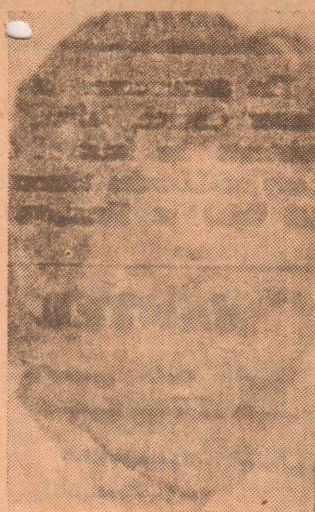


Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 2 No. 8

February 19, 1983



The man
who
could
have
become
President

Will the Upali crash now lead to a

POLITICAL FALL-OUT?

A major political fall-out resulting in the exit of prime figures from the United National Party government may well be the immediate consequence of the suspected crash of the plane which carried Upali Wijewardene, according to informed political sources in Colombo.

A wave of genuine regret has been sweeping Sri Lanka from North to South ever since the news came that the country's leading international entrepreneur, Press baron and political "dark horse" Upali Wijewardene (43) and his private Learjet carrying five others have been missing after take-off from Kuala Lumpur's Subang International Airport at 8.41 p.m. on Sunday night, 13th February. A five-day

sea and air search by ships and planes belonging to seven nations yielded no trace of the missing plane and its occupants until it was reported that the wreckage of the Upali jet had been located off the Indonesian island of Sumatra on Friday. But until the time of our going to Press on Saturday morning the 19th, the wreckage has yet to be identified.

Although it is now widely believed that the plane had crashed leaving no survivors, hope lingers in family circles and the popular mind that the man who once publicly declared that he would like to be President of Sri Lanka some day, might yet be alive. While hope thus lingers, the mystery of the missing plane has deepened.

An Act of Sabotage?

Lear Jets Corporation of Arizona, U.S. have flown in two specialist teams to Singapore and Malaysia following suspicions that the plane could have been sabotaged. Agents of the Corporation in Singapore have said that the plane was in perfect condition when it left Singapore after its servicing.

The Government of Sri Lanka is flying its own C.I.D. team to Malaysia to investigate the possibility of sabotage.

The Chief-of-staff of the Sri Lanka Air Force, Air Commodore A. W. Fernando had paid a magnanimous tribute to Capt. Francis Ignatius Anandappa who possibly piloted the ill-fated Lear jet as the best pilot the Air Force has had. (The Daily News in its initial report on February 15 stated however that it was Capt. Soysa who was at the controls). Capt. Anandappa was the first to occupy the cockpit of every Mig Jet added to the

Air Force fleet, he said. "He was peerless in acrobatics and was the pride of the Air Force", he said. "Piloting a craft like the one that carried Upali Wijewardene is child's play for him".

While not ruling out the possibility that Upali Wijewardene could have earned business enmity in Malaysia where he has extensive business interests, political circles in Colombo point out that Upali's spectacular success in international business, and the tremendous political potential he had in being a cousin of President Jayawardene and linked by marriage ties to the leading SLFP family made him an object of antagonism among some political figures in Sri Lanka. The enmity had surfaced off and on in public forums and is within public knowledge, they say.

Upali Wijewardene who was featured in the cover of ASIAN BUSINESS, a prestigious monthly, was one of the leading businessmen of Asia to be invited for SUMMIT '83, a function to be held in Hong Kong from May 25-27, to discuss common problems of Asian economic development.

Among those who were in the missing jet along

with Upali Wijewardene was Jaffna-born S. Murugaratnam (S. M. Ratnam) from Siththankerni now a Malaysian citizen, who handled Upali's business

interests in Malaysia. The others were Peli Muhandiram, one of the key Upali executives, Capt. Anandappa, Capt. Soysa, and steward Senanayake.

Madras Conference begins today

A two-day mass conference to focus attention on the welfare of the hill-country Tamils in Sri Lanka begins in Madras today (Saturday). Billed to speak tomorrow are TULF leader A. Amirthalingam and S.C. Chandrasenan.

Tamil Nadu leaders asso-

ciated with the rally include Kamaraj Congress leader, P. Nedumaran, Rajya Sabha member Dr. Janarthan, veteran Congressman Dr. Ma Po Sivagnam and K. Rajaram. The Ceylon Workers' Congress leader Minister S. Thondaman has disassociated himself with this move.

Police Inspector, Driver shot dead

Headquarters Inspector K. R. Wijewardene of Point Pedro Police and his jeep driver, both in civils, were shot dead opposite an eating shop in Point Pedro around 8.40 last night, Friday February 18, by unknown gunmen. The assailants are reported to have driven off in the same Police Jeep.

Police and Army patrols

have been intensified in the Point Pedro and Valvettiturai areas and coastal areas are being watched. Mr. Wijewardene figured in the news recently when he took down the statement of the former Pt. Pedro D. J. Mr. Thilakan in open court when Mr. Thilakan made allegations against an Army officer who had insulted him on the highway. (S.R. Jan 29)

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Siruthivu Feast on Sunday Feb. 20

The parishioners of St. James' Church, Jaffna, will celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes tomorrow (20 Feb.) at Siruthivu, a

small island between Mandaitivu and Gurunagar South.

DEATHS

THURAISINGHAM—K. (Valuation Inspector, Jaffna) beloved son of late Mr. K. Kanagaratnam (retired Auditor General and Ex M.P. for Vaddukodai) and late Mrs. Kanagaratnam, beloved husband of Annaluckshmy (Principal, Namasivaya Vidyalaya, Jaffna) loving father of Shiranee, Balendra, (student, St. Patrick's) and Harichandra (Jaffna Hindu College), son-in-law of late A. Ponnampalam and Mrs. Ponnampalam of Vaddukodai, loving brother of late Capt. Kandiah, late Vijayaluckshmy Namasivayam, Dr. Bala-

subramaniam (Anaipanthi, Jaffna), Mrs. Kamalambikai Kathirkamasekaran (Australia), Selvarajah (Ex-Planter), Mrs. Ratneswary Mathanagopalan, Mrs. Sarojini Ramakrishna (St. Pauls, Milagiriya) and Narendran (Proprietary Planter), brother-in-law of R. Namasivayam (Attorney-at-Law and Secretary, Thiruketheeswaram Temple Restoration Society), Sivapackiam Balasubramaniam (Canagaratnam MMV, Jaffna), Dr. Kathirkamasekaran (Sydney), Indradevi Selvarajah, N. Mathanagopalan (Ceylon Electricity Board, Colombo), Prof. R. S. Ramakrishna (Colombo University) and Rathika Narendran, died under tragic circumstances. Cremation took place at Kombayan Manal, Jaffna, on Thursday, 17th. No. 6, Kanthapurana Veethy off Amman Road Jaffna.

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JAFFNA

EDITOR
S. Sivanayagam

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Mr. President, what a soul-stirring and heart-warming speech that was from the Octagon in Kandy!

Embellished with references to compassion, truth and the rule of law, it was kingly in content and tone.

Particularly moving was the appeal to the people to "Share my burdens..... I need the help of everyone of you to accomplish the responsibilities entrusted to me."

I was instantly reminded of the late President John F. Kennedy's call to the American nation in his inaugural address in 1961: "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

However, the co-operation of any people, to be meaningful, must be voluntary. And for this the rulers must create the proper climate.

Unfortunately, the United National Party Government suffers from a terrible credibility gap created by an increasing divergence between its words and deeds. In fact, when I listen to the speeches of some of its leaders now, my hand involuntarily begins to reach for the proverbial pinch of salt!

In Kandy in July 1977, Mr. Jayawardene spoke as "the Prime Minister of all the people of this land." Again in Kandy in February 1978, he addressed the people as "the first executive President of all Sri Lanka." And in the latest address, he referred to himself as "the ruler of every citizen who lives in this land."

But there are large segments of Sri Lankans, both in the North and the South, who believe that they do not belong, that they have no place in the Government's scheme of things, that in fact, they are unwanted.

The Government, by its actions, has even succeeded in accentuating the fears, suspicions and antagonisms of the Sinhalese and Tamils.

Take the Government's election pledge to hold an all-party conference soon after assuming office to seek solutions to the grievances of the

Political Causerie

by

Gamini Navaratne

Govt's divergence in word and deed

How about by-elections to the Batticaloa, Kalkudah and Mutur seats? And how about Kotte?



He knows too much?

minorities, particularly of the Tamil people. It has yet to take place, while secret talks with the Tamil United Liberation Front alone have not yielded satisfactory results. In the meantime, misguided or over-zealous security personnel are spawning more "terrorists", complicating the situation further.

In the South, the Government antagonised sizeable sections of the people by, among other actions, stripping Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike of her civic rights in one of the most crass acts of political victimisation.

How can the Government expect the people's co-operation after all this? To share the burdens or responsibilities of Government?

For the sake of Sri Lanka and its people, President Jayawardene should, as one of the first tasks of his new administration, launch a campaign devised to bring about national unity and reconciliation, which is essential if we are to tackle the country's grave economic situation, which is becoming graver daily.

In the North, the devolution of state power, through district councils or other means, offers the only hope of keeping Sri Lanka in one piece. Until the institutional arrangements are worked out—and there should not be more delay over this—the security forces must be kept on a



The President
A Credibility gap

tight leash; by all means, go after the Tigers, but please order them to leave peaceful citizens alone.

In the South, the Government could win much goodwill, even co-operation, if the President were to pardon Mrs. Bandaranaike. What is the threat that the leader of the hopelessly divided Sri Lanka Freedom Party could pose to Mr. Jayawardene, now that he is firmly ensconced in power until 1989? The experience and energies of a national leader who was twice Prime Minister and could still be of some service to the people are now lost to the nation in the Government's pursuit of some vague principle or another. Only one stroke of the President's pen is necessary to end an untenable and embarrassing situation.

And how about re-instating at least now the remaining public sector employees who were dismissed after the 1980 strike—also by a stroke of the pen?

