

## Editor's Note

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# THE MORNING STAR

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

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## Development Council discusses Teacher Shortage Problem

At the monthly meeting of the Jaffna District Development Council held on 23-3-82, the problem of Teachers not willing to take up duties in 'difficult areas' of the Jaffna District such as Kilinochi, the islands and Vadamadchi (East) was taken up and a resolution was passed that with a view to solve this situation teachers appointed to such areas be given an additional allowance which may be an incentive to some teachers.

It was also resolved that teachers belonging to these areas should not be given appointments or transfers outside their home station.

The attention of Council members was also drawn to an instance where a teacher whose native village is in one of the islands of the Jaffna District was posted to his own station but used his influence and got himself transferred out of his native village.

## Seminar on Amendment Bill

A Seminar was held at Percival Hall, Jaffna to discuss the implications of the new Amendment Bill that has been passed recently in Parliament, amending the existing Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act of 1979.

Father Paul Caspersz addressing the Seminar said that the Amendment Bill tends to make lawful a situation which exists in the country when un-identified persons had "arrested" suspects and put them in detention in places that were not known to anyone.

The Bill affects fundamental human rights and should be fought tooth and nail by all institutions which have the interest of the community at large — Father Caspersz said that a massive protest campaign should be organised and representations made to the authorities to make our country safe for democracy.

Attorneys-at-Law, Prince Rajasuriya and J. V. Saviour explained the various aspects of the Bill and the seeds it contained for a misuse of the law, to undermine individual liberties.

Mr. M. Sivasithamparam, M.P., for Nallur, said that it was tragic that what was announced as "Temporary Provisions" to the Prevention of Terrorism Act has now by an Amendment Bill given the status of "permanency" in the legal framework of the country.

The people most affected by this Bill said Mr. Sivasithamparam would be the people of the North.

(The Seminar was held under the auspices of the Northern Branch of the MIRJE.)

## Some Interesting Figures from the 1981 Census

The following figures published recently based on the 1981 Census of Sri Lanka are of great significance:

The minimum age of the population over the last ten years has risen to 21.4 years from 19.7 in 1971.

The average at which women marry is 24.5, again an increase from 23.5 in 1971. The average age for marriage of men remains at 28 as in 1971.

More women are opting to remain single and there is a decrease in the percentage of married women in every age group. The percentage of married men however shows an increase in almost every age group.

Literacy rates have again increased in Sri Lanka. It has risen from 78.5% in 1971 to 86.5% in 1981. The rate of increase for females is very steep. From 70.9 in 1971 it has risen to 82.4 in 1981. For males the increase in literacy is from 85.6 in 1971 to 90.5 in 1981.

Gampaha District has the highest recorded literacy rate at 94.2% followed very closely by the Colombo and Jaffna Districts.

The percentage of the population literate in English is 11.5%.

## A New Concept

A new concept in Church Communication is the "Video Magazine" which has come to the church in Malaysia. It is a one hour video cassette family viewing. It features programmes with social religious and cultural themes. The new medium has been prepared for home use and it gives special attention to the feed-back. Each 'video magazine' may be rented for a period of seven days at a cost of two US dollars. The Casette Magazine may be purchased outright for 63 US dollars. The response has been most encouraging in Sabah and Sarawak in East Malaysia.

## Important WCC Events in 1982

Geneva (Feb. 15 - 19) — Semi-Annual Meeting of the WCC Executive Committee.

Bossey (Feb. 22 - 25) — Consultation: Ecumenical History.

Bossey (25th March to 2nd April) — Workshop - Local and Ecumenical Dimensions of Worship.

Colombo (28th March to 2nd April) — Christian - Muslim Dialogue.

Geneva (May 14 - 17) — 1983 WCC Assembly Preparations Committee.

Geneva (July 16 - 18) — Semi-Annual Meeting WCC Executive.

(July 19 - 28) — Annual Meeting WCC Central Committee.

