

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Vol. 1 No 12

April 17, 1982

Rs. 2

Editorial

Two cheers for the Hindu Conference!

Mr. Chelliah Rajadurai is a politician with a tarnished political image. There is no need to be polite about it and hush a fact that is already well-known. The convening of the World Hindu Conference in Sri Lanka by his Ministry now gives him the opportunity to exercise his very pleasing prose style in public, to be applauded, garlanded, photographed, and come slap-bang into the lime-light—the kind of opportunity that all our dear politicians would love dearly.

But take away the political distraction that Mr. Rajadurai's involvement brings in, and we have a World Hindu Conference in Sri Lanka which without doubt is a pioneer and rare occasion. **Saturday Review** welcomes the event in its own merit, welcomes the international delegates to this country, welcomes the official participation of the Government, the President and Prime Minister in the programme of the conference, and welcomes the efforts made by Mr. Rajadurai and his ministry to make the Conference a success. In a country where the popular Tamil leadership had shown no sensitivity to Tamil Arts, the announced presence of some leading Indian Artists in music and dance, some of whom will be seen in Sri Lanka for the first time, is an additional welcome blessing. Two Cheers as we said in our title, not three.

The third unsaid cheer needs explaining. One would expect any international conference, linguistic or religious, to represent a popular effulgence, an extra reaching out from a sense of national achievement, or an advance from an already held position of strength. This World Hindu Conference, let us face it, is taking place when Hinduism is on the retreat in Sri Lanka. Had the retreat been the result of an intrinsic weakness in Hinduism or in the Hindu Society itself, the holding of the World Conference could help in rejuvenation. But this certainly is not the case.

What is the motivation behind this World Hindu Conference? From what we have seen of the mental approach of the organisers we are in a position to make a safe prediction. All foreign delegates are going to be told ad nauseam:— One, that this is the only country or the only other country in the world that has a separate ministry to look after Hindu affairs. Two, that this Conference is an expression of the friendly co-existence between Hinduism and Buddhism, the majority religion in this country.

Any foreign delegate who looks beyond his nose will realise that neither claim has much merit in it, in the context of the sense of insecurity that Hindus in Sri Lanka suffer right now. A careful perusal of this issue of **Saturday Review** itself will tell him why.

There are many recent writings on the wall—at Vavuniya, at Sri Pada, and at Kataragama. Mr. Rajadurai will have to summon all his personal charm and prose style to do the job of white-washing all these ugly blots. While white-washing may be unavoidable, Mr. Rajadurai can at least take care not to use the conference as an eye-wash—to make foreign delegates believe that the position of the Hindus in Sri Lanka is all hunky-dory.

A new party gets set to challenge the T. U. L. F. in the North

A former Tamil Parliamentarian and an ex-Mayor of the Jaffna Municipal Council are actively canvassing support for a new political group which is likely to take on the Tamil United Liberation Front at the next General Elections.

Hectic closed-door discussions have been going on the last few days and the birth of the new alliance is likely to be announced very soon, the **SATURDAY REVIEW** understands.

What is holding up the announcement, political insiders say, is the reluctance of a key figure to openly declare his support for the new group.

The new party will have no truck with other political parties and will be committed to the creation of a separate state of Tamil Eelam. For the present, it will confine its electoral activities to the North, say sources close to the new group.

Political observers think the new party will be able to mount a fairly strong challenge to the TULF in

the North, as it has already attracted dissident TULF elements and radicalised youths to its ranks. Even a TULF M.P. is flirting with the idea of joining the new alliance, the **SATURDAY REVIEW** learns.

Even pro-TULF sources concede that the new party might dent the TULF's immaculate electoral image. 'The next elections will not be a one-horse race or a cake-walk for the TULF as in the past', some of them told the **SATURDAY REVIEW**.

NO AUTOMATIC VISAS FOR HINDU CONFERENCE DELEGATES

The Sri Lankan Deputy High Commissioner's Office in Madras is thoroughly screening every delegate and observer before granting them visas to attend the World Hindu Conference in Colombo.

Nearly 1000 delegates and observers from India—the majority from Tamil Nadu—are expected to attend the Conference which begins at the BMICH on 21 April.

