

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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SOME HOPE FOR SOME DETENUS

On the eve of the Indian Foreign Secretary, Romesh Bandari's visit to Colombo, President Jayewardene assured that as many Tamil detenus as possible would be released as early as possible.

"However those detenus against whom indictments have been served and those whose cases are still under investigation cannot be released."

The assurance was given to the Editor of SATURDAY REVIEW when he met the President at his

residence on Thursday. The President noted that quite a number of suspects who had been released had later been found to have indulged in "terrorist activities."

He said "the Army are complaining that they arrest people and hand them over to you, you release them only to come back and try to kill us."

The Editor also met the National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali who said there was "plenty of evidence" against al-

most all detenus. One cause for the delay regarding preparing and filing was the paucity of Tamil translators and typists in the Attorney General's Department. Minister also said that parents of the detenus could come and see them at any time after obtaining permission. SATURDAY REVIEW understands that the release of the remaining detenus at Welikade and elsewhere would have to await the outcome of the New Delhi talks.

"If a settlement is reached there

would be a general amnesty and everyone would be released."

The Editor met the President and the Minister in pursuance of a decision taken at the inaugural meeting of the Jaffna people's committee, that all steps should be taken to secure the release of all the Tamil political detenus. So far, indictments have been filed against 68 suspects at Welikade.

The proposal to go in a deputation could not be carried out owing to transport and communication difficulties.

MH Takes on Gamini

Transport Minister M. H. Mohamed has chosen to take on Gamini Navaratne, the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Since he has done so in parliament—a privileged place—we are unable to comment, for obvious reasons.

This is what Minister Mohamed said in parliament, as reported in the State controlled DAILY NEWS of 21st September. "The Minister said there were also articles written by one Gamini Navaratne in the SATURDAY REVIEW, supporting the cause of Eelam."

"Mr. Muttetuwegama: He is a journalist and not a member of this house. You must not criticise him."

"Mr. Mohamed: I am not criticising him. I am saying that I have no time to read these articles in the papers and magazines."

MARIOS APPLIES

At the time of going to press we received some applications for the post of Chief Minister of Jaffna.

We were much impressed by a candidate's curriculum vitae, and would like to share that with the SR readers, before forwarding to the Authorities concerned.

Name: Marios Benedict Selvarajah.

Age: 50 years.

Qualifications: B. A. (Peradeniya) M. A. (London) (Thesis was on "The Third Worlds": The stupid anti-Imperialist & anti-fascist struggle).

Experience: Taught in London, East End for 10 years. Have also taught in Nigeria and Saudi Arabia for 12 years.

Other qualifications:

Left Sri Lanka in 1958 after

the riots and have never come back home after that. Now resident in England and have a British Passport. My wife is a Greek lady with some royal blood in her. This should not be a disqualification to me, as I can think of so many heads of states who have foreign wives. In fact my wife looks almost a Tamil lady when she decides to wear a saree. She assures me, that if I am selected as Chief Minister of Jaffna that she would not mind living in Jaffna for about 3 months a year. My only problems are my four children... May be I will board them in a private school in Kent where the Duke of Kent's two sons are boarded.

Although I have forgotten my Tamil and have not been in Jaffna for the last 27 years my feelings towards my people are very genuine. Now I am ready to serve my people for the next 5 years.

Police Station Attacked

At a press conference held on 24.9.85 by National Security Minister, Mr. Lalith Athulath Mudali at which Lt. General Cyril Ranatunge was also present, it was revealed that the Kilinochchi Police Station was attacked round about midnight till early hours of the morning. It was stated that a lorry loaded with explosives, hand grenades and diesel were driven near the police station after which the driver is said to have disappeared. In the explosion that followed the police station was set on fire, 11 policemen injured, 6 of them seriously and 3 Tamil guerillas were killed. Helicopters were said to have been used to evacuate the injured to Colombo.

It is reported that following this incident barricades had been set up along the Jaffna-Kandy Road and near Chemmani. These barricades prevented normal buses and private coaches plying between Jaffna, Chavakachcheri and Kodikamam

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WOMEN FOR PEACE URGES: CONSOLIDATE THE PEACE PROCESS

Women for peace, a movement with the purpose of bringing together women from all ethnic groups and all walks of life to demand a peaceful negotiated political solution to the conflict, urged the government to stop the war and consolidate the peace process.

We reproduce their statement in full.

"Ten thousand women from all walks of life and from all communities drawn together by deep concern over the worsening communal conflict were moved to sign a joint appeal deploring the loss of life on all sides and calling for peace. They urged a political solution over a military one and called for negotiations involving all parties concerned.

"The signature campaign was initiated in December 1984 in the aftermath of the breakdown of the All Party Conference. Beginning with the signatures of just eight women, the campaign climaxed on March 8th 1985, International Women's Day, by which date over ten thousand women had signed the appeal. Copies of the signed appeal were sent to the President of Sri Lanka, the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India.

"Women for Peace" support the recent initiatives towards a negotiated political solution, but are however, deeply distressed that the peace process may be jeopardised by the recent escalation of violence, a lack of political will and mischievous propaganda on the part of political formation and groups motivated by opportunism and self interest rather than by genuine concern for the welfare of our country.

"Another aspect of the crisis is that an alarming proportion of national income is being wasted on the war effort.

"A new dimension has been added to the situation:

The numbers of people of all ethnic groups who have become refugees in their own country are reaching horrific proportions. Whole communities have been uprooted, some of them from homes and livelihoods which have been theirs for generations. This has reached the status of a virtual everyday occurrence. So much so that we have become inured to the fact that there are tens of thousands of Sri Lankans who have been refugees since 1977. They are the forgotten

uncared for, unaccounted innocent victims of the accelerated war effort.

"Another frightening development has been the increasing number of people, especially youths detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, some of whom have been detained for 18 months without charge or trial.

"We are also gravely disturbed by President Jayewardene's address to the UNP national executive committee on 15 September 1985, stating that "There is a war on in the Trincomalee district", and that "The Government may have to introduce stringent laws which would curb democratic freedom, including the freedom of the press, in the Government's all out war against terrorism."