It is not flights of fancy on the wings of rhetoric that make great statesmen but great deeds that match great ideas and principles. That is the lesson of history.

FIFTH AMENDMENT

The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution—the fifth in four and a half years! —is reportedly on the way to enable by-elections to be held in the 20 electorates where the UNP failed to poll as many votes at the Presidential poll and the referendum as at the 1977 elections.

If the Supreme Court rules that the amending bill would require approval by the people at a referendum, then the Government's plan would be to fill the vacant seats by nomination, that is, allow the bill to lapse.

Why by-elections only in 20 electorates when the UNP fared badly in 31 electorates? Why? was not the same principle insisted on in the case of the Minister of Finance, who resigned from the Devinuwara seat to be promptly nominated to Bulathsinghala? Is it because he knows too much about Sri Lanka's creaky economy that he should not be allowed to leave the Government?

The forced resignations of the MPs concerned—with several more likely to be asked to go before long—is likely to create serious tensions within the UNP. And when elephants fight, the consequences could be terrible!

The question I am worried about and which I asked in a previous issue—is: Are we going to live for some more time on a diet of constitutional changes, elections and referendums when the Minister of Finance has painted a grim picture of the economic situation that there is no time to get involved in what are at most side issues?

Or are the constitutional changes and elections a clever ploy to distract the people's attention from the looming economic crisis?

Personally, I wish that the money and energy that is going to be spent on the by-elections were diverted to fighting the mosquito menace, which has now reached intolerable proportions throughout the country. These mosquitos are sapping the health of our people more insidiously than the political mosquitos, some of whom have now been brought down from their pedestals. (Sandesa News Agency).

Gandhi, Bobby Sands & fasting as a weapon

"AHIMSA" of Jaffna, writes:

Whether Rev. Father Aparanam Singarayer is fasting at Welikade no one knows. In Sri Lanka, so far no politician professing to follow the Gandhian path has resorted to serious fasting. There have been sit-down fasts lasting from dawn to one hour before dusk but this is meaningless since most of us have lunch by about 2 p.m.

Fasting as a weapon brings to mind Mahatma. In 1918 Gandhiji resorted for the FIRST but not the LAST time to a new tactic which would prove very effective in the

later Independence struggle. He began a fast on behalf of striking textile mill workers of Ahmedabad. The mill owners were horrified and capitulated within 3 days.

In 1981 Bobby Sands, 27, newly elected member of the British Parliament became a martyr by fasting unto death. In prison Bobby showed literary talents. Wrote he in "Modern Times":

"It is said we live in modern times, In the civilised year of seventy-nine, But when I look around, all I see, Is modern torture, Pain and hypocrisy.

In modern times little Children die. They starve To death but who dares Ask why? And little girls without attire, Run screaming, 'Napalmed' through the night afire.

In an essay titled "The Lark and the Freedom Fighter", he is said to have written: "My grandfather once said that the imprisonment of the lark is a crime of the greatest cruelty because the lark is one of the greatest symbols of freedom and happiness.... I feel something in common with that poor bird.... I am a political

prisoner, a freedom fighter.. I have been stripped of my clothes and locked in a dirty, empty cell where I have been starved, beaten and tortured... But I have the spirit of freedom that cannot be quenched."

In another essay called 'I fought a Monster', he is said to have written: "My body is broken and cold, I am lonely and I need comfort. From somewhere afar I hear those familiar voices which keep me going. We are with you son... don't let them beat you. I need to hear those voices. They anger the monster. It retreats.... I know that if they

shout louder, they will scare the monster away and my suffering will be ended."

Margaret Thatcher the so-called 'Iron Lady' allowed Bobby to die in prison. Mrs. Thatcher, a shop keeper's daughter, leading a nation of Shop keepers (or their descendants), broke down and wept, when her son on a Trans Sahara Car Rally got lost for a while. So after all, there was nothing "iron" about her? One yet remembers press photos of Bobby's little son following the Dad's coffin.

What a cruel world? Are there no solutions?

Get softened up for the March 8 massacre!

Sri Lanka's Government-run and pro-Government newspapers appear to be softening up the people for the great Massacre on March 8.

During the Presidential election and the Referendum campaigns most of these newspapers had glossed over the gravity of the economic crisis faced by Sri Lanka, while highlighting the 'achievements' of the Government in the economic sphere and praising its 'democratic' nature, citing as evidence the decision to advance the election dates.

Only the 'Saturday Review' throughout warned its readers that Sri Lanka is in dire economic straits and that was precisely why the Government decided to hold early elections and not because of its so-called 'commitment to democracy'.

If the people had been made aware of the true economic position of the country after five years of United National Party rule when the result of the Presidential poll and the Referendum might have been different.

Hard times are ahead

Now most of the big newspapers have begun to warn the people that hard times are ahead, implying, if not stating specifically, that they must be prepared to make sacrifices, to shoulder more burdens.

Even the Government-controlled "Daily News," which rarely highlights matters like the high cost of living and the acute employment, recently referred to the 'looming economic crisis.'

'The Weekend' went one step further and published an interview with the Minister of Finance, Mr. Ronnie de Mel in which he said, 'Sri Lanka runs the risk of a complete political and economic breakdown unless a viable balance of payments situation can be achieved.'

At the expense

That the 'open economy' strategy has boomeranged was admitted this month by no less than that hot-gospeller of free trade, the Minister of Trade, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, who was quoted in the "Sun" as saying, 'Sri Lanka would have to review bilateral trade ties with countries which imposed counter productive quota restrictions on Sri Lanka's exports. While Sri Lanka

was trying its best to get into a sound economic footing, it was unconscionable that some countries which made rhetorical gestures of support had restricted our growth by either clamping down quota restrictions or making token allowances for quota increases when it was well within their power to extend more exports areas to Sri Lanka's exports.'

I wonder whether by any chance one of the countries he had in mind was the Government's 'best friend,' the United States of America?



Lalith Athulathmudali

by our Economic Correspondent

The Government, in keeping with the UNP's political and economic philosophy—that is, its commitment to safeguard the resurrected capitalist social structures—will no doubt attempt to solve the crisis at the expense of the masses, as it tried to do in 1953.

In 1953, it failed, but this time there is nothing to prevent it from having its way. The opposition parties are in disarray; so are the trade unions after the body blows suffered during the 1980 general strike. And there are the draconian Essential Services Act and the anti-Terrorist Act to deal with any trouble-makers even without the assumption of emergency powers.

The measures contemplated by the Government to meet

the budget deficit of nearly Rs. 30 billion and the chronic balance of payments deficit and likely to be announced with the Budget are likely to include —

A further devaluation of the rupee;

Higher import duties; Elimination of the remaining subsidies; and

A new value added tax on most consumer items.

Deflation, devaluation or a mix of the two are the stock measures recommended by the International Monetary Fund to bring the balance of payments back in equilibrium. While these measures may be appropriate for advanced industrial economies whose domestic output, exports and imports are highly diversified, it has been pointed out by reputed economists that for develop-

ing countries like Sri Lanka, where life often revolves around the production and export of a few commodities, they are "often a cure worse than the disease."

The Senior Deputy Governor of the Central Bank, Dr. H. N. S. Karunatilake was quoted in a newspaper saying, "the devaluation of the rupee will not be a helpful step at this stage. I don't think devaluation is necessary. It will mean an increase in prices....."

The subsidy bill in 1982 was around Rs. 9,000 million.

ture forgetting about the colossal waste of public funds on non essential work.

Income tax for the private sector is likely to be abolished for persons with incomes of less than Rs. 3,500 a month to bring them in line with public sector employees; but every Sri Lankan will be paying 'income tax' when the new value added tax is enforced. Yes, even the beggar, for most items in daily use are likely to attract this tax.

The Government cannot adopt any alternative strategy because its economic policies are dictated by the World Bank and the IMF, however much the Minister of Finance may deny it. And behind these two world financial behemoths are the U. S. Government headed by President Reagan.

So my countrymen, prepare to make the necessary sacrifices for Sri Lanka's sake. Prepare as President Jayewardene said from the Octagon in Kandy, to "share" the Government's burdens; but never the goodies and the perks and the other boons, these are meant, as always, whichever party is in power, for those lucky people who have everything lined up for them. Especially politicians.

'To refer to Tamils as a minority is a misnomer'

Very often in the press in public utterances on political platforms and in statements published we come across the word 'minority' often associated with the Tamils of the country. This is a very serious lapse on the part of informed personalities and more so with politicians and parliamentarians who are supposed to be paragons of political wisdom.

The political leaders and parliamentarians who have to lead the people towards Tamil Eelam appear to have not given serious thought to this matter. Ceylon (Sri Lanka) is a geographical entity with Tamil and Sinhalese sovereign states existing in the past.

This is history and going to be so in the future which again is history. Except during the colonial administration when Ceylon was brought under one administration for convenience and subsequently now under Sinhalese domination we have been existing as a independent sovereign people. So in this context what does this 'minority' relating to the Tamils connote? The so called leaders and others are well advised to bear in mind the nationhood of the Tamils lest it might endanger our national existence psychologically demoralise and de-nationalise us.

Apart from this there is another term which is equally dangerous and also a misnomer,

this is, 'Tamil speaking'. Those who speak of Tamil Nationalism should well understand that there is no such nation as 'Tamil speaking.' This term is used to include the Sri

catching and when language problems crop up could provide a common platform for a get-together; but under no circumstances could 'Tamil

A point of view

by M. Mahalingam

Lanka Muslims who say they have adopted the Tamil language but their mother tongue is Arabic and their culture and religion are different. The use of this term 'Tamil speaking' is well and good for vote

speaking people constitute a nation. Except for the language the Muslims speak, all their characteristics are different and Muslim spokesmen too have claimed it to be so.