## Church News from Abroad

### Church Statements on Public Issues

The leading figure of world Anglicanism, the Archbishop of Canterbury reflecting on church statements on public issues has suggested that organisations like the World Council of churches lose credibility if "they talk too often". He urged a "certain asceticism about public statements".

He also regretted that the church of England and the Anglican Communion may be rightly criticised for making a "modest withdrawal" from and "not playing a full part in" ecumenical activities.

### Ecumenical History

Plans for a Third Volume of the history of the Ecumenical Movement was discussed last month in Geneva by 31 church historians and ecumenists from 17 countries of the world.

The 11th Volume will be, edited by Paul Crow and would pick up the narrative of the two earlier volumes 1517 - 1948 and 1948 - 1968. The New volume will reflect the increased role of the Third World, women, orthodox and Roman Catholics in the making and perception of ecumenical history.

Paul Crow is the Ecumenical Officer of the U.S. Christian church (Disciples of Christ.)

### "Corpus Christi"

The US Navy Secretary has rejected church requests that a nuclear submarine named after the Texas City of "Corpus Christi" be called something else. He said that the name "Corpus Christi" (Body of Christ) would remind military personnel of the "humanistic values of peace-keeping."

A Museum honouring the memory of UN Secretary General, Dag Hammarskjold was opened recently in Zambia's copperbelt town of Ndola, near where the Swedish diplomat's plane crashed mysteriously 20 years ago "Markings", his reflections on his life and work, published after his death has become a noted work of contemporary christian spirituality.

## "Home Guards" Scheme

From May this year, the 'Home Guards' scheme will be operative. In Tamil speaking areas, this Scheme will be introduced with the advice of the TULF.

This we learn, was one of the matters on which agreement was reached at the on-going TULF - Government 'Summit' talks at President House.

The responsibility of setting up this new Scheme was put on the new Deputy Minister (Home guards) Mr. Mervyn Gunaratne and Dr. Neelan Tiruchelvam.

The Committee appointed by the President to go into the

## IN MEMORIAM



IN TREASURED MEMORY OF

**K. E. Mathiaparanam**

called to rest on 7th April, 1980

Milestones two down memory lane,  
Alas, how swiftly gone, since our dear dad's flown,  
To his eternal home-beyond earth's bane,  
Hues deep and strange in him were shown,  
In a pilgrim, other-worldly strain,  
As e'er gentle, dogged and devoted,  
Raises he an image apt to be doted.

Fondly remembered by his loved ones here and abroad.

32, Kotelawala Avenue, Bambalapitiya.

## Palaly SCM Celebrate Easter

On Friday the 26th March the Student Christian Movement of the Teachers' College, Palaly held a Bhajani in their Chapel to mark the season of Lent and Easter. The Archdeacon Ven. S. D. Horshington gave the message. The Staff of Nuffield School, Kaitady assisted in the training of the Choir. The members of the Roman Catholic Union also joined in the programme and gave a special item.

Earlier in the Term the Student Christian Movement was formally constituted under the patronage of the new Chaplain the Rev. S. Manopavan. The SCM conducts daily morning devotions and a Service of Holy Communion on the first Friday every month. The first such Communion was celebrated by the Bishop the Rt. Rev. D. J. Ambalavanar on the 5th February.

### News Gleanings

○ **Non-graduate Teachers** — Only 280 out of 4500 who applied were called for 'an interview'. Of this the majority are women.

○ **University Admissions** — Thirty one thousand students have qualified to enter the Sri Lankan Universities this year but only 5245 have been selected by the computer.

question of the role of Ministers of State in the working of the Development Councils will meet the Prime minister on April First and is expected to submit a report at the next sessions of the Summit talks scheduled for 5-4-82.





## EDITORIAL

## Pre-Polls Reflections

In the tidal wave of unrest that has swept over the country in recent times, two public statements made by two TULF leaders, acquire a gloss which few can fail to recognise.

