

The Sansoni Commission Evidence

The Story of the Sri Lanka Race Riots 1977

No 17.

Saturday December 9, 1978

Re. 1:

'SHUT UP

mister. Don't try to teach us Police work'

Mr. N... calls.

KANAGASABAI SIVASUBRAMANIAM, affirmed, 39 years, Signal & Telecommunication Inspector, Railways, formerly stationed at Anuradhapura. Now at Madawatchchiya.

'I was one of the Tamil railway officers who was in the rest room above the railway station on the 17th night. The room was guarded. There were two incidents that night. The first incident was at 8 p.m. Some persons came into the rest room and assaulted some of the persons who were inside and looted some of the things, wristlets, etc.

The constable on guard

'Then the police and the army personnel came and told us that this sort of thing will not occur again. At that time the curfew was on. Then the second incident took place at about 11.30 p.m. Prior to that, a constable was there with a gun. He was placed there to guard us. He started to threaten my wife and children saying that Sinhalese thugs are going to burn the place once the curfew is lifted, and the police will not be able to help us. I can

identify him but I could not see his number. He was wearing his numerals, but only the last number (5) was visible and he was deliberately hiding the number with his revolver.

'My children got scared and they were troubling me to take them away, but I had no alternative. This constable spoke to me between the first and second incidents. He spoke in Sinhalese. My children understand Sinhalese and that is why they got scared.

'Then at 11.30 p.m. they entered and smashed the doors. We put off the room lights so that outsiders will not know where we are. At that time the corridor lights went off. At that time I was lying. The smashed glasses fell over me. I got up.

17 children in the room

'At that time there were 17 children inside my room and four ladies and four men. They all carried the children and ran to the toilet. I also ran there. We closed the toilet door and watched through the key hole. We heard the shouts from other rooms saying 'we are assaulted'. They were cries in pain. Then about three people ente-

red our room and the police and the army also came at about the same time. I heard the sound of boots. I was holding the door with one hand and watching through the key hole. In front of the station there is a mercury lamp and that light is reflected into our room. I was able to see what was happening inside the room.

Mr. Liyanage was there

Q: Then what happened?
A: As the police came we came out.

Q: The police came when you were inside the room?

A: Yes.

Q: They were on guard?

A: Yes.

Q: How many entrances were there? A: Only one.

Q: They could have caught those people? A: Yes.

Q: Those people were also inside the room? A: Yes.

Q: They were not caught?

A: Yes.

"On both incidents if the security personnel were inte-

A: No. I dare not put a question like that.

Q: Did he say anything?

A: He said, This is nothing when compared to what has happened in Jaffna. This is what Mr. Amirthalingam wanted, and you are having it. Go and complain to Col. Amirthalingam"

Q: That was the reply?

A: He just laughed and went off.

Mr. Liyanage said that half the police constables had been murdered in Jaffna and he had sent his personnel to Jaffna. He said "We don't have sufficient personnel to guard". He also said, "Sinhalese girls are nailed to the walls in Jaffna"

Q: Did he say anything else?

A: The injured people were lying there. No action was taken to despatch them to the hospital by the police.

Q: When S. P. Mr. Liyanage said this, you were present?

A: Yes. The other railway officers were present.

Q: There were other police officers present?

A: Yes.

'I dared not ask him'

Mr. Liyanage the S. P. is known to me. He was there with two or three police personnel. I went to explain to him the difficulty we were having and to have ourselves shifted to the Kachcheri. As I went to him and wanted to speak to him he said "Shut up Mister. Don't try to teach us police work"

To Commissioner:

Q: Did you not ask him, "What are you doing there"?

'Mr. Sathasivam was shouting'

Q: None of them attempted to send the injured to hospital?

A: Mr. Sathasivam was shouting asking the Army officers to despatch him to hospital.

Q: How was the injured taken to hospital?

A: An Army officer came there with some others. I spoke to them and told them that we were attacked twice in the retiring room and it was not safe for us to stay there and asked them to take us to a safer place. The Army officer said he would despatch the injured to the hospital and asked us to wait for some time.

"He later took us to a safer place. The campus students came in buses in a convoy. Some ladies and we were taken in those buses to the Kachcheri.

Q: The injured persons were taken to the hospital in an army vehicle?

A: Yes. The Tamil railway officers helped to carry the injured. The police did not help.

'The police did not help'

Q: They were taken to the hospital and later to the Kachcheri? A: Yes.

I went direct to the Kachcheri. I was put into a bus carrying girls, for security. The students asked me whether we wanted a Tamil Nadu. We were taken in the same bus as the students. They said, "After doing all this do you want a Tamil Nadu. That was the impression I got. I was taken to the Kachcheri.

Q: You were living in a house at Anuradhapura?

A: Yes. In the railway quarters. I had my personal belongings there.

(continued on page 3)

"Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it"

- Santayana - American philosopher 1863-1952

TERROR IN ANURADHAPURA

'A. S. P. CHANDRA MENDIS HELPED MANY PEOPLE IN DISTRESS'

Continued from last issue)

Then I went and spoke to one of the police officers to get his help to go to Mr. Silva's residence and he obliged. Owing to the prevailing situation, I was able to take only one suitcase. I left the house with my wife and sister-in-law to go to Mr. Silva's house. My father-in-law did not come with us. He was in the house.

'A. S. P. Chandra Mendis helped us

After that, Mr. Silva and his son came to my house to take my father-in-law. We stayed on the 17th night at

Mr. Silva's house. While I stayed in my friend's house, I was able to see things happening on the road. I did not see any incidents.

Then in the night at about 11.30 p.m. the A. S. P. Mr. Chandra Mendis came to Mr. Silva's house and asked me whether my family was safe. With that, he went away. On the following morning, on the 18th till noon, we were in the house. Then we left Mr. Silva's house. Thereafter, we went to the refugee camp, at the Kachcheri. From the Kachcheri, I contacted Mr. Mendis, A. S. P. and sought his assistance to go home and get certain valuables.

He with another police sergeant came with me to my house and we found that the

house was completely looted. They had gained access through the back door and removed all my things. We saw the broken almirah and some pieces of furniture. Then we returned to the camp and stayed there. After dropping me in the camp, Mr. Mendis, A. S. P. helped many people who were in distress.

Thereafter we left the camp at about 8.30 p.m. in a convoy of buses to Jaffna.

Commissioner: Q: Who is Mr. Mendis?

A: He is an Asst. Superintendent of Police.

Q: You say, he was very helpful?

A: Helpful to everyone, Sir.

I obtained a transfer to Pandatheripu on a temporary basis on 11.11.77. I am transferred to the Chest hospital K. K. S. permanently, but I am not released from my present station. After I was transferred to Pandatheripu, I went to Anuradhapura and collected my salary. Rs. 350. was paid to me by the Anuradhapura Social Service Department. Apart from this I was not paid any compensation. I have suffered damage to the extent of Rs. 19,000/- All my things were looted.

Questioned by Mr. R. Balasubramaniam.

My entire furniture, clothing and cookery utensils had been looted. I have estimated my entire loss at Rs. 19,000/- I saw the priest of the Kathi-

rasan temple being attacked. To my knowledge the temple was not attacked.

Q: When you applied for a transfer did you get that easily?

A: No, we, the displaced officers formed a union under the presidency of Dr. Balasingam. Dr. Balasingam along with the Leader of the Opposition interviewed the Hon'ble Minister of Health and thereafter only I was transferred to Jaffna. I first asked for Jaffna and they gave me Matara. Then the union intervened and I was transferred to Pandatherippu.

