

Editor's Note

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

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JBCSI

Evangelistic Festival at Kankesanthurai

The Evangelistic festival of the Tellipalai Evangelistic Area comprising the Tellipalai, Udupiddy, Atchuvai, Erlalai South, Erlalai North and K. K. S. Churches was held at the K. K. S. Church on the 22nd of May 1982.

The day's programme commenced with a Holy Communion Service conducted by the Revd. D. R. Ambalavanar, assisted by the Revds. D. C. Ratnasingam, A. V. Jesuthasan and V. Tharmakulasingam. The Sermon was Preached by Revd. D. R. Ambalavanar. The Prayer of Litany was led by Mr. Prince Ratnam, and the lessons were read by Messrs. K. Sinniah, R. J. Navaratnam and T. Thevenesan.

At 10.30 a. m. a Seminar on Evangelism was held at the K.K.S. Maha Vidyalayam hall. The Seminar was presided over by the Revd. D. C. Ratnasingam. Rev. V. Tharmakulasingam gave a talk on 'Evangelism in the Parish', Mr. P. J. Suriyakumar gave a talk on 'Evangelism amongst the Youth', Miss. Suvendra Thuraisingam gave a talk on 'Evangelism amongst the women', and Mrs. A. R. Thambiappah gave a talk on 'Evangelism amongst children'. Rev. S. Manobavan who was a Guest Speaker gave a talk on 'The Diocesan Evangelistic Work'. These talks were followed by lively discussions.

At 4.00 p. m. a 'Katha Pirasingam' was conducted by Revd. D. C. Ratnasingam.

The day's programme terminated with a fellowship Tea provided by the members of the above Churches.

Bishop Leo Nanayakkara

We regret to record the death which occurred on 28-5-82 of the Rt. Rev. Leo Nanayakkara, Bishop of Badulla. He was 64 years of age.

Bishop Nanayakkara was ordained to the priesthood on 10-2-50 and joined the staff of St. Anthony's College, Katugastota which institution he served from 1951 - 1959.

It was while at St. Anthony's, that he was elected Bishop of Kandy on 2-7-59 and consecrated on 3-10-59.

When the Diocese of Badulla was carved out of the Diocese of Kandy, he became the first Bishop of the New Diocese in February 1973.

He was President of the Peace and Justice Commission of the Sri Lanka Bishop's Conference. One of his last acts was to obtain whatever redress he could, to the Public Servants who had been "locked-out" since the strike in 1980.

The Y's Men's Club of Manipay

A New Project has been started by the above Club at the express request of the Regional Service Director (Y's lings).— A Talent Contest—to foster and promote light Classical Music amongst the children of the area.

The semi finals were worked out at the Memorial English School, Manipay on 22-5-82.

The Finals took place at the Uduvil Girls' College on 29-5-82 at 4 p. m. under the distinguished patronage of Mr. A. R. Kadirgamar, Principal, Jaffna College and Mrs. Kadirgamar, Mrs. Thavayegam Niles and a select Committee of the Club were in charge of the organisation. Mr. V. Suntharathas, President of the Club welcomed the Chief Guests and those present.

Mr. Kadirgamar complimented the organisers for the creditable show put up and requested Mrs. Niles to continue this great service to the children of the area.

Mrs. Kadirgamar distributed the awards. Mr. C. Arulsuthan, Secretary of the Club proposed the Vote of Thanks.

The following are the winners of the respective awards:—

1. Challenge Shield for Open Quartet
— Manipay Hindu Ladies' College.
2. Challenge Cup for Open Duet
— Y's ling Malini Tharmaseelan
— Miss Brindini Selvachandran.
3. Challenge Cup for Senior Vocal
— Miss Dharshana Emerson of Uduvil Girls' College.
4. Challenge Cup for Intermediate Vocal
— Miss Malini Tharmaseelan of Manipay.
5. Challenge Cup for Junior Vocal
— Chelvi Patrick of Uduvil Girls' College.
6. Challenge Cup for Veterans
— Not awarded.

