

UNDELIVERED ISSUES

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Allen Abraham Commemoration

A meeting to commemorate Allen Abraham of the Hayleys Comet fame was conducted at Karainagar Yarlton College on Sunday the 29th March. The function was organized by the Allen Abraham Commemoration Committee of Karainagar.

Mr. R. Sundaralingam Director of Education, Northern Region, Mr. A. Kadrigamar Principal, Jaffna College, Mr. T. Viswanathan teacher Jaffna College, Mr. W. A. Senthilnathan President Jaffna Astronomical Society were among those who spoke at this meeting.

Mr. S. K. Sivagurunathan Head, Sub-Department of English, University of Jaffna Presided.

It Happened Last Week

In Vavuniya five persons including a woman were shot dead after a land mine explosion.

A fighter plane that belonged to the Sri Lankan Government fell into the Beruwela lagoon killing the two pilots on board.

A young woman who went to worship at the Alady Pillaiyar temple in Pt. Pedro was shot dead.

In the Northern sea near Velanai a motor boat with ten passengers on board was set ablaze.

In Point Pedro a Roman Catholic priest was injured when he was shot from a helicopter.

At Thambalagamam near Trincomalee three persons succumbed to gun shot injuries.

A motor cyclist was killed at Paranthan.

Three unthreshed hay-stacks were set on fire in Killinochi.

Uttara Devi Gunned

Uttara Devi the Jaffna - Colombo Passenger train was set on fire near Omanthai on Tuesday. The train which was proceeding to Colombo was stopped by a group of armed men at 12.15 p.m. The two thousand odd passengers who were on board were asked to get down from the train and cancel their trips. Then the young men set fire to the train. All the mail bags which were in the train were destroyed by fire.

It is estimated that the loss incurred by the destruction of this train is in the region of thirty two million rupees.

K. Daniel Passes Away

K. Daniel the well known Tamil short-story writer and novelist died in Madras on Monday the 25th March.

K. Daniel highlighted the problems and grievances of the down trodden people of Jaffna by his short-stories and novels. The funeral took place in Madras.

THE MORNING STAR

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RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE

Appreciation

Dr. M. H. Harrison

The year was 1929 and the place Jaffna College, Vaddukoddai. Mr. Harrison was appointed to teach Latin to the Cambridge Senior Class which was to sit the examination in December. Two text books had been prescribed in Latin Literature and the candidates could select any one of them. The prose text was Cicero Pro Sestio and the verse text was Vergil Aenid.

On the first day in class Mr. Harrison announced, to the utter dismay of the students, that he would teach both the texts. The prose text for the first six months and the verse text for the next six months. The students felt that this was too much for them, that they could not study either text thoroughly and their chance of passing in Latin was made difficult. They had hoped to study only one text thoroughly and get a good pass in the subject. Some students even protested that they could not afford to buy two text books.

Mr. Harrison would hear none of it. He stated that text books were not absolutely necessary and that he could teach them without text books. He proceeded straight away to teach Cicero Pro Sestio copying on the black board passages from the text. He taught not only Latin literature, but also language, syntax, grammar etc. All simultaneously, making copious references to Tamil grammar in which he was proficient. The students began to realise gradually and appreciate that it was in their

best interest Mr. Harrison decided to teach the prose text first and then the verse text.

True to his word, Mr. Harrison completed Cicero in June and commenced teaching Vergil. This he completed well before the end of the year, giving students ample time to go through the text a second time as they had wished. They were expected to answer questions in Vergil at the examination. It is needless to say that at the examination most of the students got credit passes and they all remained ever grateful to Mr. Harrison for his able teaching. The students realised that Mr. Harrison believed in wide reading and deep study not in merely passing the examination.

The students were very familiar with the following famous description of Marcus Brutus in Shakespeares's Julius Caesar and they often wondered and imagined that the narration aptly fitted Mr. Harrison.

"His life was gentle and the elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world 'This was a man'".

— P. J. T.

Madurai Cathedral

The newly built Cathedral of the Madurai Ramnad Diocese was formally opened on Easter Sunday (30-3-86). It is erected in the form of a fish and can accommodate three thousand worshippers at a time. About five thousand people participated at this dedication service.

Ravens Bruck Prayer

Peace be to men who are of bad will,
and may an end be put to all vengeance
and to all talk about punishment and chastisement.
The cruelties mock all norms and principles,
they are beyond all limits of human understanding
and there many martyrs.
Therefore, God
does not weigh their sufferings on the scales of
your justice,
so that you would demand a cruel account
but rather let it be valid in a different way.
Rather, write in favour of all executioners, traitors,
and spies,
and all bad men and credit them
all the courage and strength of the others.

