

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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With stepping up
of military
presence, replay
of May 1981
scenario feared

Jaffna to come under a military administration?

The Government's decision to step up its military presence in the North following last week's shooting of three of its supporters—two of them its No. 1 candidates at Chavakachcheri and Point Pedro—and to go ahead with the local polls as scheduled, has roused fears among the people of a replay of the 1981 scenario. That year, following the killing of the UNP's No. 1 candidate, A. Thiagarajah, and three policemen, rampaging men in mufti set Jaffna—including the Public Library—ablaze under cover of a curfew a few days before the District Development Council elections.

Informed sources say the Government is also thinking of clamping down a military administration on Jaffna.

Last week's shootings sparked off speculation in political circles that the Government might call off the elections in the North and East. The en bloc withdrawal of the UNP candidates at Chavakachcheri and the partial withdrawal at Jaffna (9) and Pt. Pedro (4) strengthened these conjectures.

But the Government has decided to hold the elections on schedule though, reportedly, some senior Police officials had advised it to call off the polls. Informed sources say the Government hierarchy is adamant on this point as putting off the elections would mean a victory for 'terrorism' and a loss of face for the Government.

The National Security Council which met recently to discuss the situation in the North has, predictably, recommended that more military personnel be sent to the area. Key

members of the ruling party too support the idea of a massive military presence to crack down on 'Northern terrorism'. This has roused fears in the North of a new wave of repression and terror, of a tightening of the screws. People fear too that—as in 1981—goon squads, with tacit official backing, will get to work unleashing murder, mayhem and arson. Meanwhile, the polls situation in the North

seems to be getting more complicated. The LIBERATION TIGERS OF THAMIL EELAM (Prabhakaran Group) issued leaflets on Wednesday (4 May) calling upon the people to totally reject the forthcoming local elections and claiming responsibility for the killing of the 3 UNPers. In a veiled reference, the Tamil United Liberation Front is branded an evil force which is Eelamist only at election time and

on election platforms!

The Liberation Tigers' boycott call came just a few days after a bit of political knockabout involving the TULF's Mayor Designate S. Nagarajah. He announced his withdrawal from the Jaffna Municipal Elections, then did an about-turn and withdrew his letter of withdrawal! A threatening letter is reported to have prompted him to send in his letter

of withdrawal and pressure from the TULF leadership prodded him to recall it.

The TULF and the Liberation Tigers now seem to be set on a collision course. The TULF Secretary General and Opposition Leader A. Amirthalingam, speaking at the Front's May Day Rally, warned militant youths and indirectly the Tigers that their violent intervention in politics would only backfire on them.

Viewpoint

More Brigadiers And More Battalions?

Our Colombo contemporary—THE ISLAND—has posed what she possibly imagines is a hundred-dollar question: "What is TULF's stand on Terrorism?" (Tuesday May 3); and is obviously waiting for an answer. Our advice is: DONT. In the current confused political scenario in the North, it does not matter twenty cents in Ronnie de Mel's currency what the "TULF's stand on Terrorism" is; or whether it has a stand at all. We could have credited our Colombo sister with more political perception and more journalistic acumen had she instead posed the question: "What is the 'terrorist' stand on the TULF?"

Let us first get the semantics right. What do we mean by the "TULF" today? Does one mean the party that six years ago became the custodian of the hopes and dreams and aspirations of the Tamil people? The party that won the overwhelming trust of the Tamil voter at the 1977 elections? The party that passed that grandiloquent resolution at Pannakam almost exactly seven years ago, directing the Action Committee to "formulate a plan of action and launch without undue delay the struggle for winning the sovereignty and freedom of the Tamil nation"? The party that went before the Tamil people asking for a mandate for the setting up of Thamil Eelam "either by peaceful means or by direct action", and later maintained vociferously that it had won that mandate? No, dear sister, that is all now part of Hans Andersen's Tamil fairy tales! The TULF today means simply one thing—Mr. Amirthalingam. The M.P.s themselves do not matter, the Central Committee does not matter; neither the Action Committee if there is one.

What was once the party of a people has now been reduced to a power caucus—at the centre of which stands Mr. A. Around him is a powerful cluster of businessmen and professionals who are there for their own reasons. At respectable distances stand several others who have no business to be there, but they are there because they have no other place to go. Then there are the vast mass of party supporters who have grown in politics with the Federal Party since 1956, the friends and erstwhile admirers who are confused and perplexed, afraid to question, ready to go along with the party at critical times like elections because they know that any support withheld will be promptly interpreted by government circles and the partisan media analysts in Colombo as a vote against Eelam! As a former NEW STATESMAN editor Paul Johnson once said of the British Labour Party, any pretence that the TULF is concerned with political, social and philosophical objectives, that it is a party of idealism and integrity must now be abandoned. It has become an organisation of like-minded careerists intent on power and survival, and what they do, what their stand on Terrorism or any other "ism" is, is of very little importance; scarcely any importance at all, to the Tamil people or to the government.

By successfully wooing the TULF leadership, President Jayawardene has not only divided the Tamil people, but had neatly pulled the rug under Mr. Amirthalingam's feet. As a short-term strategy it was excellent. But in depriving Mr. Amirthalingam of his appointed historic role of leading his people towards liberation, he has only delivered that role instead to unknown gunmen and uncompromising youths with whom he has no common language of dialogue, (both literally and otherwise), who have no use for Parliaments and courts of law, who are not enamoured of Colombo or Jayawardenapura or high offices or visiting American battleships, and dealing with whom he will find his own political dexterity inadequate. He will have to fall back on more brigadiers and more battalions.

**Saturday
Review** SRI LANKA

May Day in Jaffna

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Though none of the Northern Political Parties could boast of Hindi pop idols who attracted the crowds for the UNP rally at Galle Face Green, yet Jaffna town too attained a carnival-mood on Sunday night when the local parties held their May-Day rallies within close proximity to one another, with loud speakers blaring, bombastic rhetoric rending the air, and 'red' decorations adorning the skies. Even the

crowds were relaxed, as they moved from one rally to another, as if they were visiting different stalls in a fair.

But sadly the 'worker' was all but lost amidst the crowds. It was the usual petty-bourgeois politicians who occupied the platforms and most of their speeches were preoccupied with mud slinging on rival parties, rather than celebrating the 'worker'. The vote-catching "Eelam" slogan too

was raised often, as the politicians had their eyes carefully focussed on the forthcoming municipal elections. The spirit of the original May day in Chicago in 1886, when hundreds of workers lost their lives when they were struggling for a revised eight-hour working day, was rarely found in most rallies here.

T.U.L.F. certainly drew

the largest crowd for its rally in the Open-Air Theatre. The TULF exploited the splendid opportunity offered by the day to rally the people behind the party for the forthcoming elections. Mr. A. Amirthalingam at one point very clearly stated: "Let this May Day be a day in which the splintered Tamil race forget their differences and unite under the TULF". Certainly a new definition for the May Day! In a highly emotive speech in a half-threatening, half-pleading tone he criticised the radical youth of the North. With the backdrop of the shooting of the three leading UNP-ers in the North, and the letter of threat which had forced the TULF's first candidate to withdraw his nomination Mr. A. Amirthalingam issued a counter-threat to the Tigers, saying that their growing violent interference in politics would soon backfire on them.

Then he went on to criticise the up-and-coming Marxist Youth Organizations of the North. He exaggeratingly magnified the differences between these small groups, and reiterated (as usual) that his party stood for a 'Socialist' Tamil Eelam. But he stressed that he couldn't join hands with the traditional Left parties such as SLFP, CP, and LSSP because they professed sympathy for the Tamil cause but couldn't live up to their words in times of crisis.

Mr. V. Yogeswaran who was chairing the meeting, next gallantly introduced Dr. A. L. Abraham as "the future Mayor of Jaffna". But there were stray shouts of "turn-coat" from the crowds which knew Dr. Abraham's association with the Tamil Congress and this timely switch-over. So, Dr. Abraham had to first explain the reason behind his sudden change. He said that the political climate was quite different

(Continued on Page 11)

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"We have no political prisoners" Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa told a press interviewer in Washington recently. He also said that the Tamil prisoners "enjoy fundamental rights that are guaranteed in the Constitution". Reporting this, the **ASIAN MONITOR**, a new weekly newspaper in its first issue dated April 15th 1983, carries the following despatch by IRVIN MOLOTSKY

"The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, Ranasinghe Premadasa, met on Monday with Vice President George Bush and said afterward that the session had gone well.

"They are well informed and have a good opinion of us," Premadasa said in an interview in the residence of Sri Lankan Ambassador.

Bush and his aides were particularly impressed, Premadasa said, by the 80 percent turnout in the last Sri Lankan presidential election—a figure substantially higher than the 60 percent turnout in the United States.

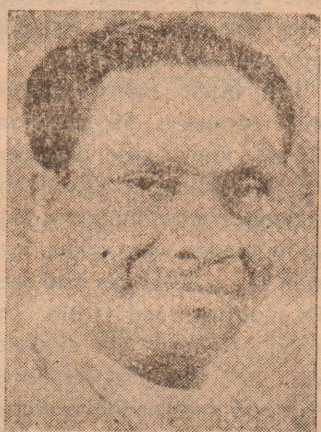
"Democracy is strong in Sri Lanka," the Prime Minister said, tracing his country's tradition to its first voting, in 1931. At that time, the country, then named Ceylon, was under British colonial rule.

Asked about Sri Lanka's Tamil minority, which is seeking an independent state, Premadasa denied charges that Tamil political prisoners had been mistreated.

"We have no political prisoners," he asserted, adding "We do have a problem of terrorism."

