

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA



A refugee family from Kantharmadam now housed in a temporary refugee camp.

Vol. 2 No. 20

May 21, 1983

- ARSON
- THEFTS
- ASSAULTS

ARMY

RUN AMOK

About sixty four houses, three mini buses, nine cars, three motor cycles and 36 bicycles were set on fire by Army men on a rampage at Kantharmadam in Jaffna on Wednesday the 18th evening and night as soon as a state of emergency came into force at 5 p.m. This was believed to be the Army's "reply" to the killing of Corporal Jayawardene by militant youths at the polling centre in the vicinity an hour earlier.

The army men who were mostly in civils came fully armed in several trucks, jeeps and cars. Cash, items of jewellery and valuables had also been looted from some of the more affluent middle class homes while the worst affected were the depressed class families in the area who not only lost their homes but whatever possessions they had.

The Army reprisal followed the shoot-out between youths and the Armed personnel who were guarding the Saiva Prakasa Vidyalayam polling booth. About eight youths had come there at 4 p.m. and exchanged fire for about twenty five minutes. Later they coolly wheeled away their bicycles leaving behind Corporal Jayawardene dead, and Soldier Bandara and PCs Tilekeratne and Premadasa badly injured. Eye witnesses said the youth had spoken to the public as they cycled along Adiyapatham Road, Tinnevely introducing them-

selves as "Prabaharan Group" and informing them of the killings. None of them appeared injured.

Later in the evening, a helicopter flew low and landed in the area and trucks and jeeps loaded with soldiers numbering about 600 entered the Arasady Road. Residents whose houses were reduced to ashes told Saturday Review, that the attackers had thrown what looked like petrol bombs to the cadjan fences and the smaller cadjan roofed houses. Some soldiers were also seen with "Pandams" (torches). Trucks smashed the iron gates of some houses before the men walked in. Many of the males in the area were assaulted with rifle butts.

Passing vehicles were stopped and burnt. As the dark smoke leapt into the skies, men, women and children of the surrounding areas ran in all directions for safety.

Many of the families ran to the temples nearby and the premises of the University of Jaffna, for temporary refuge. It was at 4 a.m. next dawn that the last trucks rumbled out of Kantharmadam, leaving behind the ashes and rubble of this dense residential area, and reeking stench of burnt cattle.

Meanwhile another group of soldiers went on a small "spree" to the town area at about 8.30 p.m. As the trucks roared through the main streets the soldiers fired into the air to frighten the public. The vegetable shops in the old market

and a few shops in the vicinity were set on fire. The glass windows of the Jaffna Co-operative Stores were also smashed. The petrol shed owned by Mr. A. G. Rajasooriyar was also heavily damaged. This was "the most unkindest cut of all" in the whole night's happenings, as Mr. Rajasooriyar is a Senior Member of the U.N.P. in Jaffna and has stood for the present Municipal Elections on the U.N.P. Ticket.

Though the I.G.P. Mr. Rudra Rajasingham and Army Commander Mr. Weeratunge flew to Palaly on Wednesday night, and held high level discussions with Mr. Rajaguru (D.I.G) Mr. Anandarajah (S.P. Jaffna) and Brigadier Lyle Balthazar (Army Chief in Jaffna) soldiers continued

their "carnival" on Thursday too. People were assaulted with rifle butts, they were forced to kneel in the middle of the road for long durations of time, and perform other embarrassing "exercises". Youths on bicycles were stopped on certain roads their hands were tied behind and assaulted mercilessly.

As dusk enveloped Jaffna Town on Thursday, business men correctly reading the signs of the times, packed their wares into vans and lorries and hurriedly emptied their shops, before abandoning the town to the whims and fancies of the soldiers who were once again enjoying the privileges granted them by the "emergency regulations"!

They turned their guns on the hospital

"With stepping up of military presence, replay of May 1981 scenario feared"—said the Saturday Review in its issue of May 7 on Page 1

This grim foreboding nearly came true on the night of May 18, when Army personnel on a maniacal spree attempted to set fire to certain public buildings in Jaffna town. A 100-strong gang in civils who were trying to set fire to the Jaffna Co-operative Stores opposite the Jaffna General

Hospital suddenly turned their fury on the hospital itself, when they realised that they were being observed from the House Officers' Quarters. They fired wildly in the air and at the hospital building and in the process a pump operator attached to the hospital got wounded in the thigh. Both the House Officers' quarters and the Administration Block were shot at, while doctors and other staff scampered for safety.

The Medical Superint-

endent told Saturday Review that the hospital staff were demoralised by the incident and many of them did not report for work. He had to run the hospital with a reduced staff who were working under persuasion. A number of patients were discharged temporarily.

Unfortunately for the hospital two members of the medical staff, were themselves victims of Army terrorism, elsewhere. Professor Sriharan, a well-

known and respected citizen of Jaffna, who has his house in the Kantharmadam area where army atrocities were at the worst, was threatened with bodily harm, and Dr. Mrs. Theivendran's house was among those set on fire.

"Even during war, enemy hospitals are never touched" was the wry comment made by the Medical Superintendent.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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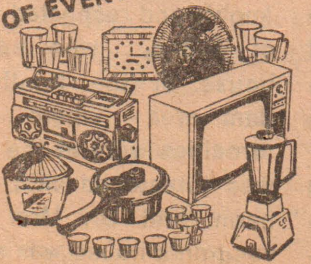
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Education and Human Rights

The book, "Education
and Human Rights in
Sri Lanka" by K. Nesiiah
former Senior Lecturer
in Education, University
of Ceylon, will be releas-
ed formally at a public
meeting on Thursday
26th May at 4-30 p.m.
at the Trimmer Hall,
Jaffna. The function to
be held under the
auspices of the Christian
Institute for the Study
of Religion and Society
(Ashram, Chunnakam)
will be chaired by Mr.
I. P. Thurairatnam.

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EAST OPPOSES ARMY CAMP

The Government's plan
to set up a permanent Army
Camp at Kalladdy in the
Eastern Province has run
into a storm of protest
from the people of the area.

Strongly protesting the
decision, residents of the
area have sent memoranda
to Regional Development
Minister C. Rajadurai, the
2nd MP for Batticaloa and
Deputy Minister of Rural
Development Dr. Fareed
Meera Lebbe and Batticaloa
DDC Chairman S. Sam-
banthamoorthy.

The authorities had
earlier planned to shift the
Army cantonment at the
Weber Stadium, Batticaloa
to Periyathurai. When the
people of Periyathurai
protested strongly against
this move, it was decided
to site the camp next to
the Air Force base at Bat-
ticaloa. Now, it is learnt,
the Army wants to pitch
camp permanently at Kal-
laddy.

'Body was on Cement floor'

"The body of the deces-
ed Navaratnarajah was ly-
ing on its back on the
cement floor in a cell 6 by 5
feet. There was no mat
or pillow. There were no
electric lights burning in
the cell' stated the Addl.
Magistrate, Jaffna, Mr. K.
P. R. Varatharasa at the
resumed inquest into the
death of Navaratnarajah of
Kiliveddy. Navaratna-
rajah died at the Guru-
nagar Army Camp on 10th
April.

Giving evidence before
the Jaffna Magistrate, Mr.
S. Nagarajah, on 13th
May, Mr. Varatharasa said:
"On the day of the incident
I was the Acting Magistrate.
Inspector Sritharan in-
formed me that a detenu
at the Gurunagar Army
Camp had died. I went to
the Gurunagar Army Camp
along with him and two
constables. A. S. P. Mano-
haran and some Army
Officers were there. In
the cell's dim light I could
see the body was dressed
in a shirt and sarong. I
made order that the body
be taken to the mortuary
of the Jaffna Hospital
where it could be examined
properly. I also made
order that the JMO carry
out a post-mortem and
submit a report."

The inquiry will resume
on 31st May.

Stamp release

A Commemorative Stamp
to honour the Tamil
Scholar C. V. Thamother-
ampillai will be held at
9.30 a.m., on Sunday the
22nd May 1983. The
stamp will be released at
the Jaffna Post Office.
The District Minister, Jaf-
fna, Mr. U. B. Wijayakoon
will preside over the func-
tion. The Leader of the
Opposition and the Chair-
man of the D.D.C. will
participate in the function.

(See article on Page 4)

As individuals, we are all concerned about our image among our fellow people. As a nation, we should also be concerned about our image among the comity of nations.

The image of Sri Lanka abroad is formed by the impressions foreigners gain, first hand as visitors to our country or second hand through the media or other individuals and organizations who have a vested interest in the matter.

The grouse of successive Sri Lanka Governments — and not that of only the Jayawardene Government — has been that certain people and organisations are intent on tarnishing the country's image through "false propaganda".

This issue came up in a forceful manner during Mrs. Bandaranaike's last regime, when correspondents of foreign newspapers and news agencies were accused of misreporting and misrepresenting the Government's intentions and actions.

As a foreign correspondent, I myself was at the but of much official displeasure and had occasion to write to the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Affairs defending position. A few quotes from that letter are relevant to the situation that has arisen today, with newspapers like the "Sun" (whose Editor is himself a foreign correspondent) getting hysterical about "organised campaigns of sowing seeds of calumny, concocted stories of human rights violations and half-backed truths about racial discrimination....."

Propaganda for the government

I wrote, "Foreign correspondents should not be expected to do propaganda for the Government, always showing it up in a favourable light and shutting out all opposition criticism. The job of the correspondents is to give a correct picture—the whole picture—of what is happening in Sri Lanka and not merely what the Government wishes to be conveyed. The facts must take precedence over pleasing any particular Minister or Government....."

"Most of the damage is done by the Government itself, by its acts of commission and omission..... When opposition political activities are restricted, when opposition newspapers are sealed (the reference covered the "sun" as well), when journalists are jailed, when foreign correspondents are ticked off, whatever the provocation or justification, the picture that emerges in the foreign mind is that of an authoritarian regime...."

I ended by reminding the Ministry that no action taken by any Government even a police state can prevent the news of its activities reaching the outside world."

Political Causerie

by

Gamini Navaratne

The present accusation of the Government, which is echoed by the "Sun" (vide its editorial of May 16) is not so much against foreign correspondents as against Tamil expatriate organisations, human rights bodies, foreign legislators, etc.