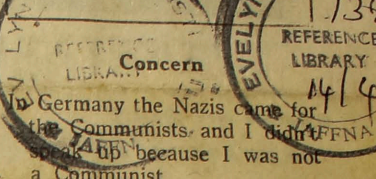
..... All the good should count and not the evil.
And for the memories of our enemies,
we should no longer remain their shuddering ghosts,
but rather their help, so that they may cease their
fury.
That is the only thing that is asked of them,
and that we, after it is all over,
may be able to live as humans among humans,
and that there may be peace again on this poor
earth.
for the men of good will
and that this peace may come also to the others.



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Then they came for the Jews
and I did not speak up because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists and I didn't speak up because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Catholics and I was a Protestant and so I didn't speak up.

Then they came for me. By that time there was no one left to speak up for anyone to make sure this doesn't happen again. The injustice to anyone anywhere

Must be the concern of everyone everywhere.

"Declaration of Guilt" — Pastor Martin Niemöller Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany. October 18th, 1945."

Obituary

Rajan Selvanayagam

Mr. Rajan Selvanayagam a former Second M. P. for Batticaloa died in a private nursing home on Friday the 28th instant. He was fifty years of age at the time of his death. He entered politics at the age of twenty six by winning a seat in the Batticaloa Urban Council as a Federal Party Candidate. From 1965 to 1970 he served as a member of the Batticaloa Municipal Council. In 1970 he contested the Batticaloa multi-member Parliamentary Constituency as an Independent candidate and was elected second M. P. He later joined the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and was appointed the Political authority for the Batticaloa District.

The funeral took place in Batticaloa on Monday.

He leaves behind, his wife Indraneel, a son and a daughter who are pursuing their studies in U. K.

IN MEMORIAM



IN EVER LOVING MEMORY
OF

**Vellupillai Nathaniel
Aiyathurai**

Called to rest on 3-4-1981

A day of remembrance
Silently kept of one whom
We loved and cannot forget.

Remembered with love and affection by your loved ones on your fifth death anniversary.

Church Road,
Chavakachcheri.

— யாக்கோபு 4:17

JAFFNA.

EDITORIAL

A Northern Focus

"The truth was that there was some administration in these areas. Jaffna was the most difficult place, but yet there was some sort of government. They could not claim that there was full administration, but one could send a telegram, post a letter and there were the train services." [CDN: 22-3-86]

This is the picture of the North, particularly Jaffna, as projected by National Security Minister, Lalith Atulathmudali, in Parliament on 21-3-86 in reply to a comment made by the SLFP member for Madawachia that "there was no civil administration in the North and in Vavuniya".

The Minister also said as reported in the CDN of 22-3-86 that such a comment on the part of the opposition was an attempt "to provoke the Sinhalese" and went on to say that it was also "an insult to the soldiers".

About the inter-relation between the "civil administration" and the military, there have been many discussions off and on at higher levels on the subject and we do not intend to comment on them in these columns.

As to the reference of the Minister to the situation in the North and the attitude of the Sinhalese people in the South, Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam, former TULF member for Vaddukodai (The TULF still remains a symbol of the identity of the Tamil people) had an important comment to make in an interview recently when he was asked the question if he believed that Indian intervention alone can solve the Tamil problem.

Dr. Tiruchelvam, stressing the need to bring to an end violence in the North and the East with its ancillary problems of arbitrary arrests, extra-judicial killings, allegations of torture etc., etc., said:-

"The people in the South are only marginally aware of the situation. I am sure if groups in the South fully understood what is happening, they would join the Tamils in demanding an end to it".

Whether there is full administration or half, civilian life in the North, as everyone knows, is but the pale shadow of normalcy. In fact, there have been no paroxysms of jubilation over the grounding of the bombers, because in several areas in Jaffna, of a predominantly agrarian character, as Kadduvan, Erlalai, Vasavilan, and Kurumpaciady (where the soil is red and rich), there have been mortar shells labbed periodically with the stultor of machine-guns from helicopters lasting for several hours during an attack, causing immense damage to people and property.

It is a tragic irony that while development and village reconstruction in the South now make the nations front pages and television screens, many village people in Jaffna have been reduced to an inchoate mass of refugees driven out of their homes and cultivated plots by security forces in the name of fighting an "invisible enemy" — sepratist terrorist.

Ravaged homes, damaged crops, carefully targeted industrial plants (as rice mills) remain the only signs of human existence in many rural areas today.

In a country where the diverse beauties of nature are packed into an island of just 25,000 square miles, it is so heart-rending to see one part of a unitary state, where the people once led their simple life, now the target of devastation and unmitigated rage, recalling to our minds the lines of the Arab Poet, Tawfiq Zayad (who described Arab-Israeli relationships) in these poignant lines:

"And in your throats we shall stay
A piece of glass, a cactus thorn
And in your eyes, a blazing fire."

