

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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Paradiso Or Inferno?

There is guarded optimism in political circles in Colombo that despite the opposition of the SLFP ex-Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna led by Dinesh Gunawardene and sections of the Buddhist clergy, President Jayewardene would this time be able to push through the proposals (see SATURDAY REVIEW of 5th July, 1986) for a settlement of the ethnic problem.

The President has already obtained Cabinet sanction for the proposals. There is no reason to think that Parliament will withhold approval.

For, just as in the North, there is a yearning in the South for an end to this senseless

violence, on both sides, that has brought Sri Lanka to the brink of ruin.

This is the best climate to strive for a settlement. Settlement is possible provided there is give and take on both sides.

The fact that the TULF leaders were present in Colombo for the duration of the Political Parties' Conference from 15th to 18th July, was significant. Though they did not participate in the talks, the TULF General Secretary, Mr. Amirthalingam, said in the television interview on 17th July that his party has not totally rejected the proposals nor accepted them in toto. This, too, is a hopeful sign. There is plenty of room to negotiate and Mr. Amir-

thalingam and his colleagues have been meeting the President on this issue over the past several days.

What finally matters is what 'The Boys' think of the proposals. They don't trust the President. His credibility is very low among them. That is the President's fault. Too often he has gone back on his word, 'The Boys' say.

If the President can win the confidence of 'The Boys' then the problem would be over. We say, as we said on 29th September 1984, "Invite the Tigers to the Table". Let them also meet the political leaders here, particularly, Mrs. Bandaranaike, Dinesh Gunawardene and the Maha Sangha before a final settlement is reached.

It will be a novel experience for them where the elders learn from the saplings. Youths have plenty of grievances. This must be remedied, if the elders are to live in peace.

Old style high-handedness, the fashion of a by-gone era, cannot withstand the challenge of present-day youth. They also demand a place under the sun. They must be given a place. Or, else, Dante's inferno.

Kalmunai Citizens Committee Chairman Paul Nallanayagam, who was charged on four counts, walked out of the Colombo High Court as a free man on Thursday.

Mr. Nallanayagam, a naturalised citizen of Canada, was charged for 1) conspiracy, 2) spreading false rumours regarding incidents at Karaitivu, 3) spreading false rumours regarding incidents at Oluvil and 4) spreading false rumours regarding incidents at Natpittimunai.

High Court Judge K. Viknarajah discharged him on all four counts. The State however did not press the charge on the third count.

Mr. Nallanayagam, a retired member of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, was defended by Messrs. S. Nadesan Q.C., J.C.T. Kotelawela, Ms. Suriya Wickremesinghe, Ainsley Samarajiva, J.F. Xavier, K.S. Alagarajah and Miss Nimalka Fernando. Additional Solicitor General Mr. Sunil de Silva and State Counsel Nihara Rodrigo prosecuted.

Amir on Rupavahini

"We are not particularly concerned now about our legitimacy as representatives of the Tamil people. But we can say for certain that the Tamil people, by and large, look up to us to negotiate a settlement and end their suffering," replied TULF Secretary-General A. Amirthalingam to a question about whether the TULF represents the Tamil people. "Hear, hear, well said," applauded an old lady seated in front of the telly. "It is nice to hear Amir speak sense," said a more demanding critic, as former classmates are wont to be. On the whole it was a performance that would have brought comfort to all people and to the Tamils in particular. In a statesmanlike manner Amir said that all people in this country had suffered and a settlement would bring good to all. Some felt that Amir could have been more forceful in pointing out that Tamils had suffered far more grievously. Amir further said that two weeks would be about a good period in which to negotiate a settlement and that the TULF was not attending the PPC as both sides will tend to posture in public and get things on record for future use, a practice which they discovered at the APC, was not conducive to fruitful negotiations. He added that talks with the President had been useful and that if a good agreement was reached he had no doubt that the Tamil people and by and large the militants who have publicly said that they will take their cue from their people, will accept it.

The interviewer Ariyasinghe chose his questions well, but showed persistent bad manners in using the term terrorists for militants even after Amir had objected to its use.

—R.H.

PPC: Familiar Syndrome

(By D. B. S. JEYARAJ)

Behind the scenes looms the benign diplomacy of India.

Of the variety of events contributing to this state of affairs the biggest obstacle seems to be disagreement over the Unit of Devolution. The Tamil Militant groups, the T.U.L.F. and Tamil Congress remain uncompromising on their stand that the Northern and Eastern Provinces should comprise One Unit while the Government is inflexible in opposing the merger.

The SATURDAY REVIEW learns that in the bi-lateral talks between the Govt. and the T.U.L.F. many Govt. leaders have been very conciliatory in expanding the substantial Powers of the Provincial Council but are intransigent towards extending the unit to comprise two Provinces. The Eastern Province component of the T.U.L.F. also seems adamant that both Provinces should be together.

The Political Parties Conference (PPC) initiated by President Jayewardene is being assailed by the familiar pattern of events which disrupted or undermined similar attempts in the past. The disruptive syndrome of uncompromising intransigence, political opportunism, whipping up of communal passions and the spectre of violence in Tamil areas threaten to transform the present Conference too into an exercise in futility.

The redeeming features which have prevented the Conference from grinding to a halt are President Jayewardene's determination to push through the proposals, the mature response of a politically mellowed TULF and the militant hierarchy, and the constructive support of the Left-oriented parties.

Two other issues have also cast their shadow on the Govt. - T.U.L.F. bi-lateral talks. In Jaffna five militant groups comprising the L.T.T.E. - P.L.O.T.E. - E.P.R.L.F. - E.R.O.S. - T.E.A. staged a demonstration and mass meeting protesting against the P.P.C. The T.U.L.F. came in for heavy criticism during this demonstration.

Apart from this over a hundred civilians have been reported killed in two operations while the P.P.C. was in progress. The incidents in Adampan and Muthur have revived memories of the Vavuniya and Trincomalee massacres that caused the Thimpu talks to end. A T.U.L.F. delegation met President Jayewardene and complained about the atrocities.

Likewise despite the Tamil Militant leaders announcing in India that they neither supported

(Continued on page 8)

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OFFICE-BEARERS

The Lions Club of Jaffna (Lions Clubs International - District 306 B Sri Lanka) at a meeting held at Old Park Chinese Restaurant on 29th June 1986 installed the following new office-bearers: **PRESIDENT:** LION S. MAHENDRA, (Director, Merchant Finance Ltd.), **SECRETARY:** LION T. POOPALASINGHAM (private building contractor), **TREASURER:** LION V. ARIARATNAM (Chartered Accountant).