Most of the Tamil people support the Government in its attempt to end that terrorism, he said,

Tamil prisoners enjoy fundamental rights,



P. M.'s claim in Washington

'Most of the Tamil people support the government'

because many Tamil civilians had been its victims.

"The Tamil people themselves were living in fear as a result of terrorist activities," he declared.

"Ordinary people, not just militiamen, were harmed, so we had to enact a new law - the Prevention of Terrorism Act - to deal with such offences.

In any country where terrorism raises its head, you have to have laws to meet the situation".

Asked if such laws had led to mistreatment of Tamil prisoners, Premadasa replied "No, not at all."

The prisoners, he said, enjoy "fundamental rights that are guaranteed in the Constitution."

Regarding the arrests of three Roman Catholic priests who have been held on charges of aiding the Tamils, Premadasa said: "They were char-

ged and are facing trial. The law is common to everyone. You don't make exceptions just because people are priests'

As for the Tamil attempt to set up a separate state, the Prime Minister said: We don't agree with that demand. I don't think Sri Lanka is big enough to divide or partition."

He said his trip to America was a goodwill mission to improve bilateral relations with Washington, to promote trade and industry, to meet with leaders of the Reagan Administration and Congress, and to meet with Sri Lanka's living in the U.S., who are thought to number about 10,000.

"I spoke a piece of my mind to the Vice President," Premadasa said of his conversation with Bush.

"The U.S. expects fair play from countries that accept aid from it," the Prime Minister said. "Our position is that fair play is required

even if countries do not get aid."

While it is socialist, the current Sri Lankan government has had good relations with Washington, especially compared with the previous Government, led by Sirimavo Bandaranaike, which was much more leftist.

"If the U.S. wants countries to deal fairly with it, it should in its own industrial and trade interests help developing countries," Premadasa asserted, adding that the developing countries would then be in a position, to be good markets for the U.S. and other developed countries.

He said that he had conveyed this to Bush and that the Vice President "appreciated it very much."

The Prime Minister said they did not discuss establishing an American naval base in Sri Lanka, a step that has been under consideration in Washington.

"We are an independent country," Premadasa said. "We have not offered anyone our bases." Asked if Sri Lanka might do so in the future, he said, "No, there is no need."

He said Sri Lanka allowed naval vessels from any country to stop at Sri Lanka ports to

take on fuel and provisions, "They can come any time they want," he said, with only two exceptions ships of any country at war with another country, and ships carrying nuclear weapons.

During his visit to the U.S., Premadasa said, he met with business leaders in Los Angeles and San Francisco and found great interest in investing in Sri Lanka.

Two large American electronics companies, Motorola and Harris, have agreed to build large factories in Sri Lanka, he said, and other companies are expected to follow.

"We have a large potential for agro-industries," he asserted. We are already in textiles industries and we have a potential for fisheries. "Much of the 100 million in American aid given to Sri Lanka in the last year went towards such development.

He said that Sri Lanka had been harmed by 400 years of colonial rule under the Dutch, the Portuguese and the British. The colonial powers, he said, had changed the country from a self sufficient producer of rice to a plantation economy that produced tea, rubber and coconuts but in turn had to import its rice supplies.

Colonialism did more than injure the economy, the Prime Minister declared: "We lost our bearings in the process."

More about Tamils and Fundamental Rights : From the pages of Hansard

'SATURDAY REVIEW' in the course of its Editorial Viewpoint in the last issue quoted Robert Kennedy who said, "There is no point in telling Negroes to observe the law - it has almost always been used against them." We went on to say that laws in Sri Lanka are desi-

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has been a tendency over the last one year for cases to be transferred by fiat of the Attorney General. We thought it was only the cases of accused persons in Jaffna that were being transferred to Colombo. Every anti-terrorist case, prevention of terrorists cases have been transferred to Colombo. Recently, you have also transferred the cases that arose

gned to place the Tamils at a disadvantage or to oppress them.

A 'S.R.' reader has brought to our attention a recent speech made by the M.P. for Nallur Mr. M. Sivasithamparam in the course of their discussion on the votes of the Ministry of Justice. Since

in Chunnakam and other places, where some police officers were charged with certain offences during May/June 1981. Sir, on what basis were these transferred? These were cases where police officers were accused persons. The witnesses were all in Jaffna. Why were these cases transferred to Colombo? In fact, in two or three of those cases, witnesses have refused to go to Colombo;

we find this very pertinent we reproduce from the official Hansard of Parliamentary Debate dated 31st March, 1983 the following extract from Mr. Sivasithamparam's speech as well as the reply by the Minister of Justice Mr. Nissanka Wijeratne:

that is, because, if they go to Colombo, they do not know what is going to happen. They do not know where to stay, and who is going to bear the expenses. Then on what basis are these transfers taking place?

Why are these cases where police officers are charged for incidents in May, June 1981 being transferred to Colombo? Is it because you
(Continued Overleaf)

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Principal

(Continued from page 3) have lost confidence in the Judicial Officer of Jaffna? Is it because you have come to a conclusion that the Judicial Officer in Jaffna cannot do justice any more? On what basis are these cases being transferred? So I do want to register our very serious protests against these cases being transferred to Colombo, particularly those cases where the accused are police officers.

Similarly, there is the question of bail regarding the three young persons who were taken into custody in 1980. The names are Vadivel Mahendran of Sandiveli, Aiyathurai Thadchanamoorthy of Kiran, and Marugupillai Perumathan of Sittandy. These three young men were taken into custody in 1980. Up to date no cases have been filed against them. Applications for bail have been resisted by the Attorney-General's Department and they have not been released. Even the Prevention of Terrorism Act lays down that priority shall be given to those cases. Well, what have you been doing since 1980? These three young men were arrested and put in jail, put in remand, but there is no case against them. You resist the applications for bail and you do not even release them. But I know of other cases where even persons who were charged for shooting down witnesses have been given bail. What is the rationale on which bail is being granted by this Department? Why is it that some persons are being refused bail consistently while others are being given bail? So I want the Hon. Minister to see that there is some uniform rule as far as bail is concerned. And particularly I want the Hon. Minister to look into the case of these three young men, because I have raised this matter on the Floor of this House more than once that these three young men are being kept for no reason at all, and that bail is being resisted. So, I do ask that these persons, be given bail or that they be brought to trial at the earliest possible opportunity.

Similarly, when the Emergency was declared late last year and early this year, a number of people were taken into custody. A number of SLFP people were taken into custody and a few of the TULF people were also taken into custody. In fact as far as the SLFP is concerned, it was said that they were Naxalites and that it was dangerous to leave them outside. They were taken into custody under emergency rule. Some of our young men also were taken into custody. One of them was a boy called Paranthaman who was arrested as he came to Ceylon from India.

'Tamil prisoners' held from 1980 : No charge, no case and no bail either !

The allegation was that he was having some literature which is supposed to be seditious. He was also arrested under Emergency Regulations. They have been released. I am not complaining I am glad that they were released. As soon as the Emergency lapsed they were released. The Emergency lapsed, and on the day before the Emergency lapsed, a Detention Order was served on this young man by Hon. Minister for Internal Security under the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In the case of the Naxalites that is what we were told-you released them as soon as the Emergency lapsed. But in the case of this Young man who brought some literature into Ceylon we will grant for the moment that it is seditious-he is not being released; a detention order is being served on him and he is being kept in custody. If he had seditious literature, what is the difficulty in charging him? It is a very, very simple case. Possession of seditious literature-it is very simple case. Possession of seditious literature it is very simple matter. Why do you not charge him? This type of incarceration of young men, is it fair? He was a young man who was working in the Jaffna University as a laboratory technician. Keeping these young men without any reason is certainly a matter that needs the condemnation of every right-thinking person.

Tamil man killed:

No prosecution

Sir, once again, why are you keeping some of these detenus, some of these young men who are charged under the prevention of Terrorism Act, in Army custody? You are keeping some in remand prison, but you are keeping the others in army custody.

We have received many complaints from these young men as to the type of treatment they are being given at these army camps. Under the prison rules, remand prisoners are not expected to work. But these young men who are being kept at Panagoda are being compelled to work and they are sometimes compelled to do work which certainly hurts the dignity of these young men. They have been asked to wash lavatories. They have been asked to wash bathrooms. They have been asked to sweep the compounds and so on at the army camp. Well, if they are remand prisoners, you cannot ask them to work. That is your prison rule. Why is that in the case of some

people only, who are kept at the Panagoda camp, they are being compelled to work in this way?

I want the Hon. Minister to make inquiries into this matter and see whether some of these young men cannot be transferred to normal remand custody. After all, Sir, the Welikada Prison and the Magazine Prison today are being guarded by the army because some of the accused persons who are charged under the anti-terrorism law are kept there. So, why do you not transfer all these persons who are on remand to either the Welikada Prison or the Magazine Prison? There is absolutely no reason why these people should be continued to be kept in Army custody when you have all the security arrangements necessary both at the Welikada and Magazine prisons, to keep these persons. The reverend fathers and the university professor and so on are at Welikada and Magazine prison, and there are sufficient army guards to ensure security.

Why not transfer all these people in the remand prison and change to judicial custody from Army custody? These are the matters that I

want to raise as far as the young men who are today in detention are concerned.