The old time preacher's warning that "in the midst of life, we are amidst death" has to be reversed, it seems, in the context of the exigencies of the political situation in Jaffna today. It would be perhaps, more correct to say that today in the midst of death, we are amidst life".

The tone and temper of the national media reflect an unmistakable 'war psychosis'. Sri Lanka has an army of 37,660 men according to the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IIS). There are also some 2000 Tamil armed activists and another 6000 supporters. The Soviet Union has supplied SA-7 Grail Surface-to-Air Missiles to several countries with whom they have military ties, including India (CDN 22-3-86). In the same page of the CDN is also a picture of 'a deadly terrorist arsenal' reported to have been recovered in the Mullaitivu district during an army raid.

These reports simulate the accounts we have read in foreign journals of the 'over-kill capability' of the two super-powers — the U.S and the USSR. The U.S could kill every Soviet citizen 34 times over while the USSR could kill every American 29 times over.

The fact of the matter is that the country with its additional 25 billion rupees voted for defence (making a total of 9 billion) is teetering on the brink of a grave economic crisis. "The economy has been burdened" Minister Ronnie de Mel has

Loosening Dumb Tongues and Opening Closed Eyes

Will the Church-related Institutions in Sri Lanka heed the call once again

(Continued from our last issue)

FOUR: Guidance, counselling and employment placement are vital to help the disabled to take their due place in society as well as to develop their own personality. Experimented placing at desks in offices, or on the factory floor, in the last stages of their schooling may often help. For these pupils as well as for all pupils, the school has to be but the beginning of a process of life-long self-education, as they may want to decide and re-decide on their career more than once, and if needed, go for training and re-training as often.

FIVE: One proof that the universities of Sri Lanka have come of age would be when at least in some of them the disabled have special access to lectures in their wheeled chairs, and the visually handicapped have facilities to take down notes and submit answer scripts in Braille. The University of Jaffna has also a responsibility to train graduate teachers for work in Special Schools and to promote research studies in this field.

SIX: Tamil medium students at school and University need text books in Braille in their fields of study. Passed-out students need books for general reading. There was an indication that modern Braille Press, set up this year at Maharagama with funds provided by the Swedish Or-

ganisation of the Handicapped, will prepare reading materials in both Sinhala and Tamil. But the need for general books for School, University and Public Libraries in Tamil Braille and English Braille too is a big one. Perhaps the new Centre for the Blind being built at Kaithady can also, with some similar aid, embark on a massive programme of printing Braille books and other papers, and build up too a bilingual library that will be a resource supply to Public Libraries and educational institutions.

SEVEN: If, as our ancients discovered, education is a life-long process, even life an educational process, public libraries carrying books, periodicals and newspapers, should be readily available to the disabled as to the others, both to the young and the old. The Jaffna Public Library, now under rehabilitation, provides for access to the disabled, in their wheeled chairs, primarily to the newspaper section. So will the new Nallur Branch Library that is being planned. Both libraries will carry each a shelf of books in Braille. The right to read is one of man's inalienable rights. Reading affords pleasure, knowledge and high ideals.

Will our churches, and church-related institutions, which have access to large funds, local and foreign, also heed the cry of blind Bartimaeus.

said "by the pincer effect of increasing defence needs on the one hand and sharply reduced tea-earnings on the other"

As for "the political solution", according to the PTL, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is reported to have said at Ahmedabad, that India will not resume its mediation efforts on the Sri Lankan question until the violence in Sri Lanka is ended.

Hard lines and hardening arteries in the body politic will not save us from the fate that awaits the country unless the government winds down immediately the state of belligerency, particularly in the North.

As for the Government Scheme of Devolution, the National Security Minister at the very outset of the 'Dialogue', described the Scheme as "a clothes line on which various proposals could be hung".

While it is desirable that a Scheme of Devolution should take into account the needs and aspirations of all communities, it is also important to remember that "a little democracy, like a little learning, can be dangerous". [We quote S. Nimal Singh, a political analyst of Asian affairs who is now Project Director of the Twentieth Century Fund.]

Nobody can attempt to deny that the government is faced with an unprecedented portfolio of problems — the Nurses' strike, led by a member of the Buddhist Clergy (as head of the Nurse's Union) the closure indefinitely of the Batticaloa University (only recently upgraded), the imminent closure of a Science Faculty of one of our well established Universities and the problems arising out of the 20 per cent withholding tax on interest on fixed deposits (the sole means of subsistence for many people).

But with regard to the policy which the government has decided to pursue at any cost of 'War and Parley' to solve the 'Tamil problem', the world today cries with the words of Oliver Cromwell to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland — "I beseech you in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may (just once) be mistaken."

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