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COLONISATION, DEVOLUTION, SINHALA INTERESTS-2

Traditional Homelands: Core Of Tamil Nationalism

(Continued from last issue)

Prof. K. M. de Silva in his *A HISTORY OF SRI LANKA* observes that an important political consequence of the establishment of colonisation schemes in the dry zone during the Donoughmore period was the deep suspicion among the indigenous Tamils that "an irreversible process had begun, and with it the increasing prospects of a confrontation between the intruding colonists and Tamil settlements".

G. G. Ponnambalam in his exhortation before the Soulbury Commission, complained of the low priority and poor allocations for major and minor irrigation works, for restoration of old tanks and opening up of forest land in the Northern and Eastern provinces as opposed to the Sinhala areas in the dry zone. When investments were made in the Tamil areas after independence, they were for the purpose of carrying out Sinhala Plantations. With the emergence of the Tamil Federal Party the political demands of the Tamils were given a territorial basis and the concept of 'traditional homelands' became the core of a restive Tamilian nationalism. After forty years of by no means pleasant experience of interspersed living, the Tamils cannot be expected to voluntarily forsake the right to their homelands.

The Tamils are not unaware that in Malaysia, as Prof. S. Arasaratnam has pointed out, "the Chinese and Indians are unable to take a firm stand for language and other ethnic rights against the Malays, largely because they do not hold a part of the country where they can establish their own cultural institutions." The Palestinian question in the State of Israel is totally the result of Jewish intrusion into traditional Arab settlements in a manner similar to the one that is apparently being contemplated by the Sri Lankan government, perhaps not without Israeli inspiration. All observers of the Middle East who are not afflicted by Reaganomania, agree that the Palestinian homeland question, the Lebanon crisis, Iraq-Iran war and the uneven-handedness of the US policy in the region constitute the root cause of individual terrorism in the Middle East. It is not so much the Libyan Bedouin, Muammar Gaddafi, as the US Sheriff habitually claims. Canadian Foreign Minister Joe Clark, while on a recent

visit to Israel, is reported to have stressed that the key to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict is the establishment of a Palestinian homeland in the West Bank and the Gaza strip. Clark went to the extent of describing the PLO "as a force to be dealt with" and emphasised that Palestinians "have their rights too".

Well, so do the Tamils of Sri Lanka. Their rights are not diminished merely because history has landed them in a place which is not a high priority location in so far as international relations are concerned. It is a matter for gratification for those Sri Lankans committed to the realisation of justice and equality for the country's ethnic minorities, that two of its Prime Ministers were able to enter into agreements with the Tamil leader S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, which recognised the Tamil rights to

if precipitated, can be resolved by incorporating them into 'autonomous republics' within the Tamil Unit as in Yugoslavia; or by bringing them under 'Union territories' outside the Tamil unit, as in India.

The intransigence of the government is not to defend the interests of the Sinhalese. On the contrary it is exploiting the siege perceptions of the Sinhalese to justify the militarisation of politics. The MIRJE statement calls upon the government to "work out with the representatives of the Tamil people a Political solution that recognises their territorial, linguistic and cultural identity". But even the most optimistic observers are becoming increasingly less sanguine about the prospects for peace and a political solution under the present government.

Neither the Tamils nor their representatives can be blamed for their unwillingness to take into their confidence a government that has made them the target of its scorched earth policy, aerial strafing and off-shore shelling. It has become clear that from time to time the government would let fly a political balloon for the benefit of the annual Sri Lanka Aid Group Meeting. The government sources are said to have hinted at the possibility of having an International Commission called upon to recommend a formula for land alienation in the Tamil homeland. Evidently the government would be inclined to seek international ratification after fundamentally changing the demographic pattern of the Northern and Eastern provinces. We can merely echo the warning given by MIRJE that such actions will only postpone the return of peace to Sri Lanka, as indeed it has happened in the Middle East.

What the MIRJE statement seems to have left unsaid is that there are alternatives to the dominant Senanayake legacy, now stretched to ethnocidal proportions, of capital intensive dry zone colonisation for resolving the land and agrarian problems of the Sinhalese. It is a moot point whether this realisation and a corresponding recognition of the Tamil position will be given their due place in the reportedly growing dissident movement among the Sinhalese. One thing is clear. Without taking a principled position on the question of the Tamil homeland, the opposition to the present government, even if it is able to bring about a change of rulers in Colombo, will not be able to hold the country together any better than it is being held now.

(CONCLUDED)

BY AMALI

their traditional homelands. As a matter of fact, following his agreement with Chelvanayakam in 1959 S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, as Prime Minister, despite the subsequent abrogation of the agreement, did not permit the settlement of new Sinhala colonists in the Northern and Eastern provinces. Even the two Republican Constitutions, notwithstanding their grave shortcomings in the area of minority rights, have granted a special status to the Northern and Eastern provinces in the administration of the language laws of the country. What had been conceded by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and Dudley Senanayake and recognised by the Republican Constitutions cannot be argued away by academic greenhorns, political nondescripts and private researchers in Colombo.

The single unit demand of the TULF does not jeopardise the interests of the Sinhalese. At a recent seminar in Oxford, Prof. A. J. Wilson suggested two practical steps to create an acceptable single Tamil unit: by tacking the Tamil majority areas in the Eastern Province to the present Northern Province and withdrawing the Tamil population in the South to the Tamil homeland over an agreed period of time. Within a system of autonomous regional units, one of which shall be the Tamil State, the question of the Muslims and the Sinhalese in the Eastern Province,

'Forgive Them; They Don't Know What They Say'

We, the members of the Old Boys' Association of St. Patrick's College, Jaffna, deplore with utter disgust your abusive 'open letter' regarding the address delivered at the Prize-giving of our alma mater by his Lordship, Bishop B. Deogupillai, the Patron of our Association and our Chief Pastor. Your letter clearly indicates the shallowness of mind and the depths one could descend to vilify truth. However one should expect these qualities and more from you, as the very name of the organisation you are said to belong to, is an independent one, unfettered, unbridled, with no restrictions to do or say whatever you like.

Let us, at the outset, reiterate for the Nth time our position in regard to the taking away of human lives, for the benefit of those who are not aware and to those who do not wish to know, for whatever it is worth. We have categorically and very firmly condemned the killing of innocent civilians from whichever quarter it came. The prime and the most sincerely vociferous person in such condemnations has been our Chief Pastor. Our Pastor and his flock have condemned, and will continue to do so in the future, the taking away of human lives, even capital punishment, leave alone the wanton killings that are a day to day event in our areas. We are aware that you will not accept this, as this is very unpalatable to your stand in assisting the State to hide the truth from the poor masses of the country.