Q: People who could not get the assistance of higher-ups have now been forced to go to Anuradhapura and work there? A: Well, some have gone back.

MANIAR SINNIAM — SITHAMPARAPIL AI:
Affirmed. 63 years, Pensioner, residing in Colombo; 161, Malay Street, Colombo.

Q: You are a retired Government Servant on pension?
A: Yes.

Q: On the 16th you travelled to Tellipallai from Colombo in the night mail?
A: Yes.

Q: You were attacked in the train at Anuradhapura?
A: Yes.

Q: What happened to you?
A: About six or seven people got into the compartment and they searched me and one person pulled out my shirt. There was about Rs. 250/- in the pocket and my wrist watch was also in the pocket. When the people told me that people were being searched I took my wrist watch and put that in the pocket. I had a suit case and a leather case where I kept my fountain pen and books. Both the suit case and the leather case were taken away.

'She treated me well'

Q: Then you were assaulted with the belt?

A: Yes. I was injured on my forehead. It was bleeding. I lost my slippers also. Then I was thrown out of the train. I was thrown away from the train for about 50 yards. The assaulting took place outside the station. I walked to the station and hid myself in the lavatory till about 4-30 p.m. Till 4-30 there was shouting in the jungle. After that I surrendered to the soldiers who came there.

"I was taken to the hospital. I was treated by a Tamil Doctor and a Sinhalese Nurse. She treated me well. Thereafter I walked along the Rest House road. A Sinhalese gentleman by the

63 - YR. OLD PENSIONER'S EXPERIENCES IN A'PURA

name of Noel Ilangatilake saw my injury and advised me not to proceed and he took me to his house.

Mr. Noel Ilangatilake

"I wanted to go without knowing what actually happened in the town. I went to his house. Even my shirts were washed by Mr. Ilangatilake. I was given coffee and meals by him.

Q: You came out with Mr. Ilangatilake to get your ticket revalidated because you wanted to travel to Colombo?

A: Yes. I went to the railway station.

Q: Mr. Ilangatilake and you saw shops being looted?

A: The Chandra Stores was looted. Mr. Ilangatilake told me that it was a Tamil shop. Policemen were there talking to women. They were watching when the shops were being looted. They had guns with them but still they were watching. Buses were stopped by the thugs and the Tamils were pulled out of the buses and assaulted. While I was going I was pointed out as a Tamil. Mr. Ilangatilake saved me and he took me to the railway station. There my ticket was revalidated.

'Pappa, it is dangerous'

Q: Was everything quiet at the station?

A: There was nobody there except the Station Master. It was about 10-30 a.m., on the 17th morning.

Q: You got your ticket revalidated in the morning at about 9 a.m., on the 17th?

A: Yes. Then I came back to Mr. Ilangatilake's house. I was out to have my lunch then when Mr. Ilangatilake's son came there and said, "Pappa, it is dangerous to keep this gentleman here. They are searching all U.C. cottages for Tamils".

"Then I was taken to the Police Station by Mr. Ilangatilake. Mr. Ilangatilake is a retired man from the Kachcheri at Anuradhapura. He

knows all Police Officers. I think the Inspector in charge there refused to have me at the Police Station.

"Then Mr. Ilangatilake took me to the bus. At that time there was a bus halted in front of the Police Station. I got into that bus and came to Colombo. I had Rs. 50/- hidden in a false pocket and that was safe there.

A refugee in Colombo

Q: After you went to Colombo you stayed at Shoe Road?

A: Yes. They had a shop at Wolfendhal Street. That shop was burnt. Then as a result of that we went to St. Peter's College Refugee Camp.

Q: A second time you became a refugee? A: Yes.

Q: How much do you claim as compensation?

A: About Rs. 1500/- I applied to the G. A., for assistance but nothing has been heard. They never acknowledged my application and they never replied.

Mr. Kodeeswaran: I am calling Kandappu Shanmugam.

AT THUNUKKAI: 'POLICEMAN KICKED ME WITH HIS BOOTS'

SITTAMPALAM RAGU-NATHAN, affirmed, 22 years, Branch Manager, M. P. C. S. Mallawi.

Examined by Mr. G. P. S. de Silva.

"On the 29th of August, 1977 I was, at about 8.30 a.m. on my way to the M. P. C. S., at Thunukai on my cycle. I was proceeding to the MPCs to make purchases for my branch depot. When I was riding my bicycle, some police officers came there. I heard a crowd of people running along the road shouting that the police were coming. Then I turned back and looked and saw some constables with rifles behind me. There were about four or five. A constable came towards me and gave me a

dig with the butt end of the gun on my stomach.

(Commissioner:

Q: Did they come in a van or a jeep?

A: In a land rover.

Q: Do you remember the number of that land rover?

A: No.)

"Then I fell down. Then another constable kicked me with his boots. There was a canteen close by. I immediately ran to that canteen and took shelter there. Then they trampled the bicycle. The wheels of the bicycle were dented. They damaged my bicycle. I made a complaint to the A. G. A. Thunukai. I made a complaint to the MPCs also on the very day. I have a copy of that complaint at home. I will send that copy to this Commission.

(Commissioner:

Q: Did you see the number of the policeman?

A: They had no numbers.

Q: Why did you not take down the number of the Land Rover?

A: The Land Rover was parked about 50 yards away from the spot where I was assaulted, Sir.)

No questions by Counsel.

Mr. R. Balasubramaniam: If the A. G. A. Mr. Karthigesu is summoned, he will be of great assistance to Your Honour.

Commissioner: We will see what the complaint is before we take action.

'S. P. WALTER LIYANAGE SAID:

'A. S. P. CHANDRA MENDIS TOLD US :

(Continued from page 1)

"My family was in the retiring room. My quarters were looted. I went late and found nothing left in my quarters. About Rs. 43,000/- worth of goods were looted. All my life savings, jewellery clothes etc. had been looted. When I originally went to the retiring room I took some jewellery valued at about Rs. 12,000/- and they too had been looted. I could not identify any one of the looters. Rs. 43,000/- includes everything I lost. The Social Services Department paid me

Rs. 300/-. The Govt. promised three months salary loan. Though I applied for it the Govt. did not pay it. The Department did not sanction it.

"On 14-2-77 the transport Minister visited our area and I gave him a memorandum. I asked for a transfer to Jaffna. If I got that transfer I would have got the railway bungalow at Jaffna. In August I applied for the transfer. I was denied as I had been in Jaffna earlier. In certain other departments that condition of having

worked earlier at a particular station was overlooked and transfers were given. I was denied a transfer to Jaffna.

"I approached the Minister through the M. P. Jaffna. The Railway has not overlooked the fact I was in Jaffna earlier. The Minister promised the M. P. that I would get Jaffna. I was unable to trace the letters in the Ministry. As such I did not get a transfer to Jaffna.

Q: If the police had done their duty properly these would not have happened?

'Half the Police constables have been murdered in Jaffna'

'Sinhalese girls are nailed to the walls in Jaffna'

'Nothing serious has happened in Jaffna... Had I remained in A'pura, I would have checked all these on the 17th morning itself'

A: Yes.

Q: The looted goods could have been recovered? A: Yes.