A hungry Tamil Officer Kumarasamy, working in Colombo, walks into his office canteen one late afternoon. He is disappointed that his usual 'vadai' and 'thalaguli' are over. The canteen-boy knowing that he is a strict vegetarian, doubly assures him that the cutlet is vegetarian. But when Kumarasamy has taken a bite he smells to his consternation the stale stink of fish. He rushes out of the canteen and gulps out the piece. Returning, he tells the canteen boy that he was not going to pay for the cutlet! It is then that Danny-baas, a Sinhalese subordinate of his, tells the boy that it is still Kumarasamy who has to pay for the cutlet. When Kumarasamy attempts to argue, his subordinate slaps him and says that he should keep his bravado in Jaffna and not try it in Colombo.

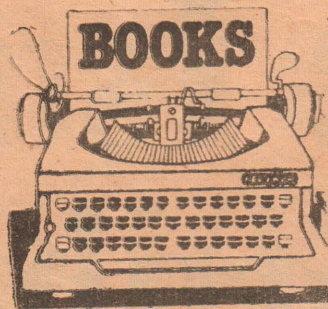
The next day when the other Tamil colleagues indignantly suggest to Kumarasamy that he should report the subordinate, Kumarasamy hesitates. He fears that the issue might become a racial one. But when the enraged colleagues still insist on his reporting, Kumarasamy comes out with the actual reason for his hesitation: his horoscope has predicted a dangerous period for the month and hence it is better to hush the matter!

Conversational prose

The above is not a live incident that occurred recently though it won't be surprising if such an incident did occur in present day Sri Lanka. This is actually a short story written by Santhan titled "Thamilan" in one of his recent publications of short stories. Santhan's casual conversational prose and colloquial dialogue make the story sound very realistic and dramatic. But the characteristic that stands out, as in his other stories, is his balanced approach. Not only is he critical of Danny-baas' unreasonable communal outburst, but he also reveals the limitations of the conservative Tamil man, his stinginess, his comically rigid vegetarianism, apathy and irrational enslavement to the horoscope. As the title shows (i. e., 'A Tamil') it is the ironic revelation of the Jaffna man's attitude that is Santhan's main concern.

Illustrated Weekly of India

With two recent publications of his collection of short stories — "Krishnan Thoothu" and "Mulaikal" — Santhan once again treats the readers with his dramatic style and balanced approach to experiences. This 36 year old bearded, pleasant draughtsman has already published three other collections of short stories and a novel. One of the very promising contem-



porary writers in Tamil, he also won the Sahitya Mandakala literary Award in 1975. Some of his stories have appeared in translations in the Illustrated Weekly of India.

Even very simple, matter-of-fact experiences of daily life are used by Santhan as subjects for his stories, and in his masterly hands these casual incidents emerge as worthwhile experience. It is true that most of these incidents are treated in the background of the looming communal problem in Sri Lanka. But though Santhan is a Tamil he is totally detached in his writing,

small planet and their daily drama of a struggle for existence.

The narration is very swift and dramatic. The author never enters into the story heavily to moralize or theorize on the incident. He strikes no elevated pompous note, but narrates as casually as possible. But no one can deny that through a clever arrangement of details he communicates the pathos of the situation, and externalizes his sympathy for the little girl without becoming sentimental.

Though the so called breed of 'progressive' writers might accuse Santhan of not up-

Reviewed by

Suresh

and makes complex judgements, sometimes ironically criticizing the Tamils themselves. Never does he allow himself to be guided by narrow prejudices.

Santhan is a very humane writer and sometimes it is the downtrodden among the Sinhalese who become objects of his sympathy. In 'POOKOLAM' (i. e. 'GLOBE') the main character, a Tamil, while walking around Fort, sees a small model of a globe being sold on the pavements and remembers that he had wanted to buy one for his child. But inquiring, he finds that the price ranges from 7/50 to 8 rupees, which he feels is too expensive. But as he walks further he sees a small girl selling these models, for 7/50. And as he rejects the offer and walks off she calls him back offering it for Rs. 6/50. He is surprised, but seeing that she is an innocent small girl, he doesn't feel justified in accepting the offer; instead he advises her that the traders are selling it at Rs. 7. 50 and walks off. But the girl once again calls him back asking him to accept it for Rs. 6/- and desperately explains that she had had no sales that day.

It is then that he looks at this ten year old Sinhalese girl, tired and weak from standing under the scorching sun, her dirty uniform showing that she must have rushed directly from school to look after this trade, and with hardship and frustration written on her face. At once he takes his purse, keeps back only 30 cents for his bus fare and gives all the rest amounting to seven rupees to the girl and buys the model. As he walks off he sympathetically laughs at the globe, symbolically laughing at all the human beings in this

holding any particular ideology or committing himself to the cause of a particular community yet one feels it is good that Santhan remains so. This detachment gives him sufficient freedom to enter into each situation and the experiences of each character and make complex judgments, doing justice to the case of each character regardless of whether he is a Sinhalese or a Tamil, a devout Hindu or atheistic Marxist. The fact that he doesn't narrow experiences down to suit a particular ideology or cause contributes to the richness of quality and greater scope of his short stories.

Life first, later literature

But this doesn't mean that Santhan is a mere Aesthete, one who believes in 'Art for Art's Sake', one who writes for the sake of beauty and literary perfection only. As he himself puts it "For me life comes first. Literature plays a secondary role. In the Process of Life, it is possible for literature to only be a 'by-product'. One can guess that it is Santhan's extreme fidelity to life that prevents him from enslaving himself to a particular ideology. After all life is so complex that it cannot be reduced to suit a particular stream of thinking. Thus Santhan is able to avoid the limitations of the modern existential novelists or the Soviet writers who slightly falsify life to confirm their own particular "World-View".

Santhan's masterpiece is of course "Krishnan Thoothu" which symbolically suggests Lord Krishna's mission between the warring parties of Pandavar and Thuriyothanar.

The legend is the backdrop to the narration of the struggle through letters of some Tamil officers in a Colombo Office demanding their management to use their language in official matters. The trouble is sparked off when the Tamil officers find that their "Welfare Association" has printed its letter heads only in Sinhala and English and not in Tamil. As the printing is still not over, the Tamil Officers demand that Tamil too be used.

As the Tamil officers organise themselves to write a letter of demand to the management, Santhan captures their complex feelings with

scenes almost resembling the cinematic montage effect. Santhan dramatises the increasingly courageous demands of the Tamil officers and the evasive answers of the unfair management. Ultimately the Tamil officers are driven to stand to their word and resign from the Welfare Association. But the ending is not pessimistic. The resignation is a triumph for the Tamil officers because it is the first and only instance when all twenty nine Tamil officers write in a collective decision. An ironic compliment indeed for a community of selfish materialistic individuals who can rarely bring themselves to unite over any issue!

But the main weakness of the story is a lack of organisation. Santhan could have been more selective in his characters. Many who don't contribute anything substantial to the development of the story are strewn across the pages. In another story, "Mulaikal", too one feels the scenes could have been better structured. A more selective and restrained use of characters and incidents is something Santhan will have to attend to in his future stories.

The usual tale of woe that circles of Tamil writers repeat, is that it is very difficult for a writer using Tamil to earn his bread, because the community is so obsessed with its own material self-advancement that it has very little time or money for the luxury of reading a Tamil story. However it may be, Santhan is a writer whom we should encourage, because this young 36 year old writer has the stuff of a great artist in him.

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Tamil Rights: Is it an internal problem?

Is the Ceylon Tamil problem an internal problem? This question is being raised by several persons whenever some other country discusses the Ceylon Tamil problem.

In a technical sense Ceylon Tamil problem is not an internal problem. This is because the sovereignty of the Ceylon Tamil nation which was ethnically, geographically and linguistically separately identifiable and distinct, has revived since 1970.

Thereafter the Ceylon Tamil nation has not been conquered by the Sinhalese Nation. The Ceylon Tamil Nation has not consented to the constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka Furthermore This constitution has no legal continuity with the past.

Therefore the Ceylon Tamil nation is entitled to exercise the sovereignty which is already vested in them and be a free distinct separate state or decide to federate with the Sinhala State or States.

Let us analyse and examine this contention. To start with, I set out below a brief resume of the submissions and arguments advanced by the late M. Tiruchelvam Q. C. on behalf of the defence and referred to in the judgment of the Trial-at-Bar No. 1 of 1976 in the case of the "Republic of Sri Lanka -vs- Appapillai Amirthalingam":

Symbolic repudiation

"Once there is a break in legal continuity the sovereignties, of the inhabitants of the Island until then under eclipse so to speak, appear once again. Hence the sovereignty of the Tamil Nation which was ethnically, geographically and linguistically separately identifiable and distinct revived".

"Historically the territory called Jaffna Patam that belonged to the Tamil Nation lay in the northern and eastern portions of Ceylon from the limits of Puttalam and Mannar to the Kumbukkan Oya".

"Therefore if an autochthonous constitution is to be promulgated the consensus of the majority of the Tamil Nation should be unequivocally obtained".

"In fact the Tamil members showed their repudiation of the Constitution in a symbolic way when they made a bonfire of it by way of Public demonstration".

"Autochthony cannot be established by a mere counting of heads. The question is, does the majority of the Tamil Nation accept the new Constitution? That should have been ascertained by a referendum or plebiscite, but this was not done".

"As the Constitution had no legal continuity with the past and as the claims that it is autochthonous were also not valid the constitution is illegal and the courts set up under it are not valid".

The three High Court Judges before whom this was raised could not make a pronouncement on this issue for the reason?

"..... so far as the validity of our Constitution is concerned because we were not High Court Judges under an Old Constitution no such office being known to the law prior to the 1972 Constitution. We are High Court Judges created under the new legal order established by the

but lived in Colombo upto the year 1597, Dom Hicronimo do Azevedo being the Captain General of the conquered territory; in this year the Lord was pleased to call him to the blessed State. And when he felt that his hour was drawing near he set about arranging his affairs and distributed his property among those who had worked for him. He made his will in which he declared that he had no son to succeed him in his Kingdoms and that therefore he appointed the King of Portugal his universal heir to all of them and thus he became absolute lord of all territories situated within the Island, only the Kingdoms of Candia and

in Ceylon Almanac and Annual Register 1855-Appendix pages 3,4 and 5).