"These developments, in our view will serve not to further but to frustrate the peace process. Instead of war-mongering, all sides should genuinely attempt to observe and extend the ceasefire and create a climate conducive to the negotiation and implementation of a just political solution.

BOOK REVIEW

GLOBAL MINI-NATIONALISMS: AUTONOMY OR INDEPENDENCE

LOUIS L. SNYDER,

(Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982, 326 pp.)

As Louis Snyder notes in his conclusions to this useful survey of separatist movements, "Decisions on nationalism are made by force. This may be regrettable, but it is, nevertheless, true. Throughout history, the expansion or shrinking of national borders has been determined, not by rational argument, but by might. The process is accompanied by heavy loss of life and property. Old grievances and old prides are satisfied only by the power principle. Tensions are certain to continue as long as nationalism remains a preferred mode of human behavior".

The shape of nation-states are the result of past struggles for power, and each separatist movement today is the remnant of those who lost, be they Ame-

rican Indians, Palestinians, Kurds, Basques or Scots. Many groups who lost have accepted the outcome, and while not totally losing their identity, have made their way in the resulting entity. "Hang on to your Confederate money, the South will rise again" was never a serious slogan; and the rise of the post-Confederacy South in the USA has been the result of using the levers of political and economic power within the wider American system. The American Indian tribes on the other hand have not yet been able to find a satisfactory means to power; neither separate nations, nor individual assimilation, nor the manipulation of group power within the political system. They remain largely unseen, more myth than reality.

The world is full of those who lost out in the struggle for control of territory: the Ukrainians, the Balts, the Croatians, the Tibetans. They have been incorporated into larger units and are usually economically and politically exploited by those who hold power in the larger unit. Since the government of the larger unit fears separatist tendencies, the government tries to centralize political controls and economic integration. The mino-

rity group feels more and more excluded, and if political circumstances permit asks for "self-determination", usually meaning the creation of a new nation-state.

Since existing states rarely accede to these demands — the separation of Norway from Sweden being one of the few cases of negotiated and peaceful state creation — the result can be sporadic terrorism and organized guerrilla warfare.

Terrorism can be organized by a very small minority of people as long as there is some sympathy for terrorist actions in the wider community. This is the case of Corsican independence terrorists. They represent a very small number of people but few Corsicans would turn in a fellow Corsican to a mainland French policeman. The Armenian terrorists acting against Turkish officials outside Turkey is another example.

On the other hand, organized guerrilla movements require a wider political base, even if it is only a minority that is actively fighting. Snyder outlines the armed resistance of the Kurds in both Iran and Iraq, the resistance of the Azerbaijanis, the Baluchi, and the Palestinians. Many of these armed struggles open the door to

manipulation by external powers and thus increase international tensions, the Palestinian — Israel case being the classic example.

Until now, the territorial shape of a state has been the result of armed struggle. Are there any non-violent alternatives to the way in which people are organized on a territorial basis? Leaders today lack political imagination. The only far-reaching visionaries have been those like Jean Monnet, who worked to overcome national antagonism by creating the supranational institutions of Western Europe. Snyder outlines briefly the creation of the European Common Market and the European Parliament.

There has been no comparable manifestation of imagination to meet the demands for regional and ethnic identity. Snyder's subtitle "Autonomy or Independence" is a good indication of the limited range of options usually proposed. Since both words often have unacceptable overtones, serious negotiations never get underway — the prime example being again the Palestinian "autonomy" talks.

— Rene Wadlow

(Courtesy, Transnational Perspectives)

OPPOSITION GROUPS: AI EXPLAINS ITS STANDS

Amnesty International, as a matter of principle, condemns the torture or execution of prisoners by anyone, whether it be Governments or Opposition groups.

This position has been reiterated in one of AI's latest bulletins, in answer to criticism in certain quarters here and abroad that it takes sides in political conflicts.

Here are extracts from the bulletin:

AI plays a specific role in the international protection of human rights. Its activities are focused on prisoners.

It seeks the release of prisoners of conscience. These are people detained anywhere for their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religion, who have not used or advocated violence.

It works for fair and prompt trials for all political prisoners and on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial.

It opposes the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment of all prisoners without reservation.

This mandate is based on human rights principles proclaimed by the international community through the United Nations and other inter-governmental bodies. These international standards define the obligations of governments in protecting the rights of individuals. Amnesty International's main task is to ensure that governments respect these commitments.

AI is impartial. It does not support or oppose any government or political system. Nor does it support or oppose the views of the prisoners whose rights it seeks to protect. It is concerned solely with the protection of human rights, within its mandate in each case, regardless of the ideological, political or other conflicts involved.

AI takes no position on the question of violence. It does not identify itself with any of the parties to a particular conflict, violent or non-violent, nor does it presume to judge in any situation whether recourse to violence is justified or not. It deliberately restricts itself to working for the protection of the human rights that fall within its mandate and does not comment or act on

issues that fall outside those terms of reference.

AI has sometimes been asked to act as a mediator between governments and opposition groups. It cannot do so. It works by making clear its opposition to specific human rights violations, publishing details about these wherever they occur and making recommendations to the responsible authorities. The organisation does not negotiate either with governments or with those in opposition.

Some groups in opposition to Governments have acquired characteristics that in practice make them similar to governments. AI expects them to respect international human rights standards and appeals to them to do so.

When considering whether a group has such characteristics, several factors have to be taken into account. For example, does the group control people in its territory in a way similar to the exercise of government jurisdiction? Is it able to implement procedures for the protection of human rights and humanitarian law in its territory? Is it recognised by governments and international organisations?

An appeal from Amnesty International to such a group or to a government does not imply any legal or international status or recognition; it is aimed strictly at securing the protection of the human rights that AI seeks to defend everywhere. It should also be noted that it is governments that are the subject of international human rights standards. Non-governmental entities do not, in general, have the international obligations or recognised responsibilities to which Amnesty International can refer.

When governments infringe the human rights AI defends, the organisation urges them to take all necessary steps to restore these rights. It also holds Governments responsible when they act indirectly through, or in complicity with, "death squads" and assassins.

Where offences are committed by opposition groups, AI considers that it is within the jurisdiction of governments to determine criminal responsibility and to bring those responsible to justice. The exercise of such authority by states must conform to their commitments in international law.