It is indeed very unfortunate that you have the advantage of making use of the State controlled mass media and Press, access to which is denied to the oppressed people of the North and East. A section of the Press, which claims to be independent, is compelled to toe the line of the State. In any case all the English dailies are in the hands of those who have very strong blood ties with the majority community, and hence will not publish the actual happenings in the North and East. It is this situation that must have given you great strength to put out your vitriolic and scandalous letter.

In your letter you state: "Anyone who is aware of what is happening in the North and East will on reading your statement be struck by the lack of objectivity and disregard for truth" To claim that the statement of his Lordship lacks objectivity and truth, is to

say the least, a manifestation of your gross ignorance of what is happening in the North and East. You and those outside these areas, who are being constantly fed with distorted versions of the events in our region by the interested parties — the State Intelligence, the notorious Lankapuwath and the state controlled mass media would naturally fall foul of the truth. The standing ovation received in the hall and the subsequent unanimous approval by the local press are a clear indication and ample proof of the unreserved

Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai, Bishop of Jaffna, who was the Chief Guest at St. Patrick's College Prize-Giving made an appeal in the course of his Address, to the United Nations Organisation "to take effective steps to halt the annihilation of the peaceful, defenceless Tamil civilians of the Northern and Eastern Provinces" (SR, 21st line).

The Bishop's forthright speech seems to have roused the ire of Catholics — both clergy and laity — down South. The Colombo media have seized the opportunity to deepen the ethnic split in the supposedly monolithic Catholic Church.

We publish here the St. Patrick's OBA's reply to a diatribe by two Sinhala lay Catholics — J. T. De Livera and Walter Rupesinghe — published in the state-controlled Daily News of 7th July.

endorsement of the Bishop's statement by those who have experienced and are witnesses of the actual happenings in these areas.

You will not like to accept or believe that the killing of defenceless civilians by the state security forces in this area is almost a daily occurrence. These innocent civilians are not the victims of cross fire between the state security forces and the militant youths. The security forces shoot at random into houses and public places. Rockets and shells are fired from within the camps of the security forces and from the air into residential areas and even hospital and school premises. Peaceful and defenceless men, women and children lose their lives by these senseless and indiscriminate attacks. It is indeed hard for you to believe this, but it is true, and you will not readily accept the truth for, more often than not, 'Truth is bitter.'

You have invited our Bishop when he visits Colombo next time, to go round Colombo and see how the Tamils are living in safety and peace there. We would invite you to come to Jaffna and see for yourselves the frightful conditions under which the poor, peaceful, defenceless Tamil citizens are living and dying here.

You state that the Government is taking certain unwarranted risks

in maintaining supplies and services essential to the life of the community in these areas. This very statement indicates that the Government is doing us a great favour, and not its duty. We do not fully agree with this statement, for we know how our people are deprived of the essential commodities and what greater risks our private sector undergo to maintain even a limited supply. Contrary to your statement regarding the G.C.E. Examinations, we affirm that the holding of these examinations was

possible because of the exclusion of the security forces from the examination centres.

Your assertion that the Bishop's statement is a travesty of truth is in itself a gross travesty of truth. It is the bitter experience of the people of this area that the security forces, which the State claims from the top of the roof to have been sent to protect the 'poor, innocent, peace-loving civilians' are murderers who are hell-bent on destroying life and property. In this situation, are the people in these areas wrong in concluding that such killings and destruction are an attempt by the state to annihilate the Tamil people in the North and East?

The atrocities of the security forces are on the increase daily in these areas. They have stepped up their massacre activities under the guise of searching for 'Terrorists'. Killing, arson, looting and robbing by them are what we witness in these areas. It is hard for you to believe or accept this from your plush arm chair in your homes. In these circumstances, the people in this area have to cry out for help. When the majority squeezes the neck of the minority, the minority has to shout out in pain for help. In this dire moment, when the minority is throttled to death, the stifled voice of the desperate finds its true expression in the utterance of our Chief Pastor, who has only voiced the sentiments of the oppressed people.

The people of the North, belonging to all communities and races hold his Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai, the Bishop of Jaffna, in very high esteem. They all look up to him not merely as an individual but as a wise leader with a very strong personality who speaks out without fear or favour to defend the truth against odds and threats even to his own life. We are aware that he has been threatened on several occasions by both sections of the present conflict, whenever he condemned their atrocious activities. He is considered by non-catholics in this area as a true man of God, and they look up to him to voice their feelings and sentiments. Living up to this expectation of his people and flock he has only voiced the yearnings of his people in his prize-day address. We, the people of this area, are happy and thank God for giving us a Pastor who is able to speak out and defend the truth against the evil machinations of the powerful institutions. We can only pray for you in the words of our Master: "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they say."

Fr. G. A. Francis Joseph-President, Dr. J. P. C. Phillips-Senior Vice President, Very Rev. Fr. Louis Ponniah - O. M. I. Vice President, Mr. A. V. A. J. Wijeyaratnam-Vice President, Mr. G. R. Rajasingam-Hony. Gen. Secretary.

(For and on behalf of the Old Boys' Association of St. Patrick's College, Jaffna)

North Vs South

The Catholic Bishops' Conference on 5th July, dissociating itself from the statement made by the Bishop of Jaffna, Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai, said that the statement made by the Bishop appealing to the United Nations for help to resolve the ethnic conflict did not in any way reflect the views of the Bishops' Conference.

The Assistant Secretary-General of the Catholic Bishops' Conference Rev. Fr. Neil Dias Karunaratne said: "The Bishop of Jaffna's statement about appealing to the United Nations does not in any way reflect the views of the Bishops' Conference."

"The statement, however, I feel, should be read as an expression of the sense of near despair of the people of the North and the East at the continuing and increasing violence, both of the Security Forces and the internecine killing by terrorist groups intent on destroying those who differ from them".

(See also page 6)

'Defunct Village Councils More Potent

The President has put forward some proposals purportedly for a political solution of the ethnic problem by discussion and agreement, but he announced at a Press Conference immediately afterwards that with suitable modifications he will implement the proposals with or without the consent of the Tamil people. Modifications will be considered only within the rigid frame of a unitary state and separate provincial administrations. The people's acceptance or rejection of the proposals is therefore irrelevant. The question is whether any modifications of the frame of the proposals which can satisfy the basic aspirations of the Tamil people will be given due consideration. They are: 1. Security of life and property in their traditional homelands, 2. Economic autonomy, 3. Political self-determination and 4. Equality of rights.