The other matter that I want to raise is, Sir, the Hon. Minister knows that a person was shot down in Atchuveli. A Magisterial inquiry was held and witnesses were called both from the public who had seen the shooting and from the army. After all the evidence was led, the Magistrate of Mallakam returned a verdict of homicide. The persons involved were asked to appear in the High Court. They came into the High Court, and they made an application for bail. How quickly the Attorney General's Department acted in this way shows that even before the notice was served on the Attorney General and the respondents, they came into court and said, "We are not objecting to bail. They can be released on bail". I wish they act with such promptitude in all matters of applications for bail. In this particular case they came into Court even before the notice was served and said, "We have no objection. Bail can be granted." Then a nolle prosequi! The Attorney General said, "I am

not proceeding in this case." What is the remedy that this young man has? Here is a magisterial inquiry, and a verdict of homicide has been returned. The Attorney General sits there and says, "I am not prosecuting."

This is not the only instance. Mr. Speaker, where homicide verdicts have been returned and no action has been taken. There was a young man who was shot dead in the verandah of my office in May 1981. The Magistrate returned a verdict of homicide. Up to now we do not know what has happened.

Therefore, Sir, I asked that the Attorney-General's Department should have some uniform standard by which they decide, if the Magistrate has returned a verdict of homicide, what further action they should take.

These are some of the matters that I wanted to bring to the notice of the Hon. Minister so that they could be looked into and some justice done to these unfortunate persons who had been done to death in this way by either the armed services or the police.....

Nothing wrong in cleaning latrines. says Justice Minister

(Mr. Nissanka Wijeyeratne - Minister of Justice).

In regard to bail that had not been granted to three young persons from 1980 to date and no case had been filed, he mentioned that the Attorney General had consistently resisted bail. I would like to mention that in the case of Vadivel Mahendran, Aiyadurai Techanamoorthy and M. Bhavanandan indictment has been filed for murder of a person called Sudharman Silva who was bringing cash for the workers in the Cashew Corporation and also for robbery of the cash. I trust he will appreciate. (Interruption) But, these are the facts about it, and I think you will appreciate that it was quite an objective approach in this case. He also mentioned the fact that a Tamil boy who came from India with seditious literature had been arrested and not released. The detention order in this case, after the emergency was over, was served by the Ministry of Defence which handles the matter. They did so for very good

reasons, and no doubt when an occasion arises, the Minister in charge of the subject will elucidate it further, when the opportunity arises. In regard to the prevention of detenus under the Prevention of Terrorists Act, it was mentioned by the Member for Nallur that some of them are in the Army Camp and he would prefer if all of them were brought to the maximum security at Welikada. But whether they are at the Army Camp or not in regard to the question of work, I might mention that even in remand, prisoners are expected to do a certain amount of work, and I do not think the cleaning of one's own latrine is such an unbearable thing; young Navy Officers have to do it. I know a young boy, a relation of mine, who joined the Navy in Trincomalee-one of his duties was cleaning his own latrine. If he saw the picture of Gandhi, he will realise that the cleaning of latrines is not meant only for untouchables. (Interruption)

In regard to the matter mentioned about Achchuveli, he mentioned that the Mal-

lakam Magistrate said there was a case of homicide, but that the Attorney General had said there was no objection to bail and subsequently a nolle prosequi was entered. In actual fact, the Magistrate's verdict was not of homicide, but an open verdict. (Interruption) If I have been misinformed, I am sorry. I shall correct myself later. But at the present moment my information is that it was not homicide, but an open verdict, and the A.G. had consented to bail after notice was received, and not before notice was received as alleged by the Hon. Member. The accused were discharged and the facts revealed were that an Army patrol were shot at by some persons lying in ambush and that the Army patrol opened fire in self defence and one person who had received gun shot injuries had died. So, I do not think it was a question of a deliberate act of murder. It was in the course of Army operations against persons who as the Hon. Member knows, these days are very frequent and endanger the lives of security people.

In the year 1833, the same year as the birth of our Parliament any Institution under the British tutelage, was born Muthu Coomaraswamy to Mudaliyar Arumuganathapillai Coomaraswamy. The father Mudaliyar Coomaraswamy was the first representative of the Tamil speaking population in the country's Supreme legislature. He was presented with a medal by Sir Robert Brownrigg for his excellent public service in 1819.

Ponnambalam

brothers' uncle

It is also interesting to note when the last king of Kandy Sri Wickrama Raja Singhe was deported to Vellore (1815) in the Madras Presidency in the charge of Major Hook - Mudaliyar Coomaraswamy waited on the King and helped alleviate his interim period of agony, from kingship to exile.

Muthu Coomaraswamy was the maternal uncle of the Ponnambalam brothers, Sir Ramanathan and Sir Arunachalam. He had his education in Queen's Academy, now Royal College, from 1842-1851. In 1862 he represented the Tamil speaking population in the Legislative Council replacing his uncle the Hon. Mr. Ethirmanasingham. He in turn had taken the succession from Muthu's father. Muthu served his country for seventeen years until his death, and the impact of which was felt for more than three quarter of a century.

First Asian to be knighted

His first voyage to England was in 1863 and the second to London in 1874. On his second visit, his marriage to Elizabeth Clay Beebi of Kent, a lady who was interested in Eastern Philosophy was solemnised by the then Archbishop of Canterbury.

He was the first to be called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn and the first Asian accredited for the practice of law in Gt. Britain and the first to be knighted by the British Crown.

He introduced one of the great Tamil epics "HARIS CHANDRA" in drama form to Queen Victoria. The play was staged at the Royal Court under the patronage of the Queen, who graced the occasion with great enthusiasm. She is said to have treasured the Holy Bible, the English version of the "THIRUKURAL" and "HARISCHANDRA" by her bed-side table. The Queen made him a knight of the most distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George. Disraeli, (Lord Beaconsfield) accompanied Mr. & Mrs. Muthu to the Palace for the Conservative dubbing ceremony.

Muthu also figured in Disraeli's novel as the Ceylonese hero "Kusinara" which he did not finish but was found later

Sir Muthu Coomaraswamy: the colonial who hobnobbed with Kings, Queens and Prime Ministers



Sir Muthu Coomaraswamy

by Victoria Joseph

in instalments in the London Times.

The couple left for Ceylon in 1876 and took up residence in a Colombo Mansion known as 'Rhineland' where Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy was born in August 27th 1877. In 1879 mother and son left for U.K.

hoping to be followed by Sir Muthu who was then planning to enter Parliament encouraged by Disraeli, and others. But alas he died on the intended day of departure!

Sir Muthu's charming manners, dynamic personality, his good English and culture made

him idol of the elite crowd of the political circles of Gt. Britain. He graced the drawing rooms of Disraeli, Palmerston, and Gladstone. He was the admired guest of the salon of Paris. The French Emperor, Napoleon III used to invite him to his Palace to enjoy his company of intellectual and philosophic wisdom. He never gave up his eastern culture for the western one, but live in the realms of the International cultured world! He was master of twelve languages including Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Pali, Arabic and Sanskrit; and the classics embodied in them. He was like S w a m y Vivekananda, another Theophist presenting the Orient to the Occident.

Sir Muthu was instrumental in placing the Island of Ceylon on the map of the world. Respect and honour was bestowed on her by the Western World, and it became the 'premier Crown Colony'. In reading one of Sir Muthu's speeches in the legislature, the Secretary of State for the Colonies exclaimed in Parliament - "they might as well be allowed to manage their own affairs". His dicta in Downing Street were much esteemed.

To the cause of general education he gave his best to the country. The Science Laboratories at Royal College took form mainly due to his efforts. One could have seen the power of his language acumen when he argued against the injustice of using tax monies gathered from non-Christians to support the Church of England.

He was the honorary member of the Royal Geographical and Geological Societies, and a member of the Fraternity of the much esteemed Athenaeum Club. He translated from Buddhist scriptures, the "Sutta Nipata" and the "Vamsa"; Also the Tamil Classics "Harischandra" and the Hymns of "Thaymanavar" which opened up a new world for the West on spiritual and philosophical plane.

His legacy

to the world

His influence was also felt in India. The then Maharaja of Tanjore died and when his throne fell vacant, it was held by the British. The Maharanees therefore wanted Sir Muthu's help to intercede on her behalf with the British Parliament, to secure for her grandson the throne of Tanjore. Thereby lasted a friendship which resulted in the matrimonial ties of the Maharanees's Guru, Swami, Arulparanandha's grandson Dr. S. Natesan marrying Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan's daughter Sundari.

Sir Muthu had left the world a legacy in his own son Dr. Ananda Kentish Coomaraswamy—a cardinal figure in the 20th century Art history.

'Refugees left helpless again, because of repression on Gandhiyam'

"Because of the repression unleashed on the Gandhiyam Society by the Government, about 30,000 refugees who were being rehabilitated by this society have once again become helpless. Please note that these refugees from various regions were the displaced victims of racial riots from 1977 to 1981", says the MOVEMENT FOR THE DEFENCE OF DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS (castle Street, Colmbo 8) in a letter addressed to President Jayawardene dated 22nd April, and signed by S.G. Panchihewa, Joint Secretary:-

Your Excellency,

This is to confirm the telegram sent to you today.

"Hon. President, We are gravely concerned about the arrest of Dr. Rajasunderam,

the secretary and Mr. S. A. David, the president of the Gandhiyam Society. We are also sorry that rehabilitation-work against the refugees and victims of racial riots from 1977-81, is obstructed by the arrest of these two persons as well as other volunteer workers of the Gandhiyam Society. We request that these members of the Gandhiyam Society who were arrested, be produced before a Magistrate forthwith, that they, if they had violated the existing laws, be tried under the normal laws of the land and also they, be freed as soon as possible if they are innocent. Movement for the defence of Democratic Rights"

The secretary of the Gandhiyam Society, Dr. Rajasunderam

has been arrested and held in custody, innocently from 1983-04-06 Bright lights have been shined on to his eyes denying him even sleep. The health of this diabetic patient has begun to deteriorate. His repeated requests for Medical treatment have been refused. He is being kept in a room 3 feet wide, handcuffed. We strongly deplore these inhumanely cruel acts.