"I went to the police station to identify my goods from the looted goods, but there was nothing of my goods. I went to the Anuradhapura police station. The A. S. P. Mr. Chandra Mendis was at the Kachcheri camp on the 18th morning. He was apologetic. He told us that nothing serious had happened in

Jaffna. He felt sorry for what had happened. He said that if he had been there he would have checked all these on the 17th morning itself. The S.P. and the A. S. P. (1) were both in Jaffna. Mr. Chandra Mendis and the S. P. had been ordered to come to Jaffna. Mr. Mendis had also come to Anuradhapura. He said that if he was there on the 17th morning he could have stopped all these.

Fled from A'pura, but....

'Even at Omanthai I felt unsafe, for fear of Police attacks'

MOORTHILINGAM SIVA - LINGAM: Affirmed: 40years Programming Officer, District Labour Office, Jaffna.

Q: In August 1977 where were you?

A: I was attached to the Anuradhapura District Labour Office.

Q: You were residing there with your wife and 3 children?

A: Yes.

Q: Your wife's family comes from Anuradhapura?

A: Their family had been there for about 75 years.

Q: Her father was a businessman?

A: Yes.

Q: His business was attacked in 1958?

A: Yes.

"I heard of disturbances on the morning of the 17th in August 1977. Before that I went to the Bank Town area. While I was in the Bank Town area I went to Jekrishnan & Co. I was told a mob was creating disturbances. I went home and came to office and told my Assistant Commissioner of Labour that the situation in

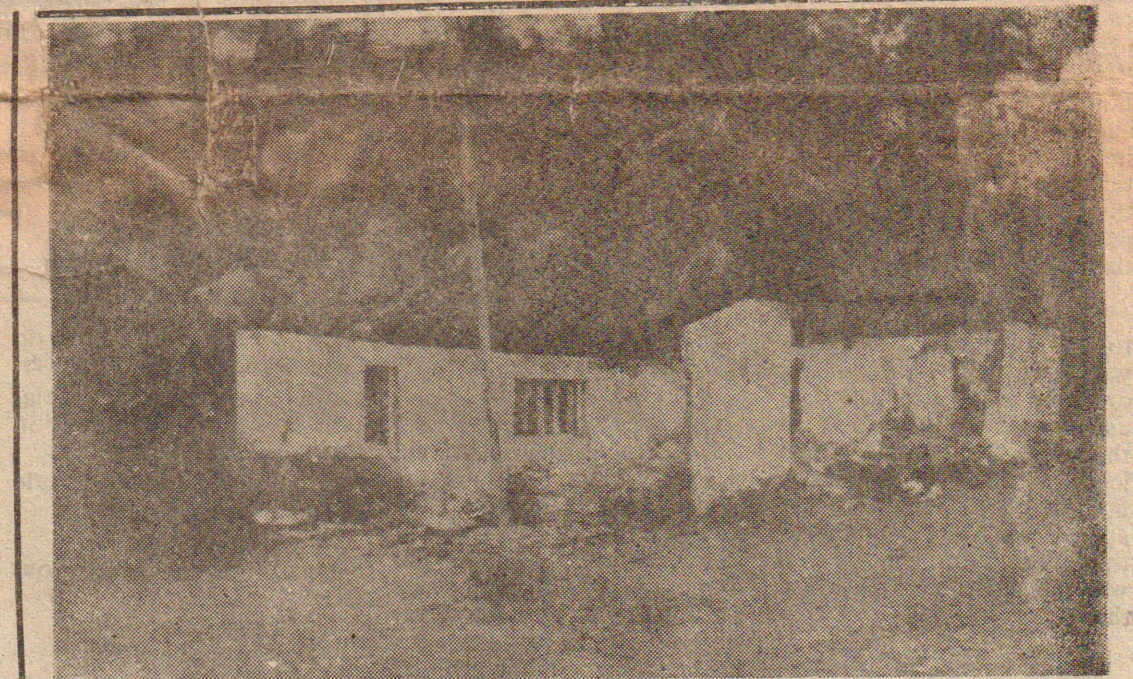
town was unsafe for Tamils. I told him that thugs were getting ready to attack the shops in town.

"A little later my Asst. Commissioner of Labour got information over the telephone stating that Jekrishnan & Co. was being attacked. I was there a while earlier. I proceeded home. My wife and children were there. We waited inside the house having closed all the doors and windows. We were inside.

"About noon I went to Vivekananda Society close to my house - about 300 yards away. I saw a crowd of about 100 young boys armed with clubs. They were coming from Kurunegala junction side towards Kathiresan temple. I was frightened. I went back home because my wife and children were there.

Mr. Niles: Q: Then what happened?

A: Then a little later I heard three gunshots. On inquiries I found that those shots were fired by the Police in the air to disperse the crowd who were trying to attack the Kathiresan Temple. Those young boys scattered.



What was left of the Ukkuwela Temple priest's residence after August '77

"Then my neighbour Bandusena Perera thought that the shops in the town were being attacked. He told me that it was unsafe to stay in the house and asked me to go and stay in his house. That night my family and I stayed with Mr. Bandusena Perera in his house.

"On the following day I told him that it was unsafe to stay in his house and his house also might be attacked as I was staying there. I asked him to get help from the Police or Army. At about 10 o'clock on the 18th morning the Army was brought and I went with my wife and three children to the Police Station.

Q: Did you manage to take anything with you?

A: I was asked to take whatever I could possibly take in one suit-case and I took a suit case. We went

to the Police Station and then to the refugee camp at the Kachcheri.

Q: You have been transferred to Jaffna now?

Q: I have been given a temporary transfer to Jaffna for one year.

'Unsafe even there'

Q: After that what will happen?

A: From the Kachcheri we were taken in a convoy and I got down at Vavuniya and went to Omanthai Rampaikkulam. There also I found the situation unsafe. I saw the proprietors of shops at Vavuniya transporting their goods in tractors. I was told not to stay in the house at Rampaikkulam but to stay in the jungle in the night. My family and I spent the night in the jungle like other people. On the 21st I found

my way to Puliyankulam and then to Point Pedro. My loss is about Rs. 8400/-. My belongings were looted and they were burnt.

Mr. Balasubramaniam:

Q: You referred to Kathiresan Temple in your evidence?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you see the priest of that temple?

A: I saw the priest in the Kachcheri refugee camp. He was assaulted and he was injured. I heard that the statue of the deity was stolen and the temple was damaged.

Q: When you were in Rampaikkulam why were you in the jungle?

A: The shops in Vavuniya were attacked. We got the information that even the neighbouring villages were not safe.

Q: Attacked by whom?

A: By the police.

Q: In fear of the Police you were staying in the jungle?

A: Yes.

KANDIAH APPAR :
Affirmed: 54 years: Clerk :
Chavakachcheri, now work-
ing in the Office of the S.
H. S. Jaffna.

(To Commissioner :
Q: Where were you work-
ing?

A: At the Office of the
Supdt. of Health Services,
A'pura.)

To Mr. Niles :

Q: You can give evidence
in English? A: Yes.

Q: You were attached as
a Clerk to the S.M.S. Office,
Anuradhapura? A: Yes.

Q: On 17.8.77 that was
your job? A: Yes.

Q: What happened in the
morning of that day?

A: I went for work.

Q: Then what happened?

A: I was in the office. I
heard of trouble in the town.