There is limited scope for the realisation of these aspirations in a unitary government if there is even maximum devolution of powers to the provinces. Though the President announced that he was prepared to give the maximum autonomy within a unitary frame, the actual proposals give the minimum autonomy, thus rendering it impossible for the Tamil people to realise their basic aspirations. A case in point:-

SECURITY

The provincial police force is subservient to the national police force because (a) the head of the provincial force is appointed by the head of the national force, (b) provincial police officers are promoted to the national police force, (c) the latter hears appeals against disciplinary proceedings of the provincial police, (d) recruitment to the provincial police is done by a commission in which two of the three members are nominated by the central government. Even the prevention and direction of crime in a Province is the responsibility of the National Police subject to limited functions delegated to the Provincial Police. Even without the declaration of an emergency, the President can deploy the National Police in the Provinces. He can also declare states of emergency and deploy the armed forces when he thinks it necessary. Such powers are dangerous in the hands of any government hellbent on genocide.

The security of the Tamil people is threatened most by state colonisation of Tamil homelands with Sinhalese settlers, the creation of

mixed settlements and the use of State power to help the Sinhalese settlers to evict Tamils and take over their lands. The Note on Land Settlement appended to the proposals perpetuate this situation which now prevails in the North and East.

POLITICAL SELF-DETERMINATION

The powers and functions delegated to the provinces are few and even they are hemmed in by serious reservations. The central government retains the more important powers and functions. All development work in the provinces is reserved for the centre, namely, economic infrastructures like highways and roads, markets, public institutions, transport, internal

We publish here, in full, the comments of 'A Group of Tamils' on President Jayewardene's latest proposals to solve Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis.

A summary of the Group's comments was published in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 12th July under the headline 'A Pig In A Poke?'

waterways, all irrigation schemes except village tanks, mines and minerals, coastal shipping, fishery harbours, building and construction and social infrastructures such as the establishment of banks, insurance firms, hospitals, schools and welfare institutions. The power over agriculture proposed to be delegated to the provinces is curtailed by the central government's power over research, import of planting material and management of government farms and farm schools. It will be remembered that the control over the import of planting materials was the biggest constraint to the expansion of potato cultivation. In industrial development in the provinces, the central government reserves the power of registration of industries. It will be remembered that this power was used by the central government to discourage industries in the North since 1970.

The principal threats to provincial autonomy are contained in (a) the President's power to dissolve a provincial council if he is 'satisfied' that the affairs of the council are not conducted lawfully, (b) Parliament's power to change provincial boundaries e.g. the Eastern Province could be reduced to a narrow coastal strip, (c) the exclusion of Trincomalee Port and its 'environs' from the provincial administration. The 'environs' could swallow up the greater part of the Town or the whole of it.

The autonomy of a province is limited by its fiscal powers. The proposed Finance Commission which will be appointed by the President, could discriminate between provinces in the absence of firm constitutional guarantees. The minimum financial contribution from the centre to the province is not stipulated. As in the case of the present so-called Development Councils, the provinces could be starved of financial resources. The present proposals would then become a mockery. Provincial councils cannot get foreign loans or grants without the approval of the centre, not even commercial loans and foreign private investments. This restriction could be used to obstruct provincial development when the traditional and historic hos-

lative power. In effect this proposal is an amplification of the earlier proposals on the decentralisation of the executive powers of the President. The proposed appointment of Governors of provinces by the President is an act of decentralisation of executive power. It is akin to the British colonial provincial administration.

The President announced at his Press Conference that his proposals with suitable modifications within the given frame will be implemented whether the Tamils accept them or not, presumably by military force if necessary. There is no proposal to revoke or even suspend the dreadful Prevention of Terrorism Act, to withdraw the armed forces from the North and East now or at any time and not even to suspend temporarily the war against Tamil civilians.

CENTRALISED INSTITUTIONS

In the name of devolution, four powerful institutions are being created. The authority of the Central Government will be exercised through them. The Institutions are: (a) The Office of Governor, (b) Finance Commission, (c) National Land Commission and (d) National Police Commission. The power and authority to be vested in these Institutions make it clear that they will only reinforce central control rather than help devolution. These Institutions are examined below in detail.

THE GOVERNOR

The Governor of a Province will be appointed by the President. "Executive Power, including all matters in respect of which Provincial Councils have power to enact legislation, shall be delegated to the Governor". According to the Constitution, Executive Power shall be exercised by the President. This power delegated to the Governor will be exercised by him either directly or through officers subordinate to him. It is a basic principle that a delegate cannot further delegate the power delegated to him. It is explicit, therefore, that power is not being transferred or delegated to the Provincial Council or to the Chief Minister. Can anybody concede that herein lies devolution?

It is laid down that the Governor appointed by the President shall appoint the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister will be one of the members "who in his opinion is most likely to command the confidence of the Council".

Even though elections will be held in respect of each province on

tile relations between Sinhalese and Tamils prevail. All state land is vested in the State and only the President can alienate any state land. Land policy will be decided by a National Land Commission, even the size of allotments in different areas and the ethnic ratio of settlers. The central government reserves the rights over land alienation and land settlement in inter provincial irrigation schemes, including the Mahaweli scheme and major irrigation schemes which irrigate over 200 acres, leaving only minor irrigation works and village tanks to provincial councils. Even here the proposed constitutional amendment will also guarantee the allotment of all state lands in Batticaloa and Trincomalee Districts which remain after making the present 31,390 allotments, to Sinhalese settlers only.

EQUALITY OF RIGHTS

A unitary state should guarantee equality of rights to all citizens. The present proposals do not offer any guarantee of non-discrimination in employment, higher education and the use of the Tamil language. There is no policy proposal for recruitment on merit to the public services, admission to Universities on merit nor for recognition of Tamil as an official language.

It is obvious that the present proposals were framed with a view to giving the provinces the minimum amount of policy making and legis-

Than Proposed Provincial Councils'

the proportional representation system, the practice of calling the leader of the party which polled the largest number of votes is not being followed. It should be mandatory for the Governor to do so and perhaps in the context of his inability to do this, he may have the option of appointing as Chief Minister "one of the members who in his opinion is most likely to command the confidence of the Council".

FINANCE COMMISSION

The Finance Commission will be appointed by the President. Financial resources will be apportioned to the provinces on the recommendation of the Finance Commission. There are very clear modes for determining an equitable entitlement to a Province. This crucial problem has been placed before successive governments since 1957. The unwillingness or inability to evolve objective criteria over a period of three decades does not inspire confidence that the Government is earnest in making the Provincial Councils work.

Any foreign loans or grants would require the sanction of the Government of Sri Lanka in accordance with National Policy.

What is National Policy and who formulates it? Needless to say it is the Central Government. It is then clear that the Provincial Council cannot evolve a policy independent of the central strait-jacket.