The Kingdom of Jaffna held on upto 1619 AD and with the fall of Jaffna the sovereignty of the Tamils which was vested in the King of Jaffna passed on to the Portuguese.

These two sovereignties later passed on to the Dutch and then to the British while the sovereignty of the people of Kandy which was vested in the King of Kandy also passed on to the British in 1815.

Though the British had taken over the entire Island these three areas were administered separately upto 1833 till these areas were amalgamated on the recomm-

time to draft and adopt a Constitution for the whole of India.

Therefore to enact a new Constitution in 1970 Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike the then Prime Minister moved a resolution at the Constitution Assembly on the 19th day of July, 1970 to break the legal continuity with the British Parliament and further resolved to declare and proclaim. "Sri Lanka to be a free sovereign and independent Republic.... deriving its authority from the people of Sri Lanka and not from the power and authority assumed and exercised by the United Kingdom in the grant of the present Constitution of Ceylon nor from the said Constitution". (Vide proceedings of the Hansard of 19.07.1970.).

With the break in the legal continuity the sovereignties of the inhabitants of the Island namely people of Kandy, Kotte and Jaffna revived to the respective people. Therefore in the absence of the legal continuity or the consent of the Tamil Nation the Constitution enacted is not Valid and binding on the Tamil Nation.

With the revival of the sovereignties the Tamils as well as the Kandyans were entitled to exercise their sovereignties and enact and adopt a Constitution for each of them. But the Kandyans have consented to amalgamate and have one Constitution even though they were entitled to function as a Separate State. But the Tamils have upto date not consented to the present Constitution and are therefore entitled to exercise the sovereignty which is already vested in them and be a free distinct separate State.

by

R. Balasubramaniam

Attorney-at-Law

Constitution of Sri Lanka of 1972. Further by the terms of our oath we have sworn allegiance to the Republic of Sri Lanka and undertaken to serve the Republic in accordance with the Constitution and the law.

In these circumstances the time-honoured and judicially settled principle of justiciability that a court or tribunal which owes its creation to a particular Constitution cannot embark upon an inquiry into the validity of that Constitution demands to be accepted. We therefore hold that the validity of the Constitution is not justiciable by us".

As the matter is still open it will be useful and interesting to analyse further this argument and see to what extent this argument of the late M. Tiruchelvam Q. C. is correct.

Prior to the arrival of the Portuguese there were three major Kingdoms in Ceylon viz: Kotte, Kandy and Jaffna.

The sovereignties of the inhabitants of these three major Kingdoms were vested in the respective King of each Kingdom.

In the year 1597 AD the Emperor of Kotte Dom Jode Paria Pandar who conceived such an affection for the Portuguese left for Portugal and thereafter bequeathed his Kingdom to the King of Portugal (see CHILAO by Rubeiro pages 90 and 91).

"The Emperor Dom Jode Paria Pandar conceived such an affection for the Portuguese that he would not leave them,

Uva belonging to Dona Catharina while the kingdom of Jaffna patam had its own native King."

On the death of the King of Kotte the sovereignty of the King of Kotte passed on to the Portuguese.

At that time the Kingdom of Jaffna Patam had its own native King (see Ceilea by Reberiro pages 90 and 91). The boundaries of Jaffna Patam are given in the "GLEGHORN'S MINUTES".

"2nd: Jaffna Patam whose courts of Justice exercise jurisdiction in the Northern and Eastern part of the Island from the limits of Puttalam and Mannar to the river Koomane or Koombukkan". (see GLEGHORN'S MINUTES"

endation of the Colebrooke Commission.

When Independence was granted to Ceylon, the Ceylon Independence Act of 1947 provided only for the grant of an Order-in-Council. The Ceylon Constitution Order-in-Council became effective with effect from 4th February, 1948. This Order-in-Council did not empower the Ceylon Parliament to alter the Constitution completely but only provided for amendments to provisions of the Constitution without in any way contravening Section 29 (2) of the Constitution.

But in the case of India the Indian Independence Act empowered the Constitution Assembly that existed at that

A Chinese Fable : How to abide by the Law!

Mr. R. Ponniah of 18, Quarry Road, Dehiwala, sends us this Chinese fable:

To respect the freedom of residence of the rabbit the snake made a law and went to proclaim it to the rabbit.

"Listen, From now on, if I should enter your residence without knocking and getting your permission first, you can prosecute me."

The snake announced this in real earnest. However, the snake did not know whether the rabbit would do as she was told. He felt

that she had no sense of law and suspected that she did not trust him. He decided to test her.

The snake deliberately darted into the rabbit's burrow without knocking and killed a little rabbit. Then he posted himself outside, waiting for the rabbit to come and file a charge.

The rabbit never emerged. His indignation growing, the snake went in again, arrested the rabbit angrily demanded;

"Why didn't you abide by the law?"

"What law, sir? Whose law?"

"Why didn't you come to file a charge?"

"You were the bandit and now you are the judge. Whom should I charge and where should I bring my charge?"

The snake hissed with indignation and swallowed the rabbit.

Then he announced to the public, "I killed the rabbit according to the law. And the entire lawful procedure of arrest and trial has been carried out".

Palmyrah Industry in the 19th century

The Palmyrah palm has been a source of mainstay among the Tamils of North Sri Lanka for quite a long time. Reference to Palmyrah and its uses are found in Tamil literature here and there, but there is no record of its actual output, demand and consumption interpreted in terms of money in the economic sense. There does not seem to be any record of it during the Portuguese and Dutch periods of Sri Lankan history except that it was a substantial export food commodity. There is ample evidence of its variegated uses and evaluation in terms of money during the British period.

Two main uses of Palmyrah have been the Jaggery and timber. Jaggery and timber have been produced as export commodity. They have been exported coast-wise from North Sri Lanka to other parts of Sri Lanka and overseas to India and Holland. Besides Jaggery and timber, the export commodities, other products of Palmyrah have served as the main food of nearly one-fourth of the total population of Jaffna.

Preserved for rainy days

The palmyrah fruit has been a main food item. The juice of the fruit is squeezed out and dried in the sunlight on mats prepared from palmyrah leaves. The dried juice is preserved in air-tight packing baskets weaved out of palmyrah leaves and hung over the furnace at home. The smoke prevents it from decaying and acts as an effective preservative. The dried juice, more like chocolate is cut into pieces of about six inches square, folded and packed in the packing baskets before being hung above the furnace. It is also cut into small pieces, mixed with the jelly prepared by boiling sweet toddy and spices like pepper, and preserved in bottles and jars. These are done when the season is on and preserved for consumption during the rainy season, when food items are scarce.

The nuts are imbedded in specially prepared sand beds in much the same way that any other nursery for seedlings are prepared. After about two months, the roots come down. The empty shells of the nuts are removed and the roots are taken out.

The roots known as "Kilanku" (yam) are either dried raw or boiled and dried. The raw-dried ones are then crushed to powder or flour. This flour is used to prepare pittu, a nourishing food. Leafy vegetables are mixed in preparing the pittu. Prawns or sprats are also mixed with the flour in preparing non-vegetarian pittu. The pittu is also mixed with mutton or fowl curry and taken. This flour is also prepared for rainy days. The raw-dried seedlings or roots can be more safely preserved than the flour and they are turned into flour during the rainy days, when necessity demands.

The boiled seedlings or roots can be eaten afresh. It is also dried and eaten. The boiled-dried ones are also



Building of a fence in a Jaffna village with the fronds of the palmyrah palm

by

A. Theva Rajan

pounded to flour, and mixed with scraped coconut and jaggery or sugar and taken as food. When a palmyrah is felled, the portion just below the shoots contain a floury young shoot. This is also powdered and dried up and pittu is prepared from it. It is also eaten raw.

The Palmyrah fruit, apart from being eaten afresh, or in the form of **panattu** (dried juice), is also roasted in fire and the juice is squeezed out. This juice is mixed with coconut milk and boiled and consumed as a drink. It quenches thirst besides being very nourishing. The Palmyrah juice and coconut milk mixture thus prepared are boiled and rice-flour is added with jaggery or sugar and mixed while still being on the furnace till it becomes a chocolate-like pulp (**KALI**). This is taken as a nourishing food. Not only rice-flour even **kurakkan**, **samai**, or **thinai** grain flours can also be used.

Used as soup flavour

During the Dutch period the flour (**odiyal flour**) was exported to Cape of Good Hope and Holland. There, it was mixed with soups which, apart from thickening them, gave a nice flavour. It was considered a convalescent food by them. This flour is used locally to prepare **KOOL** or a cordial into which vegetables like brinjals, beans, jak-nuts, ripe jak fruits, and sprats and prawns are also

put. It is a very flavoury food. The empty shells after removal of the root is used as fire-wood. The palmyrah leaves are used as cattle food. It increases lactation in cattle and goats. The palmyrah leaves are used for thatching houses and fencing around houses. The worn out palmyrah leaves of thatched houses that are removed from the roofs when thatching is done anew is used as manure in the farms. It is considered a very good manure.

Stalks used for fencing

Dried stalks of palmyrah leaves are used for fencing around when spinned coconut leaves are used for fencing instead of palmyrah leaves. It lasts for a longer period unless damaged by white ants. Fibre is extracted from the stalk and the base of the stalk which divides into two clinging on to the palmyrah palm. This fibre has a good international market.

The sap of the roots and trunk, after they have been bruised with a stone is used to cure sores caused by the 'falling of spittle' and also dysentery according to the belief of natives of the olden times.

The trunk of the palm is cut open and rafters, well sweeps, and other timber for construction purposes are made by dressing, chiselling and polishing. A

complete house of long durability can be built with palmyrah timber which is considered to be the best for construction work.