Mr. Nanayakkara's advice

Q: Then? A: We got down
our lunch. We did not go
out for lunch. We stayed in
the office. All the Tamils
stayed in the office. Our Chief
Clerk Mr. Nanayakkara said
that we should not go out
saying that he would take us
to the Chest Clinic for the
night. At about 4 he told us,
"It is better to go to the
hospital and stay there". Mr.
Nanayakkara said he had been
instructed by the S.H.S. to
take us to the hospital. At
that time the Medical Su-
perrintendent was acting for
the S.H.S. Anuradhapura.

"We were taken in a jeep
to the hospital. Mr. Nana-
yakkara came with us. He
dropped us at the gate and
asked us to go and stay in
the office room. He then
left. We had no alternative
but to go to the Office up-
stairs. We were there with
the other Tamil Officers who
were already there. We joined
them.

"Then I went to answer a
call of nature by 7-30 p.m.
I saw from the window one
Albert a clerk in the Anura-
dhapura Hospital and Ukku
Banda the cook of the hos-
pital and other minor em-
ployees of the hospital whom
I knew but did not know
their names, in front of the
hospital within the hospital
premises close to the gate,
having a conference. They
were talking to each other.

'Jump out of the windows'

"I was frightened and came
and told my friends and
said, "Even this place is not
safe". We locked the doors.
We placed chairs against the
doors. Immediately we saw
15 to 20 people rushing into
the room. They began to
assault. Immediately they
came in the Tamil officers
said, "Jump out of the win-
dows". They said that in
Tamil. Then some of us jum-
ped out of the window. I
did not jump.

TEROR IN ANURADHAPURA

"I was hiding behind a
cupboard - a cabinet. One
Velayutham the senior Public
Health Inspector was there,
Mr. Sivasambu the person
who died, Mr. Rajaratnam,
Mr. Sivasubramaniam and
others were also there. The
others jumped through the
window."

'Don't hit, don't hit, he cried'

"The crowd came and as-
saulted Mr. Sivasambu. Mr.
Sivasambu cried out, "Don't
hit, don't hit". He was bleed-
ing. They assaulted Mr. Vela-
yutham. I saw that. They as-
saulted with clubs. They saw
me behind the cabinet. They
pulled me out and assaulted
me with clubs. I held my
right hand. I received blows
on my right arm. There-
after I fainted. Till about 10
minutes I did not know what
happened.

"Later Mr. Velayutham pull-
ed me and asked me to come
to the hospital for dressing.
I followed Mr. Velayutham.

Mr. Niles: Q: Then what
happened?

'HOSPITAL COOK WHO GAVE US FOOD LATER JOINED IN ATTACK'

A: I followed Velayutham
and we went to the ward.

Q: Were you able to walk?

A: Velayutham helped me
to walk. When I went there-
military people were there. They
took us to the M. S.'s bun-
galow. The M. S., directed me
to go to the hospital and
get the wound dressed. Then
we were taken to the hos-
pital by the military people.
They treated us there. Then
the following morning we
were taken to the Kachcheri
by the army personnel. From
the Kachcheri we were taken
as refugees to Jaffna.

'They said: no bed, no mat'

Q: While you were in the
hospital that night were you
given any bed? A: No.
I asked for a bed. They
said that no bed was avail-
able. I asked for a mat.
They said that there was no
mat. Then the Station Mas-
ter from Cheddikulam said,
"This is our position." We
were in the verandah. Some
labourers said that there was
no medicine and that there
were no doctors.

Q: Did you see Sivasambu?
A: He was there.

Q: The next morning you
went to the Kachcheri and
found your way to Jaffna?

A: Yes. I am at present
attached to the S. H. S.
Office, Jaffna.

Q: What are the letters
that you have sent?

A: I was living at Wil-
liam's Flat. All my belong-
ings were looted. When they
hit me they took my purse
and rings. Then I came home
and applied for assistance
from the Social Services De-
partment. I have not been paid
anything whereas some have
been paid. I asked for my
salary from the S.H.S. They
have not paid me for Octo-
ber to December.

'Medical Board at A'pura'

"I have told the S. H. S.
that I am on medical leave.
They have asked me to come
for a Medical Board at Anu-
radhapura. I told them that
I am not in a position to
go to Anuradhapura. They
have written to me two letters.

Q: What is the value of
the damage that you have
sustained?

A: Only Rs. 5000/-. My
hand is fractured and I am
not in a position to work.

Q: You are hoping to do
farming now? A: Yes.

Mr. Bartlett: Q: Mr. Bala-
ratnam was also a clerk in
this hospital? A: Yes.

Q: There were 17 people
occupying this room?

A: Yes.

Q: Were you given your
food? A: Yes.

Q: By whom?
A: Hospital cooks.

Q: Who made those ar-
rangements? A: Some of
the hospital clerks made ar-
rangements for our food?

Q: It was about this time
that you were having your
dinner that the attack on you
was launched by the same
employees? A: Yes.

'One out of the 17 died'

Q: In fact one of the
persons who was involved in
this attack was the very cook
who gave you food?

A: Yes.

Q: It would appear that
you were given food and
kept here in order to attack
you? A: Yes.

Q: They did not want you
to proceed to the Kachcheri?
A: Yes.

Q: After that one out of
the 17 died? A: Yes.

Mr. Balasubramaniam:

Q: When did you get your
transfer to Jaffna?

A: I got my transfer to
Jaffna from 1st January?

Q: From August where
were you? A: I was in
Jaffna not working.

Q: When did you apply
for your transfer?

A: In September.

Q: What was the delay?

A: They did not give me a
transfer. I contacted Dr.
Balendra and they gave me a
transfer to Jaffna.

Q: After coming to Jaffna
did you apply to the Social
Services Department for
relief?

A: I applied but I was not
paid anything.

Q: You also referred to
the Medical Board being held
at Anuradhapura?

A: I was also asked to go
for a Medical Board to be
held at the Anuradhapura
Hospital. The letter requires
me to go to Anuradhapura
Hospital on 9.3.78. I am
unable to go there. I want
the Medical Board to be held
here in Jaffna. I was treated
here.

Commissioner's directive

Commissioner: I suppose
you asked the Medical Board
to be held here? A: Yes.

Mr. Bartlett: They want
these employees to go to Anu-
radhapura to undergo a simi-
lar experience. Probably they
want to intimidate and harass
them. Your Honour will be
pleased to make an order
similar to the earlier one stat-
ing that the Medical Board
be held here.

Commissioner: Why cannot
the lawyer write? Why cannot
he state that his client will
not be able to stand the ex-
perience he had earlier and
request that the Medical
Board be held in Jaffna.
Write something like that and
let us see what happens.

Mr. Bartlett: Your Honour
will be pleased to make the
order. It is the Board that
has to make the order.

Commissioner: What hap-
pened last time?

Secretary: We wrote a letter

Commissioner: Write the
same letter in respect of this
witness also.

On Aug. 16

17 & 18, 1977

My Sinhalese friends were holidaying in Jaffna

Sinnthamby Maheswaran,
affirmed, 47 years. Clerk.
Working in the District
Director's Office, Jaffna.

"In August, 1977 I was
attached to the T.C.O. Anu-
radhapura. On 16.8.1977 I
had to come to Jaffna. I left
Anuradhapura by 11.30 a.m.
to come to Jaffna to attend
my niece's wedding along with
my friend, who is a Techni-
cal Officer by the name of
Wijesekera, his wife and two
children, and our labourer
called Velu.

Mr. Wijesekera's friend also
came with us. We all came
in Mr. Wijesekera's car. We
reached Vavuniya at 2.20 p.m.
Then we came to Murukandi
at 4.30 p.m.