But can the Editor of the "Sun" deny, despite the "clean certificate" given recently by the US State Department, that there is racial discrimination in Sri Lanka (something admitted in the UNP election manifesto itself!) and that there have been gross violations of the fundamental rights enshrined in the 1978 consti-

custody, police brutality, abuse forms of interrogation, inhuman, degrading punishments and killings of prominent persons in 1982. But none of these appeared to be politically motivated.

The report said that the number of political detainees in Pakistan was very hard to estimate, given the absence of official statistics and the practice of detaining individuals without any specific charge. Added to it was the difficulty in distinguishing between arrests for actions which actually threatened national security. Taking these factors into consideration, it was estimated

gation alone, may unless the contrary is proved, presume that the accused has committed the offence with which he is charged.

"Gen. Zia has also suspended the Bill of Fundamental Rights, abolished habeas corpus and extended military jurisdiction to civil courts.

"What distinguishes Pakistan from other contemporary tyrannies is not its actual excesses but Gen. Zia's structural assault on the legal framework and the independence of the Judiciary. Significantly, this assault began in earnest in early 1981 after the Reagan Administration

furnished by the recently-established Human Rights Foundation of Sri Lanka of which the President's distinguished lawyer brother is chairman.

Some of our politicians sometimes cannot resist the temptation of boasting about what a fine country Sri Lanka is compared to most other developing countries. India has been one of the targets of disapprobation.

Sri Lanka is only 25,332 square miles in area compared to India's 1,138,814 square miles; our population is only 15 million while India's is over 700 million. (The annual increase alone is nearly Sri Lanka's present total population!)

This means that, area-wise, India is nearly 50 times bigger than Sri Lanka and its population is also bigger by about the same magnitude.

This also means that the problems faced by India are so many times bigger than Sri Lanka's.

Which means that our problems should be much more easier of resolution than India's whereas our politicians find the task too much for them!

I firmly believe that Sri Lanka could have been a much better place to live in, veritable Garden of Eden, if not for the politicians who have made a hash of things.

And those politicians who claim to have served the country longer than others should shoulder a bigger share of the blame for the mess. Amen.

Sri Lanka's image abroad and the role of foreign correspondents

tution, including Article 11 which stipulates that "No person shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment"?

It does not need "smear campaigns" on the part of anyone to tarnish Sri Lanka's image abroad; a regular and discerning reader of the "Sun" itself will soon realize that all is not well in the "Dharmista" land.

The remedy? To mounter a massive counter-propaganda campaign? This will be so much waste of time and energy.

Here I am reminded of the Sinhala aphorism, "Koranna hondai, kiyamma, marakai" (Good to do, bad to tell)!

The best remedy is for the Government to desist pursuing from courses of actions that give rise to bad publicity abroad. As the "Sun" editorial concedes, "There is no smoke without fire"

The US State Department's report on human rights in Sri Lanka in my reckoning, is a load of bullshit. It has a parallel in the Department's country reports on Dictator Zia's Pakistan.

A Press Trust of India news agency despatch from Islamabad said, "It (the report) lists detentions, deaths in police

that there were about 404 political prisoners at the end of 1982.

"According to the report, there were at least 11 cases in which prisoners died while in police custody during 1982 but none of the victims would be termed as political prisoners and the deaths did not appear to be politically motivated...."

"There were no reports during 1982 that individuals had disappeared as a result of action taken by the security authorities, though there had been reports that individuals were sometimes held incommunicado or at unknown locations.

"Allegations of generalised police brutality also continued during 1982 and included reports of beatings, extortions and rape, the report said, but added that there was no evidence that these attacks were politically motivated.

As against the US State Department's certificate, there is this comment by a Pakistani, Eqbal Ahmad, who is a visiting professor of political science at the Rutgers University, New Jersey: Pakistan, you are guilty until proved innocent. The law provides that 'a military court, on the basis of police or any other investi-

offered him a five-year, multi billion dollar arms package".

I wonder whether the material for the US country report on Sri Lanka was

Protest by Dutch

Students over

Gandhiyam arrests

Eight Dutch students who have contacts with Sri Lanka in connection with their studies have sent a letter to President Jayawardene protesting the arrest of Gandhiyam Society leader Mr. S. A. David and Dr. S. Rajasundaram. The students who study Tropical Planning (Asterstraat 189, 6708 DN Wageningen, The Netherlands) are: K. de Jong, H. de Brouwer, C. de Wit, C. Nagtegaal, W. Zweers, D. V. D. Neut, J. de Kroes and H. V. Eijck.

In their letter they have appealed that Mr. David

and Mr. Rajasundaram be tried under the normal laws, and given a fair trial; permit the continuity of the social service undertaken by Gandhiyam for the benefit of 40,000 people many of whom are refugees in Tamil areas; and "to acknowledge that within Sri Lanka's boundaries several ethnic groups with their own cultures are living, which together form Sri Lanka's pluralistic character and which are to be treated equally for a peaceful future". The letter is addressed May 1, 1983.

C.W. Thamotherampillai : the foremost Tamil research scholar of the last century

A postage stamp in honour of C.W. Thamotherampillai of Jaffna is being issued on National Heroes Day this year. This is in fact a tribute to Tamil scholarship, for Thamotherampillai was undoubtedly the foremost Tamil research scholar in this country during the last century: and to this day he remains as a pioneer researcher whose amazing services to Tamil literature could only be reckoned as unique and incalculable.

Thamotherampillai hailed from Sirupiddy, a tiny hamlet near Puttur some ten miles from the capital of the Northern Province of Sri Lanka. He was born on the 12th September 1832 and received his education at the famous Batticotta Seminary (Vaddukoddai) of the American mission, to which he was admitted in 1843. His father Wyravathar had earlier come under the care of the same Mission where he was known as Cyrus Kingsbury. Thamotherampillai, the eldest son of Cyrus, was named Charles Kingsbury, and for as long as ten years he remained in the Seminary.

The standard of education at this Seminary has been universally acknowledged as of a very high order. Emerson Tennent who had visited the Seminary in 1848, when Thamotherampillai was there as a senior student, had written "The knowledge exhibited by the student was amazing. The Batticotta Institution of Batticotta is entitled to rank with many European Universities".

Batticotta Seminary

It is necessary to emphasize that at this Seminary the teaching of Tamil literature was treated as a very important function, although English and English literature were also taught at the same time. The curriculum included studies of Sanskrit and Greek beside the Sciences. One of the objectives of the founders could be seen to have been as described in their Prospectus published in 1823, "the cultivation of Tamil literature", and particularly "Tamil composition which", in their words, "is now almost entirely neglected. It is common to find among Tamil people men who can read correctly, who understand to some extent the poetic language, and who are able perhaps to form a kind of artificial verse, who cannot write a single page of correct prose".

It is here that we note the signal contribution made by Batticotta Seminary, the initiation given to the writing of modern Tamil prose. This marked a revolutionary event in the history of Tamil literature. It began to develop further until a few years later the Bible (or a part of it) was translated into elegant Tamil. One of those who assisted in this task was, strange to say,

the great scholar and later Hindu Revivalist Arumuga Navalar, who had himself begun his education at the Wesleyan Mission School at Jaffna under the great educationist and Tamil scholar Percival, later to become the first registrar of the University of Madras.

Thamotherampillai completed his education at the Batticotta Seminary at the age of 20 in 1852. While holding his first appointment as a teacher at Kopay he started his brilliant literary career with the modest publication of an annotated edition of the *Nee-thi Neri Vilakam* (Path of

at least two thousand years." Its antiquity has been traced by Burrow by his discovery of Dravidian words in other languages, to have been contemporaneous with Vedic Sanskrit. But the evolution of the Tamil language has often been interrupted by changes and setbacks caused by historical events.

Kamil Zvelebil, one of our renowned Tamil scholars, whom the writer had the pleasure to meet at Charles University Prague in 1954 when Zvelebil was an earnest student of Tamil under professor Pertold and had until then, according

to interpolations, authorship authenticity and date.

Zvelebil has described the scene in the second half of the nineteenth century as the transition period, during which time a rediscovery of Tamil classical literature had taken place. He had neither overrated nor underrated the work of European and indigenous scholars. Many mistakes had undoubtedly occurred, but the enthusiasm had never flagged. Having said all this Zvelebil declares unreservedly, "The two men most responsible for the re-discovery of the ancient

Rama's arrow take a portion; and the third element, earth, has its share, too... When I was small, my father taught me from a few books which are no longer available, even if one searched throughout Tamilnadu... When you lift a palm-leaf manuscript, the edge breaks. When you untie a knot, the leaf cracks, when you turn a leaf, it breaks in half... All old manuscripts are falling apart, one after the other, and there is no one to make new copies".

Zvelebil whose admiration for Thamotherampillai and Swaminatha Aiyar was unqualified has in a notable instance given the palm to Thamotherampillai and had incidentally remarked the cordiality that prevailed between the two sabants during their lifetime. Zvelebil wrote: "S. V. Damodaram Pillai deserves equal admiration and gratitude for his editions of grammatical and literary texts. It was probably Damodaram Pillai more than anyone else who began the intensive search for old manuscripts. Since 1883, he and Dr. Aiyar had been in contact, and when doubts and suspicions arose as to the authenticity and genuineness of the ancient texts, he could write in a sort of self-defence 'Srimat Caminataiyar is my witness, as I am witness to him.'"

In conclusion I am happy for the opportunity given me here to quote from my dear friend the late lamented Professor Kailaspathy's brilliant and most erudite address on The Cultural and Linguistic Consciousness of the Tamil Community in Sri Lanka, which he delivered last year in honour of Punithavathy Tiruchelvam a close relation of Thamotherampillai. Kailaspathy said:

"It was the scientific and philosophic education which Damodaram Pillai and others received in Jaffna that enabled them to blaze new trails and carry out investigations covering a vast range of subjects. It was also this sense of history and the spirit of inquiry that launched C. W. Thamotherampillai on his pioneering attempt at periodication of the history of Tamil literature and into textual criticism in which he was a pathfinder."

by Dr. James T. Rutnam

Evelyn Rutnam Institute, Jaffna

Justice). This evidently had caught the eye of Percival who had meantime gone over to India. Percival seems to have lost no time in summoning Thamotherampillai to India to edit the Tamil paper *Thinavarthamani* (Daily Gazette) reputed to be the first Tamil paper to be published in Madras.