I AM NOT GLAD OF ANOTHER DEATH

My Lord,
Why do you wage war against me
Killing me, my children
I am innocent
I am innocent and unarmed
See the wounds
You have inflicted in my heart.
Heal my wounds, my Lord,
Without burning me alive.

I ask you not money
Not a city of gold
I weep to live in my home
With peace, as you
And your race.

My men going out
For their daily bread, fall dead
In their fields

On their streets
And in the schools, too,
Our children always in fear
Meeting their early grave
Your gun has no brain
Five feet and 35 inches
Are the long and the wide.

It is true
Come I'll all the grief prove.

Am I your enemy
Why do you wage war against me.

Not a single day
Breaks without a death or blood
The death, which has become delicious
And which we carry every minute.

Low hangs the Moon
At times she forgets to come
And even when she comes
Not a single word she speaks
Silently moving, moving and vanishing
And not a single street
escaped an exception being bathed
In the blood
In the tears

Ask my morning birds
When did they sing last?
Ask my children
When did they laugh last?
And the sun and the stars
Shone with smile.

Broken are my bows
And the honours I offered
My Lord,
Let me speak to Lord Buddha,
He too is in pain of me
To whom you worship without shame
And with flowers soaked in my blood
And let Him see me and
My house which darkens with sorrow

Why do you wage war against me
Am I your enemy, my Lord,
No, I am not
I am as dead, by the war
You declared upon me
Death closes us all

It may be the drop of my blood
It may be the drop of your blood
My tears and blood

Already moved,
The Heaven and The Earth
However, my dear Lord,
You do believe,
I am not glad of another death.

— PON GANESH

CLEANING UP THE GANGA

No other river in the world has probably been as venerated and desecrated as the Ganga which begins sparkling and crystal clear in Gangotri in the Himalayas and flows 2,525 kms across the great Gangetic delta of India till it terminates in a muddy brown torrent of filth and impurities in the Bay of Bengal.

The Hindu ritual of holding your nose and closing your eyes and dipping thrice in the holy Ganga to cleanse yourself of worldly sins has today become a necessity, for the river stinks, and if you do not shut your eyes you will find it difficult to take the ceremonious dip with so much filth floating around you. The easier way to salvation is to close your eyes and take the dip as prescribed in the scriptures.

Untreated sullage from the sewer lines empty into the mighty Ganga which despite its divinity cannot wish or wash away the filth. The industries mushrooming on the banks of the river too discharge their effluents into its bosom, and pesticides and insecticides drain into the river. For centuries the Ganga has withstood the desecration by man. Now it can take no more. While the holy dip cleanses souls it increases the danger of the body contracting infections and disease.

The late Prime Minister Smt. Indra Gandhi, a keen environmentalist, was concerned about the mounting filth in the Ganga. The Central Board for Prevention and Control of Water Pollution under Mr. Nilay Chaudhari did a comprehensive study of the river — the extent of pollution, the causes of pollution and the many points of contamination. The next big question was—can our environmental engineers clean up the river and restore it to its pristine splendour? Both Dr. T. N. Khoshoo, Secretary, Department of Environment and Dr. Chaudhari were confident it could be done. Smt. Gandhi gave the green signal for the Ganga Action Plan and even wrote to the Chief Ministers of the seven states through which the river passes for a joint action plan.

Sadly before the five-year action plan could be announced Smt. Gandhi was assassinated and the implementation of the late Prime Minister's dream for a clean Ganga fell on the new Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

In his very first address to the nation on the priorities of the new government, Shri Gandhi announced the cleaning up of the Ganga. In February this year the 10-member Central Ganga Authority was set up

with the Prime Minister as its Chairman. The Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh Bihar and West Bengal are also on its Board to ensure coordinated and quick action. The project will be handled entirely by Indian engineers and experts. Though several countries have offered assistance for this prestigious project India is confident it has the necessary knowhow and resources to take on this national project.

by

Usha Rai

The cost of the five-year project is estimated to be Rs. 2500 million. Time is not to be wasted. The allocation for this year (1985-86) is Rs. 300 million. In the first phase the most polluted stretch of about 400 kms going past or through 29 cities of Uttar Pradesh, Behar and West Bengal, each with a population of over a 1,60,000 will be taken up.

The first major task will be to construct a network of sewer lines and treatment plants to treat the sullage before it is discharged into the river.

On an average each person is responsible for 100 litres of waste water a day. The 29 cities included in the first phase of the action plan contribute 902 million litres of waste water to the river every day. The human contamination begins at Haridwar, one of the seven most polluted cities on the banks of the Ganga. The others are Kannauj, Kanpur, Allahabad, Varanasi, Patna and Calcutta.

In all there are 100 cities on the banks of the river, most of them without sewerage treatment plants. At Varanasi, which also has no treatment plants, 8 big drains and 61 small ones continue to pour, non-stop, the city's sewage into the river. Even where there are treatment plants they are badly maintained and waste water flows through the open drains into the Ganga. Many of the pumping systems are in a state of disrepair for want of funds. Stopping the discharge of sewage alone is expected to reduce pollution in the river by 75 per cent.

The other sources of contamination are industrial liquid wastes, cattle wallowing in the river and the surface runoff from cultivated lands on which pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers and manure have been used excessively.

A study for the years 1976 to 1978 conducted by the Board

for Control of Water Pollution has revealed that 1.15 million tonnes of chemical fertilizers equal to about 34 per cent of the country's annual consumption of fertilizers were applied in the Ganga basin. In the same period 2573 tonnes of pesticides were used.

U. P. and Kanpur in particular, is responsible for a high degree of pollution. U. P. alone contri-

butes upto 55 per cent of the total pollution of the river. West Bengal comes next. Haridwar, the pilgrim centre in northern U.P. is just 350 kms from the source of the river. Just 10 years ago you could make small balls of wheat flour and feed them to the fish at Haridwar. Feeding birds and animals is also a spiritual act favoured by the Hindu scriptures. But at Haridwar there are hardly any fish visible these days. The small balls of wheat flour just get washed away. Apart from the thousands of people who bathe daily in the river at this point and more so when there is a religious festival like the Kumbh mela, Baisakhi or a solar or lunar eclipse, Haridwar is also the point from which "organised pollution" begins. Several large industries like the Indian Drugs and Pharmaceutical Limited (IDPL) and the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) discharge untreated effluents at this point. Small wonder that the fish have disappeared from this stretch of the river.