'Inspector was known to me'

"On our way between Va-
vuniya and Murukandi, I saw
a large number of army ve-
hicles and armoured cars.
Then we went to the temple.
Then I saw a bus going
towards Jaffna. That bus
stopped at Murukandi. That
bus came from Anuradhapura.
I saw policemen inside the
bus.

"The Inspector who was
travelling in that bus was
known to me. He was attach-
ed to the Anuradhapura po-
lice. He told me that there
is trouble in Jaffna and that
he and his other policeman
are proceeding to Jaffna. He
also told me that one police-
man was shot dead and another
was wounded in the Jaffna
hospital. He also told me not
to take Mr. Wijesekera to
Jaffna because there was
trouble."

"So, my friends got excit-
ed after hearing this story.
I told my friends not to get
worried because I am there.
I told them "if anything hap-
pens to you in Jaffna, that
must happen over my dead
body".

"In the meantime, I saw
a bus going from Jaffna to
Anuradhapura. Inside the bus
I saw a number of Govern-
ment servants including ladies.
They are Sinhalese people.

(Continued next page)

(Continued from Page 4)

What the bus Conductor said

"I spoke to them and they told me that there is trouble in Jaffna. They did not tell me that anyone of them was assaulted. They did not tell me that their houses were looted. The bus conductor showed me his ticket book and said that his ticket book had been torn by the Tamils at the Jaffna bus stand. He was a Sinhalese conductor.

"I also saw two or three lorry loads of furniture being transported from Jaffna to Vavuniya. On the 17th I attended my niece's wedding. It was held in the Divine Life Society Hall, Nallur. My Sinhalese friends attended that wedding.

"On the 17th my friends and I went to the various places. Nothing happened to them. No one stopped me and asked 'why are Sinhalese people going on the road'. On the 18th morning I went to Naina Thivu. We went both to the Hindu and the Buddhist temple. I inquired from the Navy people who were stationed there and they said there was no trouble.

Nagadipa Priest

"I also spoke to the Buddhist Priest of the Buddhist temple and he also said there was no trouble. On the 19th morning, we went to Tellipallai and there I met Mr. Gananathan. He was working in Anuradhapura. He told me that his quarters had been looted. When I inquired about my quarters, he said he was not aware. He asked me to contact the Chief Clerk, Mr. Ponnampalam.

"Immediately I came to Jaffna town I went to my Chief Clerk and asked him about our house. He said it had been looted at 5 p. m. on the 17th. Immediately I arranged with Mr. Wijesekera to go to Anuradhapura I went in his car and arranged for some escort on the 19th.

"When we came, there was no petrol and we had to get a permit for petrol. I went to the Kachcheri Mr. Wijesekera and I met the Govt. Agent. We told him the story and wanted permit for petrol. He asked me, 'Why did you come to Jaffna?' He jumped at me. I told him we came the previous week.

'Thought I was Sinhalese'

Q: Why did he jump at you?

A: He thought I was a Sinhalese

Q: Finally did he give you the permit? A: Yes.

"I got the permit and obtained the petrol at 4 p. m. at which time I went with Mr. Wijesekera and family to Naga Vihara. It is from there the escort was arranged to go to Anuradhapura. We were inside the temple till 8.30



The G. A. Mr. Lal Wijepala

p. m. Mr. Wijesekera and others also continued to stay there.

"As there were no buses the convoy was to be on the following morning at 3.30 a. m. The following morning I came alone. Mr. Wijesekera and his family stayed the night there. There were biscuits freely available. I spoke to one of the Army officers and asked him how they got biscuits. He said the biscuits were a part of the looted items.

Buses went in convoy

Q: The following day, after some time they made arrangements to transport refugees?

A: By 7.30 a. m. the buses came and they went in convoy. Mr. Wijesekera went to Anuradhapura and wrote to me. He was asked to make an entry at the police station. I went with the co-ordinating officer and he had arranged an escort for 13 to Anuradhapura and on that day we went to Anuradhapura. We went to the police station to identify our goods at the police station. Our goods were not there.

"Again I went on 30th September by bus to identify the goods. We returned the same day. I went to meet the S.P. but could not. On the 12th of October I went to meet the S.P. I stayed there for a week.

"On the 12th October I met Mr. Liyanage the S. P. He wanted me to furnish the names of the looters. I told Mr. Liyanage that the children of one Gunasekera a Technical Officer had looted our goods. I also told him that I saw one of his sons wearing my shirt. He asked me to furnish further names of the looters. I stayed there for one week.

Met the I. G. P. in Colombo

Q: Was Mr. Liyanage helpful to you? A: No.

"I reported the matter to the S. P. Jaffna, the co-ordinating officer Anuradhapura, D. I. G. Range 2, I. G. P. Colombo and others. I sent copies to the Hon'ble the Prime Minister, the Minister of Local Govt. etc. I have not recovered any of my looted

goods. The police have not taken action to recover them for me.

"I went three or four times to Colombo and met the I. G. P. Colombo and he referred the papers to the D. I. G. Range II. There was a conference and at that conference they decided to send an A.S.P. to look into my case. I informed S. P. Jaffna also of my loss. They have not taken any action to recover my looted goods.

"I was living with my family in that area for seven years. I have lost all my household

goods. I gave a list of the items I lost. I valued the lost goods at Rs. 58,868/-. That is the total of the goods I have lost. People were arranging to murder me one day. Some of our departmental employees had arranged that.

'Left a death threat'

"On my table they had written in English that they would kill me. That was written on the office table I had at home. It was not

written on the table in office. They had not removed the table in my home.

"They had damaged the furniture and left them in the house. Thereafter I applied for a transfer. In the meantime our Director of Highways gave me a transfer in December 1977 to Jaffna. From 21.9.77 I am working in Jaffna. I have not received any compensation for my loss. I applied to the Social Services Department for assistance but they did not pay me any compensation. I did not have any trouble regarding my salary.

RAJANGANE ENGINEER HID IN THE JUNGLE

KANDAPPU SHANMUGAM: Affirmed.

46 Years of age residing at Vaddukodai.

Q: In August, 1977 you were working at Rajangana in the Anuradhapura District as a Resident Engineer in the Irrigation Department? A: Yes.

Q: You were the local Head? A: Yes.

Q: Many Tamil Officers were working under you?

A: Yes, there were about eight Tamil Officers.

Q: There were some Sinhalese Officers also? A: Altogether about 30.

Q: You remember 17th August, 1977 A: Yes.

Q: In the morning on that day you had gone out for inspection? A: Yes.

The Assistant Engineer

Q: You returned after inspection to your office? A: Yes, I returned to the office at about 1.30 or 2 p. m. As usual I returned and went to my bungalow for lunch. Then Mr. Navaratnam, the Assistant Engineer, came to my bungalow and told me that he could not proceed to Anuradhapura. In the morning I had sent him to Anuradhapura in a jeep. He said that he stopped in Talawa because he could not proceed further as there was trouble at Anuradhapura.

Q: Then what happened? A: I finished my lunch quickly, went to the office and told the Head Clerk about the situation. He also informed me that assaults were going on.

Q: Then you told him to go in the jeep to Thambuttagama police and ask for an escort?

A: Yes. This was between 2 and 3 p. m.

Q: By that time was there tension at your place at Rajangana? A: Yes.