Although there were many reputed Ports in the North, the Point-Pedro Port has been a hive of activity for both imports and exports. Of the chief item of export from Point - Pedro, William Ferguson—a Scotsman has this to say on this subject:-

"There is no wood better known in Ceylon and in the maritime parts of India than the palmyrah wood, which Roxburgh describes as being, for rafters, 'decidedly the first wood in India.' Large quantities of this timber are exported from Point Pedro and other parts of Jaffna to Madras and Colombo. At certain seasons of the year the felling, splitting, dressing and exporting of it give work to thousands of the Tamil people of the Northern Peninsula. After being prepared where they are felled, the palmyrah rafters are carried to Point-Pedro from various parts of the neighbourhood, chiefly on the heads of women, who indeed seem in many cases to be the creatures of burden in Ceylon. The rafters are then sent out to Dhonies or country vessels in rafts and are taken to Nagapatam, Nagoor, Cuddalore, Tranquebar, Pondicherry, Madras and elsewhere on the Coromandel Coast, in exchange for grain, cotton,

cloth, metals etc'.

The same author in a foot note adds an interesting story. He says: "Occasionally large piles of palmyrah timber are heaped along the shore at Point Pedro ready for shipment. This it is said, was the case when the British fleet appeared off the coast in 1795, and the story afloat among the Dutch descendents, to the effect that the piles of palmyrah timber were in the first instance mistaken for batteries, is by no means improbable".

He also explains another point. The name Point Palmyrah by which Point Pedro is known is derived from the fact that Palmyrah grows in these ports of call. He puts it thus:

"Point Palmyrah near Point Pedro, and Point Palmyrah in Orissa, below the mouth of the Ganges, have derived their names no doubt from the most familiar term by which this tree is now known".

Incidentally, Palmyrah was not confined to Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Mullaitivu, Batticaloa, Anuradhapura, Trincomalee and Hambantota. It was found even in the mountain districts including the vicinity of Kandy and Badulla. The name Thalagodapiya among the Kandians and the name of the Vihara called Thalagahagoda Vihare in Matale remind us of the presence of the palmyrah palm in the olden days in these mountain regions. "Thal" in Sinhala (derived from Sanskrit) means palmyrah.

Export trade in timber

Emerson Tennent expressed the view that the Palmyrah timber of Sri Lanka was superior to the palmyrah of India. And hence the lucrative export trade in Palmyrah timber. A study of the export revenue indicates that the Point Port had been a very busy Port engaged in this trade. The Port was closed for some time due to an outbreak of cholera. Sir P. Ramanathan had espoused the cause of the Point Pedro Port in the Legislative Council when he demanded that the Port be re-opened.

It must be recorded that two Government Agents of Jaffna P. A. Dyke and W. C. Twynam did their best to promote the palmyrah industry in the Peninsula. In 1883, W. C. Twynam called for report from the Maniakara of the Islands on the state of the Palmyrah industry. The Maniakara's report runs

(Continued overleaf)

The Palmyrah Industry in the 19th c...

(Continued from page 7)
thus:

"October 1883. With reference to the order No: 179 of the 26th ultimo, I beg to report that the produce of palmyrah this year in my division has been very satisfactory and comparatively better than that of the past year.

"The fruits of the palmyrah this year are found pulpy and good in quality and size. The weather during the collection of the produce was dry and favourable, so that penaddo has been well prepared and dried without damage.

"In the Islands the collection of the Palmyrah produce generally comes to a close in the month of August, and very scarcely extends up to September; but this year about one third of the produce is still on the trees in a partly ripened state, and will last until November.

"When dry season commences and scarcity begins to prevail in the Islands many of the poor people especially in Pungudutivu, Nayinativu and Eluvadivu are compelled to leave their native places and friends and have resort to the mainland districts in search of living; but the abundant supply of the palmyrah fruits this year has been the cause of preventing many from doing so, and even tempting several others who have already left the place under similar circumstances to return to their localities.

Jaggery to
French India

"The Palmyrah in the Islands is looked upon by the majority of the inhabitants as their principal article of food, and a failure of the same is considered a misfortune to them.

"The copious rain that fell in the previous year and the subsequent rain in April last had been more favourable to flourish the palmyrah and yield an abundant produce there of."

It can thus be seen how much the palmyrah contributes towards providing food for many people in Jaffna. Twynam, commenting on their reports thus collected, says:-

"From their reports received by me, the manufacture of jaggery appears to be rather an important industry of the poorer classes. It is estimated that about 15,000 cwts are manufactured in the Peninsula, valued at Rs 70,000/- at prices varying from Rs: 4/- to Rs. 6/- per cwt, of which about 5,000 cwts are exported to India. The jaggery appears to be exported chiefly to French India, where, I am in-

formed, it is refined and sold as crystallized sugar.

There is also a very large trade with India in Palmyrah timber. Up to 1870 an export duty of 2½% was levied on all palmyrah timber. This duty was, however, given up together with all other export duties. It appears that an average of about 27,000 trees are felled annually. I doubt if new plantations are formed in the same way. There is besides a coastwise trade in palmyrah timber, of which I have not a return.

Besides, the many uses to which the tree and its products are applied, it supplied toddy (sweet and fermented), panattu (the preserved juice of the fruit) odials (the roots from the nuts which are buried in pits after the juice has been squeezed out from the panattjaggery a very considerable proportion of the food of the people and the manufacture of mats, baskets etc. from the leaves and stalks gives employment to a large number of women and children of the poorer classes.

Bertolacci imposed a 25%

duty on Palmyrah timber exports which was later reduced to 2½%. It was totally abolished in 1898. For 30 years the export had remained as nearly as possible stationary.

The Dutch Government prohibited the export of palmyrah timber except on special permission from the Commander or the Disawa or the Collector of the District. Later the exportation of timber was permitted subject to the payment of a duty to the Company. By an order dated January 3, 1717, the Government granted Civil Servants in Jaffna five hundred and six dollars annually as compensation for the income they lost on account of the Government in Colombo imposing a ban on the Civil Servants in Jaffna granting permission for exports. After the British took over, the income from duty imposed on export of palmyrah timber nearly doubled.

Even in time of distress caused by drought the palmyrah palm had helped to alleviate and cushion the hardships to which the people were hard-

put.

The following observations of W.C.Twynam explain it: "Mr Russel in his report for 1868, remarked on the permanent character of the prosperity of the province as shown by the revenue realised during a year of depression; and Mr. Dyke often remarked on the resources of the Peninsula of Jaffna possessed within itself to recover itself from the depressing effects of successive seasons of drought, and consequent want of poorer classes, especially of the necessities of life, followed by epidemics from which the Province in general has suffered severely". (1870).

"During the early part of the year and up to June, large quantities of palmyrah toddy were drawn and consumed as food more especially by the people of Vadamaradchchi division; and the crop of palmyrah fruits, helped on by some showers of rain which fell in July, was on the whole a tolerable one and afforded a welcome addition to the food of the people at a time

when the import of grain appeared to be falling off". (1877).

Thus, it is clear that the palmyrah industry was flourishing in the 19th century. It would appear, however, that there had been indiscriminate felling of the palmyrah palm for timber which was not accompanied by fresh plantations. The industry can be revived by the Palmyrah Development Board by opening extensive areas of palmyrah plantations.

William Ferguson has made the following observations with regard to Palmyrah jaggery:

"The Palmyrah jaggery made in Jaffna, formed so considerable an article of export from Point Pedro to the opposite continent, that, that the question has, very naturally, with great frequency and force recurred, why a manufactory for refining should not be established where the raw material is so abundant."

He has also mooted the idea of Plantations at Catcolalam two miles east of Point Pedro on the sand mounds.

LETTERS

'A proud record'

77/1, Barnes Place,
Colombo 7.
10th February, 1983.

The Editor,
Saturday Review,
Dear Sir,

Your paper is now one year old; yet very much a baby; but your contribution to journalism and public welfare has indeed been most creditable. More particularly, in the sphere of human rights and minority aspirations, the views you have espoused have been both constructive and

bold.

This is a proud record for your paper and in the interests of our highest values during this period of social and political decay and a venal kind of journalism that has become rampant, I am extremely happy to wish you be allowed to carry on unharassed into the future and be a beacon of hope for the oppressed people both in the North and the rest of the Island.

Yours faithfully,
J.C.T. Kotalawela.

Honest & Intrepid Journalism

17, Wijerama Lane,
Navinna,
Maharagama,
5 February, 1983.

The Editor
Saturday Review

Dear Sir,

It has been said with some conviction that history is largely a recitation of the vanities of the victor as paraded by his supporters, while the voice of the defeated is seldom heard on the public stage. It is, however, in the banners of the vanquished that the

disconcerting pointers to the future may be more truly discerned.

We have entered a phase in the political life of this country when the powers of peaceful persuasion and unchained debate have been overwhelmed by the powers of state coercion, brazen intimidation and plain and simple terror. A ruling class has been cynically described as that element in society which has achieved monopoly of the instruments of violence. That definition is more accurate

than cynical today. The face of the future has already been riddled by the pockmarks of a senile autocracy, and the restoration of the democratic infrastructure of our society seems to pose more problems than were present at the beginning of 1982.

Saturday Review begins its second year on the 35th anniversary of this country's independence from colonial rule. May it survive long enough to proclaim the dawn of true freedom from oppression, injustice, and poverty

for all our people in both North and South. And, even more from manipulation of their destinies by a neo-colonial elite entrenched in power through dubious democratic devices. You have done well enough in your first year by practising a brand of honest and intrepid journalism, a sadly unique thread in the timorous and yielding fabric of the Fourth Estate in Sri Lanka today. One wishes your example will prove catching.

Sincerely,
H.A.I. Goonetilleke

Loss of Muslim political Identity

27, Fareed place,
BAMBALAPITIYA,
COLOMBO 4,
7th February 1983.

The Editor,
The Saturday Review,
Jaffna.
Sir,

I am a regular reader of your valuable journal. In fact, I have become addicted to it. Every week, I earnestly look forward to it. I do not have much to comment except to say that I fully appreciate your bold and frank presentation of news and views, independent of views, policies and prejudices of the major political parties in the country.

It is exactly the policy, we want the Muslims in Sri Lanka to follow. Our leaders followed a policy of integration with the two major political parties in the country for thirty years

or more and destroyed our Political Identity in the country and our Voice in the Parliament, which we rightfully enjoyed even during the British days. The restoration of these two rights is the immediate issue before us.