It is estimated that 70,000 pilgrims converge every day at Varanasi, (also in UP), the holy city of the Hindus. After bathing in the river and doing a round of the temples, devotees go home taking the precious "ganga jal" (Ganga water) in a copper container. A drop of this holy water is poured into the mouths of the sick and the dying but little do they realise that the water may be full of unseen germs. "Achaman" or swallowing a bit of the holy water of the Ganga, while bathing is also considered a part of sun-worship.

An estimated 400 bodies are cremated on the banks of the river in Varanasi every day and 9000 dead cattle thrown in annually. Often half burnt bodies can be seen floating down the river. The bodies of infants and holy people like the Sadhus are not

cremated but washed away in the river. Another very common sight in India is buffaloes wallowing in rivers and ponds.

There are 33 industries at Kanpur city and each adds its share of effluents to the river. Ironically enough at Kanpur the Ganga is reduced to a mere trickle now because it has changed its course and flows eight kilometres away in the district of Unnao. Water itself has become a scarce commodity in the city and tube wells are being sunk.

The Bengalis love their fish but little do they realise that the fish caught and eaten from the Hooghly may be highly contaminated with metallic substances. Elements like zinc, cadmium, lead and even mercury are thrown into the river along with the effluents by the industries. Calcutta is a heavy pollution point of the Ganga because a large number of industries are situated on this stretch of the river bank. A stretch of about 80 kms from Tribeni to Batanagar along the Ganga are dotted with industries with no arrangement for waste disposal.

The result is that Ma Ganga (Mother Ganga) has become a carrier of deadly diseases like cholera, viral hepatitis, amoebic dysentery, polio, typhoid and paratyphoid. In summer about 80 per cent of the people of Calcutta suffer from amoebic dysentery.

The silver lining to the grim story of the Ganga is not only the gigantic cleanup project that has been started but the proven curative powers of the river. The radon and iodine content of the river water is so high that it can kill a lot of the bacteria within 24 hours. But the Ganga's regenerative powers are being daily eroded by a deluge of pollutants.

In some stretches of the river the dry weather flow is very lean due to the tapping of the river upstream of these stretches for irrigation that leaves no scope for dilution of urban and industrial waste. In the case of the Ganga for example practically all the dry weather flow is diverted into the upper Ganga canal at Haridwar and whatever flow is regenerated in it between Haridwar and Aligarh is again diverted to the lower Ganga canal near Aligarh. As a result there is very little dry weather flow in the river at Kannauj and Kanpur where there is heavy discharge of pollutants.

(Continued on page 5)

The following are excerpts from the Report of the Netherlands Fact-finding Mission to Sri Lanka earlier this year which was submitted to the Chairman of the Second Chamber of Parliament at The Hague:

There is no evidence that the Sri Lankan Government is persecuting Tamils as an ethnic group.

The situation in the South has returned to normal, and Tamils are migrating from the North to the South particularly to Colombo, where they are not exposed to violence from which the Government does not provide protection.

In view of the situation in the South, it is not on the whole true to say that Tamils cannot return to Sri Lanka.

The Mission was completely free to go wherever it wished and to speak with whoever it wished. It was not accompanied by any representative of the Sri Lankan government.

The Minister of National Security of Sri Lanka has now ordered that an inquest shall be conducted by a high court judge in the event of a person dying whilst in detention or as a result of acts perpetrated by the Security Forces.

DOUBLE DUTCH !

The mission found time and again that no attempt is made by the authorities to impede or prevent the human rights organisations and citizens committees from carrying out their activities. In fact, relations with the authorities are generally good.

Tamils are to be found throughout the Government Service. The Attorney-General and the Chief Justice are Tamils; there are two Tamil Ministers, and there are many senior and lower-ranking civil servants who are Tamils. The Police Force, though not the Army contains many Tamils, and in the northern districts nearly all Government Agents and their staffs belong to this ethnic group.

In the five northern districts, life goes on fairly normally, though it is marked by continued mutual acts of violence. Innocent members of the public are often the victims. In the three eastern districts the danger of inter-communal violence is just below the surface; the recent disturbances in the Batticaloa district in which

dozens of people were killed and 25,000 Tamils and Muslims made homeless bear this out.

The authorities allege that so far only four Tamils have been detained in Colombo under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (following the bombing of the Oberoi Hotel).

The Sri Lankans did not deny that excesses had taken place. They resulted in about 500 dismissals from the army. The mission urged that the perpetrators be brought to justice, but this was considered impossible for all manner of reasons (lack of evidence etc.)

In the opinion of the delegation, Tamils living in the northern districts have good reason to feel threatened. This is not the result of a deliberate policy of persecution by the Government, but because it has so far not done enough to prevent excesses and is unable to provide a reasonable degree of protection against the "Tamil Tigers". In the eastern districts there is a danger of communal

violence. In the South of the country the situation is different: Tamils enjoy the protection of the Government. As previously stated, at least 500,000 Tamils live in the South.

No evidence of persecution has been discovered with regard to the group of 43 Tamils who were sent back to Sri Lanka by the Netherlands in January 1985. In the case of Tamils sent back from Europe, the only ones arrested were the 25 who were deported from Italy for drug-trafficking.

Assistance in the form of the basic necessities of life is still needed in a number of coastal villages. Government help is being provided. The situation in Jaffna is exceptional in that emergency relief operations are only possible with the permission of the "Tamil Tigers". Permission is generally obtainable.

Following recent ethnic clashes between Tamils and Muslims in the eastern districts of Batticaloa and Amparai, 25,000 people, have now left their villages. They are being accommodated in 18 camps.

As stated previously, for the first time in the history the South of Sri Lanka is safer for Tamils than their traditional settlement areas in the North.

Cleaning up the....