Thamotherampillai was later appointed to a post at the Presidency College Madras, and it was while he was there that he sat in 1858 for the B.A. Examination of the recently established University of Madras. He became one of the first two graduates of the University, the other being his quondam teacher at the Seminary, Caroll Visvanathapillai who however could only come second to Thamotherampillai.

The restless scholar now began a voyage of discovery in the field of Tamil literature. In the fifties, Tamil works were mostly found in Ola manuscripts. The Christian missionaries in their efforts to propagate their gospel sought to study the language of the people and bring their sacred scriptures to the people in the latter's own tongue. Some administration officers too joined the missionaries' efforts in the study of the local languages, and with the spread of printing several Tamil works came to be printed now for the first time.

The literary tradition of Tamil, which is the principal member of the Dravidian group of languages, goes back, according to Professor Burrow, a former Bodleian Professor of Sanskrit at the University of Oxford, "for

to him never set eyes upon a Tamil, has in his recent classical work on Tamil literature remarked, "The development of Tamil literature was in one sense quite irregular; a decisive, even abysmal, hiatus occurred in its evolution and in that of Tamil culture, during the 6th-8th cent. A.D. when the secular, anonymous, conventional bardic poetry ceased to be a living literature and became part of a "dead" classical heritage, giving way to the religious, individual hymnody of the Saiva and Vaisnava Bhakti movement. Everything changed".

Under the influence of militant Brahmanical Hinduism, Sanskrit oriented and exclusively religious works supplanted and suppressed the classical works. Zvelebil quotes from A.K. Ramanujan, another great Tamil scholar. "The later medieval Saiva and Vaisnava scholars apparently tabooed as irreligious all secular texts which included the earliest and the greatest of Tamil literary texts; they disallowed from study all Jain and Buddhist texts." "Under this intellectual taboo", Zvelebil continued, "even great scholars were unaware of the existence of classical literature". One of the Buddhist texts tabooed was the only Buddhist epic, *Manimekalai*.

Such was the deplorable condition in the Tamil land when Thamotherampillai embarked on his mission to explore Tamil literature and study in a scientific manner the variations in the texts, the possible or probable in-

Tamil literary heritage and thus for allotting to Tamil the status of a great classical language were U.V. Swaminatha Aiyer (1855-1942) and C.W. Thamotherampillai (1832-1901)."

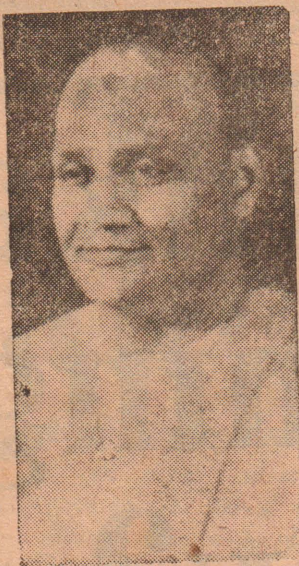
We in Sri Lanka who hail Thamotherampillai as our kinsman are inclined to put the names of Swaminatha Aiyer and Thamotherampillai in their true chronological sequence, and we have reasons for doing so. It will be noted that Thamotherampillai was born in 1832 and Aiyer in 1855. The credit that we are now claiming in for pioneer efforts, assuming that the quality of one's work is as good as the other's. What do we find?

Thamotherampillai had brought out his highly commended edition of *Tolkappiyam Collatikarem* as early as 1868 and had followed it with *Viracoliyam* in 1881, *Tanikaipuram* in 1883, *Tolkappiyam Porulatikarem* in 1885 and *Kalittokai* in July 1887, before Swaminatha Aiyer had commenced his own series of great classical editions.

Thamotherampillai had thus led the way and Swaminatha Aiyer had dutifully and worthily followed in Thamotherampillai's footsteps. Thamotherampillai continued his work until his death at the onset of the twentieth century, on 1st January 1901. The task of the pioneer has always been formidable. Read what Thamotherampillai says in his Preface to *Kalittokai*, "Only what has escaped fire and water and religious taboo remains; even of this, termites and the insect called

Australian Tamils tell Amirthalingam: 'Please step down'

9th May 1983
 Mr. A. Amirthalingam
 General Secretary of the
 T.U.L.F.
 & Leader of the Opposition
 Parliament of Sri Lanka.
 Dear Mr. Amirthalingam,



A. Amirthalingam

"Our Association has requested me to write this letter to you.

"Eelam Tamils at present resident in Australia are horrified and dismayed to note that while Tamil Eelam is suffering under the yoke of armed occupation by its present Sinhala rulers and while its youth, intellectuals, refugee rehabilitation workers and religious leaders are being harassed, tortured and murdered in Sri Lankan jails, the T.U.L.F. parliamentarians like modern day Neros are fiddling with local elections and power politics and are having secret 'discussions' with the Sinhala rulers and even proclaiming that the present U.N.P. government is giving 'redress' to Tamils (refer. your speech reported in Veerakesari of 13-4-1983)

"When following the death of our late revered leader Thanthai Chelva the mantle of Tamil leadership fell on your shoulders and you led the T.U.L.F. to parliamentary power on the mandate

of achieving independence for THAMIL EELAM, we like all Eelam Tamils at home and abroad were thrilled to the cores of our hearts. When for the next two years you roared your defiance at the fanatical Sinhala Buddhist parliamentarians we all thought that the hour had at last produced the leader who was going to liberate the Eelam Tamils.

"But alas, we have witnessed yet another of the sordid Tamil parliamentary dramas of soft pedalling followed by back pedalling, crowned by downright betrayal of the Tamils, of

their hopes, their aspirations and their lives. Eelam Tamils have been betrayed time and again in the past by their political leaders, but your betrayal has become the most dastardly of all the acts of betrayal because it is happening at a time when mother Tamil Eelam is bleeding to death.

"We strongly point out to you that the Tamil people gave you and your T.U.L.F. parliamentarians a clear and unequivocal mandate to strive for and achieve an independent sovereign state of THAMIL EELAM and not to compromise for anything short of this. You were most certainly not given any right to conduct back door dialogues asking for DDC'S and other petty concessions. We hate to ponder in whose best interests you are acting today: your parliamentary seats or the Tamil people's freedom?

"We have this to say to

you—you and the present bunch of Tamil parliamentarians, who like puppets are dancing to the tune of the master puppeteer J.R. are not made of freedom-struggle material; you are most definitely not capable of leading Eelam Tamils to freedom. Therefore please step down, taking along with you, your parliamentary harem and let a real meaningful leadership come forward and lead us to freedom.

"We have one more thing to say to you—they say history repeats itself and that is true of our struggle too. You will remember that when the Tamil Congress leaders betrayed the trust that the Tamils placed in them, Thanthai Chelva and Vanniasingham emerged as the real leaders of the Tamils. But it took them eight long and heart-rending years to break the Tamil people free of shackles and deception that the previous leadership

had imposed on them. We are now watching a similar drama unfolding yet again, the only difference being that the players are different and the stakes are priceless—the very survival of Eelam Tamils. Do not think you too could fool the Tamil people for eight long years or more.

"Please remember the old adage, 'You can fool all the people some of the time, you can fool some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time'. Long live THAMIL EELAM."

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Vincent

Sundrasingham

President

For and on behalf of the

EELAM TAMIL ASSOCIATION (AUSTRALASIA)

From the Eelam Tamil Association (Australia) P. O. Box 198, Eastwood N. S. W. 2122, Australia

'A call to all Eelam Tamils at home and abroad'

"Thamil Eelam—the territory of the Tamils in Eelam has always been and will continue to be in existence. Neither the armed might of the Sinhala rulers nor the wails and betrayals of the Jeremiahs and Judases among the Eelam Tamils could wish or whistle it away or wipe it off the face of the Earth.

"The only issue that appears to be causing confusion among some Eelam Tamils is, as to how self rule for them—restoration of Thamil Eelam—is to be achieved.

"In 1977—in the last democratic General Elections held in the country—the Eelam Tamils overwhelmingly voted the TULF to parliamentary power on the clear, unequivocal mandate of achieving an independent socialist state of THAMIL EELAM for all Tamils of Eelam origin. From that date onwards all self-respecting Eelam Tamils at home and abroad, who cared about human dignity, freedom and preservation of basic human rights have linked their hearts and minds and souls to the goal of achieving self rule for themselves.

"In spite of the by now familiar Tamil parliamentary tragic-comic dramas of defections to the Sinhala party in power lured by offer of Ministerial positions and meaningless and seemingly end-

less dialogues resulting in Tamil booby prizes such as powerless District Development Councils, since 1977 Eelam Tamils at home and abroad, from all walks of life, in short the whole Tamil people have become one unity a national movement for freedom from oppression and for the achievement of a sovereign state of Thamil Eelam. The reasons for this are two fold; on the one hand we have witnessed the insane acts of violence, arson, rape, pillage and plunder by the Sinhala armed forces and 'goon' squads formed by the fanatical power hungry elements among the Sinhala-Buddhist politicians, on the other hand we have seen the soul stirring acts of heroism of Kuttimani, Jegan, Thangathurai and others in the face of death, the selfless devotion of the Christian priests, university lecturers and students and the martyrdom of Sivakumaran, Inbam, Selvam and countless number of other Tamil youth for the cause—this has sparked off something in the corners of the heart of the vast majority of the Eelam Tamils, something that is achieving a Tamil 'miracle' in modern times.

"The Tamil is at last starting to break out of the shackles of the self-created cocoon of servitude and

Stand up and be counted!

servile thinking with which he had enveloped himself in the many years of foreign rule (4½ centuries of European and 3½ decades of Sinhala rule to be precise) and think and act as a self respecting person who cares about dignity, freedom and preservation of basic human rights.

In this context a fundamental question has to be clarified and resolved once and for all. When in 1977 the Eelam Tamils determined publicly that they desired self-rule, they had consciously resolved that they were not going to have anything more to do with the Sri Lankan parliament or to be governed by its laws. Thereafter it became an absurdity for the Eelam Tamil parliamentarians to continue to be members of the Sri Lankan parliament. No people, anywhere in the world have achieved self-rule through their existing parliamentary system. It would be equally impossible for Eelam Tamils to achieve independence of THAMIL EELAM through the Sri Lankan

parliament — it is as simple as that.