Granted Sri Lanka's current economic predicament, no development can be contemplated without foreign loans or grants. Sri Lanka's foreign debt stands at Rs. 67 billion and the Finance Minister states that he has negotiated a further sum of Rs. 18 billion. But even a modicum of such aid cannot be negotiated by the Provincial Councils without the sanction of the Central Government under the scheme of devolution. What authority is really being conceded to the Provincial Councils in respect of foreign loans? Is there an iota of progress from the so-called authority given to the Development Councils? Did the 24 Development Councils succeed in negotiating a single rupee as loan or grant during the five years or their existence? The nature of taxes to be levied by the Provincial Councils will be defined by Parliament. Within the cast-iron frame, what leeway has the Provincial Council?

NATIONAL LAND COMMISSION

The National Land Commission, it is stated, shall evolve a National

Land Policy. "In the context of the creation of Provincial Councils, such Councils must have the right to the utilisation of State Lands in respect of all the functions that are by statute devolved on them". So runs the high philosophy on Land and Land Settlement. Giving practical expression to such a policy would involve vesting authority in the Provincial Council. But the 'real intention' of monopolising land powers has necessitated the creation of a National Land Commission. Development of land under irrigation and for settlement could be carried out only on state land. This power, however, is vested exclusively with the Central Government.

Inter-Provincial irrigation and land development projects are the responsibility of the Government. Principles and criteria regarding size of holding and selection of allottees will be determined by the Government.

A Point Of View

Regarding the use to which land can be put, the National Land Commission will formulate policy.

Lands required by Government for subjects reserved for the Central Government will be utilised with authority unfettered by the Provincial Council.

Lands required by the Provincial Councils for subjects devolved upon them could be utilised only in accordance with the policy of the Central Government.

Any alienation or disposition of land will be made by the President.

Has the Provincial Council any powers over land? Can it evolve policy? Can it determine any principles or criteria? Can it alienate land? Can it formulate a programme and implement it?

Is it necessary to say that the Provincial Council can do nothing? Not content with reserving land powers exclusively with the centre, a tendentious statement is made that "the principle of entitlement of each community for settler numbers on the basis of the national ethnic proportions has been accepted". Accepted by whom?

NATIONAL POLICE COMMISSION

The National Police Commission has a powerful command over police personnel numbering 20,000. The National Police Commission is composed of: (a) The I. G. P.

(b) Nominee of President (c) Nominee of Chief Justice.

It is laid down that the police force shall function under the overall direction and control of the I.G.P. The National Police Commission shall be responsible for recruitment to the National Division and for promotions from the Provincial Division to the National Division.

On every issue that matters, tight central control is maintained. Only with the approval of the President can the cadre of each Provincial Division be fixed. The Provincial Council cannot decide on the nature, type and quantity of firearms and ammunition and other equipment for the Provincial Division. These shall be determined by the National Police Commission. For training of all recruits, the Central Government is responsible.

Therefore, in the matter of law and order, the Provincial

Council will be a mere muted appendage of the Central Government.

FINANCIAL POWERS

Provincial Councils have the power to levy taxes, cess or fees. The proceeds will be credited to a Provincial Fund. It is said that to the Provincial Fund will also be credited grants, allocations or subventions from the Republic. The above powers are no more or no different from those outlined in the Draft Regional Councils Bill or the Development Councils Act. In truth, they are akin to the powers that the Village Councils and the Town Councils had. The total amount of taxes levied in the whole country by the Development Councils hardly approached 0.5 percent of the national budget. Government contribution to the Development Councils constituted a mere 0.7 percent of the national budget in 1986. Without the power of finance, how effective can Provincial Councils be? Siphoning 25 to 30 percent of the nation's capital budget to the Provincial Councils for the latter's development programmes would seem imperative. Objective criteria evolved for this purpose have to be built into the Constitution and non-discrimination as between provinces should be constitutionally guaranteed.

AGRICULTURE

Formulation and implementation of national policy in respect

of agriculture is reserved for the Central Government. The powers enumerated for the Provincial Councils are no different from the demoted ones relegated to the Districts at present.

INDUSTRY

National policy of industrial development is a matter for the Central Government. The role of the Provincial Council is subservient to this. It is known that no worthwhile industry can be established without a loan. It is stipulated that where investment involves loans, Ministry approval is mandatory. With such a proposal what is the difference from the existing scheme of things?

EDUCATION

Powers relating to education up to secondary level will be devolved. On a sensitive subject like education, not even a pretence to devolution is being made. The right to establish and manage private Universities without state funds is being conceded. What does it mean? State patronage for the favoured community and tender mercies for the lesser minions.

Detailed proposals on extent of devolution are supposed to be worked out. On every crucial issue on devolution, details 'were being worked out' even in 1957. In 1986 also they are being worked out. On inconsequential issues all details have been worked out.

CONCLUSION

In every conceivable sphere, the concept of devolution is being subverted by making national policy paramount. In the fields of education, irrigation, agriculture and industry how much have the Northern and Eastern Provinces benefited from national policies and programmes hitherto?

To be candid, Provincial Councils as envisaged by the Government can achieve nothing. The aspirations of the Tamils are not met even marginally. The air of suspicion is not cleared. Fears are not allayed and suspicions not assuaged. There is simply no meeting ground even to consider the proposals. The Provincial Council is made to appear a step forward from the Development Council because the geographical unit is larger. This may dazzle the charlatan. The discerning mind, however, cannot be diddled. To the latter, the now defunct Village Councils were more potent.

Excerpts from S. H. VENKAT-RAMANI's article in **INDIA TODAY** (15th July), headlined **TAMIL NADU—SPYSEIZURES**.

When the Tamil Nadu police swooped down on five Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils and repatriates last fortnight, the arrests quickly became the talk of the town. Tamil newspapers played up the story about how the police had, for the first time, all but busted a Sri Lankan spy ring. Said a top police official, who did not want to be quoted: "From what we have unearthed so far, the objectives of these spies were to infiltrate into the Tamil militant groups and sow seeds of dissension among them, to create political problems in Tamil Nadu by using the presence of the Tamil militants here, and finally to spy on the secrets of the groups and pass on information to the Sri Lankan Government."

The five arrested were: Kandaswami Naidu, 42, a Sri Lankan Tamil and former CID sub-inspector and security officer to Sri Lankan Minister for Rural and Industrial Development, S. Thondaman, who came to India after the July 1983 riots; A. S. Manavai Thambi, 57, a Tamil repatriate and DMK sympathiser, who had come back from Sri Lanka under the Bandaranaike-Shastri pact;

Moles At Work In Tamil Nadu?

V. K. T. Balan, 35, partner of a travel agency in Madras; P. Ranjan, 22, a Sri Lankan Tamil who had taken refuge in Tamil Nadu and Radha Krishnan, 34, from Tamil Nadu.....