The first statement was made by the Leader of the Opposition and Secretary General of the TULF, Mr. A. Amirthalingam on the subject of the TULF in relation to the "Terrorist" movement in Jaffna:—

"There are two types of people resorting to violence in Jaffna. One is the politically motivated group and the other, the hard core criminals. The politically motivated group believed in achieving their objectives by violence. *They have no connection with the TULF.*" — (CDN 2-3-82.)

(Italics are ours)

The second statement was made by the Chairman of the Development Council of the Jaffna District, Mr. S. Nadarajah at a meeting held at the Jaffna Secretariat presided over by the Minister of Lands, Land Development and Mahaveli Development, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake:—

"The Tamils did not really wish to divide the country, although circumstances had led them to clamour for such a division.

— (CDN 8-3-82)

These two public statements made by two TULF leaders who have been involved in the human conflicts of our time since the days of Mr. S. J. V. Cheivanayakam, take the lid off the iron box of TULF 'secrets' and also exonerate the leaders from the charge of official dissembling—a charge often levelled against them, in relation to 'terrorism' in Jaffna and the *Belam* cry.

This position now throws on the government, during election year, an awesome responsibility.

The rough edges of the new Development Councils are still to be smoothed out and one such "edge" perhaps the sharpest, is the role of the ministers in the working of the development councils.

We are sure that the President and the Cabinet Ministers will appreciate that "the new engines of development", (as the Development Councils have been described) are likely to be meaningful and fruitful at the grassroot level only if the government ensures that they do not "move on determinate grooves".

The government and the TULF have reached now a crucial stage in the struggle to make the Development Councils a working reality.

What seems to us very necessary in our national life, in this context, is a *national consensus*. But what is happening instead, is that we are muddling from crisis to crisis with no specific goal in view.

Much has been spoken of our development efforts. But the important questions which have to be answered are, Development for what? Development for whom? Development by using what methods?

During election year, the temptation is irresistibly strong for the ruling party to be hectically involved in spending much time and energy, pointing to the people 'the pie in the sky'.

But the biggest 'pie in the sky' which President Jayawardene can point to the people and to posterity is the Development Council, if and when it becomes a working reality.

It is not difficult today to discern in the Tamil speaking areas a palpable anxiety hovering over the scene.

The Tamil people are no longer interested in the type of propaganda that has already commenced in the land. The 'old tunes' to them have no meaning or relevance.

Even after four years and eight months of intermittent political turbulence in this country, in which several precious and innocent lives have been lost and a trail of destruction left behind in many parts of the island, all that we hear from public platforms today is that the UNP wants to *save us* from shortages and underdevelopment and the anti-UNP forces want to *save us* from capitalism and its ancillary sins of greed and self-interest.

If that is all that the Tamil speaking people are to be saved from, we would with one voice acclaim, as the Vietnamese are reported to have once done, 'we wish to be saved from salvation.'

### Parliamentarians Bid Farewell to the House

On 27th March 1982 the Parliament of Sri Lanka met for the last time in the old Parliament House on Galle Face, Colombo. At noon the Secretary General of Parliament read the President's command proroguing Parliament until April 29 when the House will ceremonially meet at the new premises in Kotte.

### Jaffna Library

A "Jaffna Public Library Week" to rebuild and restore the gutted building will be held in Colombo from May 10th to 16th.

Arrangements are being made at the Saraswathy Hall, Bambalapitiya to collect books, periodicals and magazines from wellwishers. Any donations in cash to the restoration fund will be exempt from Income Tax.