"The time has come for the Tamil parliamentarians to stop fooling the Eelam Tamils. If they want to be the real leaders of the Eelam Tamil freedom movement they have to get out of the Sri Lankan parliament immediately and establish the THAMIL EELAM NATIONAL ASSEMBLY and proclaim the independence of THAMIL EELAM. If the present TULF parliamentarians do not have the guts to accomplish this task, they should quit the stage forthwith and let genuine leaders of the freedom movement take over and lead the people to freedom. All self respecting Eelam Tamils at home and abroad are yearning for the day when a real meaningful leadership would emerge. We have reached the eleventh hour of our struggle and unless this leadership emerges right now, the world will soon be witnessing the total annihilation of the Eelam Tamils.

"We have a message for the apathetic Eelam Tamils

who want to be spectators and not participants in this life and death struggle for freedom

"Mahathma Gandhi said; 'I must liberate myself before I think of liberating my people'. If we want liberation for our people we must first of all liberate ourselves from all slavish attitudes. This is in keeping with the central theme of all religious thought. That is if our struggle is very much religious struggle — as was the struggle of the Jews who ultimately recreated Israel and as is the present struggle of the Palestinians.

"Finally this is what we have to say; the time has come for all conscientious Eelam Tamils at home and abroad to stand up and be counted. Every Eelam Tamil no matter where he lives today is part and parcel of the struggle — every Eelam Tamil is a part of THAMIL EELAM — every Eelam Tamil soul is part of the THAMIL EELAM soul.

"Therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls — it tolls for thee" and me.

Eelam Tamil Association
 [AUSTRALASIA]

N. Sanmugathasan & the plantation worker — SR April 30

Is Sri Lanka a slave-owning democracy?

The article on 'The plight of the plantation workers and the role of Thondaman' by Mr. N. Shanmugathasan which appeared in the Saturday Review of April 30 touched on many matters, but it also contained some over-statements and understatements. I shall in the latter part of this article make a few observations on them and some other relevant matters so that the readers may have a correct understanding of the recent political history of this country and the strength and weakness of the Ceylon Worker's Congress which Mr. Thondaman leads and which, by and large represents the vast majority of the plantation workers. During the Referendum campaign last December many of U.N.P. politicians went to the extent of saying that an ancient Greek City—States democracy flourished at its best, that giving an opportunity to the people to express their opinion on an issue by Referendum is the most democratic characteristic of a democracy, that they were only following an ancient example etc., etc., It would be irrelevant to examine now the validity or the truth of those statements. But what is to the point is that there is a great similarity in one aspect between the so-called democratic states of ancient Greece and modern Sri Lanka. The ancient City-States were slave-owning democracies and modern Sri Lanka is also a slave-owning democracy, if at all it can be called a democracy, although named Democratic Socialist Republic.

Not citizens of any country

For most Greeks, society without slavery was unthinkable. The slaves were employed in domestic, service, on land and in factories. The intelligent were given some posts of responsibility. The slave was a chattel to be bought and sold. Most slaves were obtained by war or raids from non-Greek countries. In this way the question of slavery was connected in the Greek mind, as in the American, with that of racial inferiority. The slave could not participate in the political activities of the Assembly or the State, for they were not citizens. That is why the Greek City-States were called Slave-owning democracies. Can it be said that, in Sri Lanka today there is slavery?

According to Mr. Shanmugathasan, half a million of the plantation workers still remain stateless and voteless, that is to say, like the slaves of ancient Greece; they are not citizens of any country in the world. It is not necessary to recapitulate now the various statutes passed by D.S. Sena-

yanake and the motives behind to deprive the plantation workers of their civic rights and reduce them to a status of statelessness. The then government was an aristocracy cum plutocracy with a racial bias under the semblance of democracy. For nearly 35 years they have remained stateless and voteless. Of course arguments can be adduced to say that various attempts have been made to resolve this problem, that factors of history have brought about this problem etc. But the hard fact remains that these are now in this country lakhs who

are stateless and voteless. What is the comparison between such people and the slaves of the Greek City-States? Can they be regarded as slaves? Not exactly, for they are not chattel that can be bought and sold, but near-slaves.

Aristotle described the Greek slaves as "living tools". These people are also living tools without any rights of citizenship. To expand on this aspect of the similarity between the two groups would take much space. All that can be said is that this problem would not have arisen if these workers had been non-Tamils.

Frank Moraes, the eminent Indian journalist in his book 'Witness to an Era' says that S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike once told him when he was in this country "if only the Indians in Ceylon came from anywhere but the South we might have settled the problem". In any case, the problems had to be settled. It cannot be postponed any longer in the vain hope that a day may come when they could be sent out or driven out.

Now to come to some of Mr. Shanmugathasan's statements, he says that Nehru did not meet working class leaders when he gave the advice to the leaders of the plantation workers to form a separate organisation to fight for their rights. If he had not given this 'reactionary' and 'unfortunate' advice, in Shanmuga-

thasan's view, the possibility existed that these workers might have joined common class organisations, along with their Sinhalese brethren. History would then have been different." I have no doubt that Nehru met Dr. N. M. Perera, Dr. S. A. Wickramasinghe, Dr. Colvin R de Silva and many others.

When Nehru came here as the representative of the Indian National Congress in 1939 Mr. Shanmugathasan and I were students of the then University College. There was a public meeting at the Galle Face Green. I was pre-

stitution was drafted by Dr. Colvin R de Silva? Was any attempt made to solve the Tamil problem or Indian problem? If anything was done, it was only to aggravate the problems. If we have learnt any lesson from the immediate past, that lesson is that the so called left parties, when in power, will be only interested in feathering their own nest. Mr. Shanmugathasan says: "It is to the eternal shame of the left movement that it stood paralysed, unable to take a firm, principled stand. It was a major concession to Sinhala

by T. Subramaniam

sent there. While Nehru was speaking there was a slight commotion in the crowd owing to some antics of some mischief-makers. Nehru was about to jump into the crowd when he was held back by Dr. Colvin R de Silva and the late Stanley de Zoysa who were standing on the platform on either side of him. Does Mr. Shanmugathasan seriously suggest that Nehru did not meet the leaders of the left political parties?

Who were working class leaders in 1939 Mr. Shanmugathasan speaks of? Does he

chauvinism. Senanayake had won a bloodless victory". If they had been paralysed before 1970 that can be excused or understood. But what did they and T.B. Illangaratne the ex-Trade Unionist, do between 1970 and 1977 when they were in power and when they could have undone all the mischief and harm done earlier?

The reason for their apathy or indifference or inability was that they did not have the moral courage to oppose the racism and chauvinism of

What S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike told Frank Moraes

suggest that Nehru should have met A.E. Goonesinghe? If the Ceylon Indian Congress had not been formed and if these workers had joined other organisations the only difference in history would have been that at the 1947 General Election instead of 7 M.Ps of Indian origin more Sinhalese of left parties might have entered parliament and still D. S. Senanayake would have done the same thing. Mr. Shanmugathasan himself admits that it was the Kandy by-election that goaded Mr. Senanayake into action.

What happened in 1970 when the S.L.F.P., C.P., and L.S.S.P. formed the government and what sort of Con-

the S.L.F.P. That is the brutal fact. Now Nemesis has over taken all of them.

Mr. Shanmugathasan poses the question, when it was the U.N.P. that was responsible for disfranchising the plantation workers how comes it that they have been brought to a position of being the main prop of the present U.N.P. government? Mr. Shanmugathasan is a student of history and he should know that history has its own ironies. I do not belong to any political party, nor do I hold a brief for Mr. Thondaman. Mr. Shanmugathasan himself has given the answer. But what he said was an understatement.

The S. L. F. P. and Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, in particular, adopted a very hostile attitude towards Mr. Thondaman and the plantation workers. There was a time when Mr. Kobbekaduwa could not address a meeting without attacking Mr. Thondaman. It was a sustained campaign against him. He was simply driven into the embracing hands of Mr. J.R. Jayawardene, and the embrace was such that no one could free him out of it.

Mr. S. has referred to the various hardships the plantation workers are undergoing now. Their leaders, I am sure, will take steps to ameliorate their living conditions and to have their grievances redressed. I am also sure that their future will not be so bleak as it had been. Mr. Thondaman does not lick the foot that kicked the plantation workers.

We remember the occasion when the motion of no confidence on the Leader of the Opposition — an unusual and extraordinary exercise — was moved. While the other two Tamil Ministers, the twins from the Eastern province, were keeping mum, Mr. Thondaman courageously criticised the U.N.P. members who were attacking in their speeches the Tamil people and refrained from voting.

Mr. Shanmugathasan also referred to the revolutionary potential of the plantation workers. I agree with him

on this point, but conditions must be favourable and advantageous for them to enter into such a movement. They are not living in a dream world, day-dreaming. They are practical men, guided by practical leaders. The 35 years of post-independence era has been one of animosity, chauvinism and racial hatred, perhaps equalled only in South Africa. These men and women have learned many a lesson from practical experience, if not from books. Who knows what is in the Womb of Time?

Now leaving aside the questions raised by Mr. Shanmugathasan, there is another (Continued next page)

Mr. Sunil Ranjan Jayakody, you got it

The Honourable M. P. for Polgahawela, Mr. Sunil Ranjan Jayakody (U.N.P.) deserves the plaudits of all right thinking citizens of Sri Lanka and at least a nomination for the Nobel peace prize for 1983, for having broached an idea that if developed a little further can resolve the Sinhala-Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka. The Hon. member's suggestion to withdraw the state sponsored bus services from Jaffna (vide S.R. of 02 - 04 - 1983) should be implemented by the Minister of Transport immediately and the buses so withdrawn be sent to either Polgahawela or some other Sinhala electorate. Mr. Jayakody through his suggestion has inadvertently pointed the way towards the solution of a long festering and painful problem.

Why should the government of Sri Lanka insist on providing various services to areas with people who apparently—as exemplified by the burning of buses in Jaffna—do not want these services? The Tamil people have definitely proved to be an ungrateful lot by time and again indicating by their actions that they do not appreciate such services. It is the sacred duty of all governments, especially those in developing countries, to deploy state services and other scarce resources in such a way as to maximally benefit the most number of people. In Sri Lanka the term, 'Most number of people' by the definition used by various post-independence governments, means the Sinhalese.