Observers of the Sri Lankan scene have felt for some time now that moles had gained entry into the Tamil militant groups. The possibility of external agencies at work was first suspected after the bomb blast at Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) spokesman A. S. Balasingham's house in Madras. The suspicion was strengthened after the recent bomb explosion near the Marina Beach podium, from which DMK President M. Karunanidhi was addressing a meeting.

The growing disunity among the Tamil militants after the Thimpu talks had also raised doubts about disruptive forces at work behind the scenes. The LTTE disengaged itself from the apex body of all the militant groups — the Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF) — and then went to war with another ENLF constituent — the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) in Jaffna. There were also clashes between the LTTE and the Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF).

And finally, there were serious internal dissensions within the Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE).

All of this led to the feeling that there were outside agencies deliberately fomenting trouble. As K. Ketheeswaran, spokesman for the EPRLF observed: "It was clear that Sri Lankan intelligence agencies had infiltrated into Tamil Nadu to capitalise on and aggravate some of these problems...."

The state police moved in, when it intercepted some communication between Naidu and the Sri Lankan Government. Although the contents of the messages are not known, the police official was categorical in saying that they were directly between Kandaswami and Colombo and not routed through the Sri Lanka deputy high commissioner's office in Madras. In the interrogation, Naidu is also reported to have owned responsibility for the bomb blast in Balasingham's house. The police also found that Naidu had made a couple of secret trips to Colombo under a bogus passport taken out in the name of Nadarajah. Expectedly, cases have been registered against the suspected spies for violation of the Official Secrets Act, the Indian

Passports Act, the Indian Foreigners' Act and the Explosives Act.

In apprehending only those known to be close to Thondaman — leader of the Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka, who has denied having anything to do with the five arrested — the Tamil Nadu police has created the impression that they have been selective in the arrests they have made. Police sources confirm that the spy scandal investigation has been wholly the initiative of the state. It is not coincidental that Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran was unhappy that Thondaman had not visited him on his last trip to Madras but had met Karunanidhi. He is reported to have said: "I gave him so much bandobast, but he did not care to meet me," although the fact is he had not given Thondaman an appointment.

While the full dimensions of the spy scandal will only unfold in the court, the case took a new dimension with Kandaswami's admission that he had undertaken to promote the interests of the Sri Lankan President's son, Ravi Jayewardene, as the potential successor, as against the National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali. With the arrest of known DMK sympathiser Thambi, the disclosures in court may well have repercussions not just on Indo-Sri Lanka relations but also on intra-party relations in Tamil Nadu.

Lanka Has Sophisticated Weapons Scanner

This item, headlined 'Detecting Concealed Weapons' appeared in the **NEWSWEEK** of 23rd June.

For terrorists, plastic bombs are the right stuff. Powerful, lightweight and as pliable as putty, plastic explosives are unfazed by x-rays: seen on the video screen of a typical airport luggage scanner, a slab of the material is no more visible than a slice of bread. The deadliness of the bombs is incontestable. The chemical fingerprints of plastic bombs have been found at the scene of several recent terrorist incidents, including the explosion aboard a TWA jet flying over Greece this April, in which four people were killed.

Are plastic bombs and other terrorist weapons detectable? Several firms striving to develop new weapons scanners think they are. Yet even the most fervent advocates of the new technologies don't expect that the equipment will work perfectly — or that it will deter terrorists for long. "A well-trained

terrorist can defeat even an advanced (detection) system," says Richard Sesnewicz, a marketing manager at American Science & Engineering, Inc., in Cambridge, Mass., which is building one sophisticated type of scanner.

Still, the equipment expected to appear within the next two years promises to be a good deal more accurate than the X-ray scanners and metal detectors used today. And their unorthodox methods may also help ferret out other illicit substances, from drugs to stolen diamonds.

When a piece of hand luggage is bombarded with conventional X-rays, the dense objects inside — a metal hair dryer, for instance — absorb the rays, and the shape of the items is revealed by a shadow projected on a screen. But X-rays bounce off materials made up of elements with low atomic weight, such as carbon. Now AS & E has discovered a way of focusing an X-ray beam so that even substances that normally elude X-rays can be seen.

SHUT UP — ARCHBISHOP

The Archbishop of Colombo, the Most Rev. Dr. Nicholas Marcus Fernando, said that an uncontrolled tongue could be as sharp a sword as the sword itself and unleash violence against the innocent and the defenceless on both sides of the conflict.

The Archbishop made these observations at the prize-giving of the Ave Maria Convent, Negombo, on 5th July, at which he was chief guest.

First, a pencil-thin beam of X-rays rapidly scans an object, and the pattern of the X-rays scattered at each scanning point is recorded. Then these "spot checks" are assembled into a composite image and displayed on a video screen. Normally hard-to-see objects — a bag of cocaine, a bunch of grapes or a plastic gun — show up in ghostlike white. High-density objects appear as dark images on a separate screen. Despite the high price of the system at \$ 80,000 — it costs twice as much as a conventional X-ray scanner — it has already been bought by the national airlines of Sri Lanka and Finland.

He said that at a time like the present when the country was passing through a crisis everyone should master the art of self-discipline and self-control.

"It is not only the peaceful unarmed Tamil civilians who have been forced to flee from their traditional homelands. In this very town, there are hundreds and thousands of peaceful and unarmed Sinhala fishermen who have been chased out from their traditional fishing grounds and homes. Why not speak of them in all truth and honesty? Unarmed, peace-loving and religious people meditating under the historic banyan tree in Anuradhapura, sacred to millions of our Buddhist brethren and precious to us as Sri Lankans, were mowed down mercilessly. Why not speak of them and for them too? Justice is not one-sided.

"To the children here I say, and to the parents and to all here present, let us learn to be self-disciplined."

(Based on a report in 'The Island' of 7th July).

APRIL '86

(Continued from last issue)

23.4.'86 - **Mandur** - Several villages are surrounded by a number of Service personnel. About 1000 persons are arrested and detained in the scorching sun the whole day and, later, all except 58 are released. During the search the Security Forces had looted and desecrated the Mandur Kandasamy and Amman Temples and assaulted the Priests. 2 youths commit suicide.

Government communique: Terrorists' hide-out attacked; 9 terrorists killed, 56 arrested. Next-of-kin who go to the Amparai Hospital to identify the dead bodies are chased away by the Security Forces. Hospital authorities say the bodies have been burnt.

23.4.'86 - **Sittandi** - 4 youths leave for Vadamanai on bicycles to purchase milk. Later 2 are found dead with gun-shot injuries. The whereabouts of the other 2 are not known.

