluntary organisations. "They come from the Third World, which shows that the main cause of the hard new line is prejudice."

As always, prejudice builds on an amalgam of false statistics, emotive language and wrong assumptions.

The 170,000 asylum-seekers who were registered by European govern-

ments last year are not all new arrivals. There is no coordination by European governments on how to compile figures, or differentiate between people who come in and ask for asylum and those already living here who have developed ties in Europe. More than half the asylum-seekers in Britain between 1979 and 1982, for example, were Iranians, and most were students here who were afraid to go home.

The figures show that newspaper headlines and politicians' rhetoric about "floods" "waves" and "hordes" of refugees "swamping" Europe are absurd, given the size of Europe's native population and that richness of its societies. The wild talk also overlooks the fact the 80 per cent of the world's refugee population are in the Third World. Most are displaced within their own countries or flee to neighbouring states.

As Jean-Pierre Hocke, the United Nations High Commissioner for

and says he has no future as long as the Mobutu regime remains in power. Obe, the Ghanian, went to the Ivory Coast, where his wife and five children are waiting for him. He crossed the Sahara to Libya in a lorry, took a boat to Italy, and then hid in a train across the Alps.

Wrong assumptions are rife. The main two are that the new refugees are not genuine victims of persecution, and that many are nothing but economic migrants. A third is that they are impoverished peasants, who—whatever their motivations—are unsuitable for integration in Western Europe.

It is true that many do not qualify under the 1951 Convention which provides for asylum to any person who is outside the country of his nationality "owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, or membership of a particular social group or political opinion".

## COLD HEARTS AND PREJUDICE

by

Jonathan Steele

Refugees puts it, "More than nine million refugees are to be found in the developing countries which are least able, because of their own population pressures and economic difficulties, to assume this added burden."

The difference now is that the few Third World refugees who come to Europe do so uninvited. Whereas the Indo-chinese "boat people" of the 1970s left home for nearby states and then waited patiently in miserable Asian camps for the developed world to take some of them in, the "jet people" of the 1980s were not so meek. They sacrificed savings for airline tickets, and, as European visa rules tightened, for false documents as well. Then they simply arrived.

Others came by sea and land. Joseph (not his real name) the Zairean student I met in the Zurich transients' home paid \$200 for a boat trip to and illegal landing in Marseilles, and another Dollar 50 for a trip to Switzerland, hiding in a lorry.

He had taken part in a university strike in 1982, was dismissed

Originally, the convention was confined to events in Europe but it was widened in 1967 to include all countries. Not all states accepted the geographical broadening. Among Nato members, neither Italy nor Turkey has, with the result that a Somali can apply for refugee status in France but not in Italy, the former colonial mother-country, while in Turkey a Pole can receive asylum but not an Iranian from next door.

The UNHCR and the voluntary organisations are urging European governments to accept a broad rather than a narrow interpretation of the conventions. Tamils afraid of army reprisals against their villages in northern Sri Lanka are increasingly being told that they cannot justify a fear of persecution on the mere existence of a civil war. "No one suggests that there is genocide in Sri Lanka," says Jean Brouste, the head of the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless Persons.

"It is a civil war, as in Lebanon, and we don't give asylum to all Lebanese. There is repression which can sometimes be blind but on the

whole it is directed at members of separatist movements." Some 15 per cent of Tamils were recognised as refugees last year. In Switzerland only 2.68 per cent were.

The suggestion that most refugees are economic migrants is rejected by Henriette Taviani, the head of the voluntary organisation France Terre d'Asile, and UNHCR's former representative in Paris. "Who are the foreigners who come to France mainly to work? It is the North Africans primarily, and then the Portuguese. Now when the government blocked immigration from North Africa in the 1970s, you would have expected a big increase in refugees, if people were trying to come in under a different statute. There was no such increase."

"If the problems were purely economic you would have expected an increase during the worst of the famine in the Sahel, from places like Mali and Mauritania. Again there was no such increase. The fact is that the asylum seekers in France, come mainly from countries which are not places of traditional emigration to France, like Sri Lanka (ex-British), Zaire (ex-Belgian) and Angola (ex-Portuguese)."

As for the Tamils, she points out they account for 98 per cent of the refugees from Sri Lanka. "If it were a civil war, you would expect Sinhalese as well. What's going on in Sri Lanka is racial persecution."

She and other representatives of the non-governmental organisations complain that refugees are increasingly being included in a mood of general xenophobia in Europe, whereas they used to be seen separately.

Martin Barber, director of the British Refugee Council, says the motivation for people to leave their countries of origin varies widely. At one extreme there is the person who was lucky enough to be out when the police or the death squad came by, and who is afraid now to go home. At the other there are people whose economic situation is worsening.

"In between there is a range of motives. Most of the new refugees were well established. People are saying things have become so intolerable that we're abandoning what we've got. After all, people do not leave home easily."

No solution to the refugee problem can be found, he believes, without a comprehensive effort by the industrialised countries to deal with the misery, the conflicts, and the ethnic tensions which the debt and other economic crises has sparked off in the Third World. Europe cannot just shut its doors.



# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

### KALMUNAI:

## POLICE ON THE RAMPAGE

How much did the lives of a Sub-Inspector and two other police officers cost? For an answer, one has to go into all the available records since 1982. However the recent incidents in Kalmunai on 13th December show that the lives of three police officers in terms of costs were 50 houses, 5 cars, a Pillaiyar Temple and 3 Rice Mills and a lorry apart from 3 Muslim civilians including a woman and a Tamil.