Since the smaller number of Tamils concentrated in their traditional homelands have repeatedly spurned all efforts to help them through the development of state services, the Sri Lankan government would be well within its rights to reallocate these services, as it has already done with most resources, to the Sinhala areas.

The other services the government should consider withdrawing with immediate effect from the areas peopled by the ungrateful Tamils are:

- 1. The Police:** The conditions in the Tamil areas are such that the policemen cannot honourably and in safety discharge their duties and have to be provided with protection at considerable cost. Why should the Sri Lankan government station policemen in the Tamil areas, when the latter cannot perform their duties and have to be confined to the

The considerable amounts of money spent to maintain an active army in the Tamil areas could be more usefully spent on building schools, bridges, water works and libraries in the Sinhala areas that have remained neglected.

Thus, once the police and the other visible state services such as transport are withdrawn from the Tamil areas, there would not be anything left to protect from the ingratitude of the Tamil people and the army can be safely demobilised. The savings thus

other less visible state services that should be withdrawn from the Tamil areas for the greater good of the country. The withdrawal from the Tamil areas of as many state services as possible would help reduce the enormous deficits in our national budget and will definitely win the approval of the IMF and the World Bank on account of its economic soundness.

The government need not feel guilty or ashamed of implementing the above proposals, as it would be doing the

cost and at the expense of Sinhala people to maintain protect various state services in the north and east.

The determination to serve the Tamil people well, has even necessitated a democratic, dharmishta political party that had vowed to govern in accordance with Buddhist principles of tolerance and righteousness, to enact laws that have been compared to in the Republic of South Africa. Why should this thrice blessed land acquire a dubious reputation and international notoriety, just because the government insists on providing several state services to an ungrateful Tamil people?

In the three decades since independence from colonial rule, only Mr. Ranjan Jayakody among the Sinhala leaders has understood the root cause of a chronic national malaise and has had the courage to suggest an appropriate and simple remedy. This clearly illustrates that sometimes only great minds can comprehend simple problems (remember Isaac Newton, the falling apple and the understanding of the principles of gravity)!!

Comprehension of the problem

Mr. Ranjan Jayakody should now in the interests of the Sri Lankan nation, carry his message to all nooks and crannies of the Sinhala areas and through mobilization of public opinion convince his colleagues in parliament to initiate action to implement the concept he has so well enunciated. The solution to the Sinhala-Tamil conflict will be found as soon as the simplicity of Mr. Jayakody's remedy is comprehended by a majority of the Sinhala people and their leaders.

Comprehension of a problem is as we all know the seed to its solution. All what the Sinhala people have to understand is that their ungrateful Tamil brethren do not want any services from the government and crave from the depths of their souls to be left alone to manage their own affairs, their own way. All patriotic citizens of Sri Lanka should be very thankful to Mr. Sunil Ranjan Jayakody for having got the ball rolling in the right direction.

Says 'Mahadana Mutha' writing from U.K.

Police station most of the time and guarded by the army at all times? It is quite clear from recent events that the Tamil people do not want the protection of the police and hence the policemen presently stationed in the Tamil areas should be forthwith transferred to Sinhala areas that are short of police services.

- 2. The Army:** The Army has been deployed in large numbers in the various areas peopled by the Tamils and provided with sophisticated weaponry and other ancillary war tools, mainly to protect the police force and other state services such as transport.

It does not appear that the army has been deployed in these areas to protect the Tamils or the nation from an external enemy. There have not been any mass riots or civil disturbances either in these areas to warrant the massive military deployment.

Maintaining an army in active service is an expensive exercise even for a rich country, let alone a poor developing country like Sri Lanka that is sustaining its threadbare economy with large infusions of international aid and credit.

accrued can then be utilized in the Sinhala areas.

- 3. The Railway:** The Sri Lankan government railway is providing its services to Jaffna, Batticaloa and Trincomalee at considerable cost and risk. Derailments, vandalism and regular attacks on these trains and its passengers by Sinhala patriots incensed at the ingratitude of the Tamils, make it difficult for the S. L. G. R. to ensure the safety of its trains and clientele. The prestige of the S.L.G.R. too has suffered considerable damage in recent times on account of the above occurrences. The S. L. G. R. should forthwith terminate its services on the northern and eastern lines at Medawachchiya and Polonnaruwa respectively and utilize the savings in rolling stock and running time to provide better services to the Sinhala areas. The Tamils from the north and east can walk (as suggested by Mr. Jayakody) or use other means of transport if they have any business to transact in the rest of Sri Lanka.

It appears that there is a crying need for the government to appoint a 'Presidential Commission' to investigate

most logical thing in the present circumstances, for the greater good of the country. In the face of the negative and ungrateful attitude of the Tamil people, the government has been forced to take various measures at considerable

'You have got the ball rolling in the right direction'

Is Sri Lanka a Slave-owning democracy?

(Continued from Page 6) matter that needs attention. Mr. Mervyn de Silva, the Editor of Lanka Guardian, has given in that journal of May 1 in page 4 an account of 'Gandhiyam' as presented by Shirley Candappa. "Therefore, far from bringing or luring people from down South or the plantations, the Gandhiyam Society has only helped in rehabilitating these unfortunate people".

These unfortunate people were the plantation workers from the Southern and Central parts of the country. Now this movement has been suppressed and its leaders have been arrested. It has been reported that some of them have been mercilessly tortured. Various allegations have been levelled against this movement. The Ceylon Workers Congress and Mr.

Thondaman have a moral duty to ascertain the truth and to see that justice is done.

Finally, we come to the question that was posed at the beginning. This "Island of Righteousness" is unique in that no other country in the world is governed under two Constitutions, the old and the new, and no other country in the world has lakhs of people who are

stateless, that is, who are not citizens of any country in the world. The question to be answered is: 'Is Sri Lanka a Slave-Owning Democracy?' Perhaps it may be another irony of history that the U.N.P. which created this problem may put an end to it. Till such time the stigma will be there - Sri Lanka is a slave-owning democracy.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has adopted a resolution of Development Co-operation and Human Rights which contains a number of important recommendations to European governments concerning principles of development co-operation.

These are the central parts of the resolution: The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe invite the governments of member states:

1. to make it the primary objective of their co-operation and official development aid policies to contribute not only to the satisfaction of the basic needs (food, employment, drinking water, health, clothing, housing and education) but also towards promoting the protection of civil and political rights

2. to endeavour, if they have not yet done so, and in spite of the economic and financial constraints there may be, to achieve the target of 0.7% of GNP for official development aid and introduce new financial instruments, such as the subsidisation of the interest rates; bearing in mind that such aid will contribute to the substantial improvement of the global economic situation and a development of trade between the developed and developing countries;

3. to make an additional development aid effort in favour of those countries which carry out internal reforms, establishing pluralistic democratic structures, and trying to promote economic and social progress, social justice and the implementation of human rights.

4. to initiate consultations within the Council of Europe and O.E.C.D. with a view to a special programme of finan-

Development co-operation & Human Rights

cial assistance being carried out for the few countries with low or intermediate incomes which are genuine democracies and are having to contend with extremely difficult economic conditions prejudicing social and political stability as well as democracy

5. to channel official development aid towards the most disadvantaged sections of the population, by supporting priority sectors such as basic education and vocational training, rural development, the fight against hunger, the creation of jobs and the promotion of appropriate technologies, as well as certain forms of co-operation such as mutual aid organisations and co-operatives;

6. to support the creation of democratic institutions and the achievement of human rights, with a view to establishing a bond of solidarity between democratic nations;

7. in regard to states where relations between the rulers and their subjects are marked by arbitrary measures, intimidation and physical repression, and where civil and political freedoms are trampled underfoot;

a) to confine their action to those development projects that are directly beneficial to the afflicted populations, having recourse where appropriate to non-governmental organisations such as religious bodies and trade unions which are more directly in touch with the victims of human rights violations;

b) to bring strong diplomatic pressure to bear, and if necessary reduce or cancel official development aid programmes while fully maintaining purely humanitarian assistance; in particular by having recourse to non-governmental organisations;

8. to take into consideration, when shaping their bilateral and multilateral development assistance policies, the human rights situation in the countries concerned as well as the possible impact of the proposed projects on the evolution of this situation;

9. to implement forms of North-South co-operation more conducive to economic and social progress of the kind required in the developing countries for giving human rights a firmer basis;

10. to encourage the preparation and application of human rights instruments of regional level, such as the efforts being undertaken in this respect in Latin America and Africa;

11. to urge all countries that have not already done so to ratify and apply the International Covenants on Human Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and to submit to the control machinery set up by these covenants, whose effectiveness should be reinforced;

12. to submit to it for an opinion the draft for a new protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights which aims at including in the Convention a number of fundamental rights listed in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and not covered by the European Convention;

13. to encourage the adoption of efficient procedures for supervising the application of existing instruments for the protection of human rights, and to provide the competent organs, organs of the United Nations with the

necessary staff, equipment and financial resources.

14. to promote the institutions of a United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights;

15. on the basis of this recommendation, in particular in the framework of the Council of Europe, the crossroads of the democracies, to agree adopting joint attitudes on all questions towards regimes that flout human rights;

16. increase their contributions to the International Institute of Human Rights at Strassbourg (Institut Rene Cassin) and other organisations which provide information and assistance for the promotion of human rights and support for all efforts undertaken in the Third World with a view to promoting respect for human rights and democracy.

By courtesy: Development & Co-operation, No. 2/1983 March/April, published by the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), Born.)

LETTERS

Palmyrah Development

19, 1st Cross Street,
Jaffna,
27th April 1983.