April, '86 **Tharavai, Murakottan-chenai** - Security Forces surround village and arrest 60 persons. They are marched on foot to the Amparai Army Camp 50 miles away. Those who fall on the way being tired are reported to have been shot dead.

24.4.'86 - **Off coast of Jaffna** - Government communique: Navy destroy boat of militants; 10 are killed and 3 arrested.

25.4.'86 - **Senthankulam, Mathagal** - Helicopter strafes the area, damaging roof tops and fishing craft on beach.

25.4.'86 - **Nilaveli** - Government communique: terrorist hide-out attacked; 12 terrorists killed.

25.4.'86 - **Verugal** - Government communique: terrorist hide-out attacked - 30 terrorists killed. Residents complain to Citizens' Committee. 10 civilians, including women, killed by Security Forces.

25.4.'86 - **Iranattivu** - 34 refugees fleeing to South India in 2 boats arrested by a Navy patrol boat. They are all now detained at the Palali Army Camp.

25.4.'86 - **Sagamam** - Paramanathan, a father of 3 children, on his way to a relation's house on his bicycle for a function is shot dead by Security Forces.

26.4.'86 - **Thondamannaru** - Strafed by a helicopter for half-an-hour. Shells are also fired from Army Camp.

26.4.'86 - **Navatkudah** - Special Task Force personnel surround village and arrest 250 persons. They are removed to the Kallady Army Camp. 240 are released after questioning with instructions to report at the Camp every Sunday. 10 not in possession of National Identity Cards detained.

27.4.'86 - **Point Pedro** - Government communique: Navy gunboat destroys boat of militants, killing 6.

27.4.'86 - **Puliampokkanai (Paranthan)** - Bombers drop about 7 bombs; several houses destroyed.

27.4.'86 - **Karainagar** - Navy remove ferry which operates between Karainagar and Kayts depriving the facility for people of both islands.

27.4.'86 - **Chundikulam-Thalaiyadi-Nagercoil** - Areas strafed by a helicopter. 3 in a fishing boat escape by swimming ashore.

28.4.'86 - **Palugamam (Batticaloa)** - Special Task Force personnel who arrive to set up a Camp meet with resistance from militants. It was reported that 2 Special Task Force personnel were killed and 1 injured. Later 2 bombers drop bombs in area killing 7 civilians. 5 houses are also destroyed.

28.4.'86 - **Vavuniya** - Residents of 5 villages put up in the night by Security Forces for search operations. Several youths are severely assaulted.

29.4.'86 - **Vellaveli** - Government communique: Special Task Force personnel and terrorists in direct confrontation. 1 Special Task Force personnel and 5 terrorists are killed. 15 are arrested.

29.4.'86 - **Kalviyankadu, Jaffna** - When 2 groups of militants are engaged in internecine struggle a helicopter strafes and drops shells in area for about half an hour causing injuries to two children. 2 houses are also damaged.

29.4.'86 - **Kaddaiparichchan** - 3 Security Forces personnel are killed when their vehicle hits a land-mine.

29.4.'86 - **Vantharumoolai** - Security Forces order 2 civilians to dig up the road at the site of an earlier mine attack. They then throw hand-grenades killing the 2. The bodies are removed to the Camp; some arrests are also made.

29.4.'86 - **Ganesapuram, Kilinochchi** - Security Forces shoot at youth who attempts to flee in fear killing him. 2 others are arrested. The mother of the dead youth unable to bear the loss commits suicide.

30.4.'86 - **Jaffna** - Kalviyankadu strafed by a helicopter at 11 a.m. On the same day again a helicopter strafes and drops shells (for the first time in the night) at 10 p.m. in a residential area within the Municipal limits; residents escape unhurt.

30.4.'86 - **Valalai** - Security Forces proceeding on foot from the Thondamannaru Army Camp fire at random at workers in a farm. A child is killed and 2 are injured.

30.4.'86 - **Palali** - A fisherman is shot dead by the Security Forces firing from the Army Camp.

30.4.'86 - **Kilinochchi** - Security Forces in civilian dress shoot killing a youth. His body is removed to the Army Camp.

Fostering Indo-Lanka Links

Fr. Tissa Balasuriya of the CENTRE FOR SOCIETY AND RELIGION and a few others from Sri Lanka, together with some persons of Tamilnad have formed an Indo-Lanka Maithri Sangam Sangamaya to foster understanding and cooperation among persons and groups in India and Sri Lanka.

The immediate objective is to help in the peaceful, just and honourable resolution of the present ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka.

From among the many who have joined so far from India are: K. Srinivasa Iyengar, T. K. Oomen, D. Anjaneyudu, Bishop Sundar Clarke, Sarah Chandra and Dr. A. K. Thamby and from Sri Lanka, Ven. Uthalamada Gunaratna Thero, Godfrey Gunatilleke, U. Manivasagam, Bishop Don Sylvester, Dr. James Rutnam, Dr. Frank Jayasinghe, Mazzahim Mohideen and Ratnapura Kaveeswara Narada Thero. Anyone interested in joining the Sangamaya can write to Ms. Bernadeen Silva, Coordinator in Sri Lanka, 281, Deans Road, Colombo 10. The Telephone No. is Colombo 595425.

Here's the text of the Sangam's press release:

Father Tissa Balasuriya, Ms. Bernadeen Silva and Ainsley Samarajeeva who participated in an Asian Christian Peace Symposium in Bombay from 26th - 30th May, spent three days in Madras from 31st May to 2nd June. They worked together with friends in Madras, beginning with persons who had already engaged in Indo-Sri Lanka dialogues and local peace work.

After extensive discussions during these days they were able to come to a consensus with about 20 persons from different groups in India representing the religions, youth, students, women groups, scholars, journalists and religious personnel

on the formation of an Indo-Lanka Maithri Sangam (Sangamaya).

At the inaugural meeting held on 1st June, a general orientation of objectives and means was accepted by the group and a resolution clarifying our present thinking was adopted.

Organisations and individuals from India and Sri Lanka are eligible for membership.

FIND THEM, HANG THEM!

*Boys will be boys
is the conventional wisdom;
they play truant,
they fight amongst themselves,
they fall in love,
as the parents often despair.
Then the boys also
become parents
and the game
is repeated all over.
But when adults
act like boys
What to do?
What to do?
This is not a time
for infighting.
This is a time
for introspection.
This is a time
to find out what went wrong
and where and how.
This is a time
for unity in action.
Jaffna will live long
if only the people
rise above creed and caste
and crass selfishness.
Self-centred people
move in a particular orbit
which leads them nowhere
except to oblivion.
Oh, where are the politicians
who promised the people
heaven on earth?
Find them.
Hang them.*

— ANON - VII

WANTED IMMEDIATELY RESIDENT MEDICAL OFFICER

Applications are called for Resident Medical Officer at Mission Hospital, Murasumodai. Those with MBBS qualifications and those who are qualified western practitioners (RMP) can apply.