(Continued from page 4)

An important corollary to the Ganga project is the tapping of the tonnes of sewage for energy. It is hoped to produce both biogas and manure from sullage. The income generated from the muck—Rs. 110 million annually will be used for maintaining the sewage treatment and pumping plants as well as providing them with energy. The main by-products of the treatment of sullage will be methane biogas, manure rich sewage sludge, alga, and a river teeming with fish.

It is estimated that on an average it should be possible to get an annual income of Rs. 37 per capita from the contribution of sewage. The expenditure on pumping and treating sewage to a degree that renders it safe for drinking would be Rs. 23 per capita per year.

The action plan includes not only renovation of the existing sewage pumping and treatment plants but construction of new plants in towns which do

not have them. A network of sewer lines are to be constructed and the overflow checked. Till the sewer lines are laid human and animal waste will be collected and fed to a sewage sludge digester. This will ensure their sanitary disposal as well as production of more biogas and manure matter.

Community cattle sheds are to be constructed in urban areas to facilitate collection of animal waste. This will also prevent the rainfall runoff from the urban areas washing and bringing all muck to the river.

The Ganga Authority also hopes to stop disposal of dead bodies in the river. Since disposal of the bodies of infants in particular in this manner is a religious ritual, the local civic bodies will have to work hard to change the centuries-old practice.

The Department of Agriculture will work out the cost as well as the proposals for regu-

lating use of insecticides and pesticides and preventing surface run-off from cultivated areas reaching the river.

The level of purity of the Ganga is to be raised so that it is uniformly drinkable C class purity. The biological oxygen demand, (BOD), has to be three or less, the reserved oxygen four or more and coliform count less than 5000 for every 100 millilitres.

Known as Bhagirathi reminding one of her legendary descent into the world of mortals, famous for her divine powers to purify, the Ganga has been worshipped from time immemorial by the peoples of the subcontinent as a peerless cleanser of bodies and souls and as the celestial mother provider. Millennium after millennium man had revered her as an inexhaustible source of pure sustenance. Yet today, her waters are polluted and the time has come for man to cleanse the cleanser and redeem her purity.

(Courtesy, "Indian and Foreign Review")

Appeal by Wife

We publish without comment excerpts from an appeal by Mrs. P. Rajasundaram of Chulipuram, to the five Major militant movements:

Fortyone days have passed since my husband Mr. V. Rajasundaram was taken away by unknown persons while my children and I were away in India. I am making this second appeal to you as there has been no response all these days...

I, a mother of four children, appeal to the liberation organisations of Tamil Eelam to identify the abductors of my husband whose 64th birthday is on 23rd Sept and get him released or at least let me get a letter in his own handwriting and proof of his good health.

Copies of this appeal to the six major Eelam Liberation Organisations are sent to the following social organisations:

1. Jaffna University Students Association.
2. Mothers Front
3. People's Committee. (Jaffna)
4. Citizens Committee.
5. Mass Movement for Human Rights.
6. Tamil United Liberation Front

THE MISSING SON

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

My son T. X. Thevamanoharan (32) a qualified Metallurgical Engineer who is employed in U. K. came to Sri Lanka in the last week of January this year to see me. As he is my last son, I asked him to stay with me for some time.

On Tuesday the 21st of May he left home on a bicycle to attend religious services at St. Antony's Church, Urany but he did not come home.

I got eye-witness account of what had happened. According to this my son was seen cycling along Keerimalai—Kankesanthurai road. He was stopped by the army personnel who were on duty at the entrance of the Harbour View Hotel army camp. My son had got down from his bicycle and produced a letter which he had in his shirt pocket. I believe that it was the identity letter which he had obtained from the Superintendent of Police, Colombo when he arrived from U. K. as he did not possess the identity card. At that time the army personnel had slapped him. An army officer who was inside the camp had ordered that my son be taken inside the camp. As my son had walked inside the camp the army personnel who was on the road had got on my son's bicycle and rode inside the camp.

I obtained a letter from G. A. Jaffna and with my other children and brother I went to the Kankesanthurai Camp and asked for my son and whether he is alive, but the army chief had denied that no such person had been arrested by them. I wept bitterly and told him that my son is employed in UK and that he was not involved in local politics as he was permitted to stay in UK for an indefinite period. As the army officers were flatly denying that no such arrest were made, on their advice I went to the Palaly camp. The army authorities at Palaly told me to go to Gurunagar Camp. When I went to Gurunagar Camp they told me to go to Kankesanthurai Camp. The army authorities refused to accept even the GA's letter.

As all my efforts to find whether my son is alive ended in failure I sent an appeal to His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka asking him as to whether my son is alive, mentioning eye witness account of the arrest. I received an acknowledgment

from his Secretary that the letter had been referred to the Minister of Defence for necessary action but so far I regret to mention that I had not received any reply.

I sold all my properties to educate my son who was very brilliant in studies. He had his early education at St. Henry's College, Ilavai and later at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna. He went to UK and gained admission to Leicestershire University and obtained an Honours Degree in Engineering, specialising in Metallurgy. He earned the distinction as the first Sri Lankan to obtain an Honours Degree in Metallurgy.

I am a heart patient. I am unable to explain the mental agony that I am undergoing for the last four months. If my son had been killed by the army they should at least inform me.

Mrs. S. T. Thiruchelvam

Ilavai

Open and Broad Mindedness

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

I am happy to note that in two recent weeks the SR reached me in a way that it has never done before. For example, the 17th Aug. 85 issue reached me on 19th Aug. 85 and especially when even the letters from Colombo or Badulla take three to four days. It is indeed a good sign of the days yet to come.

I fully agree with Mr. Neville H. de Silva of Colombo 5 who wrote in the SR of 17th Aug. 85 that the man who said that the "terrorists" had agreed to the truce because they knew they could not win is imprudent and foolish. It is indeed time that those MP's and others in power, whether they be in the Government or opposition, who are not prepared to co-operate and support President Jayewardene to bring about a solution to the vexed problem should resign instead of trying to boost their own ego at the expense of the country and the masses.

Mr. A. R. R. Kumar of Chundikuli is justified in pointing out that the humiliation and discrimination the Tamils are subjected to in the Department of Immigration and Emigration should be stopped.