The Editor,
Saturday Review,
Dear Sir,

I had the benefit of reading in your esteemed journal of 23-04-1983, the letter of Mr. N. Kanagasooriar, Ex-Chairman of the Palmyrah Development Board. One wonders why a Chairman who had the backing of his Minister who "sent him to India to study the palmyrah industry and to have discussions with experts in the South" and who had grandiose projects for the development

of the palmyrah industry had to tender his resignation in June 1981 as acting Chairman

Mr. N. Kanagasooriar was "pained" when a "Junior Executive" of the Board whom he dismissed" from the Board was appointed Chairman. I am sure that the Minister who appointed the present Chairman knew what he was doing because it is an undeniable fact that there is no other person at present more suitable to hold the post of Chairman than Mr. K. Nadarajah. He has been involved in the palmyrah industry for a number of years as the secretary of the Palm

Products Co-operatives Societies Union and his intimate knowledge of the problems facing it and the mainly affected tapper community is unrivalled unlike the previous Chairman including Mr. N. Kanagasooriar who sat in their ivory towers in Colombo and attempted to develop the palmyrah industry from there. The palmyrah arrack distillery at Kaithady, probably the only one of its kind in the world, several centres producing palmyrah sugar, jaggery etc., have been the result of efforts made by Mr. Nadarajah before he was appointed Chairman. The Thikkam Complex too owes its existence to him. The fact that the present Chairman belongs to the so-called tapper community is totally irrelevant. However one can discern a sense of malice in Mr. Kanagasooriar's reference to the present Chairman as a 'tapper'

Mr. Kanagasooriar states that he wanted to spend all its resources in research work and to set up model industrial centres. A cursory glance of

the objectives of the Government in constituting the Palmyrah development Board will show that the Government intended to achieve very much more than what Mr. Kanagasooriar wanted.

What the Board has achieved by way of development during the one year the present Chairman has been in charge, is infinitely more than what was accomplished by the Jegannathans, and Kanasooriars. The recent workshop/Seminar held at Veerasingam Hall, Jaffna jointly sponsored by the Palmyrah Development Board and the Food and Agriculture Organisation was a resounding success and experts and scientists who know more about the Palmyrah palm than all the Kanagasooriars was unanimous in their praise of the activities of the Palmyrah Development Board. It is worth bringing to the notice of Mr. Kanagasooriar that one of the most important decision taken at the Workshop / Seminar was the early setting up of a high-powered Research Institute

which appears to be the hobby-horse of Mr. Kanagasooriar.

It would have been more appropriate if Mr. Kanagasooriar had continued to maintain the silence which he desired at the time of his resignation.

Yours faithfully,
S. Velauthum Ex-Director,
Palmyrah Development Board, Jaffna.

Who was that CDN Editor?

Uduvil,
Chunnakam,
6 May 1983.

The Editor,
Saturday Review,
Dear Sir,

Belonging as I do to a generation than had been taught by our English Master to read Herbert Hulugalle's editorial in the Daily News or Frank Moraes in the Times of Ceylon to improve our knowledge of the English language, I was a bit dismayed at your reluctance

(Continued next page)

For nearly four hours on Sunday, 8th May Dr. S. Rajasunderam, Administrative Secretary of Gandhiyam Society was assaulted by Lieut. Bukmeewawa and three others, all of whom he could identify, at the Army Detention Barracks at Panagoda near Colombo. This allegation made by Dr. Rajasunderam in person to Dr. M.S.L. Salgado, J.M.O., Colombo, is contained in Dr. Salgado's report submitted to the Court of Appeal Colombo.

In his report to the Appeal Court Dr. Salgado says: "I examined Somasunderam Rajasunderam, 47 years, who is being detained at the Army Detention Barracks, Panagoda, at 2.10 p.m. on 12-05-1983 in the front room of the barracks building. Dr. S. Premathiratne, my assistant was also present.

"I explained to the examinee that I have come to examine him on an order of the Appeal Court on an application made by S. Karalasingham of Vavuniya. I also explained that my findings would be communicated to the said Court and asked him whether he consents to be examined.

On being pushed, he fell into cell

"I ensured that no other person was within hearing distance as the examination room was small. The examinee consented to be examined and in proof of his identity I got him to sign and date on the paper on which I was going to make my notes. The examination concluded at 3.10 p.m.

History: S. Rajasunderam stated that he was brought to Panagoda from Gurunagar Army Camp and arrived at about midnight of the 7th May, '83. He was taken in and pushed into a cell by two officers who were in uniform whom he can identify. As a result of being pushed he fell inside the cell. He thereafter slept on the marble floor of the cell.

"At about 3 a.m., sand was thrown at him but he continued to sleep. At about 5.30 a.m., on the 8th a person whom he can identify came into the cell wearing a towel and "boxed my tummy", as a

Gandhiyam Secretary

Dr. Rajasundaram:

He was assaulted for 4 hours at Army camp: J.M.O's report

result he found difficulty in breathing. His hair was pulled and he was also assaulted on the shoulders by the same person. About half an hour later another person whom he can identify came into the cell and he was hit on the head and shoulders for about two minutes after which he left.

"At about 5-00 pm., on 8-5-83, Lt. Bukmeewawa came with three others, all of whom he can identify. Two of them assaulted him with shoes, elbows, fist and knees. The assault continued from about 5-00 p.m., till about 8-30 to 9-00 p.m. Thereafter he was kept naked and he had to take his meals without clothes.

On the 8th night when he was sleeping he was taken out of the cell and shown two men hanging upside down from their legs in two cells. He was beaten there with hands and slippers and asked to admit that there was a conference in 1981.

"He was taken back to his cell where he slept and his clothes were returned at 1-30 a.m. on 9th morning. He was told that all were beaten up as two detainees had communicated what had occurred to lawyers.

"On the 10th he was threatened but not assaulted. He was made to walk on his hands and knees for exercise in his cell.

"On the 12th he was made to stand from 9-30 a.m., to 1-00 p.m., with a break of five minutes as he had told lawyers who had met him on

the 11th what had occurred. "Two officers whom he can identify threatened him not to speak about the incidents of the 8th May, 10 minutes before he was brought up for examination by me."

Dr. Salgado in making his observations says:

"He (Dr. Rajasunderam) walked into the examination room slowly and he appeared to be frightened until I explained the purpose of my visit. His face was unshaven and on questioning him he stated that he had not shaved since the 7th.

"He complained of pain behind one ear, on the back of the chest, back of head and tummy. He also complained of a buzzing sensation in both ears more in the right. His pulse was 100 per minute, his blood pressure 120/80mm. mercury. His temperature under the tongue was 99.4 F.

He had a purplish brown contusion immediately behind right ear with an abrasion at the upper end of the contusion. To the left of the mid-line on the back of the top of the scalp was another contusion which could be felt and was tender but which was not visible.

"There was tenderness over the lower end of the right shoulder blade of the back of

chest. All joints had full movements except the shoulder joints where there was pain on extending the upper arm fully. The patient complained of pain in the calves but no abnormality was detected.

he recommends that he should be examined by an ENT Surgeon in regard to his complaint of buzzing in the ears.

Dr. Salgado states that injuries that he had listed were



Dr. Rajasundaram

'He was shown two men hanging upside down from their legs in 2 cells'

Dr. Salgado states that he was unable to examine his ears as there was no otoscope. Dr. Rajasundaram gave him a history that he has had perforation of the ear drums when he was small and that Dr. Benjamin had treated him. He also stated that prior to the assault on the 8th night he had no complaint regarding his ears.

Dr. Salgado states that in view of the symptoms (tinnitus) and the history of assault

all non-grievous with the qualification that he had not examined the ears internally. Since Dr. Rajasunderam was having low fever he had recommended that he should not take the yogic exercises which he was accustomed to do daily.

After listing the various medicines that he should be provided Dr. Salgado concludes "His mental condition is normal except that he is in a state of apprehension."

Eelam Tamil Association (Australasia) writes to President Jayawardene

9th May 1983

His Excellency
J. R. Jayawardene
President of the Republic of Sri Lanka
Secretariat
Colombo - 1

Your Excellency,
Our Association wishes that I should send this letter of appeal to you.

Tamil youths, intellectuals, religious leaders and refugee rehabilitation workers are being detained, tortured and murdered in Sri Lankan jails by your armed forces under the draconian provisions of the Sri Lankan parliamentary act of 1979 known as the

'Prevention of Terrorism Act' This act which violates basic human rights and which has been referred to as being akin to the South African Terrorism Act of 1967 has been condemned outright by various international bodies such as Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists.

We therefore appeal to you to repeal this 'Act' forthwith and prevent further violation of basic human rights in Sri Lanka; a country where your government is proclaiming to have a 'Dharmishta' (just and free) society.

We wish to bring to your

attention that the real terrorists in Sri Lanka are your own fanatical armed forces who are violating all basic human rights and who must be put in jails and brought to justice; and not the Tamil youths, intellectuals, social workers and religious leaders who are genuine freedom fighters trying to liberate their people from bondage.

Yours sincerely,
(Dr.) Vincent Sundrasingham
President.

C. C. Hon. W. G. Hayden
Foreign Minister of Australia
Parliament House
Canberra

Who was the CDN Editor

(Continued from page 8) to identify the editor who made the perceptive comment referred to in your Viewpoint "A way with the abominable Act" (S.R. of 30 April). Could it be the journalist turned Ambassador Ernest Corea or Mervyn de Silva, once a journalist, always a journalist and a brilliant one at that? Recently the Tamil Weekly **Sutantiran** did him proud by publishing a translated version of a piece written by him on the Tamil problem. Was he referring to the electric kettle

or Nebuchadnezzar's cauldron? Perhaps you would like to remove the cloak of anonymity and put your readers wise on the identity.

Yours faithfully,
Rajan Selvaratnam

There was no reluctance to identify the CDN Editor as Reader Selvaratnam puts it; it was thought not necessary, that was all. But for Mr. Selvaratnam's benefit, we will give him the date of the Editorial; it was July 1, 1972 — Editor SR)

How safe are our streets for girls in the nights? Is that a true index of civilisation?

There was a birthday party at the Govt Agent's residence at Kurunegala in the mid fifties. Sir John Kotelwela the then Prime Minister attended the party and got us laughing with his usual humour. Suddenly someone remarked about "our ancient civilization". Sir John interjected with the remarks, "I do not know exactly what civilization means. To my mind civilization of a country is the level of safety of our streets in the nights. Can any one of you say boldly that our streets are safe in the nights for girls?" It was a profound statement and those present at the party turned serious and made no comments.

I am not sure whether the situation has very much changed since then. It is no exaggeration to say that very much the same situation prevails in many other countries. On this matter there is hardly any difference between developed and developing countries. There are as many developed countries as developing countries where the situation is deplorable. The only silver lining is what can be seen in Japan. The writer had spent a full month in that country many years ago, where he had seen lonely females walking freely in the streets of Tokyo in the nights. Recently the writer met an Indian friend of his who has been in Tokyo with his family for many years. The daughter of the friend said she was studying in one of the Universities in Tokyo and instructions in English are in the nights (as normal classes in day time are in the Japanese language). She always returned home by public conveyance after midnight and had never a problem. This is really the Rama-Rajja which Gandhi dreamt of.