— Cor.

Ten Political Detainees Released

The following yout 'Detainees' from the North were released on 8-6-82 by the government:— (1) Appulingam Vimalarajah (2) James Nicholas (3) Velupillai Tharmalingam (4) Chelliah Kulasegararajasingham (5) Premachandran alias Rajah (6) Ponnuthurai Sri Jeevahan (7) Thampu Kanthiah (8) Sivasubramaniam Arunakirathan (9) Thomas Aririthalingam and (10) Singaram Nadarajah.

This is a sequel to the talks which Mr. A. Amirthalingam had with the President, Mr. J. R. Jeyawardena on the subject. The final decision was taken by the

For the Record

Jaffna DDC Chairman's Policy Statement

Mr. S. Nadarajah, who made a policy statement on 12-5-82 at a Special sitting of the DDC, said "It is to the credit of the President that he steered through the Development Councils Act, thereby creating a landmark in the process of a devolution of power. As Chairman of the Development Council, Jaffna, I express my gratitude.

The Jaffna DC has now converted itself into a mini-parliament and works through sectoral committee headed by DC members with senior public servants serving as deputy secretaries. Talented personnel from the private sector have been co-opted to these committees.

Mr. Nadarajah, who described the establishment as a watershed in the process of decentralising the administration, said the TULF is conducting negotiations with the President to define, elucidate and amplify the authority and the financial resources available to development councils.

"The best arrangement for the provision of financial support to the DCs would be for selective transfer of taxes like BTT, Excise and taxes on corporate income. Such a step is possible under the DC Act and I strongly urge its being given effect" he said.

Urging that the DCs should first make full use of the 15 subjects handed over to them, he said that at a later stage efforts would be made to extend the scope of their activity to other areas like highways, electricity forestry, marketing, ayurvedha the textile and coconut industries and regional development.

Mr. Nadarajah presented an Integrated Rural Development Plan involving an out-lay of Rs. 750 million and asked the government to find the necessary foreign funding.

"When the request is seriously pursued, the government's overtures to the people of the North to join the mainstream of development will be considered genuine in intent" he said.

After giving details of the integrated plan, he welcomed the expansion of the cement factory, the installation of generators for thermal power by the Cement Corporation, and the construction of the harbour.

"The DC welcomes the construction of the harbour most whole-heartedly"

President, we learn, a day earlier than scheduled and communicated to the Opposition Leader through the Deputy Defence Minister.

Jaffna College

Wanted a Librarian

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PRINCIPAL

Jaffna College, Vaddukodai.

Whitsun Festival of Prayer at the Ashram

The Whitsun Festival of Prayer was held at the Christa Seva Ashram, Chunnakam from the 27th to the 29th of May. Sadhu Chellappah from S. India was the Chief Speaker on all three days.

The Holy Communion Service on consecutive days were conducted by the Revds. Sam Jayatillekera, Isaac Selvaratnam and D. R. Ambalavanar. Mr. P. J. Suriyakumar assisted at these Services. Sadhu Chellappah conducted the Bible Studies and was the Speaker at the Youth and public meetings.

Rev. Sam Alfred welcoming Sadhu Chellappah said that he was pleased to meet a person who had always associated himself with the Ashram movement. Sadhu Chellappah during his younger days was a Hindu and a member of the Sivananda Ashram, S. India. After he became a Christian he became a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, S. India, and now spends much of his time conveying the "Good News". Sadhu Chellappah is also a very close relation of Rev. Saverinayagam Jesudasu, the founder of the Christian Ashram movement.

IN BRIEF

○ One hundred and fifty government servants from Jaffna are yet "locked out" after the July 1980 'Strike' of Public Servants for enhanced salaries.

○ Sri Lanka has become a high level alcohol guzzling country warns the World Health Organisation.

○ The Cabinet has decided to increase charges in all paying wards of government hospitals from 1-6-82.