As reported in SR of 17th Aug. 85, the Prime Minister's attempt to rouse public opinion against an

alleged "sell-out" of the Sinhalese by President Jayewardene's Government to the Tamil people is very unfair.

Let us Sinhalese remember that we are a minority in the view of world's eye and "a frog in the well" attitude will never help anyone of us in this beautiful island. Intelligence and foresight should be the hallmark of our brand if we are to be a noble race. Let us bypass the old saying 'Sinhala modaya, kavun kande yodaya' (Sinhalese are foolish, giants only to eat oil cakes) by going over in leaps and bounds. Let us be sincere in our efforts to keep the land undivided and yet united with everybody, doing justice to all in the real "Dharmista style".

Avoiding the "frog in the well" attitude, let us get ourselves immersed with all religions, cultures and languages and that alone will enrich our language, culture and religion (Buddhism) and will make this land a beautiful place of all of us.

Let us selflessly take a risk and the net result will be great. But if we selfishly hold on to our own, ultimately we shall not have anything of our own. In the long run we are not going to lose, but only to gain.

Fr. Mathew G. E. Silva

Boragas.

LETTERS

FOUL DEED

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

I am a retired Government executive, Jaffna Tamil, aged 83 years. At present, my ill-health keeps me almost bedridden. I and my family resided in our own house in Elvitigala Malwatha, Colombo, for nearly 30 years until the outbreak of the July 1983 disturbances.

On the night of 24th July 1983, we were attacked by a mob of nearly 150 men who looted all our belongings, set fire to our house and that of my son-in-law, completely destroying them to the ground and murdered my son-in-law, a highly qualified engineer. The ladies were forced to surrender all their jewellery.

After this traumatic experience, we fled for shelter and finally arrived in Jaffna by plane. We could not return to Colombo as we are left homeless there and ever since reside in a rented house at this remote place.

Our property in Colombo was vested with REPIA. We were negotiating the sale of the property from here, when a thug of the area, who had been sentenced to jail twice, entered the property.

I had several valuable documents in the house, but all these includ-

ing the deeds of the property, were lost.

To my utter consternation, I have come to know that person concerned had presented some false deeds and documents with the connivance of some party and sold the property at less than one-fourth the actual value.

The man who committed this bold fraud, taking advantage of our absence from Colombo and the prevailing situation when even travelling from Jaffna to Colombo is out of the question, reportedly.

I reported the fraud to the O.I.C. Narahenpita Police, the IGP, REPIA, the President of Sri Lanka and the agents and notary who put through the sale.

But so far we have not had a response from any quarter.

To whom are we to appeal to?

V. Thillairajah

Punnalaikadduvan North

PENSIONERS' PLIGHT

Editor
SATURDAY REVIEW

I have read with deep sympathy "A Poor Pensioner's" letter under the above caption published in the 20th July issue of your "open mouthed" — for some time past severely "mouth-strapped" — journal. This is not a stray case. There may be several not brought to light.

I know of a recent case where the post-office quite rightly refused to pay a pensioner just because there was some defect in the voucher. The poor man—an octagenarian with a bad gait—had to take it all the way to the Jaffna Kachcheri and bring back the same rectified. And the cost thereof? Down by Rs. 12/00 plus a day's labour. Could not the clerk concerned have exercised a little more diligence—if he had any at all and avoided this?

I think all is not well with the Jaffna Kachcheri. I am disgusted with the manner in which even routine matters are conducted. I am referring to a land matter which is being dragged on for nearly three decades, and a small matter at that.

The irony of it is that even the Prime Minister as well as the Lands Ministry are apparently being taken for a ride. Instructions from the Prime Minister's Secretary (Ref: 2/22/27/6591-of 27th August 1981) as well as that of the Land Minister's (Ref: 02/05/10411 and 03/05/10555 of 5th June 1981) have received scant regard. What is puzzling is that a reply has still not been sent even after four years, though the Prime Minister's

(Continued on page 7)

DETENUS AT WELIKADE 3rd List

The following is the third instalment of the list of Tamil detenues at Welikade that we have received:

38. Simeon Santhan, Mavilankerni, Murunkan, (Mannar).
39. Simeon Jesuthasan, Mavilankerni, Murunkan, (Mannar).
40. Subapakiam Santiago, Mavilankerni, Murunkan, (Mannar).
41. Gnanasekaram Kamalanathan, Mavilankerni, Murunkan, (Mannar).
42. Arokiam Sebamalai, Mavilankerni, Murunkan (Mannar).
43. Anton Berty Navaratnam, Poovarasankulam, Murunkan, (Mannar).
44. Soosainayagam David Puva-nendran, Pericharkaddu, Murunkan, (Mannar).
45. Alfred Thevathas, Ellupiddy, Thiruketheeswaram, Mannar.
46. S. Thevathas c/o A. Saveriappu, Vanichchiankulam Vankalai, (Mannar).
47. A. Kandeepan Silva c/o A. Sinnamalar, Iraddai Kulam, Murunkan (Mannar).
48. A. Vettithasan c/o A. Santhan, Vanichchiankulam, Vankalai, (Mannar).
49. P. Pakiarajah c/o R. Philipnehris, Post Office Murunkan, (Mannar).
50. M. Gabriel Coonghe c/o M. Pakiam Coonghe Ward 1, Pesalai, (Mannar).
51. S. Balathas, c/o M. Saveri, Muthalaikutti, Uyilankulam, (Mannar).
52. Robert Balasingham c/o J. Ponrajah, Ward 7, Vidaltivu, (Mannar).
53. S. Cornelius c/o S. Pilendran, Poiddy, Ilavilai, (Jaffna).
54. Balasubramaniam Tharmalingam, 'Sothyvasam', Viluriddi, Tellippallai (Jaffna).
55. Thavamaninayagam Muralikrishnan, K. K. S. Road, Malakam, (Jaffna).
56. Somasundaram Selvendran, Main Street, Thondamannaru (Jaffna).
57. Kandasamy Thavarajah, Ilanthasalayady, Karainagar (Jaffna).
58. Rajathurai Selvamohan, Ward No 12, Myliddy (Jaffna).
59. Ponnuswami Sritharan, Ward No. 6, Myliddy (Jaffna).
60. Lavan Selvaratnam, c/o N. Thambaiya, Near Farm School, Kondavil East, Kondavil. (Jaffna).
61. S. Alfred Kunasekaram, Vasavilan East, Vasavilan, (Jaffna).
62. K. Vaithianathan, 'Gnangiri' Love Lane Uduvil, Chunnakam, (Jaffna).
63. M. Thevathasan c/o K. Sub-amaniam, Vairavarkovilady, Tellippallai East, Tellippallai (Jaffna).