Q: That was why you asked the Head Clerk to bring Police guards? A: Yes, This place is about four miles from my office.

Q: You had the responsibility as the local head to look after the safety of the officers there?

Inspector Joseph sent 4 men

A: Yes, my Head Clerk Mr. Samarawickreme went to the police Station and met Inspector Joseph. Then Inspector Joseph dropped in the office and told me that there was trouble in Jaffna and there would be trouble in Anuradhapura.

Then I saw a crowd. I told this to Inspector Joseph and he said 'I just chased them away'. Then I asked him 'what shall I do'. He said 'you all get ready. I will go to the police station and send two jeeps. I had five jeeps and I released two jeeps to the police.

Then four constables came to my office before 3 p. m. They guarded the four entrances of the Rajangane camp. In this camp area, you find the quarters of the other officers including my quarters. I asked them to guard the area and inform me if there is trouble. Then I went to my office and later to my quarters. I told my servant to close all the doors and the windows.

Then the second jeep came with a Sub-Inspector and a P. C. They told me that they are taking all the Tamil officers because it was not safe for them to stay. There were two pregnant women also. They told me that

they were picking the other people and that they would come to us later. So, the S. I. and P. C. went to pick the other staff from their quarters.

When they approached my bungalow, one of the Technical Assistants, Mr. T. Balendran who came to see me was caught by the mob and I heard Mr. Balendran shouting. In the meantime, I saw the police jeep coming. Then I saw the crowd approaching my bungalow. I thought it is the appropriate time for me to leave the bungalow because I had faced similar situations earlier in 1958 and during the insurgency period.

Inspector Joseph rescued me

So, I and the servant boy ran into the jungle. That was at about 5 p. m. From inside the jungle, I could not see anything happening outside. I heard the sound of breaking windows and smashing up of my car. The whole night I was inside the jungle.

The following morning I came up to the edge of the jungle but not to the road. While I was inside the jungle, I saw a blaze. Later I came to know that they had set fire to my car.

In the morning when I came to the edge of the road I saw one of our jeeps coming. I thought that was one of our jeeps given to the police. Immediately I sent word to the circuit bungalow boy who was just close to me and I told him, if Mr. Joseph is in the jeep, ask him to rescue me. Mr. Joseph was coming in that jeep. He immediately rescued me.

My loss about Rs. 44,000.

Then I went to my quarters along with him. I saw my car fully burnt. I did not have the heart to go into the bungalow because that would make me more worried. It was a well reconditioned Austin 40 CL series car. The present market value is about Rs. 24,000/-

I also lost all my household articles including government property. All my valuable things had been looted. I have estimated the value of my household articles at Rs. 20,000/- In all, I have lost about Rs. 44,000/- I cannot place any value to some of my personal articles and books.

THUNUKKAI INCIDENTS:

M. P. C. S. MEN COMPLAIN OF POLICE LAWLESSNESS

VYTHILINGAM AMBALAVANER: Affirmed.

Mr. de Silva: How old are you? A: 39 years; I was Credit Manager employed in the Multi Purpose Co-operative Society at Thunukkai.

Q: How far is Thunukkai from Mannar?

A: Close upon 37 miles.

Q: How far is Thunukkai from Vavuniya?

A: 42 miles.

Q: In August 1977 you were the Credit Manager of the Multi Purpose Co-operative Society at Thunukkai?

A: Yes.

They entered the office

Q: On 29th August, 1977 you were at the M. P. C. S. Office? A: Yes.

Q: On that day about 10 or 15 Policemen came to your office in a Land Rover?

A: Yes.

Q: At about what time was that? A: About 8.30 in the morning.

Q: Were they armed with rifles? A: Yes, they were armed with rifles.

Q: Please tell the Commission what those Policemen did?

Rajangane Engineer

(Continued from page 5)

At 9.30 p. m. I was taken by Mr. Joseph, Inspector, to the Tambutugama police station where we were given two rooms in the dormitory, one for the ladies and one for the men. All our staff were living in those rooms. Then the Inspector commandeered one of the buses, escorted it by one of our jeeps and sent us to the Anuradhapura camp on the 11th afternoon.

In the camp, there was no water and food. From there, we were sent to Jaffna. I have not returned to Rajangane after I left on the 17th August. Now I am attached to the Irrigation Department, Jaffna from 12th October. I was asked to report to Rajangane by telegram. I sent a registered letter saying that I don't have clothes and also that I am frightened to go there.

So they summoned me to the Colombo Head Office and I explained to them personally about my inability to get back to Rajangane.

A: In the first instance one policeman entered the building. I was seated at the entrance. In slang Tamil he asked me to come out. Through fear I got up from my seat and went further inside the office. Again three other policemen entered the office and called out for me. At that time there were six of us in the office; two ladies, two other employees and a customer.

Q: Did the constable assault you? A: Yes. Excluding the two ladies the customer and the other employees were assaulted. They held the rifle with muzzle end and hit us with the butt end.

Q: Were you injured?

A: Yes.

Q: Did those constables speak to you?

A: They did not say anything. While assaulting we told them that we were employed in the M. P. C. S. While they were assaulting a ring dropped down and they took that also. When they went out of the office they dragged the bicycles belonging to us.

They had no numerals

Commissioner: Q: Did you know them?

A: They appeared to be policemen not from that area.

Q: Have you noted their numbers?

A: They had no numerals on them.

Mr. Balasubramaniam:

Q: You said that this happened at Thunukkai? A: Yes.

Q: Under whose A. G. A.'s Division does it come?

A: A. G. A. Thunukkai.

Q: Who is the G. A.

A: This comes under Jaffna District.

Q: You said that they smashed the bicycles when they got out after the assault?

A: Yes.

Q: What did they do?

A: When they got on to the road they assaulted the cyclists who went along the road and smashed the bicycles putting them on the road and then they drove the Land Rover over the bicycles. Two bicycles were put inside the well that was there.

Q: Were the officers in other M. P. C. S. also assaulted? A: I heard that the employees of Vavunikulam M. P. C. S., which is about

four miles away were assaulted. Some cash and coupons were taken away.

'I complained to the A. G. A.'

Commissioner: Q: Did you complain to anybody else?

A: I complained to the A. G. A. Thunukkai.

Q: When did you complain to him?

A: On the same day.

Q: Did he take down your complaint?

A: He asked me to go and complain in writing and I gave the complaint in writing. His office is only 150 yards from the M. P. C. S.

'Policemen in Land Rover came from the direction of Mannar'

Q: Have you got a copy of that complaint?

A: Yes. I have not brought it here.

Q: Did anybody hold any inquiry?

A: So far as I am aware the A. G. A., has written to the G. A., Jaffna and he has also informed the Police authorities at Mankulam.

Q: Was any inquiry held?

A: Nobody came for inquiry. We made representations to the Union.

Commissioner: Follow this up. If the A. G. A., had informed the Police and if the Police have not taken action I like to know why.

Mr. de Silva: Let us see the copy of his complaint and see what he has written.

Witness: I have to go back and bring the copy of the complaint.

Q: Can you post it to the Secretary here?

A: Yes.

Commissioner: After this a further inquiry must be held in this matter.

'Temple priest assaulted'

Mr. Balasubramaniam:

Q: You said that an incident happened at Vavunikulam?

A: Yes.

Q: There is a Sivan Temple at Vavunikulam?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you know what happened to the Priest of that temple?

'Smashed up the bicycle'

Commissioner: Q: Did you take down the number of the Land Rover?