The President of the Gandhiyam Society Mr. S. A. David has been arrested and kept at Pannagoda Army Camp from 8-4-1983.

Volunteers of the Gandhiyam Society from several regions have also been arrested and kept in custody. Because of the arrests of

these people and the repression unleashed on this society by the Government, about 30,000 refugees who were being rehabilitated by this society have once again become helpless. Please note that these refugees from various regions were the displaced victims of racial riots from 1977 till 1981.

Hence we request that,

i) the democratic and human rights of these refugees be respected and their lives safeguarded by lifting all restrictions placed on the working of Gandhiyam offices,

ii) the president, the secretary and others of the Gandhiyam society who are held in custody be treated humanely,

How many of our politicians in power who are now living it up in style stop to think, even occasionally, how the ordinary people live after six years of UNP rule?

Quite a number of the politicians may turn round and say that the people are now better fed, housed and clothed than ever before.

But for what percentage of our 15 million is the picture painted by the politicians true?

The UNP Government has certainly ended the shortages that were a curse during the previous regime but some of its policies have contributed to make even such essential items like drugs and infant foods all luxuries beyond the reach of the ordinary people—the very people on whose backs the politicians climbed to power.

Of course, the UNP always has them in mind. Only the other day, UNP General-Secretary Mr. Harsha Abeyawardana told some party candidates at Sri Kotha that they should always uphold the principle of serving the masses with a view to raising their living standards. "The UNP always espoused the cause of the common man." ("Sun" April 21, 1983).

Life an endless struggle

The same day same newspaper quoted the Secretary to the Ministry of Finance and Planning, Dr. W. M. Tilakaratna saying at a seminar on "An Agricultural, Food and Nutrition Strategy for Sri Lanka", that the basic purpose of such a strategy should be to end malnutrition in the country.

All our efforts should be directed towards achieving a fuller and more meaningful life for our people. We must keep this goal in mind and work for the abjectly poor, for whom life is a meaningless and endless struggle to stave off sheer starvation.

Subsidies gave them the basics

"Malnutrition is only a symptom of the greater disease of poverty. To eliminate malnutrition therefore means to eliminate the worst forms of poverty that exist among the very people who produced food—the rural peasantry. Faced with the acute problem of landlessness, they can never hope to overcome poverty..."

The rural peasantry comprises by far the greater portion of our population. According to the politicians, they have never had it so good as under this Government. But I prefer to believe a more objective observer like the Secretary to the Ministry of Finance and Planning who virtually admits that, despite all the Government's development programmes, there is acute poverty, especially in the rural areas.

Six years of UNP rule : and how do the ordinary people live?

For the vast mass of the people, in both the urban and the rural areas, it was the subsidies that had made life tolerable hitherto. These subsidies had enabled them to obtain the basics of life—food, clothing, housing, medical care, education transport and fuel—more readily than if they were not there.

In consequence, though in terms of per capita income—it was \$ 270 in 1982—Sri Lanka was far down in the world table, it was high up as measured by the "quality of life" index.

But subsidy is a dirty word to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund where the developing countries are concerned. Subsidies are a waste of resources which could be better used for development.

This view is echoed by the fat cats who form the elite in the developing countries. With their tummies overfull and enjoying the best of things, they join the cry "Subsidies must go—to attain higher growth rates."

The "fat cats" include most politicians in power.

Our subsidies have been going gradually since the early 1960s. After 1977, the process have been accelerated. Soon, all the subsidies will be gone.

The World Bank and the I. M. F. will then applaud the UNP Government for its courage in taking "politically unpopular but economically imperative measures."

Latest round of price increases

But is it a courageous act to hit the people below the belt? That is exactly what the Government has done with the latest round of price increase, both direct (like the fuel price hikes) and indirect (through the increase in the business turnover tax and the slashing of subsidies). It will be some more months before the full inflationary impact of the increases are felt. Already the middle and low income groups

who have no legitimate avenues of increasing their incomes to match the price increases are groaning under the burden.

If one were to believe the consumers' Price Index, the general level of prices has increased by only 100% since 1977. The index, which stood at 203 points then, is now a little over 400. But it is a well-known fact that this index does not reflect price changes accurately.

For instance, when beef was needed, some policemen were sent in a jeep and the butcher would give a prime cut without charge.

He justified the conduct of such officers by saying that, besides being poorly paid, many politicians he knew also received "gifts" of various kinds. I liked his change of emphasis, from "presents" to "gifts," but in most instances does not the word mean the same thing—BRIBE?

FOCUS

by

Gamini

Why it is that most politicians do not seem to feel the pinch themselves? Is it because there are hidden subsidies in the form of "gifts" in cash and kind? It is no secret that every time a contract is awarded somebody somewhere gets a "cut". Few people talk of these subsidies, least of all those at the World Bank and the I. M. F.!

I am reminded of a former superintendent of Police who enjoyed a Rolls Royce life style on what was a bullock-cart salary. When I twitted him about it he asked me what was the use of being a superintendent unless he was able to use his power and influence to make hay? He used to get almost everything he wanted—rice, vegetables, beef, liquor and other goodies plus women as well—FREE!

He said that most police officers he knew, from sub-inspectors up to even some DIGs, were supplied with "presents" UNASKED by merchants, bucketshop owners, illicit liquor sellers and others who wanted the law to turn a blind eye at they engaged in their nefarious activities.

In fact, I myself have seen "gifts" arriving at a certain politician's house some years ago. It required four people to carry the stuff laid in a wicker basket. Cakes, cheese, biscuits, meat, liquor, cigars etc. One of those hampers would have lasted an ordinary family a full month at least. How could such politicians feel the pinch?

We have a Bribery Commissioner's Department, but tell me when it last nabbed a really big fish?

There is provision in the law for politicians and others in public life to declare their assets periodically. And declarations have been made since the early 1970s but these remain secret.

Why not change the law so that the declaration could be made public? If the UNP high command is sincere about its pledge to cleanse public life, this is the least it could do. And why should any politician, if he or she has nothing to hide, be afraid to make a public declaration? I should like to see some Government politician moving a private member's motion on this matter.

Now to what could be done to bring down, or at least hold, the price line,

The heavy oil import bill, which eats up nearly half our export earnings, is like a millstone around Sri Lanka's neck. The sensible thing is to cut down imports and impose rationing. This could ease the pressure on the balance of payments and slow down the further depreciation of the rupee. The World Bank and the I. M. F. however would not allow the imposition of any controls and regulations. They want the price mechanism to act as a check: increase prices and consumption will go down.

But this is not happening to the desired extent in Sri Lanka because of a number of factors chief among which is that people who have benefited from the Government's policies and the public sector appear to have money to burn.

In the public sector particularly, there is large scale waste of petrol and diesel, the Mahaweli Ministry and the SLCTB being notorious in this respect.

For a start, why not cut down the number of cars and jeeps in departments and corporations by half? Officials should be made to come to pool arrangements for their official travelling and no private travelling should be allowed in official cars. Any talk that this will hamper the development effort will be so much bullshit.

Charges for electricity

As the Central Bank warns, "It is inconceivable that Sri Lanka could continue to spend resources on this scale on just one item of imports, however essential it may be. The situation warrants urgent attention directed towards the formulation of a national energy conservation policy, as a matter of the highest priority. Sound demand management policy in the short run, coupled with a planned supply expansion strategy, including the search for alternative sources of energy in the long run, are of critical importance."

The charges for electricity for both domestic and industrial use should be brought down by doing away with the fuel surcharge—as well as the waste in the Electricity Board. Far better to impose judicious

(Continued next page)

On a visit to the home of Mr. N —, a well known toddy tapper in our area was able to get an insight of the pathetic condition of his life. He has been living in poverty for the last nine months with his wife and children.

When I met him very recently, he started to narrate the incidents that had occurred to him in his lifetime. He told me that he had been working as a toddy tapper for the last three decades and his job is a dangerous one. He gets up very early in the morning, has a cup of tea and goes to his work without breakfast. Then he comes home at noon and has his meals. Now he is at his house without any job and living in poverty because of the Palm Products Society in his area. This society ordered him not to tap any trees from last April: a well known District Development Council Member is the President of the society. From his words I was able to understand that he is not much of a conversationalist. Anyhow from his random talk I could gather the following facts.

One evening in March 1982 a group of people came to the land in which he was tapping toddy, gave him much trouble, and damaged the Palmyrah Flower Stalks (Spadices) of, the, numbered trees and went away from the scene taking his tapping knife. He told me that those people were not known to him, except one. But he was sure that the people who visited the land were not from the Excise Department or representatives from the Co-operative Department.

After this incident he met the Committee Member of the area and informed him of what had happened. At his request the Committee Member visited the place and noticed the damage, done by that group. I also met the Committee Member and inquired

The travails of a toddy tapper

about this incident. He told me he had seen the Flower Stalks that had been cut off from the numbered trees.

Then the tapper made an appeal to the Palm Products Society regarding the action of the members who were involved in this incident.

But he didn't receive any response. After this he made several requests to his society to take immediate action. After a few days he received a letter that he was fined Rs. 1,000/- for his mistake and he was asked to pay a visit to the society. But he could not go there because of his illiteracy. But he made a strong appeal to the society that the charges framed by them were false and incorrect. In addition to this he most emphatically stated in his letter that he was innocent and he was not ready to pay the fine as demanded by the society. If the society failed to withdraw the fine imposed on him, he was going to file a case for justice.