○ Jaffna District Development Council has already issued 40,000 applications for its Job Bank. All applications close on 30-6-82. Skilled labourers as masons and carpenters have also to apply on these forms.

EDITORIAL

Peace and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka!

Two significant pieces of headline news appeared in the first page of the *CDN* of 31-5-82.

One, under the arresting title 'Two pronged drive to keep the government clean' is the gist of a speech made by President Jayawardene at a public meeting after the unveiling of the pinnacle of a new dagoba at Akmeemana.

The thrust of the President's speech was that laws alone cannot remove corruption or prevent crime in the country. It is *example* more than *laws* that could prevent people from breaking the five precepts (*Pancha Seela*). "Temples" the President said "came into being only after Buddha sent his disciples to propagate the *dhamma* the world over".

In this context, the President made a pointed reference to the communal canker eating its way stealthily into our body politic. There was no point, he said, in a section of the people shouting slogans "chase the Tamils".

The other news item we refer to, is a speech made by Foreign Minister Hameed, at a Seminar at the Dumbara Campus of the Peradeniya University on the subject "Muslims in Sri Lanka".

Following the same line of thought as President Jayawardene, the Minister said: -

"I do not think communal politics can offer dividends to anyone in this country..... There would be two Muslim sections in future in Sri Lanka, one Tamil speaking and the other Sinhala speaking.

It is therefore imperative that we devise a mechanism so that these two parts of the same Muslim society do not lose their ties with each other".

The tenor of President Jayawardene's speech at Akmeemana and Foreign Minister Hameed's speech at Dumbara reflects the concern of the government over the contemporary political mood in Sri Lanka, a mood if allowed to gather momentum will spell disaster to the country.

It has been a happy augury, however, that during *Election Year* three world religious conferences have met in Colombo at the BMICH.

For, in the maze of political developments in this country (with 'parties' within 'parties', struggling to get their political goals clear), the three races which inhabit this country professing four great religions of the world, would have everything to gain by being more explicit about their religious moorings and motivation.

A significant comment was made during discussion time by Professor Max L. Stackhouse of Andover Newton Theological School (USA) at the Seminar of the CISRS held in Jaffna recently which he addressed on the subject "Christian Concepts of Justice."

The Professor said that the Conference of World Fellowship of Buddhists currently meeting in Colombo (June 1-5) should afford a unique opportunity for people of other religious faiths in Sri Lanka to discern the basic Buddhist concepts of justice which the government would be careful not to observe in the breach in a Buddhist country.

As a Christian Church, we have had no major World Conference here in Sri-Lanka in recent times. But at this point in our history, we as a Christian Church should be careful to resist the temptation of what the great theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls "cheap grace".

Reconciliation is not feeling 'good'. It does not mean merely holding hands together and singing 'we go together'. It is coming to grips with evil. We cannot be at peace with God and our neighbour if we succeed in closing our eyes to the realities of evil. "Peace" as a black theologian of Cape Town has said "is the active presence of justice. It is the *shalom*, the well being of all." In order to reconcile, Christ had to die.

As for the Tamil speaking community in this country at this hour of trial we have little doubt that our leaders believe that the dream of non-violent liberation lives strongly today even as it did during the time of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

"All history teaches us" said Martin Luther King "that like a turbulent ocean beating great cliffs into fragments of rocks, the determined movement of people incessantly demanding their rights always disintegrates the old order. It is this form of struggle, non co-operation with evil through mass action.....which offers the more effective road".

Book review

Princes in all the earth: A study of children in society and their rights in Sri Lanka, by Kenneth M. de Lanerolle.

Price Rs. 30.

The world either ill-treats its children or regards them with

condescension—as creatures who should be protected and trained to take the place their elders have prepared for them. They have never been treated as persons in their own right, entitled to recognition, interaction with adults and collegueship. Even those who framed the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the

Child have been guilty of this attitude, for their utterance have been made from a position of power and in a spirit of patronage; and there has been no attempt to prescribe specific obligations on the part of the adult towards the child.