His excellency The President, not very long ago stated in Batticaloa that this country belongs to all the races in Sri Lanka: a very welcome announcement and a great statement. It is in reality, a statement replete with live seeds of solution to all problems facing our country today. Let us examine the races in Sri Lanka. According to the Census report published in 1976, there are four established major races in the country. They are: The Low-country Sinhalese, The Kan-

(Continued on page 9)

On 3rd August, a C.T.B. bus was burned in Jaffna by the insurgents it was reported; the town was deserted, shops were closed, and the students kept away from Schools All this, as a result of the T. E. L. F's call for a Satyagraha in protest against JRI's swearing-in as President for a second time and against Independence celebrations.

What does all these mean? It only spells out the fact that there is sympathy among the Tamil speaking masses for Eelam. No doubt shopkeepers put up their shutters at a time like this, partly due to fear of damage. But the absence of school children in massive numbers and a certain popular response to calls for anti-government actions show that there is an undisputed yearning for a separate Tamil State. The Tamils had also voted for the TULF call for Eelam.

One may say that there is no option for the Tamil voter other than voting TULF whatever the TULF says. But let's not forget that there has sprung mushroom Eelamite groups including the TELF against the TULF. They differ only in the way the TULF leadership is moving towards achieving the Eelam state. None of these groups have rejected Eelam. No, they call for radical and sometimes armed action to achieve their ultimate goal, Eelam. This is a clear indication that the Tamil speaking people in the North, at least now, want a state where they could live without Police and Army repression, without harassment and fear - in peace. This they feel an Eelam State would provide.

The Left & Eelam

What is an Eelam State? What is its class nature? Ask the ordinary Tamil man in the North and he may not be able to define. Yet, he will definitely say it is a state of their own, a Tamil State. This is the principal idea around which the Eelam movement is growing, on which the TULF Leadership is basing their

The capitalist class whatever their language is only keen in keeping their share of profit undisturbed. This could only be achieved if they could keep state power in their hands. They would never fight among themselves and allow their class to lose state power. This is why the TULF leadership has never thought of going

by **Kusal Perera**

propaganda to keep its foothold in the Northern peninsula; on which the TULF leadership is playing around to keep its ties with the UNP Government.

That brings us to a more intricate and very important question. Is the TULF sincere in their endeavour to win Eelam? If so, why do they not then bring into effect the consent given by the Tamil voter in the 1977 General Elections, in the DDC elections, in the Presidential Poll and just recently, at the Referendum? Why did the TULF leadership disagree and denounce the UDI from the Eelam movement abroad as a nonsensical lunatic effort? These queries invariably brings us to class politics in Sri Lanka.

whole hog to achieve Eelam. But pressure from below has compelled them to be at the leadership, so that they could control the Eelam movement the way they need and keep it firmly under their control.

Now, how then could the Eelam state be achieved? This is the point of divergence in the Eelam movement, the difference among the youth groups.

It would take a lengthy study to analyse the divergent views in the Eelam movement, yet it would suffice to say that the movement is for a separate Tamil State, whatever be the method of achieving it. Hence the question of safeguarding it comes as one of the prime questions. Let

us not deceive ourselves. There could be no march towards an Eelam state without civil war. The Central government, whether it is UNP, or SLFP, or for that matter a Coalition of SLFP and the traditional Left, would not hesitate to march the military forces into the Eelam State to wipe out any attempt at secession. This military might of the south will have to be met if the Eelam is to exist even through civil war. Nay, not only that. Unless the masses are mobilised into a strong nationalist army, of the Khomeini type, the Eelam State would simply buckle under the southern military boots.

Yes, there is yet another option. Will the Indian government intervene? No. The chance of Indian intervention here is very bleak as this is very much more different to that in Bangladesh. There may spring a movement in the Tamil Nadu in sympathy with the Eelam State, Yet the crisis in the sub-continent, economic and social, will only limit this to a protest movement. Indira's government is in crisis and that ties her hand and will not allow her to cross the Palk-strait. Thus, Eelam will have to depend on its own manpower.

A very humble assessment will therefore rule out any life for a birth of an Eelam state, unless it derives support from the masses in the south.

Now, can the present course of action by the militants in the North muster any support in the south? As it is, hit and run policies of the radical Youth have not only alienated the broad Tamil masses who are willing to

identify with the Eelam movement; they have been kept away from developing into a strong anti-government active movement that would end up as an anticapitalist force. On the other side, the TELF has evolved as a very narrow racialist organisation, that tries to keep the Tamil masses isolated and purely critical of the TULF. The TELF is nothing but a pressure group on the TULF leadership. All this draws the south away and not for Eelam. This is where the role of the Left, the revolutionary Left, comes in.

But unfortunately, the Left has more or less disintegrated and disjointed. The Left is now far from a formidable force even in the south, thanks to its class collaborationist politics. Therefore the Tamils too have lost whatever faith they had in the Left. The Left would have to start from the beginning. The left would have to openly support the right of the Tamil speaking people for Self Determination up to secession.

Tamil Trade

Union's role

The Left would have to fight for a broad unity among the working class at factory level on transitional demands, where right of self determination of the Tamil People would be included. The Tamil Trade Union Federation will have to come out of hibernation and join actively any such working class unity.

In short, the Left and the Tamil militants will have to forge a massive anti-government mass movement with working class at the head of it. That would be the only process of achieving an Eelam, for separation to be possible under this crisis ridden, capitalist, semi-dictatorship.

LETTERS

(Continued from page 8)

dyan Sinhalese, The Tamils and the Moors.

The Rights and Recognitions of these racial Groups, if properly and adequately enshrined in a Constitution, particularly in a Presidential form of Government all problems facing the country will vanish and it may even help us to prevent the creation of causes for problems.

I realised this long ago and I warned the Moors and the other minorities in the country as early as in 1953 at the All Ceylon Moors Rally held in Colombo of a situation as is confronting us today and I published a Memorandum in 1956 giving my own solution. The relevant passage is given below:

Nothing can suit Ceylon better than a Government based on Swiss Constitution, with proper modifications

to suit local conditions. Our demand aims at a Federal Government based on a Constitution similar to that of Switzerland. Under our plan, Ceylon will be divided into FIVE Provinces—Two provinces going to the Majority Community. (One in the Central part to the Kandyan Sinhalese). The Tamils shall have their province in the North. The Muslim or Moorish province shall be on the Eastern sector and the rest except the District of Colombo shall form the province of the Low-country Sinhalese. The District of Colombo, by itself shall be a province, cosmopolitan in character, Centre of Commerce and Seat of the Central Government. All the Provinces except the Province of Colombo shall have the privilege of choosing their own language for provincial administration, while, the Central Government be conducted in a language common to all

—“ENGLISH”. This will not only solve the language and other problems facing Ceylon, but will solve them in a manner that will not hamper the progress of the country.

I would also like to appeal to our Tamil brothers to avoid extremism and fall back to rationalism. Bombs and bullets can never produce a long lasting solution to any problem. On the other hand the government also should make a realistic approach to the

problems in the North. It is not one that can be solved by Military actions or arbitrary decisions. It is essentially a political issue and a political solution should necessarily be sought.

Thanking you,

Yours truly,

M.H.M. Saheed

President

ALL CEYLON MOORS

ASSOCIATION.

&

Chief Organiser,

ALL SRI LANKA UNITED

MUSLIM PARTY.

'S. R. Should go on as it is'

Trincomalee,
11-2-83.

Editor,
Saturday Review,
Jaffna.

In the "S. R." of the 5th of February many have expressed their views regarding the paper. Except for Mr. Arul M. Rajendran, no one has proposed any radical changes in the paper. All desire that

"S. R." should continue as it is now. It is the existing style and content of the paper that is the reason for its influence and popularity. Also we shouldn't forget that many foreigners too are reading "S. R."

We are living in the midst of turmoils. All we have is corrupt politics. We have forgotten how to live and

shape our destiny. In such a situation, is a paper which panders to our leisurely appetites of any importance? Do we need such a paper?

Whatever we do, should be dictated by Time and Circumstances. In the present juncture it is very important that we should achieve our freedom. We should act with this objective. A newspaper should be a handmaid for such purpose.

When even an ordinary departmental peon is in a position to humiliate us, do we need white-collar jobs? When on the roads, a 20 year old Sinhalese soldier or policemen is able to order me to sit and stand as he pleases, do I need a wife? For us, why Cinema, why Horoscope, why love-stories, why liquor, why damsels?

Do continue writing about Liberation, and freedom fighters like us.

Yours,

"Penguin"

news BRIEFS

MADRAS: A record number of 24 candidates including nominees of five political parties will contest the Thiruchendur by-election to the Tamil Nadu Assembly. The nominees of political parties are S. K. Chandraseker Congress (I); Nellai Jebamani Janatha; R. Amirtharaj AIA-DMK; Nellai Nedumaran DMK; M. Muthu Gandhi-Kamaraj National Congress.

The by-election necessitated by the death of AIADMK Member Kesava Athithan will be held on March 1st.

BOMBAY: A fugitive Malaysian student leader, Hishamuddin Rais, has secured political asylum in Belgium after a court battle in India and detention in police custody for nearly four months. Police authorities here reported that Hishamuddin, who jumped bail and disappeared from Malaysia in 1974, left for Belgium last month after he failed to get reversed his deportation order in the Supreme Court on January 11.

COLOMBO: Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayawardene who is to attend the non-aligned summit in New Delhi in March is expected to have a series of bilateral talks during his visit with Indian leaders. President Jayawardene is also expected to

discuss with Mrs. Gandhi the citizenship problems involving a large number of people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka. He will visit Madras on the way and meet leaders of the Tamil Nadu Government.

MOSCOW: Indian Cosmonaut Trainees Wing Commander Raveesh Malhotra and Squadron Leader Rakesh Sharma are being put through increasing periods of weightlessness in preparation for the space flight scheduled early next year. The one who would be selected for the flight would carry out experiments assigned by Indian Scientists. Yoga exercises would be part of this.