Our past traditions have stressed on the good conduct of men towards women. Rama is the outstanding case of a person who believed in one wife and treated any other woman as mother, sister or daughter. He turned down the overtures of Soorpanahai. Later in life after Sita was requested to live in the jungle & away from the palace, for the Aswametha Yagam the elders advised his taking a wife. The Yagam could not be done without a wife according to tradition. He surmounted the difficulty by having an image (in gold) of Sita by his side. It is also said that when Rama met Sita for the first time accidentally, that night he was troubled whether he had done the right thing in being attracted towards her in case she was already married. Ramayana mentions that Lakshmana could not identify Sita's jewels except those worn on her feet as he never looked at his sister-in-law's face. Ramayana also mentions that Hanuman on his mission to find out the whereabouts of Sita was looking at every female in Ravana's palace in the nights. Before he did the search he prayed to God to forgive him for this was strictly forbidden (for men to enter women's apartments particularly in the nights).

Some positive steps have to be taken. Though the necessary legal authority should be available to the police and other authorities in charge of

law and order, by and large it is the civil code of conduct of the males that has to change. It is not out of place to mention of an extreme case what a Govt. can do. The writer had heard while working in a country in West Asia long ago that a lady driving a car in a city in that country had difficulties with her car. It was about midnight and the car stopped on one of the bridges over the river that runs through

ously and thus there is a point in this type of punishment.

What is the set up in Japan that makes the women safe in the streets? Can we learn something from that land? A lady in the street is not treated as an object for merriment. She is somebody's wife, sister, mother or daughter. What is the situation if she happens to be your wife, mother, sister or daughter? How would you behave with a female member

standards. A young male who saw her in the park attempted to molest her. In court the young man pleaded that he was not used to women in such scanty clothing and was tempted when he saw the lady in that condition. This makes it clear that though the females have all the right to move freely, some precautions have to be taken, taking into consideration local conditions.

PERSPECTIVES

By

Nagamuttu

the city. Two policemen on duty promptly helped the lady to put the car in order. At the end of it, they did not behave properly with the lady. The following day she reported to the President at the palace. The I.G.P. was ordered to locate the two policemen. In due course, six of them turned up at the palace and the lady was asked to identify the 2 men. She had no difficulty in identifying the 2 men. The two men were then & there shot and killed in the presence of the lady. Some countries believe in such drastic actions. Each country has its own way of dealing with such matters. It has to be admitted that this is also a way of dealing with the situation. Less punishments are generally not taken seri-

of your family? Cannot you give the same treatment to other women? If you want fun go to the right place rather than look for it in the streets. The Japanese have something unique in their set-up as a nation to have this admirable quality. It is difficult to isolate & state that due to a particular characteristic they have this wonderful attitude towards females.

In our societies it would be prudent for girls not to go out alone in the nights. Such precautions can avoid awkward situations. The writer remembers a case reported in Malaysia some years back. A European lady took a stroll in a park in a provincial town not properly clad by Malaysian

Women

representation

To meet the situation a conscious effort should be made by society. Training at home in childhood and in the schools and religious institutions should go a long way. Above all, society should take a serious view of harassment of females. Those who claim to be leaders and those whom people look to for leadership should set an example by their living. How sad I was when I read in the papers not long ago that a man who was alleged to have been involved in the death of a lady was given a promotion by his firm soon afterwards. The firm could justify their stand that the man was acquitted & that his work was good. But in the eyes of the public who have followed the court case, one gets the impression that society is prepared to put up with such males. It is thus difficult to put across the right point of view to all. The average person thinks that this is the responsibility of everybody else. Men should treat women as equals which attitude is nothing new to those used to the Arthanareeswara concept (at least in theory). One wonders whether women should not be reasonably represented in the services which are responsible for law & order e.g. judiciary, police. This might help. Above all it is the attitude of man towards woman that has to change to make the streets safe for our girls. The State can help with scrupulous enforcement of the law and if necessary amend the law for more deterrent punishment. Women's organisations could help.

Evelyn Rutnam Institute — 2nd Anniversary

S. H. Hoffman reports:-

"If man is right the world will be right," so said John D. Guyer, Representative of The Asia Foundation, as chief guest at the 2nd anniversary commemoration ceremonies held recently at the Evelyn Rutnam Institute for Intercultural studies, Tinneveli, Jaffna.

Mr. and Mrs. John D. Guyer were garlanded by two little girls and received by Dr. James T. Rutnam and Professor K. Indrapala, Dean of the Faculty of Arts, University of Jaffna and Director of the Evelyn Rutnam Institute, at the entrance to the Institute and were conducted on arrival with Nathaswaram music to the Institute Hall. Thereafter Mr. and Mrs. Guyer garlanded the bronze-cast head of the late Mrs. Evelyn (nee Wijayaratne) Rutnam done by her daughter

Indrani. This bronze head standing on a tall pedestal is the centre piece that adorns the main hall of the Evelyn Institute.

After a social held on the premises, Dr. James Rutnam made a brief speech of welcome as well as thanks to all those who had gathered there to honour his late wife. He said that he was not funded by the Asia Foundation, yet they continued to be his best friends. He said that he had abiding ties with America, and from a long time ago, had strong links with the Foundation.

Dr. Rutnam said that he had been allowed his span of life, having been spared it, at the age of 78. He said, "We have taken trouble to perpetuate Evelyn Rutnam on her birthday, and my children and

I are happy that all have gathered here to commemorate her life. This institute has over 10,000 books, and I have always had the books I needed, and I am ever happy to share them with all.

Mr. Guyer in reply said that he and his wife were delighted to attend the function and to be able to represent the U. S. A. It was also intriguing to hear the name of Rutnam whose quest for knowledge was insatiable. He said that it was Dr. Rutnam who introduced him to this country, an year ago.

Mr. Guyer then dwelt on the purpose of the Institute which was to foster a love and quest for knowledge in books. He said, "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers." Mr. Guyer then presented a set of books to Dr. Rutnam to help him in research work.

This was done to show their interest in the Institute.

Continuing Mr. Guyer said that the Asia Foundation was the oldest private funding organization. He said that there were lots of creative people in the Foundation and this helped. It was also philanthropic. Dr. James Rutnam was a true humanist and a writer on a variety of subjects. He also recalled how Dr. Rutnam settled the controversy about the painting of the Kandyan Queen; he settled the issue in 45 minutes by well presented arguments to dispel any doubts as to which queen it was and who the painter of the portrait was.

Mr. Guyer then concluded by saying that the Evelyn Institute was a great tribute to the memory of Evelyn and also to Dr. James Rutnam's sense of vision.

Terror in Peradeniya University campus

Tamil students at the University of Peradeniya experienced a night of terror on the night of 11-12 May, 1983 when gangs of Sinhala undergraduates of the same University dragged them out of their hostel-rooms, assaulted them mercilessly and ordered them to quit the campus by 6 a.m., the next day. By noon on 12 May, almost all Tamil students had left the campus hurriedly; one Tamil undergrad, who had fallen down from the ceiling while attempting to flee the attackers, was warded at the Kandy General Hospital with cracked ribs and a broken chin; yet lectures continued to be conducted "as usual" by the Peradeniya University authorities, and well attended by Sinhala students.

Unaware of the provocation

"Shocking . . . unbelievable . . . The first time an incident of such nature and proportion has taken place at Peradeniya University," said dazed Tamil undergrads on their arrival in Jaffna. "We were taken totally unawares". They pointed out that this incident portends ominous signs for the future safety of Tamil students at the Universities of Sri Lanka.

Most Tamil students reaching Jaffna were still unaware of what had provoked this brutal attack upon them the previous night. According to reports, a Tamil Engineering student named Balasooriyar was handed over to the Police (on Wednesday 11 May?) after fellow Sinhala undergraduates had searched his belongings and allegedly found pamphlets of a proscribed Tamil Liberation Organization and a rubber stamp with the sentence "DO OR DIE".

T. V. Tamil movie

Also late in the evening on Wednesday 11 May, unknown persons had defaced the Sinhala and the English lettering on the nameboard of the Medical Faculty; the words "EELAM FOREVER" in English were written in white paint on University roads; and posters in Sinhala and English expressing "EELAM" senti-

ments had appeared on the walls.

Male Tamil students staying at Marrs, Hilda Obeysekara, and James Pieries Halls bore the brunt of the assault; most of the students belong to the Medical and Dental Faculties. Tamils at all these halls were attacked almost simultaneously.

A typical scenario took place at Marrs Hall. Students watching the late-night movie were first "bucketed" with water amid cries of "THALAYA (Gingelly-oil-fellow)" and "Koti (Tigers)". The drenched students returned to their rooms. A gang came round shouting and banging on doors. They did not press to gain entry into the rooms, however, and moved away in the direction of another hall of residence. Thinking that this was just another example of chauvinistic rowdiness, many Tamil students fell into fitful slumber.

'Quit campus by 6 a. m.' order

Around 2 a.m., there was shouting again and the crash of breaking glass and wood. Gangs of Sinhala students from other halls began attacking Tamil students. Doors were broken open. Tamil students were dragged out into the corridors and each one individually attacked by 10-15 persons, many of whom were recognized as Sinhala undergraduates of Peradeniya.

Most students were assaulted mainly with hands and feet; some with clubs and iron bars. Some incurred cuts and bruises, while most sustained internal injuries due to battery. "No campus and no Eelam for you bastards. All Tamils should quit the campus by 6 a.m. tomorrow," they were told in English. Meanwhile, "search parties" raided the rooms to look for "subversive literature."

Tamil speaking Muslim students were not attacked however, Students belonging to the Estate Tamil community were not spared

even when they pleaded their different origin.

S. Sritharan, a fourth year Medical student from Kilinochchi, was one of eight students who sought refuge between the roof and the ceiling of Marrs Hall. But the ceiling gave way under Sritharan and he fell face downwards, breaking four of his ribs and injuring his chin. He started bleeding from the chin and mouth. He was later admitted to the Kandy General Hospital by helpful Sinhala, Muslim and Tamil students.