A: No, in the excitement, I did not observe the number.

Q: Have you seen those men before? A: No, Sir.)

'They then smashed up the bicycle with their rifles, put the bicycle on the road and drove the Land Rover over the bicycle.

(Commissioner:)

Q: Where did they come from? A: They are from the Mannar police.

Q: How did you know that?

A: They came from the direction of Mannar.)

Mannar is close upon 40 miles from Thunukkai. I made a complaint to the Asst. Government Agent. This incident happened at 8.30 a. m. and by about 10 a. m. I made my complaint. I don't have a copy of that statement. The name of the A. G. A. is Karthigesu. He is still the Thunukkai A. G. A.

A: I came to know that the Army Personnel had assaulted the priest and that he had been admitted to hospital.

Mr. G. P. S. de Silva calls:

VYRAMUTHU SIVARAJAH affirmed, 24 years, Clerk' M. P. C. S. Thunukkai.

'In August, 1977 I was employed as a clerk at the M. P. C. S. Thunukkai. On the 29th of August last year, at about 8.30 a. m. I was on my way to work. I was riding my bicycle. When I was about 50 yards away from my place of work, some police officers came in a land rover

and stopped me. At that time the lorry driver of the MPSCS also came with me in the same bicycle. In Sinhalese the constables asked me where I was going. As I could not speak Sinhalese, the driver answered in Sinhalese and said that we are going to work at the MPSCS. Then five or six constables got down from the vehicle and assaulted us with guns.

Commissioner:

Q: Did anything happen after that?

A: No investigations were held but we were told that he will make representation to the G. A.

Q: Nothing has happened yet? A: No.

No questions by Counsel.



Mr. C. Kodeeswaran

Mr. Kodeeswaran: Yesterday I took the evidence of Maheswaran. I missed two points. Might that witness be called.

SINNATHAMBY MAHESWARAN: Recalled and affirmed. 47 years, clerk, Office of the District Director of Works Jaffna.

Q: Yesterday you referred to your stay at Naga Vihare on the 1st evening from 3-30 to 8-30 p. m.? A: Yes.

Q: Again you referred to your stay at the Naga Vihare from 3-30 a. m., to 7-30 a. m.?

Witness recalled: he refers to his losses

A: Yes.

Q: During the time you stayed there, there were Police and Army men?

A: Yes. There were Sinhalese refugees also.

Q: There was the priest in the temple? A: There was the High Priest.

Q: You were relating to the Commission about your losses?

A: I lost the Bank Receipt for the jewellery that were pawned at the Bank of Ceylon, Anuradhapura. My wife's card and one parcel belonging to me. There was also a Saving Bank Book from the People's Bank.

(Mr. Maheswaran's evidence on Pages 4 & 5 of this issue)

DR. TERRENCE DASSANAYAKE, FORMER S. H. S. JAFFNA TESTIFIES:

10th March 1978. (19th day)
Same appearances as before.

Mr. Bartlett Calls:
Dr. Terrence Stanley de Costa Dasanayake: Affirmed, 50 years, Superintendent of Health Services, Anuradhapura.

"I am presently functioning as the Superintendent of Health Services, Anuradhapura. One time, I was functioning as the Superintendent of Health Services, Jaffna. I worked in Jaffna from 1st September, 1976 till 19th August, 1977. I left Jaffna in August, 1977.

Q: You left Jaffna due to some threat that was made to you over the telephone saying you will be shot like a dog if you worked here?

A: Yes. This telephone call was received by a Doctor working in the hospital and he conveyed this message to me.

Phone call on 17th evening

Q: The threat came over the telephone to this Doctor stating that "Tell your S.H.S. Dasanayake that he will be shot like a dog if he continued to work in Jaffna".

A: Yes, that is what he told me.

Q: One does not know the source of that call, but that call did come that morning and was communicated to you?

A: The previous evening that call had come. I was told on the 18th morning. I was told by Dr. Navaratnasingam.

Q: On the 17th August, 1977 you had reason to write to the Superintendent of Police, Jaffna with copies to the D.I.G. Mr. Ana Seneviratne and the G. A. Jaffna?

A: Yes.

Q: The subject matter of that letter reads as "Police officers in Hospital"? **A:** Yes.

Key kept at Police station

Q: (Shown X59) This is a copy of your letter?

A: Yes, I have got a copy myself. I told my Secretary to send this letter. X59 is a true copy of the letter I sent to S. P. Jaffna. (Paragraph 1 of X59 read by Counsel)

Q: You referred to your having gone to the G. A.'s conference at the Kachcheri?

A: Yes. The conference was on the morning of the 17th.

Q: Can you tell what was the matter that you raised at that conference of the G. A.?

A: That morning when I came to my SHS office, there

was a general strike of all public servants in Jaffna and I was unable to get into my office because the peon had not come to open the office. Then I went to the hospital and along with the M. S. I went to the police station to get the key. Usually the key is kept in the police station.

"From the police station, I came back to the hospital and then to my office. At that time, there was the threat of a strike by the minor employees of the Jaffna hospital and one of their grievances was that a labourer working in the mortuary was assaulted by one police officer the previous evening and the second reason they said was that there were many police officers in the hospital and many of them did not have their identity numbers.

Summoned to G. A.'s conference

"I told them that at any cost, the hospital must function and asked them to come and work. I told them that I will see that the police officers leave the hospital. I was summoned for a conference at 11 o'clock I think on that morning by the G. A. and at that conference there was the DIG Mr. Seneviratne, the S. P., A. S. P., Army, Navy and local Heads of Departments.

"When it came to matters of health, I told the gathering there that there was a certain strike by the minor employees and the reasons (1) there are a large number of police officers who do not have their identity numbers and (2) there was an assault the previous evening on a mortuary labourer by a police officer.

"Then I told Mr. Ana Seneviratne that I myself had personally checked up before I came to the conference and there were 17 police officers in and around the mortuary, some of them armed and I told him that I cannot see the reason to have so many police officers to guard the dead bodies in the mortuary. DIG Mr. Rudra Rajasingam was not there.

'D. I. G. asked for assurance'

"Then Mr. Ana Seneviratne told me "What assurance could you give for the safety of the police personnel". I said, I cannot give any assurance regarding anyone in the hospital because three months ago a baby was stolen from the Jaffna hospital.

"I said, anyway, I want you to fulfil five conditions before you send a police officer to the hospital. They are (1) He must bring a letter from the officer-in-charge of the police station. (2) He must be properly clad with his identity numbers. (3) He must take permission from the M. S. (4) If he is armed or unarmed, it must be so stated in the letter and (5) when a police officer is detailed for hospital duty, he must be stationed at the place where he is detailed for duty and not in other places. I said those conditions must be fulfilled before a police officer is sent to the hospital.

"Mr. Ana Seneviratne did agree with me and I think,



and there was a call from, I think, the Secretary of the hospital that some policemen were there without numbers.

(Commissioner: What day was that?

A: On the 17th in the afternoon, Sir.)

"My Secretary and I decided to go to the hospital and we went to Room No. 3 where an inquiry was being held by the police. There were certain witnesses and I saw a Sub-Inspector, one Mr. Walter Perera recording a statement from these witnesses. There were present three other police officers. One was a Sergeant and two were constables,

The doctor's package

"On the 18th morning when I came to the hospital at about 8 a. m. the Medical Superintendent, General Hospital, Jaffna, and the Obstetrician, Dr. Balasingam came to my office. They told me that there is a problem with regard to a medical officer. I cannot remember his name. He was a young medical officer.