Salary negotiable

For further particulars please contact:

The Acting Medical Superintendent,
GREEN MEMORIAL HOSPITAL,
MANIPAL.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

JR Ready To Concede Militants' 3 Demands?

President Javewardene has agreed to suspend the Prevention of Terrorism Act, announce a general amnesty and repeal the 6th Amendment after the current Political Parties Conference in Colombo ends.

Sri Lanka Mahajana Party General Secretary, Mr. Vijaya Kumaranatunge told SATURDAY REVIEW that the President has assured him personally that favourable consideration would be given to the three point demand of the Tamil militants after the Conference.

The film-star politician had, upon his return from India, placed the three demands insisted upon as a pre-requisite to a negotiated settlement of the National Question.

Speaking to SATURDAY REVIEW by telephone, Mr. Kumaranatunge said that he and some of his party members would be visiting the North and East shortly after the P. P. C.

"We are keen on conveying to our Tamil comrades our sympathy over their present plight and express solidarity with them on their legitimate struggle", he said. "We would like to stage meetings condemning racism and oppression", he added.

Asked to comment on his two visits to India, Mr. Kumaranatunge said he was happy with the warm welcome extended to his delegation comprising Mrs. Chandrika Kumaranatunge, Mr. Ossie Abeyagoonasekera and Dr. Colvin Gooneratne by the militant leaders.

He had met the leaders of all five groups namely Prabhakaran (LTTE), Uma Maheswaran (PLO-TE), Padmanabha (EPRLF), Balakumar (EROS) and Chelvam (TELO) during his second trip. Earlier he had not been able to meet Prabhakaran. The LTTE leader stated that he was happy to meet progressive Sinhala people

and was sorry that he could not meet them earlier.

According to the S. L. M. P. Gen. Secretary, some of the militant leaders were even prepared to re-enter the mainstream of National life by engaging themselves in 'legal politics'. They were, however, suspicious about President Jayewardene's motives. The militants were therefore waiting to see whether the Indian Government would be satisfied about any possible solution. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's decision would, therefore, influence them in any political settlement, he said.

The militants were keen on the North - East merger. They had also insisted on the three-point demand as a way to create the right atmosphere for a negotiated settlement.

Mr. Kumaranatunge, however, said that his own party was in favour of a Province as a unit of Devolution. The S. L. M. P. would, however, fight hard to see that the three-point demand would be acceded to as soon as possible. He further said that his party was not affected by his stand on the National Question.

"I will never give in to racism and will continue to do whatever I can to usher in a peaceful settlement", he said.

Striking a personal note he said that he was very happy about his meeting with Mr. M. G. Ramachandran. The last time they met they were both actors. This time M. G. R. was a Chief Minister, while he was General Secretary of a Political Party.

125 YEARS OLD

St. James Church, Jaffna, will celebrate its 125th anniversary on 25th July.

A Souvenir has been published to mark the occasion.

PPC: Familiar Syndrome

(Continued from page 1)

nor opposed the T. U. L. F. participating in talks the cadres in Jaffna have vociferously indicated that they are against the T. U. L. F.'s participation. This again reminds one of the Thimpu period when a divergence of views seemed apparent.

Adding to the confusion is the double-track negotiations in Colombo. One set of proposals were announced in Colombo. Another set was sent to Delhi. When the T. U. L. F. objected to discrepancies between both, the Govt. clarified that the Delhi proposals were 'the proposals'. The other political parties in Colombo began complaining and they too got the Delhi proposals. Now, parallel negotiations are on at the same B. M. I. C. H. The Govt.-T. U. L. F. talks on one hand, the P. P. C. on the other. The situation has been further compounded by the S. L. F. P. rejection of the proposals. The party founded by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike has conveniently forgotten the fact that it was he who first propounded Federalism, and rejects the Provincial Council as a 'Federal Structure'.

The Maha Sangha advises the Govt. to consider carefully the proposed measures. The M. E. P. and the motley crowd of Sinhala 'National Socialists' like K. M. P. Rajaratne, Iriyagolle etc., continue to whip up passions against the proposals.

By a strange irony the Sinhala leftists seem to be Jayewardene's staunch allies in advocating Provincial Councils, at a time when the Prime Minister is out of the Island.

S.L.M.P. Vijaya Kumaranatunge who knows fully well that militant leaders will not agree to anything short of a North-East merger says that his Party will not agree to anything more than a Provincial Council. His bold move in meeting Tamil militants is commendable.

The other left parties subscribe to regional autonomy as an interim solution, but restrict the region to Province.

The S.L.F.P. oriented Muslims want a Provincial Council for the East while the U.N.P. Muslims want to re-demarcate the East into three Councils for the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims.

The Tamil Congress and C.W.C. which formed a broad front with

the T.U.L.F. during the 1984 All-Party Conference are now pulling in different directions.

The Tamil Congress has rejected the Provincial Council and walked out of the P.P.C. The C.W.C. which wanted a regional council comprising the North and East at the APC, has performed a somersault and is now for a Provincial Council alone.

While political pandemonium reigns, violence continues in the Tamil-speaking areas.

The civilian massacres at Adampan and Muthur have soured the mood in Tamil areas. During the so-called cease-fire of 1985, firing never ceased. This expedited the end of the Thimpu talks. Likewise continuing violence directed against Tamil civilians will create grave doubts about the bona fides of the peace parley.

President Jayewardene has vowed to go through with his scheme. He has also stated that he would not reduce the proposed powers of the Councils and would only consider increasing them.

In the present context will the President push his proposals through?

Even if he succeeds in reaching a solution on paper can he implement it?

MASSACRE PROBE

President Jayewardene has assured the TULF that he would order an immediate inquiry into the incidents at Muthur where 67 Tamil civilians are said to have been killed by the Pakistan-trained 'black shirts'.

The victims were refugees from Manal Senai, Pachaianoor, Peruvelli and Mallikaitivu in Muthur. Only 32 bodies have been recovered. 15 of those killed are women and children.

'COPTER BOMBS CTB BUS

A helicopter strafed and bombed a Vavuniya-bound CTB bus on Thursday morning killing seven people, including the driver, on the spot.

The bus was going from Mullaitivu to Vavuniya when at Thanduvam, three miles off Nedunkerny, a low flying helicopter attacked it round about 7 a. m.

Altogether 15 passengers, including three women, died. Among the dead were two Muslim passengers. 18 were injured, including four children and an eight-month old infant.