BOMBAY: Former Indian Skipper and Tamil Nadu Cricketer S. Venkataragavan has been recalled to the Indian side to tour West Indies later this month. The 38 year old right arm off spinner is expected to lend variety to the bowling. The Indian side will be led by Kapil Dev who replaces Sunil Gavaskar.

SINGAPORE: On February 5th Singapore experienced its first nation-wide black-out since the 1950s and its biggest ever in terms of length and the number of people affected. The

power failure lasted nearly nine hours and hit the whole island at the height of the Chinese New Year shopping spree. Hundreds were trapped in lifts. Traffic was snarled when lights at busy corners failed. Shops and departmental stores were plunged into darkness and air conditioners clicked off.

MADRAS: Assam is on the brink of insurgency according to a report sent by Shekhar Gupta to the **Indian Express**. A series of incidents over the past two weeks point to this alarming trend, he says. Incidents reported include the ambush near Tezpur in which a Police Sub-Inspector was killed; earlier in the same district two sten guns and a revolver were snatched from Policemen and another sten gun from another Policeman in the Sibsadar District. The latest incidents have been the snatching of five Police Rifles in Kamalapur besides another from an Assam Police Constable in North Lakhimpur. An ineffective government crack down on student activists after the announcement of the Assam polls has resulted in a paradox where all the moderate leaders are in jail and the extremists gone underground.

MADRAS: Disciples and admirers of Acharya Rajneesh in India took out a procession on Monday from the LIC building on Mount Road to the US Consulate and presented a memorandum to the Vice-Consul, urging the US Immigration Service to reconsider its decision to deny Acharya Rajneesh permanent residence in the United States.

The re-creation of Mark Twain

The villagers of Chavakachcheri and Kodikamam had the impossible opportunity of meeting Mark Twain (1835-1910) face to face on the 12th and 13th of this month! With his golden hair, drooping moustache and black tail coat, Mark Twain spoke the self-same thought-provoking words he had spoken a century ago, with his usual drawl, humour and wit. His wise words condemning violence and attacking Racism which he had originally spoken to his American audience, was pregnant with meaning to the twentieth century Northern villagers for whom state terrorism and racial discrimination are a frightening daily fact of life.

It seemed as if Mark Twain had been resurrected. But it was only actually a 39 year old American, **William MacLinn**, who had disguised himself as Mark Twain, and had ardently studied the words, philosophy, tone, dress and mannerism of the late 19th century novelist, who was bringing the character alive to the Northern villagers!

William MacLinn, an ordained priest and Political Science graduate, is a radical American, who realising the consumerism, materialism and violence of his fellow Americans and the general human society decided in 1975 to drive some sense into them. As Mark Twain was a popular national figure in his country, and as Twain's ideas were radical and still relevant to the 20th century he found it effective to use Twain as a vehicle to speak to his fellowmen, and change their lifestyle and thinking.

This "Missionary of Peace" speaking for his own self, in his own voice, as William MacLinn, told newsmen in Jaffna on the 12th morning, what his vision was. He said Mark Twain was not outdated yet, and never will be, because "Man hasn't changed much, man is still the same mixture of greed, fear and ignorance". William MacLinn said that Twain's style and mode of communication was the best because he teaches and preaches through HUMOUR, "When people laugh, they are laughing at themselves". Because Twain makes his listeners identify with his jokes, after the laughter the listeners realise that they have actually been laughing at themselves. Also, when we laugh at ourselves, this enables us to take ourselves not too seriously, and thus



MacLinn as Mark Twain

we become simple and open enough to have dialogue with others and accept points of view which are not our own."

Rev. William MacLinn said that he was actively involved in political issues in America, especially in the "anti-nuke" movements. He said the current arms race was reaching dangerous proportions, and he described how precarious man's date with doom was. He described the many accidents and faults in safety devices on the nuclear missiles which had occurred in America in recent times, which placed mankind in danger. "Our destiny is pinned on one man, and if he is mad enough to push the button, that seals our fate".

He was very critical of America's present nuclear policy. The zero-option is a very negative standpoint. It is unfair for the Russians, because Britain and France already have missiles which are not taken into account in the Arms reduction talks now, and if the Russians remove all their missiles, the Western power would still have unfair advantage over the Russians, he said.

Rev. William MacLinn alias Mark Twain had a programme in the Colombo Central Y.M.C.A. on the 14th and left Sri Lanka for India on the 15th. He will proceed to Russia, later in the month, to perform there too. He had participated in the Presidential Race in 1980 as "Mark Twain", and he intends doing so in 1984 too. "I seriously don't hope that the Presidential Post will be thrust on me; that will become a highly boring affair. But I compete to infuse some humour into the Presidential Race and also drive some sense into the heads of the voters!" he said.

Rev. William MacLinn is no ordinary comedian, he is a man with a mission and a deep sense of commitment to Humanity.

London Dance critic on Sri Lankan girl's performance

Selvi Subhadra daughter of Mr. V. Sundharalingam of 'Thamil Osai', B. B. C., London and Mrs. Parasakthy Sundharalingam gave a Bharatha Natya recital at the Bharathya Vidya Bhavan Hall, West Kensington, London, recently. Subhadra is a pupil of Srimathi Shanthi Rajedran from Kalashetra and the Dhananjayans of Madras.

The well-known Dance Critic FERNAN HALL reviewing Subhadra's performance in the 'Daily Telegraph', London said:

SUBHADRA SUNDHARALINGAM, born in Sri Lanka, gave a Bharata Natyam recital at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Hall, West Kensington, on Saturday evening, revealing herself as a promising young artist.

Her dancing has a number of attractive qualities. It is admirably authentic, bring-



Subhadra at a performance in Madras early last year

ing in no gimmicks, no chichi, no excessive speed. She performs the beautiful style developed at Rukmani Devi's famous school in Madras with sincerity. Her facial expressions are clear her eyes being particularly good and her hand gestures well formed. She copes well with the complex rhythm of the foot beats, showing no sign of the nervousness she must feel in view of the fact that she is only 18 and has little stage experience.

As a result she is at her best when she can make good use of the child-like innocence and sweetness which come naturally to her such as when she portrays animals or birds. Now she needs to learn to fill out her movements to the very end of each phrase, and to extend the range of moods with which she can totally identify herself.

The Supreme Court on Monday allowed the application of an Indian national, Mariyadas Raj, challenging his arrest by the police without being informed of the reasons as an infringement of a fundamental right and directed the State to pay him Rs. 5,000 as compensation.

The Bench comprising Justice S. Sharvananda, Parinda Ranasinghe and H. Rodrigo also made order that the Attorney General pay the petitioner the costs of his application.

Inspector Nihal Karunaratne of the Chilaw Police was cited as second respondent but it was revealed during the hearing that it was Sub Inspector Dhammika Godagama who had arrested Mariyadas Raj in the belief that he was an illegal immigrant.

Mr. Justice Sharvananda (with the other judges agreeing) in his judgement said "For the default of Sub Inspector Godagama the State is in the circumstances liable to pay a fair compensation. Officers who feel called upon to arrest other persons (whether they arrest citizens or not) and deprive them of their freedom in the discharge of what they conceive to be their duty, ought strictly and scrupulously to observe the forms and rules of law and have due regard for their constitutional or fundamental rights."

Justice Sharvananda said that since SI Godagama has not been a party to the proceedings, he was not making any order against him, though strangely I disapprove his flouting the law and exercising his

Infringement of a Fundamental Right

State to pay Indian national Rs. 5,000

powers despotically. "As the petitioner has mistakenly made Inspector Nihal Karunaratne the second respondent, instead of S.I. Godagama, I dismiss the application against him and direct the petitioner to pay him Rs. 150 as costs of this application."

Mariyadas Raj in his application had stated that he came to Sri Lanka on November 10, 1982. While he was staying with one Anthony Rodrigo at Chilaw he was awoken from his sleep at about 1 a.m. on 13th November 1982 by Inspector Nihal Karunaratne, brutally assaulted, arrested and taken to the Chilaw police station, in spite of his pleading that he was a mere visitor to the house of Anthony Rodrigo having come from India, two days earlier.

Mariyadas Raj alleged he was not informed of any reasons for his arrest and that on November 13, 1982 he was subjected to cruel inhuman treatment in violation of Article 11 of the Constitution.

Mr. Nihal Karunaratne denied having arrested or assaulted the petitioner. He produced an affidavit from SI Dhammika Godagama according to which it was he who arrested Mariyadas Raj because he suspected him to be an illegal immigrant.

Counsel for the petitioner however submitted that the case of the petitioner was that the police officer, whoever it might be, who arrested him did not comply with the mandatory requirements of the law which obligated the officer arresting a person to inform him the reasons for his arrest.

Mr. Justice Sharvananda says, "since Sub Inspector of Police Dhammika Godagama had admitted that it was he who arrested the petitioner on 13-11-1982 and not the second respondent, the failure to communicate the reasons

for his arrest was ascribable to Godagama."

Justice Sharvananda also adds that had SI Godagama complied with the law and informed the petitioner of the reasons for his arrest, namely that he suspected him to be an illegal immigrant, it was inconceivable that the petitioner would have failed to show his passport, which at page 17 had the visa endorsed on it authorising his entry into Sri Lanka within one month of the date of issue, namely 2-11-82. "In view of this visa there would have been no foundation for S I Godagama's sus-

picion that he was an illegal immigrant. These circumstances tend to militate against the acceptance of any denial by Godagama of the petitioner's version that he was not informed of the reasons for his arrest.

"It was in the exercise of the police powers vested in him that SI Godagama in the discharge of what he conceived to be his duty arrested the petitioner. He acted thus in the name of the State. His action bears the stamp of State action even though he failed to observe the forms and rules of law."

New life for Hockey in Jaffna

The name V. T. is a family name for Sports in Sri Lanka, particularly in Jaffna. One of the Lingams in the V. T. family, MR. V. T. SIVALINGAM, the man for SPORTS in Jaffna, has been unanimously elected President of the Jaffna Hockey Association at its meeting held recently.