Sinhala students to the rescue

Amongst all this thuggery there were a number of heroic instances of good-natured Sinhala and Muslim students saving their Tamil brothers. In Akbar-Nell Hall, a gang of students was turned away by Sinhala students who told the raiders that they themselves would rather bear the blows than allow their Tamil faculty-mates to be attacked. Seeing their firmness, the mob retreated, hooting and jeering. However, the next morning, Tamils at Akbar Hall were asked to leave too, since their Sinhala friends could not protect them the next night too.

It is fortunate that women students belonging to the Tamil community were not attacked physically, though threats and insults were hurled at them.

Dean's change of mind

For some unlucky Tamils the agony continued long into the night. Some were taken to the nameboard of the Medical Faculty, assaulted, and told to clean up the defaced Sinhala and English lettering. Others were taken around the campus and were forced between blows, to deface Tamil letters on the signboards.

While it seems to be a curious coincidence that the attacks at various Halls were more or less simultaneous, it is also noteworthy that the attackers have been careful not to

injure the heads of their victims or to deal fatal blows, though they had not refrained from jumping onto the bodies of their fallen victims.

As dawn broke over Peradeniya University on Thursday, Tamil students came out of their hiding places and returned to their battered rooms to collect whatever notes and belongings they could before taking a bus or train to safety. Those whose arms were temporarily maimed by the blows were helped by others who were not so badly bruised. Some students broke into tears on seeing their notes lying soaked in pools of water.

A group of Tamil medical students dared to stay back near their Dean's Office, in order to let him know of their plight and the reason for their leaving the campus. When the Dean arrived and heard their tale of woe, he agreed that they had no choice but to leave, and promised to inform the Vice-Chancellor of the situation. However, later on in the day, he seems to have changed his mind and remarked, "Everything is calm here, why can't the Tamils come back and attend lectures?"

Lectures as usual — V. C.

This seems to have been the general attitude adopted by the Administrative Authorities at the University. Vice-Chancellor Panditharatne made haste to inform the Press that lectures were being conducted as usual and that everything was calm. He said he could not take any action as no student had come to him to complain of damage to person or property. It is noteworthy that when students loyal to the UNP and JVP Parties clashed on the campus, the university was closed down within less than 24 hours.

However, things were far from calm at the campus. On Thursday, 12 May some final-year medical students who had dared to stay on in view of their impending final exam, were assaulted. A Tamil lecturer belonging to the Arts Faculty

was assaulted in front of Wijewardene Hall and has sustained a fracture of the skull.

Three Tamil Medical Students who went to meet the Dean of their Faculty were surrounded by hostile Sinhala students; ultimately the Dean had to send them out in a university vehicle.

Observers are astonished at the viciousness of the attack, given the docile attitude of the Tamil students of Peradeniya University, who though they are still considerable in number (about one-third of the student population), yet always maintain a low profile in the University, avoiding political polarizations and alignments. Tamil students do not in general take an active part in student union activities as business there is almost all the time conducted in Sinhala. Unlike their counterparts at the University of Jaffna, Peradeniya Tamil students are rather indifferent, as a group, to political developments in the NORTH and EAST, and generally remain aloof from politics.

Meanwhile, Colombo based newspapers continued to give a distorted picture of the incidents at the University of Peradeniya. A classic example is the report on page 1 of the 'ISLAND' of Friday 13 May, 1983, which completely omits mention of any attack on Tamil students, or even a "clash" as other newspapers have called it. The "ISLAND" report mentions (1) That a student was handed over to the Police for allegedly possessing subversive literature; (2) that "after this incident 'first-year Tamil students' have left the campus; and (3) that the Vice-Chancellor has promised them full protection and has asked them to return. It does not take much imagination to realize how such a distorted report will colour the opinion of the average Sinhala readers.

The ominous question in the hearts of the Tamil students of Peradeniya University today is: "How can we hope to continue our studies in safety, if at all, at our University?"

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Army may not catch 'Tigers' but they certainly catch goats!

Sri Lanka's Army may not be adept at catching Tigers but they certainly are efficient at catching goats, according to Gurnagar residents.

While their colleagues were rampaging through the Grand Bazaar area on Wednesday night, some Gurnagar Army Camp personnel were busy seizing goats found straying near the Gurnagar Water Tank.

The goat-seizers were the escorts accompanying the Army bowlers that call daily at the

Water Tank. According to reports, they had first tried to be "funny" with some young girls who fled into their houses. Baked in their attempts to play the giddy goat, the army men then turned their attention to the goats lying on the road or straying about in the area. They were unceremoniously dumped into the trucks, bleating. Next morning (Thursday, 19 May), the people of the area found about 25 of their goats missing. They now make it a point to tether the goats in their compounds at nights.

'Big Tiger' at Sri Jayawardenapura

The newly-elected UNP Chairman of the Sri Jayawardenapura-Kotte Urban Council is Mr. C. Perum-

puli. The name PERUM-PULI means in Tamil BIG TIGER!

Did the SUN jump the gun?

Giving an account of what happened in Jaffna on Wednesday, the Gunasena Colombo daily, the SUN carried this paragraph for the benefit of its Colombo readers in the City edition of Thursday May 19, in a story written by its Police-Army-Crime reporter Ranil Weerasinghe:

"As this edition went to press, several buildings in the northern capital including houses, a multi-purpose co-op society, a petrol filling station and the new market-rebuilt after it was destroyed during the police-public clash in 1977 WERE ON FIRE...."

Now what is the truth? The "northern capital" is open to anyone's inspection. The new market was NOT set on fire, nor any multi-purpose co-op society or petrol filling station. How did the SUN come to report something that did not happen? Not that any one in Jaffna expects the SUN to publish the truth of whatever happens in the "northern capital", but that is not what is curious about this report. The fact was that there were some discernible attempts made to attack or set fire to the new market, the Veerasingham Hall which houses the office of the Jaffna M.P.C.S and a petrol filling station, but due to some reason unknown to the Jaffna public this plan was not carried out. And here was the SUN reporting that they were already on fire at the time it went to press! How come? Did the SUN have advance information of the arsonists' plans? If so, why did the paper not inform the police or the government authorities? Worth pondering over by anyone interested in journalistic ethics or public security, or both!

Printed at St. Joseph's Catholic Press, 360, Main Street, Jaffna, for the publishers New Era Publications Ltd., 118, 4th Cross Street, Jaffna on May 21st, 1983. Registered as a newspaper at the General Post Office, Sri Lanka under QJ/101

North rejects TULF call to vote : August the decisive month?

It was a near-total poll boycott in the North on Wednesday (18 May). An event unprecedented in the political life of Sri Lanka. Responding to militant youths' call to keep away from the local bodies' polls, 99 per cent of the registered voters in Pt. Pedro, 98 per cent in Valvettiturai, 86 per cent in Jaffna and 85 per cent in Chavakachcheri did not vote on Wednesday.

Overall, only about 8 per cent of the voters in the North cast their votes. This contrasts sharply with the over 80 per cent voter turnout in the North at the 1981 DDC elections—a figure higher than the national average—and the 75 per cent turnout at the 1979 local elections.

"4 guns trying to dictate"

The militants' boycott victory has triggered off speculation about the political future of the TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT which staked its entire political prestige on this election.

Instead of side-stepping the militants' boycott challenge, the TULF—particularly the high command—chose to meet it head-on. Appeals to the voters to "use their votes wisely" and return the TULF to power were laced with sneering references to four guns trying to dictate to the people.

The Northern voter's considered verdict has not only badly dented the TULF's political image. A big question mark now hangs over its future. What will the TULF MPs do in August 1983, when their present parliamentary term expires? Will the TULF high command call for fresh parliamentary elections or will it opt for the safer path of re-nomination to fill the vacancies created by its MPs' resignations?

Either way, the TULF is likely to run into trouble. Fresh elections would mean,

say political observers, an even more intensive boycott campaign. The success of the militants' trial run on Wednesday also seems to rule out the tactics of re-nomination. Accord-

The Tamil United Liberation Front as expected has retained its hold over the local bodies in the North and East.

Here's the break-down of Wednesday's voting: Pt. Pedro UC: Registered voters—10,928; votes polled—115 (TULF 82, UNP 27, Independents 5, NSSP 1. Valvettiturai UC: Registered voters—8,972, votes polled—184 (TULF 173, TC 7, UNP 4). Chavakachcheri UC: Registered voters 12,059; votes polled—1,861

ing to political observers, militant youths are now likely to press the TULF to abandon its parliamentary road altogether if it is really serious about Tamil Eelam.

(TULF 1718, TC 105, UNP 38). Jaffna MC: Registered voters—66,291; votes polled—9,696 (TULF 8,595, UNP 830, TC 272). Vavuniya UC: Registered voters—9,265; votes polled—7,079 (TULF 5,454, UNP 1,625). Trincomalee UC: Registered voters—24,795; votes polled—15,723 (TULF 10,940, UNP 2,542, SLFP 2,135, TC 106). Batticaloa MC: Registered voters—22,894; votes polled—17,520 (TULF 10,993, UNP 6,229, Ind. 298).

SLFP adds 3 more seats

At the parliamentary by-elections, also held on Wednesday, the ruling UNP won 14 seats, the SLFP 3 seats and the MEP one seat. The keenest contest was at Mahara where the SLFP candidate Vijaya Kumaranatunge (the film star son-in-law of ex-Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike) lost by 45

votes. The NSSP leader Vasudeva Nanayakkara lost narrowly at Eheliyagoda by 754 votes. Among the new SLFP MPs is former LSSP Transport Minister Anil Moonesinghe. The MEP leader Dinesh Gunawardene who has won the Maharagama seat is the son of the late Philip Gunawardene.

Tamil Conference Seminar at Mullaitivu

A 3-day Tamil Research Conference Seminar will be held in the Mullaitivu District from 27th to 29th May. The Conference cum Arts Festival, organised by the

Sri Lanka National Unit of the International Association of Tamil Research is the second regional Conference of its kind.

Policemen attack passengers

Colombo-bound Tamil passengers, including females, on the Yarl Devi train from Kankasanturai on Thursday May 19 morning were harassed and assaulted allegedly by Police personnel returning from election duty in Jaffna. Practi-

cally all passengers got off the train at various stations between Chavakachcheri and Vavuniya at great personal inconvenience and returned to their homes. The train had thereafter proceeded virtually empty except for the rowdy policemen.