One month has slowly rolled on. The above society started deducting the fine from his salary in weekly instalments. Then he wrote a letter to the society not to deduct the fine without his consent. As his protest was very strong, they stopped their action. But he didn't accept the salary from which a

deduction was made. After this they paid his salary without any deduction of the fine for a few weeks.

Again the society started to deduct the fine. Mr. N was helpless and could not do anything. So he approached a well known lawyer at Point Pedro and sought his advice and filed a case against the ex-Manager of the society at the Kayts Courts. In addition to the above action he has written to the Asst. Commissioner of Labour, Jaffna and the O.I.C. Excise at Kayts. So far no action has been taken by these officers.

Several days and months had gone. The tapper could not find any means for his living. So the lawyer who appeared for him brought about a suitable settlement between the parties in court and requested him to withdraw the case if he is able to get his job without any punishment. So he agreed to these terms to get back his job without any damage to his future.

The learned judge who was on the bench at the Kayts Courts gave the following judgement on 01-2-1983: "It appears that the parties are prepared to come for a

Mr. N has been waiting for a favourable reply from the society regarding his job. So far he hasn't received any reply. Because of his poverty he met the Commissioner for Palm Products and submitted the Kayts Courts judgement and requested him to grant permission to start his work before the Spadices get matured. The Commissioner told him that he was not aware of this incident. The society had not informed him about this. Then the Commissioner wrote a letter to the society that he had not received any information about this case and the judgement awarded by the judge.

The toddy tappers in Jaffna belong to the depressed class. They are very backward in Education and other aspects. Their struggles are well known to us for many decades. During the period of the late Dr. N. M. Perera as Finance Minister he initiated the Palm Products Society for the welfare of the tappers in Jaffna. I think this was a great boon for them. At the beginning some of the Mudalalis among the depressed Tamils protested against this arrangement and wished to wreck the Palm Products Societies. Today I can see the very same people in charge of the societies and they are sending the poor

(Continued overleaf)

by

V. Rattai

After he filed the case, the society sent a group of people to the compound where he was tapping and cut off the Palmyrah Flower Stalks and suspended him from tapping. This time an Officer from the Excise Department also accompanied this group. This action of the society made him unemployed. They took revenge on him because he had filed action in the courts. It is my opinion that till the court had given its judgement the society should not have retrenched him and deprived him of his work. It is a very arbitrary action.

settlement. As the Commissioner of Co-operative Development (Palm Products) is considering the re-employment of the Plaintiff and the Plaintiff it seems to me is willing to withdraw the case. But the Plaintiff has the right to re-open the case if he is denied employment."

On 01-2-1983 the Palm Products Society said that they had written a letter to the A.C.C.D. of the Palm Products Society regarding his case. As soon as they received a letter from him Mr. N would be re-instated in his job.

Six years of UNP rule: FOCUS by Gamini

(Continued from Page 6) power cuts, than operate the expensive fuel-consuming gas turbines.

It must not be forgotten that every increase in the oil and energy prices has a ripple effect, pushing up the prices of all other goods and services.

Schooling has become a big burden to most parents. While private tuition absorbs a considerable part of the pay packet, textbooks, uniforms, shoes and travelling plus collections for too many functions also take a heavy toll.

Why not ban private tuition altogether? Why not stop insisting on wearing white? Why not cut down on the number of items children especially at the primary level are asked to buy? Why insist on shoes when sandals

and slippers would suffice? Shoes are a particularly costly item, so that now one sees many parents wearing slippers or sandals to office after having bought shoes for the children!

In the matter of essential consumer goods, the Government should not sit back and allow supply and demand alone, that is the market system, to determine prices. As it is, both the producer and the consumer are at the mercy of a band of ruthless middlemen who sit on their fat haunches and make easy money. There should be effective public sector organisations which could compete with the private sector to prevent middlemen and wholesale and retail traders from holding the people to ransom. Hold-

ing buffer stocks of food items should be an integral part of this operation.

Also, the number of tamashas should be cut down. Pandals, decorations and illuminations may be undertaken by ruling party supporters, including new-rich mudalalis, but the money actually comes from the public coffers via commissions made on contracts.

Finally, Government expenditure should, and could, be pruned drastically. It is the heavy deficit financing that is one of the prime causes of the present acute inflation.

UNP leaders should not be made to forget that it was their pledge to ease living costs speedily and substantially that induced many people to vote for them.

Let me remind them of a particular paragraph in a biography of the President.

Then it was

Mrs. B's

mismanagement

and now world

market

conditions?

"Anywhere in the world where the parliamentary system prevails the government of the day comes in for harsh criticism on the issue of the rising cost of living and government often are changed on that issue alone. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene vilified the SLFP Government for the spiralling cost of living

and brushed aside the pleas of Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike that it was a worldwide phenomenon. He claimed that the scarcities were not a worldwide phenomenon but a reflection of her mismanagement and made similar allegations about the cost of living. His audience responded to those statements with thunderous applause...."

The applause has now become muted, but the lightning and thunder is certain to come before long, notwithstanding all pleas that it is "factors beyond the Government's control" world market conditions—that is responsible for the price spiral.

That Paris protest

Nearly a thousand men and women participated in a demonstration opposing the visit of Prime Minister Premadasa to France on 22nd of April. The demonstration which took place in front of the Sri Lankan Embassy in Paris was organized by the Tamil Eelam Liberation Council (France) and the French Spartacist League.

Slogans and posters which were in French and Tamil included "SRI LANKA ARMY GET OUT OF TAMIL EELAM", "TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF GANDHIYAM," "DON'T MORTGAGE TRINCOMALEE," "REPEAL TERRORISM LAW."



The "INDIAN EXPRESS" of April 26th carries the following letter by Mrs. Srimavo R. Dias Bandaranaike sent from her address at 65, Rosmead Place, Colombo 7. The letter is titled, 'What Jayawardene left out.'

Sir — I read in your issue of March 20 the report of an interview with President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka under the title 'The autumn of a patriarch'. In the course of that interview with Hiranmay Karlekar, President Jayawardene is reported to have made the following reference to me:

"She was deprived of her civic rights following a recommendation by a presidential commission that found her guilty of six charges of abuse and misuse of power during her tenure as Prime Minister. The charges against her ranged from evasion of land reform laws, filing of false statements before the inland revenue department and wrongful extension of the emergency".

I was not found guilty of "evasion of land reform laws" or of "filing of false statements before the inland revenue department". Be that as it may, President Jayawardene has failed to mention to

'What Jayawardene left out'

your interviewer that I was tried in absentia [by a commission which he appointed to inquire into allegations made by him, and which was required to report to him whether or not those allegations had been established. Thereafter, on the recommendation of his Cabinet, his parliamentary majority voted to deprive me of my civic rights and to expel me from Parliament to which I had been freely elected at a general election.

I was neither present at the inquiry nor was I represented by lawyers. I refused to participate in its proceedings. Firstly I saw no reason why I should explain, be answerable or be accountable, in respect of the acts of my government, to anybody or tribunal other than the legislature or the people at a general election who alone had power and authority to ques-

tion my actions and that of my Government and to whom alone I was responsible. Secondly, as I pointed out to the commission itself in a statement which I made when I was noticed to appear:

"If I am found guilty by his nominees and deprived of my civic rights by his own political party which constitutes five-sixths of the present Parliament, he will have ensured that his strongest political opponent is eliminated in advance from the contest at the very first election to be held for the election of the President of the republic. I say this is the whole purpose and object behind this elaborate facade of legality of a commission of inquiry".

President Jayawardene has also omitted to tell your paper that very recently one of the commissioners whom he appointed was found by

the Supreme Court to have been guilty of "misconduct unbecoming of a judicial officer". He ended his judicial career in disgrace. The Supreme Court also rejected the evidence on oath tendered by the other two commissioners on behalf of their colleague. In his judgment, the Chief Justice of Sri Lanka observed that "right minded people would not be unjustified if they looked askance" at the decisions of the commissioners, and added:

"What intrinsic worth any recommendation already made or that will be made (by the commission) in the future will have is not a matter for this court. That must be

judged by those who seek to impose punishments on the basis of such recommendations".

During my tenure of office as Prime Minister from 1960 to 1965 and again from 1970 to 1977, and at other times, I have had the pleasure of visiting your country. I have always had a deep affection, respect and regard for your political leaders and for your people many of whom still reciprocate that affection. Therefore I shall be much obliged if you would kindly publish this letter and let your readers be the judges of the self-proclaimed righteousness of President Jayawardene.

The travails of a tapper

(Continued from page 7) illiterate tappers from pillar to post. These people who are ruining the societies under the new set up are now trying to prohibit the action of the tappers through their trade unions and are making every effort to destroy the unions as these unions often find fault with and question the conduct of the management.

The other thing which I want to emphasise is this:—The Palm Products Societies come under three departments; they are the Co-op. Dept., Labour Dept. and Excise Dept. These three departments use the tappers as a football. If a tapper goes with a complaint to one department, that department tries to escape by saying that they are not responsi-

ble for it and directs him to any of the other two departments mentioned. Like this it goes on and the poor tapper is helpless and often loses his job and is indebted.

From the case of Mr. N, I come to understand that there is no link between the tapper and the high officer. The higher officers have good contacts with administrative officers in the Palm Products Societies. Their decision and arguments are always the same as the societies. This is really very bad. A genuine toddy tapper cannot get justice if he goes against the office bearers in the societies. Therefore it is the bounden duty of the toddy tappers in Jaffna to unite to get their rights and dues in future.