MIRJE 'DISTRESSED'

The Movement for Inter Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE) in a press release issued by its President Mr. Charles Abeysekera has stated that it is extremely distressed that the negotiations for a political settlement of the ethnic question has broken down and have been followed by an outbreak of increased violence involving not only combatants but also civilians of all ethnic communities.

MIRJE has urged the Government to extend the cease-fire and

make every effort to make it effective; to continue with a policy of negotiations with representatives of the Tamil people, including the militants; and to offer a political solution based on devolution of power to territorial administrations enjoying legislative and executive power over all areas of activity excepting national defence, national finance, foreign affairs and the higher judiciary, either independently or in consultation with the Central Government, when circumstances demand it.

Hindu Priests Appeal

The Hindu Priests' Society of Kayts has sent the following letter to President Jayewardene:

We, the Brahmin Priests of the Kayts electorate, wish to bring to your notice that the act of keeping those detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act without trial is "adharmic".

The law stipulates that the detention period without trial is eighteen months. It seems that the framers of the law themselves tend to violate its provisions. A Government following "dharmic" principles should be careful not to violate its own laws.

Therefore, we implore to bring the Tamill youths and other imprisoned under this law to trial and punish them if they are guilty or release them if they are innocent.

The letter is signed by President Sivasri Srineevasa Nagenthirakurukkal and Secretary Sivasiri R. Sriharakkurukal.

New

Publications

Sai Baba Advertising Associates, publishers of the Tamil daily "Eelamurasu" have now begun publication of a fortnightly news review "Cheithikkathir".

It covers a wide spectrum of subjects, from politics to culture.

The Editor is Mr. S. M. Gopalaratnam, Former Editor of the "Eelamadu".

The Nava Sama Samaja Party has begun publication of a newspaper in Sinhalese titled "The Nava Sama Samajaya". It is fixed at Rs. 2 and is available from No. 17 Barrack Lane, Colombo 2.

The NSSP also publishes a news bulletin, available at Rs. 5 from the same address.

NOT A DAY DREAM

Tatparanandan Ananda Krishnan, 47 year-old Malaysian Tamil from Harvard University, was a shy oil tycoon but he had dreams of creating a "global village" as foreseen by Marshall McLuhan and helping the world's under-privileged. This dream came to fruition in the form of the "Live Aid" concert for which he was entrepreneur, par excellence. How everything fell into place in this massive jigsaw is like a fairy-tale.

He had heard of Geldof, who had recruited a group of recording artistes to tape the hit-song "Do they know it's Christmas / Feed the World". The proceeds of this record were for famine relief.

Krishnan was also enamoured of Geldof's vision of bringing the world's greatest rock musicians for a benefit concert.

In the meantime, Krishnan had also met Michael Mitchell who had

been the "prime mover" on the stage for the spectacular "Los Angeles Olympics of 1984", whom he tried to entice for another globally televised athletic contest.

This "entrepreneurial trio" was responsible for the staging of the "Live Aid" concert which netted about 25% to 30% of the proceeds.

It is now quite likely that Krishnan will plough a sizeable capital to stage a "World Wide Athletic Contest" which could well be the world's Best Showpiece in the near future.

The altruistic motives of the entrepreneurs may be "questionable" because at heart there is the "profit motive" of the capitalist system. But what is wrong if the world's under-privileged millions are provided with their "bread and butter"? The end justifies the means?

LETTERS

(Continued from page 6)

Secretary had specifically instructed that a reply be sent and a copy forwarded for the Prime Minister's information!

Whether the two Ministries took follow-up action is a matter of grave doubt.

Even attempts to get the District Minister to personally inquire into the matter have been of no avail for over quarter of an year; and he has left it to his District Secretary, who is no less a person than the then Additional Government Agent who is chiefly responsible for the injustice perpetrated.

A conference was convened on 26th October 1984, the notes of which are being awaited by me for more than nine months — a matter that can be done within a week.

I am happy that there is a sign of relief now that your letters have been disbanded allowing you — the watch dog — to bark and bite while some "the Island" & "Virakesari" excepted — may continue to hug and caress.

S. Kirupamurthy

Kankesanthurai.

RAIL WARRANTS

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

Government pensioners were given the boon of holidaying with their families once a year by using a railway warrant.

But before the warrant could be obtained there were the problems of undertaking an expensive and hazardous journey to the Jaffna Kachcheri and the pensioner paying office or making an application by post and awaiting the D-Day That depends on the efficiency of the Kachcheri.

Why cannot the issue of railway warrants be assigned to the assistant government agents so that pensioners resident in the various A.G.A.'s divisions could either go by vehicle or on foot a short distance and obtain them?

R. Rudra

Point Pedro.

Almighty Umpire

A clergyman visiting a parishoner asked him to come to church on Sunday. "No father", replied the parishoner, "I am staying home to watch the India vs Sri Lanka test on the telly". "But", he assured the priest, "I promise to pray earnestly at home. I shall especially ask God that India should win".

"In that case", replied the priest, "you may be driven to the mistaken conclusion that the Umpire is mightier than God".

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

OPERATION NILAVELI: WAR ON REFUGEES

by a Special Correspondent

Having just finished interviews with displaced Tamils from Trincomalee district who are now at refugee-centres in Jaffna and Mullaitivu my mind is haunted with many horrendous stories of brutality and hatred on the part of the security forces which has not been a totally unfamiliar experience, as far as the Tamils are concerned.