The Government Media Centre has been at pains to state that three civilians were killed in the "incident" which followed the ambushing of a Police convoy. The Media Centre also mentions that the dead woman's 10 year old daughter had been sent to the Kandy Hospital in a critical condition. The Government Media Centre was obviously silent about the "civilian killers".

On 13th morning, a Police party which was on patrol on the Kalmunai-Akkaraipattu Road, was ambushed by the militants near the 3rd Division of Kalmunai, a predominantly Muslim area. Immediately after this incident, Police officers from Sammanthurai and Kalmunai—among them were some Special Task Force personnel—rushed to the scene and went on a rampage. An unofficial 19 hour curfew was clamped down in the Kalmunai area on the 13th at about 11 a.m. and was lifted on the 14th.

The Special Task Force (STF) and Police were seen patrolling the calm and otherwise busy township of Kalmunai.

The Muslim and Tamils had jointly called for a hartal in protest against the killings and arson on the 15th Kalmunai based Islamic Youth League led a call for hartal and on 16th December Kalmunai, Sammanthurai, Maruthamunai, Addalachenai, Ninthavoor, Pandiruppu, and Thuraincelaverni observed the hartal. Perhaps, this was the first time Tamils and Muslims of Kalmunai got together for a Hartal.

Ironically, the Minister of Transport Mr. M. H. Mohamed who visited the affected area on the 16th ran into the hartal. No one—either a Tamil or a Muslim—was there to receive the Minister. The Minister had a brief tour with full military escort and rushed back to Colombo in a copter.

He was reportedly met by the M. P. for Kalmunai, Mr. A.R. M. Munsoor, the Assistant Government Agent Mr. M. H. Mohinudeen, and the Co-ordinating Officer, Mr. Sumith Silva. The Minister also reportedly said that he would be placing his report to the Cabinet on the damages, and would also consider the question of paying compensation to those affected, and the appointing of a Commission to investigate the incident.

The Citizens Committee of Batticaloa had made urgent representations to President Jayewardene to hold an immediate inquiry into the incidents in Kalmunai.

At the time of writing this report normality has returned to Kalmunai. However, the main disturbing aspect of the whole episode is the proposal of setting up a permanent base for the Special Task Force (STF) in Kalmunai. At present, there are no permanent stations for them in the Area.

### Picketing Again

The Pawners' Association of Jaffna resumed picketing of all the Branches of the People's Bank in the Jaffna District on 18th December.

The picketing will continue till the Bank releases all the pawned articles to the pawners.

The Association decided on this step at its Annual General Meeting held on 13th December. A new Committee of office-bearers was elected at the AGM.

## LTTE Should Do Some Rethinking

Here is the text of a statement by the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS) on the clashes between the LTTE and EPRLF.

The course of action presently undertaken followed by the LTTE will only undermine the cause of the movement in general and further pave the way for interference on the part of India. It is therefore essential that the LTTE should do some rethinking on the policy of violence that they have embarked on.

The confrontation between the LTTE and the EPRLF will only facilitate the Sri Lankan Government's endeavour to crush the aspiration of the Tamil speaking people. This is not the time for divisive action which will not only endanger the well being of our people but also bring to nought the successes achieved so far by the militants. It is reported that

once the main reason for onslaught on the EPRLF LTTE is the suspicion that are being manipulated by India by her own ends.

If the allegation is true the conversely any action taken against the EPRLF will boomerang on the other militant groups as India will not tolerate a situation of the nature passively.

We therefore exhort the Tamil speaking people with one voice demand the cessation of the violence that is being perpetrated on the EPRLF and not be indifferent to the actions of the LTTE.

Their cry should be "Stop Warring among yourselves and unite to continue the fight for Eelam."

### 50-CENT FUND

The liquidity problem has reached crisis proportions in Jaffna with banks no longer handling cash directly.

Even 50-cent coins are hard to come by.

So last week we managed to raise only Rs.5.50 to pay the legal costs awarded by the Press Council to the Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulath Mudali over a plaint filed against the SATURDAY REVIEW.

With this remittance, by postal order, we have so far paid in instalments Rs. 381.50 of the total amount of Rs.1,575 awarded to him.

The order in another complaint filed by the Minister against the SR is expected to be made shortly.

The complaint is over an article by Dr. David Selbourne published in the SR of 10th August 1985.

On the final day of inquiry, 5th December 1986, the Editor was in the witness-box for over two hours.

Mr. R. Gunaratne, Attorney-at-law, appeared for the Minister. Mr. S. Sittampalam, Attorney-at-law, appeared for the New Era Publications Ltd.

### APPEAL TO SUBSCRIBERS

We wish to remind Readers who have not yet renewed their subscriptions to do so early because it is the best way to ensure that your favourite newspaper reaches you regularly.

Especially for Readers in the South, this is the sure way, despite postal delays occasionally, to get your copies because bulk transport to our Agent in Colombo has often got disrupted due to untoward events on the way.

In Jaffna itself, we are working under very difficult circumstances.

It would be a source of strength to us if more and more readers rally round us and not only send their own subscriptions but also get their friends to take out subscriptions.

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