Tamil New year in London

The Tamil Women's League of U. K. (23A, Sumatra Road, London NW6) celebrated the Tamil New Year at the Hampstead Town Hall, Haverstock Hill, London NW3, with a programme of classical Dance, Music and compositions. About 200 people attended the celebrations.

Photograph shows a Bharata Natya item in progress.

news BRIEFS

COLOMBO: The UNP Working Committee decided on Monday to go ahead with the Local Government elections campaign in the North despite the killing of 3 UNP nominees. Although several candidates contesting in the North have publicly announced their withdrawal, their names will continue to be in the ballot papers since nominations had closed earlier. President Jayawardene is believed to have told the Working Committee that they cannot submit to any kind of threats from the Terrorists.

JAFFNA: Postmen delivering poll cards for local elections in Jaffna will be given military escort according to a decision taken at the Security Conference called by the Police. This follows the snatching at gun point of two bags containing 1580 polling cards at Chapel Street Jaffna, on Monday evening. The gunmen are reported to have told the postal messengers carrying the poll cards that they do not want Sri Lankan elections in Tamil Eelam.

COPENHAGEN: Hooligans have wrecked the grave of Hans Christian Andersen, the 19th century Danish au-

thor of fairy tales, in a Copenhagen cemetery.

His red gravestone, 1.8 metres high, was upturned and broken into three, police said.

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's application for membership to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) may be taken up at the group's ministerial meeting in Bangkok in June an ASEAN diplomat indicated.

The five-nation association had put the application in a freeze last year while ASEAN officials noted Sri Lanka was outside the South-East Asian geographical region and hinted it would not be admitted to the anti-communist alliance.

The Malaysian High Commissioner Mr. Anthony Yeo, said the Lankan case was still before the ministerial committee of ASEAN.

SIMLA: Postmen in India deliver 11,000 million letters a day, a world record. This was stated by Union Minister of State for Communications V.N. Gadgil after laying the foundation stone of a head post office at Dehra Gopipur in Kangra district.

NEW DELHI: The Indian Post and Telegraphs Department proposes to bring out a stamp of Karl Marx, one of the greatest thinkers and philosophers of the modern age, on the occasion of his birth anniversary on May 5, 1983, Mr. V. N. Gadgil, Minister of State for Communications, told Mr. Indrajit Gupta in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

LONDON: Britain's Law Society has come out strongly against "womb leasing" and says it should be a criminal offence for a woman to bear a child for another as a surrogate mother for money. It also warned in a report on Tuesday that the practice of artificial insemination could lead to genetic incest.

MADURAI: PRABAKHARAN alias KARIKALAN and RAGHAVAN, two members of the 'LIBERATION TIGERS' of Sri Lanka arrested in Madras last year in connection with the shooting incident at Pondy Bazaar and released on conditional bail have slipped bail and are missing. Prabhakaran was to report at the Madurai Police Station and Raghavan to Puthukkottai Police Station everyday. Raghavan is believed to have joined Prabhakaran in Madurai on April 18th and both escaped presumably to Sri Lanka on April 19th. Two Sub-Inspectors and two Head Constables have been suspended in this connection.

TEXAS: Malini Annamalai, an 11-year-old girl who came to the United States from India four years ago, will represent South Texas in the national spelling bee in Washington.

Miss Annamalai, a sixth-grader born in Madras beat 18 other Contestants in the Corpus Christi All-Times 30th annual South Texas regional spelling bee.

Spelling bee coordinator Margaret Ramage said Miss Annamalai of Three Rivers Elementary School in Live Oak County and runner-up Reena Isaak of St. Joseph School in Alice, battled for one hour and went 50 rounds before Miss Annamalai came out the winner.

The young Indian, who learned English in kindergarten, spelled out "exacerbate" and "formaldehyde".

CHAVAKACHCHERI: The M.P. for Chavakachcheri V. N. Navaratnam left for Finland to participate in the Inter-Parliamentary Conference to be held in Helsinki. Sri Lankan delegation is being led by Minister K. W. Devanayagam. The others in the delegation include Acting Minister of Justice Shelton Ranaraja and the M.P. for Madawachchiya Maitripala Senanayake.

BERNE: Fifty Tamil Youths began a four-day fast here on April 28th demanding that the Swiss Government provide them political asylum. Nearly 200 Tamil youths are believed to have sought asylum in Switzerland.

HONOLULU: Members of the Free Church Divine Communion on the island of Kauai have lost a protracted legal battle with American devotees of Shiva, over the ringing of the bells in Shiva's temple.

When arguments could not settle the dispute earlier, members of the Kauai planning commission listened to the bells for themselves and dismissed the plea by the Free Communion Church that the permit which entitles the Shiva temple to function be revoked or modified.

HYDERABAD: A young daredevil from Bombay is set to jump the Niagara, the first Indian to try such a feat.

Dhananjay Kulkarni who has entered the Guinness Book of world records for standing on one leg for 35 hours in 1982 has set his ultimate aim on jumping into the 750 ft falls in a barrel.

He has already obtained permission from the Centre to attempt the feat and will be the 262nd person to try the jump.

Though 260 of those who have tried it earlier are dead and gone, Kulkarni takes solace in the fact that a woman who tried the feat has survived and now lives in New Jersey with broken limbs.

TRIVANDRUM: The Asan world prize, instituted in memory of the late Kumaran Asan, one of the greatest Malayalam poets, was presented to Sri Lankan poet Veditanti-rige Ediriwira Sarachandra at a function in Kavikkara Asan's birth place, near here on April 27.

The 2-year old Vandalism : Mayor thanks those who responded to the Jaffna Public Library appeal

Jaffna Mayor Mr. RAJAH VISUVANATHAN who is about to give up his office end May has sent a message of thanks to all those who responded to his appeal for the restoration of the Jaffna Public Library. In a document printed with messages in Tamil and English on the eve of the second anniversary of the burning of the Public Library Mr. Visuvanathan says:

It was the 1st of June, 1981 and during the curfew hours of the night of the then prevalent emergency when the priceless collection of 97,000 books and some rare manuscripts in the Jaffna Public Library which was one of the largest in South East Asia were turned to ashes and a Dravidian style architectural building — the pride of the North — was burnt and severely damaged.

"The civilised world has condemned it as a cultural genocide and a crime against humanity. But the attempt to burn the repositories of

their ancient culture hurts the Tamils beyond measure since the perpetrators of this dark deed were no other than the custodians of law and order maintained by the tax-payers.

"On the advice of the Library Committee, the City Fathers have commissioned the well known Architect Mr. V.S. Thuraiarajah to plan for an enlarged and somewhat redesigned building to serve the functions of a Public Library in the context of today.

"When completed, the newly restored Public Library shall provide ample room for all the services of a modern Library conceived as an educational centre: Lending Library, Children's Library, newspapers and periodicals section, Reference Library, Conference room, Exhibition area and a Mobile Library room, Special collections room, Audio Visual Library, Study room, an Auditorium etc. not least with the provision of a specially designed access to the dis-

abled in their wheel chairs.

"The new edifice, nominally the 3rd Stage of Mr. Narasimhan's original plan and still faithful to the Dravidian Architectural style will be a two-storeyed block with its entrance facing the west. The symbol of the harp recalling Swami Vipulananda's epic writing on this theme will adorn the central high tower over the new main entrance.

"Hence, the restoration and reconstitution of the Jaffna Public Library is being taken up in two parts. The 3rd stage of the original plan will appear as an extension to the existing building at an estimated cost of Rs. 3,017,632/- for which the work has already commenced and is in progress.

"Whereas the restoration and reconstitution of the Northern Wing of the existing building has been completed at an estimated cost of Rs. 293,296/-. We are glad to inform you that we have re-

sumed the basic services of the Jaffna Public Library in a nuclear form as from the last Human Rights Day (i.e. on 10th December, 1982) and with the books donated by supporters and well-wishers the Reference Library has already started functioning there. The newspapers and periodicals sections that were earlier housed for want of space in the portion of the Jaffna Town Hall too have now been shifted there. We are hoping to open the children's Section and the Lending Library by the end of April, 1983.

"The sum so far collected as at April 14th 1983 towards the restoration and reconstitution of the Jaffna Public Library is Rs. 44, 54,907. 72.

"Recently the American Embassy has donated books on two different occasions to the tune of about 4 lakhs and has promised further assistance in the future as well.

"The World Council of Churches which has already donated in cash a sum of Rupees One and a Half Lakhs to the Jaffna Public Library Trust Fund through the Jaffna Christian Union, has again donated a further sum of Rupees One Million to the same Organization for the purchase of books to be donated to the Library in its name.

"We have already received a consignment of forty-four tea chests full of books from London from the Standing Committee on Tamils' affairs there and another consignment of eleven tea chests full of books from Melbourne Eelam Tamil Association. Although we would very much like to do so, in order to make this report brief, we beg to be excused for not mentioning all the individual contributions in detail.

"While expressing my sincere thanks and appreciation
(Continued overleaf)

LETTERS

Dr. A. T. Ariyaratne,
President of the Lanka Jathika
Sarvodaya Shramadhana San-
sthanaya writes:

"Editor, Saturday Review.
Dear Sir, I was surprised
to read in your journal of
April 9th, a letter that was
sent to me by Mr. Joseph
B. W. Kuitenbrouwer. To
complete the story, I am
sending herewith a prompt
reply I sent him. I believe
that you will be courteous
enough to give the same
prominence to my reply too."

We reproduce below the
full text of Dr. Ariyaratne's
letter to Professor Kuiten-
brouwer with the deletion
of two sentences which our
lawyers advise us could br-
ing us within the law of
libel - Editor S. R.