The attacks on Tamil villages in the Trincomalee district were started well before the cease-fire and continued after the cease-fire. Pankulam was the first village to be attacked. From April this year a series of attacks and 'intimidations' had been going on in Tamil villages with devastating effect. These Israeli-type actions demolished Thirukkadaloor, Salli, Kumpurupitty, Pallathoddam, Veeranagar, Pankulam, Sambaltheevu, Thuvankadu, Kanniya, Kuchchaveli and Triyay. The government was so intent on wrecking the traditional homelands of the Tamil speaking people and their homogeneity.

The Tamil people from these villages were driven out by security forces and the Home-guards—a euphemism for UNP's goon squads.

On 12th September, the security forces and homeguards rounded up Thuvankadu in a search operation. This left 20 people including women and children dead. A young nurse from Thirukkadaloor had the opportunity of treating these people from this area. They included about 25 people both women and children. Within days 2 of them died.

The Tragedy struck Thirukkadaloor too and the nurse along with village people fled Trincomalee and now they are refugees in a camp at Mullaitivu.

At Pankulam, 22 Tamils were killed by the guards and that resulted in a mass exodus from that area.

"We were living at Pallathoddam for generations. On the 13th morning we heard gun-shots, while a helicopter flew overhead. About 20 of us vanished into the jungles and helplessly watched a neighbour of ours, Sellathurai, who was put the sword by the home-guards. We somehow managed to escape but 3 unfortu-

nate youths among us were caught. We walked through the jungle for 3 days without meals and reached Nilaveli. When Nilaveli was attacked by the security forces, we came to Mullaitivu by boats and now we are landless, hapless and helpless!" So said a middle aged man.

An old man from Veeranagar said that he had seen 3 of his family members burnt alive by security forces on the 4th morning when veeranagar was attacked. He along with 10 other families took refuge at St. Antony's Church, Nilaveli.

The Tamil people who fled from the troubled areas felt that Nilaveli was a relatively safe place.

By the beginning of September several thousands were herded at Nilaveli and were temporarily accommodated in Churches and Hotels which were virtually jam-packed.

It is said that Operation Nilaveli was the reprisal for the attack on Srimapura, a Sinhalese area in Trincomalee by a certain group of Tamil guerrillas. Well before this said attack, it is reported that the government had removed women and children from the Sinhalese areas. Most of the able youths had been provided with arms.

If the cease-fire in its real sense is in operation, naturally the Tamil guerrillas will be very much in control of the Northern Province and several areas of the Eastern Province. Nilaveli also could have been one such area. If the government calls all such areas as the 'base areas' or 'militants' 'territories', virtually the north and most parts of the East are under the control of the guerrillas, from the inception of the cease-fire.

It is pertinent to recall here what the present army Commander, who was then the Brigadier of Jaffna told a foreign newsman that their effective control ended at the confines of the camps.

The bridge that linked Nilaveli and the mainland at Sampaltheevu, was earlier blown up by the guerrillas. This left Nilaveli disconnected. Nilaveli could only be reached by the other way that goes through Kanniya. Fearing landmines and ambushes the Security Forces did

not make any attempt to go to Nilaveli where hundreds of Tamils had taken refuge. Most of the refugees came to Nilaveli either through jungles or by sea.

The Security Forces are reported to have reached Nilaveli through jungles. On the way they accidentally met with an encounter with the Tamil guerrillas, it is reported. The encounter did not last long.

On 16 September, 'D-day' had started—it was 'Operation Nilaveli' according to Government sponsored 'Daily News' of 18th. September. "This operation described as the biggest in recent times was aimed at a camp in Nilaveli." "46 'terrorists' were dead, 84 surrendered in a 12 hour offensive." It is true and more true that as far as the security forces were concerned that it was the biggest offensive yet because 12 armoured cars, 6 tanks, 2 Helicopters and gun boats took part.

The details of the "operation" is best seen through the eyes of a refugee now at Mullaitivu. "We came to Nilaveli, as refugees from Veeranagar after the attack there and we were temporarily housed at the premises of St. Antony's church, my husband, myself and 3 children along with 10 other families." At about 5-30 a. m. on 16th. September, we heard gun shots and immediately after, several soldiers rushed into the church premises. We ran in panic only to find that the whole area had been cordoned off. Later, all of us were 'arrested' by the security forces and herded inside the church. They asked my husband whether he could pluck some king coconuts but as he could not climb, Thuvankadu (35) came forward and plucked some king coconuts for them. We were kept inside the church till about 7-30 p. m. without food or drink. In the meantime some of our youngsters were taken away. The security forces left us about 7-30 p. m. and we decided to leave the church and vanish into the nearby Kochchithoddam. Thereafter, we reached the sea-shore through the jungles."

On the way we saw about 40 brutally slain bodies of women, youths and children. Among them I could identify the body of Thuvankadu who plucked king coconuts at their bidding to quench their thirst. On the sea-shore I saw a burnt plastic boat with 3 partially burnt bodies."

An old man who was in the Pilot Hotel Refugee camp narrated this story: "On 16th. morning I saw several soldiers approaching the hotel. They surrounded the hotel and divided us into groups, as girls, boys and old men ran helter skelter. They killed my neighbour, Subramaniam's son right in front of me. I saw 3 middle-age persons from the refugee camp burnt alive. They took away all the males between the ages of 15 and 40."

Finally, the 12-hour offensive, left several hotels including Pilot, Rainbow and Varatharajah Hotels and several hundred houses in ashes. At the moment we are unable to estimate the actual number of people killed. But from the reports and interviews we had, the number could be well over 150.

The government's statement:

"The 'Hindustan Times', 'Statesman' and 'Patriot' of 18th. September have carried reports to the effect that during the recent operations carried out at Nilaveli in the Trincomalee district, the security forces 100 women and children who were refugees and took away about 40 youths and killed them after interrogation and some among them were girls who were allegedly raped before being killed.

The government categorically denies these charges and wishes to state that the operation carried out recently was against terrorists who were in Nilaveli."

Well! Was Mr. Krishnapillai (54) who was shot inside the Nilaveli public library along with 6 others, a terrorist?

Was that two year-old child who was killed at Indrani Thoddam, a terrorist?

The sessile media-men in Colombo and the insensate authorities in power may not know the answer simply because of the fact that Tamils are synonymous with 'refugees', terrorists' or 'Kottiyas'. We are not sure whether such parlance entered the playing fields too!