"The problem was he had taken into his room three packages and one large package, and the medical officer devoted much attention to the large package which appeared like a transmitter

Mr. Ana Seneviratne asked me: What assurance can you give me of the safety of the Police personnel?

'I really got angry'

"None of the constables had any identity numbers and when I questioned one P. C. he produced his identity number from his pocket. The second constable did not have any identity number. When I questioned him, he said, he had not brought it. I think, he was armed. I really got angry over this whole issue because I was given an assurance the very morning by the D. I. G. Mr. Ana Seneviratne and in the presence of the police officers.

"I immediately drafted this letter and got it typed and asked the Secretary to send it to the S. P. Jaffna.

"After that on the 17th I left at about 4.30 or 5 p.m. having been in the hospital back to the YMCA. That night at about 7 p.m. I came back to the hospital because I have to inform the Secretary of Health about the situation in Jaffna. I got a call from the hospital and I went back to the YMCA.

Then I went with Dr. Balasingam and the M. S. to the hospital and went into the House Officer's quarters.

"I went to his room and did see a package about this size (witness shows) containing a metal instrument with Valves, something like an old radio, the identity of which I myself don't know. I scolded the doctor for having taken this article under these circumstances.

'I rang up the Army'

"He told me that he obtained it from the shop opposite the hospital. I asked him "did you know the man who gave it to you"? What is his name? He said "No". He said "I only know him because I buy my cigarettes from him.

"Then I said, 'somehow or other, you must get it out of the hospital. He asked me to make some arrangements to remove the instrument. I thought it was not correct to inform the police regarding this because I thought the

(Continued overleaf)

"Nothing is ever settled until it is settled right"

— Rudyard Kipling

The Sansoni Commission Evidence

The Story of the Sri Lanka Race Riots 1977

(continued from page 7)

doctors might be incriminated more. Therefore, I rang up the Army and told them, there is a package, a doubtful equipment and please come and remove it and the army said 'yes'.

Then I had a conference with the Specialists Staff at the Medical Superintendent's room where we made arrangements to reserve one ward in the hospital solely for the treatment of the police, army or any other service personnel rather than putting them in the various wards in the hospital. This arrangement was made purely for the purpose of providing security for the injured service personnel.

I saw a man taking it away

Soon after this, the young doctor came to our office and said that he has got the man who has given that instrument, that package. I asked him 'did you see that man take it out of the hospital premises'. He said 'I gave it to him'. I then said 'that is not enough; see that he takes it'. Then I checked up into his room and I saw through the window a man carrying it on the pavement.

Q: You did not want this equipment to be inside the hospital premises? A: Yes.

(Commissioner: Q: What is that?

A: That was an oval shaped radio set with Valves.) It was not a transmitter or anything of that kind. It was an old radio set.

(Commissioner: Q: It must be a receiving set?

A: Yes, may be. I didn't want to have the set there, Sir.)

I cannot remember the young medical officer's name. At that time, just before the conference, this Dr. Navaratnasingam told me that he received two telephone calls the previous night. Somebody spoke in English and asked where the M.S. was. Then the caller said "Tell your bloody S.H.S. that he will be shot like a dog if he works in Jaffna". Well, I said, it is alright. Then there was the stoning on the train that was coming from Colombo bring-

ing injured people. We had to make some arrangements.

I told the M.S. 'please despatch some vehicles like ambulances to bring the patients to the hospital. Then I went to the O.P.D. along with the M.S. to make arrangements to receive these patients. Then we saw a large number of people climbing over the half wall and entering into the hospital premises.

Then I got the expanded door of the O.P.D. closed to prevent the people entering into the O.P.D. They were anxious to see whether anyone of their relations was injured. I told them, in fact, I appealed to them along with the M.S. "please do not enter and if you come in, we will be not in a position to give the proper treatment to the patients".

The people reacted well

They reacted well and some patients were treated at the O.P.D. and some were admitted to the hospital. This happened at 10.30 a.m. I was told by Mr. K. Thanikasan that there was a threat on my life. I decided to go and meet the G.A. and the D.I.G. I met them at the Kachcheri and told them that I was being threatened and that I was going to Vavuniya hospital which came within my area of jurisdiction.

I decided to leave purely because I had got my son for a few days and a friend and his son. We had gone for the Madhu festival the previous Sunday and I had to attend to some inquiries on the 16th at Vavuniya.

I told the D.I.G. and the G.A. that I would leave Jaffna and go to Vavuniya. I told that to Mr. Ana Seneviratne the D.I.G. and the G.A. Then the D.I.G. Mr. Ana Seneviratne told me, "Don't be silly you can wait with me". I told them that I had to look after the work in the whole district and I left at 1 p.m.

Car hit by a stone

On our way, between Manakulam and Puliyanakulam my car was damaged. Somebody from the jungle hit my car with a stone. The windscreen got damaged. My friend's son was cut. He was bleeding profusely.

I thought the best thing was to drive without stopping. I bandaged the child's injury and drove to Vavuniya hospital and got the injury dressed. I got the child attended to. I decided to go to Colombo.

I stayed at Vavuniya and on the following morning I left Vavuniya on the 19th. We were driving towards Anuradhapura. Between the 4th and 5th mile post the road was at an elevation and it then had a decline. When I was going down the incline I saw the road blocked with trunks of trees. There were about five or six persons with clubs and they stopped our car.

I said coconut fell on the car

Those people said that I was not a Sinhalese but a Burgher. They said that my friend was a Tamil. I spoke to them in Sinhala. They said I did

not speak Sinhala well. I was asked to get down from the car. My son asked me not to get down. Someone in the crowd said that we were Sinhalese. I got down from the car.

I showed them my driving licence and the insurance certificate. A woman said that I was a Sinhalese. They asked me how my car got damaged. I told them that a coconut fell on my car. I went to the S.H.S. Anuradhapura and related the story to him Dr. Wijewardene the S.H.S. was there at that time.

I was shocked at the sight

I went up to the mortuary and I was shocked at the sight I saw. There were 15 or 16 dead bodies in different postures and in different stages of putrefaction. I reported to the Head Office. I was asked to take leave. I met the Secretary Ministry of Health.

Then I got a telephone call on the 23rd stating that Anuradhapura had been abandoned as regard the medical facilities. I was instructed to go there for a few days. They sent me an army escort and wanted me to go there. That was on the 23rd August.

I came to Anuradhapura. I got the windscreen car attended to. I got the receipt for the effected. No compensation was paid to me for the and the damage to the car. I suffered this loss and in the course of my duty. I wrote a letter to the D.H.S. and G.A. and subsequent to the A.G.A Vavuniya. I spent Rs. 1975/- on the repair. I am entitled to compensation in that sum.

Only five out of 40 doctors

When I came to Anuradhapura the entire health services there were at a standstill. Out of 47 institutions in the area only 3 were functioning. At Anuradhapura hospital where there are over 40 doctors only five doctors were working.

I had to reorganise health institutions in the area to organise Mobile Health Services. I saw to it that at least some elementary health services were maintained in Anuradhapura.

(Dr. Dasanayake's evidence will be continued in the next issue)

next week

* Trouble in Kandy — ex-University lecturer Dr. Narendiran testifies

* Mr. Wahala, Chief clerk, E.O. testifies