7th February 1983

Prof.

Joseph B.W. Kuitenbrouwer,
Senior Lecturer,
Institute of Social Studies,
P. O. Box 90733,
2509 LS, The Hague.

Dear Prof. Kuitenbrouwer,
Many thanks for your
letter of 25th January. Since
return from Holland, I
have been out of the country
in U.S.A. and India and re-
turned only today. In fact,
one of the first things I
wanted to do was to find
out your name and write
you a letter. To my pleasant
surprise your letter of
1983-01-25 was on my table.
Many thanks again.

I am well acquainted with
liberal as well as other cate-
gories of academic audiences
even though I am not an
academic myself. If what you
mean by academics are per-
sons like you working in
Universities, then, at least
in over fifty Universities in
the world I have spoken to
them. It was for the first
time however, in my life,
that I met an academic Chair-
man who conducted himself
in a most disparaging way
towards a Guest Speaker who
was invited to his Institute.
Whatever your colleagues may
say, my own group of seven
persons who came to the
Institute with me and at
least three Dutch friends who
were in the audience told
me that they were shocked
at the way you conducted
the meeting.

So I am not surprised
that it did not occur to you
that words like

"Women are humiliated,
tortured, and murdered by
Jayewardena government, and
what are you doing about
it?", are in keeping with

who attended the meeting
in advance of it". Changing
the venue of the meeting
from the advertised place,
not even extending the ele-
mentary courtesy of offering
a glass of water to people
who have travelled a long
distance to come on time,
suggesting the type of ques-
tions that people whom you

your school of thinking.

It is true that I gave two
press interviews, one at the
Airport and the other at the
Headquarters. It is also true
that I mentioned about this
deliberate attempt to destroy
the image of our country.
Even during the previous re-
gime, I always stood against
anybody trying to spoil the

newspapers or even reports and
political propaganda like the
ones you allowed to be distri-
buted at the seminar which I
addressed.

As far as I am concerned, I
only have sympathy for you.
I have no illwill towards you
nor towards the lady who
tried to insult me and my
country. For the work I am

Sarvodaya head Dr. Ariyaratne writes

your academic tradition. As
far as I know, such things
do not take place in my
country, and you as Chairman,
should have kept up the
dignity of the place. Perhaps
you may have not seen the
propaganda pamphlets that
were distributed at the meet-
ing for an election campaign
that was taking place in Sri
Lanka. My son had got some
of them from your colleagues.
I do not understand why
you should say that, "you
had talked to no one else

named should ask and point-
ing at the people to ask
such and such a question,
were matters that with our
non-academic sense we all
observed. Not one of them
raised a question on the
theme I was talking until you
abruptly asked me to stop
speaking and opened your
discussion. If you say that
it was not pre-arranged, I
accept your word. But please
do not treat people so dis-
courteously in future even
if they do not belong to

good name of the country on
political grounds. I do not be-
long to any power group in
this country. Unfortunately I
did not know the name of the
lady or yourself. However,
newspaper people always have
access to find the names of the
people concerned. On my part
I abstained from mentioning
names. However, you have to
remember that there were
others with me.

I have the highest regard
for your Institute. That is why
I was surprised that in an Insti-
tute of high repute, this sort
of behaviour was found in a
professor.

I have yet to see the news-
papers you refer to, and I do
not get excited and react to

doing, I devote myself whole-
heartedly and do not find time
to insult, find fault or sabot-
age other peoples work. I hope
you all too will conduct your-
selves like that. Then only we
can have critical dialogues.

I am sending a copy of this
letter to the Director of the
Institute of Social Studies, as
you have referred to the
practice of your colleagues
and your Institute.

Wishing you all the best.

Yours sincerely,
A. T. Ariyaratne,
President.

How can a people harassed by repressive laws offer co-operation to the govt?

19/2, Eachamoddai Road,
Jaffna

3rd May 1983

Dear Sir,

The Prevention of Terror-
ism Act has been publicly de-
cried not only within the
shores of Sri Lanka but even
in the world outside as an
oppressive and inhuman piece
of legislation that is contrary
to the correct concepts of law
and the principles of democ-
racy.

The Indian Supreme Court in
1981 observed that the de-
taining of individuals without
trial for any length of time
however short, was wholly
inconsistent with the basic
ideals of a parliamentary sys-
tem of democracy.

An eminent British judge
said, "In no democratic coun-
try in the world has the
police the right to assault or
torture those in their custody.
The police has no power not
only for physical abuse but
even verbal abuse on a
subject."

What is sadly happening
in Sri Lanka today to those
taken into custody under the
Prevention of Terrorism Act
appears to be contrary to all

norms of civilised behaviour.

Tun Suffian Hoshim, the
Lord President of the Fede-
ral Court of Malaysia, in a
judgment delivered in 1980
had the following observations
to make on Police Terrorism:-

"Parliament and the public
should not allow police terror
which brings disrepute on
those responsible for the
government and the adminis-
tration of justice. Although the
police may enjoy wide powers
of arrest, search and investi-
gation, the government and
the public expect the police
to exercise their power in a
civilised and humane manner.
But one power the police did
not have, and it is most un-
likely that parliament and the
people will give it to them,
is the power to assault and
torture suspects in their cus-
tody. Least of all the power
to kill. Police are often tempt-
ed to resort to torture to
extract confessions from the
accused and thus cut their de-
fective work short.

"To remove temptation
for the police to torture sus-
pects the government should
set up separate centres of in-
terrogation. Such centres

should not be placed under
the police but under prison
authorities and they should be
easily accessible to relatives
and lawyers."

It is about time that the
State did some serious re-
thinking on the desirability of
repealing the anti-Terrorism
Act which confers on the
police and the security servi-
ces the unrestricted freedom
to act in the way they choose

when apprehending those sus-
pected of subversive activi-
ties.

When the people feel that
they are being harassed by
the government through their
repressive laws the govern-
ment cannot expect the co-
operation of the people to
combat any form of violence
or terrorism.

Augustine Saverimuttu

Jaffna Mayor thanks....

(Continued from page 9)

to all those institutions and
individuals in every Continent
for the help and assistance
they have rendered to rebuild
the Library and expand its
services. I take this opportu-
nity on the eve of relinquish-
ing my post as Mayor of Jaffna,
to request every one of you
to remember to observe the
forthcoming 2nd anniversary

of the wanton destruction
caused to the Jaffna Public
Library in a fitting manner
this year and continue to do
so thereafter on the 1st of
June every year.

"Kindly circulate this let-
ter of mine so as to convey
my thanks and gratitude to
every single individual who
has contributed to this noble
cause."

The TIMES OF INDIA of 29th April carries the following despatch from its Colombo correspondent:

Tension is again mounting in the mainly Tamil inhabited northern parts of Sri Lanka in the wake of surprise attacks by militant youths who have put the security forces on the defensive. All the evidence points to the likelihood of the youths, who style themselves "freedom fighters", having launched a new phase in their struggle for independence for the Tamils from the major Sinhalese community.

The police and the troops, who are rarely able to apprehend the terrorists mainly because of lack of public co-operation, continue to arrest youths at random, detain them for long periods and even subject them to torture, in the hope of obtaining information.

This approach, described by Tamil leaders as "state terrorism" by the "Sinhalese army of occupation" in the north, is breeding more public resentment against President Jayewardene's United National Party government while generating sympathy for the youths. Observers point out that "the military approach" has not taken the situation in the north any nearer resolution.

It was in a bid to defuse the situation in the north that the government agent, Mr. D. Nesiiah, convened a top-level conference in Jaffna on April 2.

INAUSPICIOUS START

The conference got off to an inauspicious start: a few hours before it was due to begin, bombs exploded in the building shattering a number of windows and three jeeps parked in the premises were set ablaze.

The previous day, the security forces suffered a worse humiliation. One of the youths detained at the main army camp at Panagoda, near Colombo, escaped without trace. Despite these rebuffs, the conference was held as scheduled. It was attended by representatives of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), the main Tamil political organization, and of the army, navy and police. The main theme of discussion was on ways of promoting better relations between the public and the security forces in the region.

While the police repre-

Tamil youths on the warpath again, says Times of India

sentatives at the conference said that the public failed to give any information of incidents and of persons involved in them, the TULF leader, Mr. A. Amirthalingam, protested against the arrest of "innocent youths" without warrant, and without any reasons being given for their arrests and without access by relations and even lawyers.

REASONS TO BE TOLD

It was agreed that thereafter the parents would be told of the reasons for the arrest and the places of detention. It was also decided to set up vigilance committees to prevent crime after the police withdrew from the remoter areas of the peninsula because of the shortage of manpower and also the possibility of attacks by youths.

Most observers, however, are of the opinion that more than one conference would be needed to repair the strained relations between the people and the government representatives in the region, especially the security forces.

This is only one aspect of a larger problem involving Sinhalese-Tamil relations as a whole. Since independence in 1948, and more particularly after Sinhala replaced English as the sole official language, Tamil leaders have been alleging that there has been discrimination against their community by successive Sinhalese-dominated governments in the use of their language for public business, and in the provision of higher education, state jobs and state lands.

ORIGINAL DEMAND

The original demand of the Tamils (who comprise a tenth of Sri Lanka's 15 million population, compared to the Sinhalese who number 70 percent), in the 1930s and 1940s was for "balanced representation" in a united Sri Lanka. When this was refused, they demanded a federal form of government. This persisted through the 1950s and 1960s. It was after this too was rejected and a

new constitution adopted in 1972 amidst their protests, that the demand arose for a separate state, to be called "Eelam".