Besides being President of Hockey, SIVA is the President of the Jaffna Amateur Football League, Jaffna Amateur Athletic Association and the Northern Province Badminton Association. He is the Senior Vice-President of the Sri Lanka Amateur

Athletic Association, a National Selector and a National Coach. He represented SRI LANKA at the High Level Athletic Coaching Clinic conducted by the



V. T. Sivalingam

International Amateur Athletic Federation in collaboration with the International Olympic Committee of Thailand at Bangkok. Besides he attended the clinics at Japan, Malaysia and Singapore. While at School he was the first to have represented the Jaffna District in Cricket, Athletics, Soccer, Hockey & Basketball against visiting teams and local teams. While at Law College he captained the Athletics Team and won the Outstanding Athletes trophy for 4 years in succession.

There were no activities for Hockey in Jaffna for the last few years, and the new President is moving in the right direction to field a team to represent Jaffna at the Sri Lanka Hockey Nationals Championships and the under 23 Championship this year. Local tournaments and a coaching clinic for Boys schools and Girls schools will be held soon.

The following have been elected office bearers of the JAFFNA HOCKEY ASSOCIATION. President: V. T. SIVALINGAM; Vice Presidents: T. Anandaratnam and N. Somasunderam;

Secretary: M. Pathmanathan; Asst. Secretary: S. Thanabalan;

Treasurer: K. Poopalingham; Asst. Treasurer: S. Ratnasabapathy.

Committee: S. Jayaratnam, T. Villavarajan and Miss. S. Sivagnanam.

THE CRICKET SCENE IN JAFFNA

Victor Kiruparaj writes:-

Of the five cricket engagements completed during the last weekend, two ended in decisive wins while the remaining three were drawn encounters.

St. John set the ball rolling with a splendid innings win over Mahajana College who crumbled for meagre scores of 81 and 85 to the Johnians flattering first innings total of 272 for 7 wickets.

It was the combined effort of a belligerent 99 by V. Muraleedaran, an unbeaten 50 by skipper R. Mahinda who incidentally had a match bag of 8 wickets, five of them be-

ing claimed in the second for but 15 runs, an effervescent 47 by T. Chandrasegar and a match tally of 9 wickets by deputy skipper P. Thirukumar that helped the Johnians to clinch an innings verdict.

The OLD Centralites who had shown splendid form in their previous two outings continued to show their penchant for runs when they hit up a mammoth 329 in their match against Jaffna Central. Jaffna Central thanks to a skipper's knock of a fighting, unbeaten 96 by Paul Pralahathan in Central's second innings total of 202, saved themselves from the ignominy of an otherwise innings defeat. Jaffna Central were dismissed in

their first innings for a not too encouraging 130.

Koshy Thomas doing service for the old Centralites was the cynosure of all eyes when he clobbered a hurricane 160 which included 24 hits to the ropes and 6 towering sixers. Of the bowlers, school-boy paceman V. Sudharshan, who was treated with scant respect, claimed 4 wickets giving away 130 runs. Among the Old Boys, K. Thomas (5 for 76 and 3 for 78) and S. Sivasothy (3 for 33 and 4 for 49) impressed.

Union College taking on Kokuvil Hindu College whipped her by an innings and 36 runs. Union College registered 187 for 8

wickets, C. Sathiyapalan top scoring with a brisk 79. Kokuvil were dismissed cheaply for 43 and 58 respectively.

Hartley College forced a draw against Jaffna College who made a bold bid in the final say. Set to make 75 runs they were 47 for 3 at close. Hartley in their first essay mustered 105 to which Jaffna College replied with 168. Hartley in their second essay fared better to score 138.

The Manipay Hindu—Jaffna Hindu match petered out into a tame draw. Jaffna Hindu compiled 216 and 56 for 4 while Manipay Hindu's scores were 138 and 204 for 9.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Lake House Tamil Editor victim of racist threats

SATURDAY REVIEW had often occasion to refer to racist reporting and racist writing in the Lake House and SUN group of newspapers. But here is an incident that happened a few days ago, when an Editorial "Consultant" in Lake House walked into the room of the Editor of the THINAKARAN, the Lake House Tamil daily, and gave vent to a racist outburst in the presence and view of the editorial staff of the paper, during working hours!

The Editor of the THINAKARAN is Mr. Sivagurunathan, who is not only a senior journalist with long service at Lake House but the President of the Sri Lanka Working Journalists' Association that represents the bulk of the working journalists in all three language media - Sinhala, Tamil and English. The 'Consultant' dramatised his entry into the Editor's room by banging the chair in front of him and then went into a frenzy of abuse and threats, called Mr. Sivagurunathan 'you kallathoni' (illicit immigrant), threatened to end his Editorship, asked him what right he had to be a

lecturer at the Ceylon Law College (Mr. Sivagurunathan is also an Advocate of the Supreme Court and Lecturer in Legal Systems and Muslim Law) and made such a noise that the entire Lake House knew of the incident.

SATURDAY REVIEW learns that the provocation that made the 'Consultant' act in the way he did was the fact that the Working Journalists' Association had suspended him from membership following various allegations that he was trying to set up a rival professional organisation.

The 'Consultant' had later in the day repeated the threats on Mr. Sivagurunathan at the Moors Islamic Cultural Home where the Association held a meeting and told him in Sinhala: 'Go back to Jaffna.'

The Secretary of the Association has written to the management of Lake House requesting an inquiry into the incident. SATURDAY REVIEW learns that no action had been taken in the matter until yesterday (Friday).

Iranian 'repression'

The Sri Lanka Committee for Solidarity with the Iranian People in a statement signed by Secretary Mansoor Hasseedin has condemned the arrest of Tudeh Party Secretary-General Nureddin Kismuri amongst others on the spurious charge of "spying for the Soviet Union".

"As the latest wave of arrests indicate, the repression which commenced against the militants of the Peoples' MOJAMEDIN Organization in September 1981

condemned

has now escalated to the extent of including not only those who are opposed to the regime but also those who are lending critical support to it.

"The Committee for Solidarity with the Iranian People in Sri Lanka demands the immediate release of all political prisoners. It further demands an end to the reign of terror unleashed on the Iranian people."

NEWSWEEK report on Prisoners of Conscience

"... the spasms of weak governments unsure of their popular support; the brutal jockeying of majorities against restless minorities, and an ideology of liberation that romanticizes violence and makes one man's terrorist another's

freedom fighter. Few ordinary citizens are brave enough to withstand such pressures; most go along with even the most oppressive powers. There are no outside institutions strong enough to protect prisoners of

conscience, no one to investigate the charges against them impartially or to protect them against their violators..."

"NEWSWEEK", February 14, 1983 in a special report on the Prisoners of conscience.

Unprecedented gesture by Counsel in court

In what might be considered an unprecedented event in the history of the Courts in Sri Lanka the Counsel for the Defence paid an eloquent tribute to six accused including one on whom sentence of death had been passed in connection with another case. This happened on Thursday when Senior Defence Counsel, N. Satyendra, concluding his submissions at the 'voir dire' proceedings of the Neerveli Bank Cash Robbery case told Court:

"As regards my clients, the accused, I wish to state publicly from this Court of record, that in the presence of these individuals who belong to my community and who have been prepared to sacrifice what is perhaps the most precious possessions of any individuals—their very lives—for the cause of the

liberation of their people, I feel humble."

The accused in this case are: Navaratnarajah, Thangavelu (Thangadurai), Selvarajah Yogachandran (Kuttimani), Siva Subramaniam Sri Sabaratnam (Devan), Nadarajah (Sivapalan Master), Sunderam Sri Sabaratnam (Sri Sabaratnam), who is absconding, and Vaithilingam Nadesadasan.

Kuttimani

The second accused Selvarajah Yogachandran (Kuttimani), was sentenced to death in the constable Sivanesan murder case and has thereafter appealed against the sentence.

Jaffna Workshop on the Palmyrah

A Workshop on the Palmyrah will be held at the Veerasingham Hall, Jaffna from the 21st to 25th February. The Food and Agriculture Organisation and the Palmyrah Development Board are the sponsors.

The first day's proceedings include the welcome addresses by Mr. K. Nadarajah, Chairman of the Board, inaugural addresses by Mr. U. B. Wijekoon, District Minister, Mr. I. Ozorai, F.A.O. representative, Mr. S. Nadarajah, Chairman D.D.C. and Mr. M. Sivasithamparam, M.P. The keynote address will be delivered by Mr. M. Ramalingam, Secretary, Ministry of Regional Development.

Discussions will be led on the other days by Dr. S. Kandiah, Senior Lecturer, Department of Botany, University of Jaffna, Dr. S.

Mohandas, Consultant, Palmyrah Development Board, Professor K. Theivendrarajah, Head, Department of Botany, University of Jaffna, Professor S. Mageswaran, Head, Dept. of Chemistry, University of Jaffna, Mr. K. Sivalingam, Planning Officer, Kachcheri, Jaffna, Mr. N. Jeganathan, Engineer, IDB, Jaffna, Mr. A.S. Navaratnarajah, Retired U.N. Expert now attached to ITC-UNDP Project, Mr. C. Jayaratnam, Asst. Director of Agriculture, and Mr. D. Paulas of India and Mr. Gembong of Indonesia.

On the 24th and 25th, Field trips will be made to Ariyalai, Navatkuli, Kaithady, Point Pedro, Santhathoddam, Mamunai, Thikkam, Atchuvely and Chankanai.

(Feature on the Palmyrah Industry in the 19th century on Page 7)

D.J. Kalmunai, not A.D.J.

Mr. T. Joganathan, formerly Magistrate, Kilinochchi, has been promoted District Judge, Kalmunai, and not Additional District Judge as erroneously stated in our news report in the issue of February 12th.

Mr. V. P. Suntheralingam, Magistrate Point Pedro, is acting as District Judge, Point Pedro. We regret any confusion caused by our report last week.