This is the charge that runs through *Princes in all the earth*, a book based on a research paper presented by Kenneth de Lanerolle at a seminar on *Religions and Cultural Traditions in the Development of Human Rights in Sri Lanka*, where the author represented the Protestant Christian group.

Mr. de Lanerolle has during a span of nearly half a century, a period marked by vast and significant changes in the life of the nation, served as teacher and as head of denominational and State schools, given of his wise and mature counsel to Church and State, functioned for a term as Director of the Asian Church Service in war-ravaged Vietnam, and for many years as Director—Secretary of the Education Department of the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka. But the changes referred to—Independence, free education and instruction in the mother tongue, the State take-over of assisted schools and several welfare measures—have in most cases only served to widen the differences between groups, heighten tensions and accentuate inequalities. Protective laws are infringed with impunity and the best laid schemes, the fruits of much thought and labour, are often ruined by inept administration, bureaucratic lethargy, political meddling, the influence of vested interests, and our own (too reactionary) attitude to the children in our midst. There is a grave dearth of true leadership, and a wide gap between profession and practice. A new threat to cherished values and social stability is posed by the growth of tourism and the emergence of a new rich class as a result of current political and economic policies. It is in this context that we are invited to consider the plight of our children.

The fact that children in Sri Lanka are not exposed to some of the extreme forms of cruelty that are practised against children in other countries should not by itself give us cause for self-congratulation. This truth the author vividly brings home to us with the 10 profiles of children with which he introduces his thesis, and the detailed information he gives thereafter regarding the various areas of injustice and deprivation. After dealing with the conditions of life in the plantations and in the city's slums, and the problems of school drop-outs, the disabled, the question of health and nutrition, juvenile delinquency, the impact of tourism and the imbalances in our educational system, which is heavily weighted against the poorer child, he is drawn to the depressing conclusion that "our educational

system is a violation of the fundamental rights of the bulk of our children", and that "in regard to our conformity with the principles of human rights our record.....is deplorable".

What is the Christian attitude towards children, from which the author derives his inspiration? And what is the record of the Church and of Christian organisations in the field of human rights in Sri Lanka? Jesus belonged to a tradition that saw nothing unusual in a boy of 12 engaging himself in serious discussion with senior theologians; and children held a high place in His thinking. (Mark 9:33—37, and 10:13—15). In Christian nurture, therefore, it is not a question of how we can make our children Christians, but how we can be Christian with our children. In the sphere of human rights it is the author's view that the Church has not been slow to make its voice heard wherever there was a violation of human rights. It has also given expression to its human concern through its schools, its work among the handicapped etc. (though he has occasion to state later on in the book that its highly institutionalised life and urban slant have stood in the way of the major involvements needed for our day).

In the final chapter the author discusses the elements in our culture that provide the climate favourable to the promotion of the rights of the child, the constraints that have stood in the way, the need to frame a Bill of Rights that will harmonise with our culture and traditions, and the strategies that should be employed to ensure that these rights are taught and observed. The roles of the school, the home and the teacher of religion are spelt out, and the special problems of racism, the illegitimate child, the adolescent etc are all discussed in detail.

The author concludes by referring to two scriptural passages that would point to the leadership role of the child. In the ushering in of an era of peace a little child shall lead. And the boy who gave away the few loaves and fishes he had—did he have the key to the solution of our economic problems?

The value of this closely reasoned thesis is enhanced by the notes that appear at the end of the book, 5 useful appendices, a selected bibliography, a glossary of unfamiliar terms and photographs that speak more eloquently than words. There is much artistry in the arrangement of the material, and the cover design with a picture of 4 children at the entrance of a 'line' room framed by a crown, is both meaningful and pleasing to the eye. This book should be read, marked and inwardly digested by parents, teachers, framers of educational policy, clergy and all those who ought to have a concern for human rights.

G. A. GNANAMUTTU.