Eelam is now the basic demand of all the main Tamil political organizations. While the moderates in the TULF are still willing to work towards a negotiated settlement short of separation, if possible, such as through greater regional autonomy, the militants are against any further dialogue with the government. In this they are supported by the extremist Tamil Eelam Liberation Front and the General Union of Eelam Students.

This attitude springs from disillusionment that little progress had been made despite several rounds of secret talks between the representatives of the government led by Mr. Jayewardene and the TULF headed by Mr. Amirthalingam over the past five years. The TULF leadership is being accused by critics of having led the Tamils "up the garden path".

The Tamil Congress leader, Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, once a moderate, said recently, "Tamils, who are frustrated with the Sinhalese are today frustrated with their own leadership. They want a separate state as everything else has failed. Co-operation, dialogue and pacts have led them nowhere. The result is only greater despair. There is now no point in talking of economic development".

It is this frustration that is playing into the hands of the militants, who are also backed by Tamil expatriate groups in India, America and several other countries with money and

refuge for wanted men.

Mr. Jayewardene's problem is that most Sinhalese are opposed to the grant of any measure of self-rule to the Tamils. This is ascribed to be "minority complex" in them. Though in a majority in Sri Lanka, they are in a minority when account is taken of the millions of Tamils in neighbouring south India. In the ancient past the Tamils in the two countries had teamed up to pose a threat to the Sinhalese.

So each time the Tamils pressed their demand for regional autonomy, Sinhalese extremists reacted violently as in 1958, 1961, and 1981. But political analysts believe that in refusing to agree to a more equitable sharing of state power and all that flows from it, they could eventually precipitate the very thing they wish to avert.

Jaffna University does well at Universiad

The University of Jaffna performed very well at the 2nd Universiad held at the Colombo University grounds from 20th April to 30th April.

It won the Soccer Championship and ended up as runners-up in Basket Ball (Men and Women), Badminton (Men), Table Tennis (Men), apart from securing 3rd place in Hockey (Women).

MAY DAY IN JAFFNA

(Continued from page 2)

from what it was in 1979, and therefore he had felt the need to join TULF. But the crowds were unconvinced, and signified by their jeering that there were other, ulterior motives behind this switch-over.

The Tamil Congress held its rally this time away from the town, in the relatively secluded area of Navanthurai. There, Kumar Ponnambalam carried out a blistering attack on the TULF accusing them of having discriminated against the areas of the T.C. members, while the TULF ran the Municipality. He stressed that the T.C. was contesting the elections with the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act as its main demand. So much for T.C.'s "May Day".

The NSSP which has had a consistent policy towards the Eelam question must have been disappointed at the poor turnout for their

rally in the huge Town Hall. Even the money they had poured into colourful grand posters this time, which is the speciality of JVP, went totally unheeded. Mr. Annamalai the leader of the NSSP's Northern Branch, sensing the rivalry of other young Marxist parties, used his speech to 'prove' that NSSP had done more to the Tamil cause than any other party.

But a rally that had deeper relevance to the origins of the May Day was the one held by the joint Leftist Organization at Chunnakam, the traditional Leftist stronghold. The crowds which attended consisted of hard-core Tamil Marxists and a sizeable section of the working class. Though Tamil speaking K. B. Ratnayake and J. A. K. Perera failed to turn up as advertised, yet H. G. S. Ratnaweera of the Communist Party spoke, giving a detailed review of the Sri Lankan open economy and the

plight of the worker in this set up.

Another rally that was very meaningful was that of the Eelam People's Liberation front a group consisting of five small Marxist movements with the General Union of Eelam Students as its main component. Though May Day marches and demonstrations had been banned in the North by the Police, the E.P.L.F. very successfully carried out an "illegal" May Day March with about 500 youth marching about 16 miles in the Udupiddy Electorate, without any intervention by the Police. Later in the evening in their rally which was well attended, its leader Mr. M. Davidson attacked the bourgeois leadership of the TULF for lacking a clear policy and programme for the liberation of the Tamil Eelam, and emphasised the need for creating mass-awareness at the grass roots level.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

120 Tamils Killed in the 1977 race riots: ex-IGP

One hundred and twenty Tamils were killed during the 1977 communal riots, which lasted roughly from 15th August to 13th September. This ~~latest~~ OFFICIAL figure is given in the Annual Report of the

Inspector General of Police for the year 1977, released only this week. The text of the report had been handed over to the Government Printer for printing in January 1982. The I.G.P. concerned, Mr. Ana Senevi-

ratne is now Sri Lanka's High Commissioner in Malaysia.

The report states that during the period of the communal riots, 3327 complaints were recorded. There were one hundred and thirty one (131) cases of MURDER, seventy four (74) cases of RAPE, one thousand one hundred and forty one (1,141) cases of ARSON, and one thousand two hundred and nine (1,209) cases of LOOTING.

The report adds that while 120 of the 131 killed were Tamils, the balance consisted "approximately of 8 Sinhala-speaking persons and one Muslim".

The report also records

reports in 1983

the figures of the pre-and post-election violence the same year from 6th June (Nomination Day) to 31st July 1977. There were 7817 incidents recorded; 1374 cases of arson, 1076 cases of stone-pelting, 2812 cases of mischief, 184 cases of knife stabbing, 78 cases of shooting, 587 cases of theft and 62 cases of

murder.

The I.G.P. notes that the number of cases of recorded grave crime for the year 1977 was 83,082, as compared with the 1976 figure of 55,195. "This unprecedented increase of 26,887 (48%) was mainly due to the break-down in law and order during the period of the racial riots of the same year".

2 S. L. B. C. Tamil staffers in trouble

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation has sent two Tamil staffers attached to the News Room on compulsory leave for allegedly blacking out the speeches of two Ministers in the Special May Day programme broadcast over the Tamil Service.

The staffers who have been sent home on compulsory leave are Duty Editor Puniyamoorthy, a senior hand, and Reporter Thillainathan.

The Tamil Service of the SLBC broadcast a Special Programme on May Day lasting 1 hour and 15 minutes. The ruling United

National Party was allotted 40 minutes in the round-up. Translated portions of the Sinhala speeches of Ministers Anandatissa de Alwis, Lalith Athulathmudali, Gamini Dissanaike, Capt. Seneviratne and President Jayawardene were broadcast along with extracts of the Tamil speech made by Ceylon Workers' Congress Secretary Sellasamy.

Foreign Affairs Minister A. C. S. Hameed and Transport Minister M. H. Mohamed, who were peeved that both their names and their speeches had been blacked out in the programme, made representations that this was a calculated act of sabotage.

Anglican Church team on a visit to North

A top level delegation from the Anglican Church in the South is presently in Jaffna to understand and assess the political atmosphere prevailing here. The

goodwill visit organised on the initiative of Bishop Swithin Fernando, includes the Revds. Patrick Fernando, Eardley Mendis, Ashley Perera, D. P. J. de Silva, and L. S. J. de Silva. They called on the Leader of the Opposition on Friday morning.

From Thursday they have been touring many rural areas and meeting with people to feel the pulse of the North. Since Revd. Dr. Donald Kanagaratnam of Vavuniya was arrested and detained under the Prevention of Terrorism Act last November (he was released later) the Anglican Church of the South has been getting more sensitive to the situation in the North.

Evelyn Rutnam Institute: 2nd anniversary

The EVELYN RUTNAM INSTITUTE FOR INTER-CULTURAL STUDIES, Jaffna, will celebrate its second anniversary on Tuesday 10th May at 5 p.m.

Mr. John D. Guyer, Representative, Asia Foundation and Mrs. Guyer will be the Chief Guests.

Jaffna Army Camp to expand: house owners fear dispossession

Owners of houses down Old Park Road, Jaffna, close to the Gurunagar Army Camp, are getting jittery. What haunts them is the spectre of dispossession.

Already the Army authorities are three-quarter way through acquiring the house where part of the Camp is sited and the neighbouring house (presently occupied by a foreigner). An adjoining hotel too has become the target of the Army's 'acquisitive instinct'.

The Army top-brass had urged these take-overs on the grounds of security, SATURDAY REVIEW learns. More elbow-room for the security personnel was another of the reasons urged. Apart from these two houses and the hotel, the PWD building next to the hotel is also to be acquired by the Army.

These take-over moves have spread ripples of alarm among the house-owners (some of them long time residents) in the locality, particularly those living

very close to the Camp. They don't know at what moment their houses will be taken over for the expansion of the Camp. It's not merely the possible loss of the houses they live in that worries them. What worries them as much is that the compensation they will be paid is likely to be

much less than the market value, making it impossible for them to even think of putting up another house. As there is virtually no appeal against the Army take-over decision, the only thing we can do is to keep our fingers crossed, one of the residents in the area told **Saturday Review**.

Women labourers on strike for the third week

For the third successive week the women labourers of Maththalavodai, Punalaiakadduvan South, a hamlet in Jaffna, continued their strike, demanding a wage increase of 15/- per day from the usual 10/- per day. Whereas in neighbouring villages the wage is 15/- per day, the landowners of Maththalavodai have not only been paying low wages, but have also been allegedly treating them in an inhuman manner. As the landowners of this area have now used their influence to stop the men too from their work of carpentry and stone-breaking, about 150 families

of this area have been finding it difficult to even find a square meal a day.

The Rural Labourers' Union which is supporting the striking labourers has appealed for funds from the public.

The Union has also condemned the indifference of the Police regarding the plight of these depressed caste labourers: though on the 26th April the landowners assaulted the labourers in order to force them to work, the Police failed to take any action even after their complaint had been lodged.