### Creative Non-Violence

One would think that the question of Violence/Non-violence has become out of date in political philosophy, and perhaps in political theology too. But the very fact that it keeps coming up in every serious discussion of Christian commitment to liberation and a more just social order is evidence of its perennial challenge to the Christian conscience. Continued wrestling with this issue is bound to help us bring the mind of Christ to bear on whatever is our final choice, be it violence or non-violence and that can never be superfluous. It would be a great loss to Christian witness if, as the heat of the struggles around us and in which we are involved grows, we become insensitive to this inescapable dilemma. At Bangalore, Bishop Wickremesinghe commended to us Jesus as the self-sacrificing *satyagrahi*, no less than Jesus as the friend of sinners and outcasts and Jesus as the prophetic contestant and martyr. When he did this, he was not asking us to choose between them but to strive to hold the three together as the roots of a three-fold obedience that the realities of the modern world demand of Christians and the Church. Dr. C. S. Song was, in part, saying the same thing when he spoke of 'the power of tears', and when he declared that "the power of life released from the Cross must be the power that inspires our political theology and creates our political ethic".

Too often, we insist on solving problems in the old fashioned way, meeting force with force, hatred with hatred, when there can be other solutions if we stop, think and meditate. Today the need for an imaginative and liberating theology of non-violence is greater than ever, and it will only be discovered as action and meditation are drawn inseparably together. Segundo Galilea has urged that "as well as a theology, we need a spirituality of liberation." Paradoxically, our lives require both the apatheia of which the desert fathers wrote (a spiritual distance from our own suffering) and a consciousness of the deepest pathos in the world around us (especially in the Third World). *Spirituality and political commitment can no longer be disjointed.*

How do action and contemplation lend themselves to a liberating theology of non-violence? Can the element of surprise or paradox be applied to the problems we face in development work; for example, in a way similar to the opponent's thrust with a counterthrust, is it possible to find ways of yielding to the initial force, disarming the opponent by one's nonresistance, and thus creating a new situation altogether? Specifically, *five axioms* can be set forth, each put in the form of a paradox, each characterized by the unexpected.

1. *Liberating change will always begin with consciousness rather than action.* Danilo Dolci,

the Italian architect who became the "Gandhi of Sicily", went to the wretched village of Trappeto 27 years ago to do nothing. He simply began asking questions, gradually urging the people to think about their plight through a process he liked to call "popular self-analysis."

Liberation must begin not with action (especially not with the simple expenditure of large sums of money for the schooling of society, as Ivan Illich deploras), but with the raising of consciousness, with the awareness of suffering and repentance. The various impasses of poverty and oppression can never be moved by old solutions.

2. *Liberating change will involve respect for the opponent, not his repudiation.* A second paradoxical axiom for liberating nonviolent action involves the reframing of one's perception of both oppressor and oppressed. *The image of the intractable enemy is particularly called into question here.* Gandhi's conception of the force of truth insisted on seeing both parties within a conflict as subject to truth and in need of its wholeness. Gustavo Gutierrez urges similarly that the liberating love of Christ has to be applied in two directions. *The oppressed need to be liberated from their misery and the oppressors need to be liberated from their sin.* He writes: "Oae lover the oppressors by liberating them from their inhuman conditions as oppressors, by liberating them from themselves. ... It is not a question of having no enemies, but rather of excluding them from our love."

*The conviction, therefore, is strong that full liberation occurs only when both oppressor and oppressed are set free.* Instead of hardening the impasse by matching force against force, the two sides are now seen to be mutual parts of a larger whole. *The creative liberationist acts toward his opponent not simply so as to get power from him, but so as someday to make him his neighbor.*

— CCA News.

(to be continued)

### Court trial for 16 Policemen

Sixteen Policemen who have been charged at the Mallakam Court for murder, looting and arson during the communal disturbances in Jaffna (May 31 to June 5, 1981) did not present themselves in court for the second time when the case was called on 23-3-82.

An Open Warrant has been issued against them, according to news reports.

### In brief

○ *Vasanthapuram* in the Kankesanthurai Electorate will be the name of a new model village which will be opened by the Prime Minister Mr. R. Premadasa when he visits Jaffna in June this year.