Though Hindu Affairs Minister Chelliah Rajadurai, the convener of the Conference, declared last week over All India Radio's Regional Tamil News Service that Indian delegates and observers could get visas almost for the asking and could go anywhere they liked in Ceylon the **SATURDAY REVIEW** reliably understands that the

Sri Lankan Government has instructed its Madras Office to vet every application, particularly from Tamil Nadu, carefully and turn down anyone with a 'suspect' political background.

Knowledgeable circles say that it is this process of careful scrutiny which has delayed the publication of the full list of delegates and observers. The list was expected to be released by 10 April.

The **Saturday Review** also learns that the Sri Lankan

Government will place restrictions on the movement of delegates and observers once they are allowed into Ceylon.

Almost all the delegates and observers from Tamil Nadu have expressed a desire to visit Jaffna.

According to the official programme, the delegates will spend two days (26,27 April) in Jaffna.

The Govt. Agent, Jaffna and the Jaffna Municipal Council have made arrangements to give them a fitting reception. But, say knowledgeable sources, the Government may not grant approval to some of the delegates to visit the North.

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Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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Report from Road tragedy Nigeria: kills 5 in a family of 8 & leaves three orphans

WEEK-END CLASSES

I. C. M. A. FOUNDATION STAGES "A" & "B"

By

D. R. E. C.

(The Centre for Development Research, Education & Communication)

COMMENCING 1st MAY 1982

Enrolment: 9-30 a. m.

FOR FURTHER PARTICULARS:

Contact: **OFFICE ASSISTANT,**

D. R. E. C.

15, Sirambiady Lane, JAFFNA.

(near Sridhar Theatre)

A SIX MONTH BASIC ENGLISH COURSE

WITH EMPHASIS ON SPEECH & STRUCTURE

COMMENCED APRIL 1982

Lecturer: **Mr. R. KANTHIAH,**

Rtd. Hd. Eng. Dept,

Palaly Teachers' College.

Time: 10-00 a. m. — 12-00 noon.

(SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS)

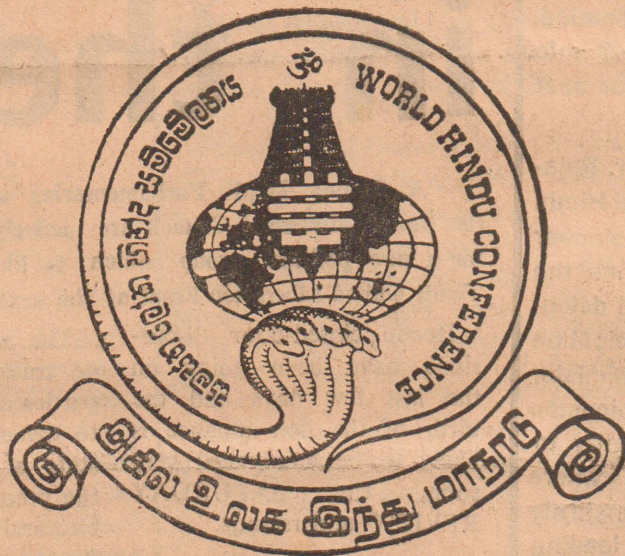
Mr. W. A. Tharmarajah
of Government Secondary
Technical School, Talata
Mafara, Sokoto State Nigeria
reports:

Tragedy on the highway
overtaken a Sri Lankan family
in Nigeria killing five members
of the family in one
blow and leaving three other
children orphans. Victims of
the pathetic car accident
were **Mr. M. N. Arulrajah,**
his wife and three children.
The fatal accident occurred
on Sunday 28th February
1982 at about 6 p. m.

The family consisting of
Mr. M. Arulrajah, his wife
and six children had been
living in Sokoto Town where
Mr. Arulrajah was a teacher.
On this particular Sunday
the family proceeded to make
a trip to Arugungu, a place
90 kilometers away to meet
some Sri Lankan friends
who were also teachers. Having
visited their friends they
were returning to Sokoto.

Mr. Arulrajah's car (a
Volkswagan) was travelling
at nearly 120 kilometers,
which is the normal speed
in the Nigerian highways.
Halfway to their destination
Mr. Arulrajah tried to over-
take a tall massive trailer
and at this point a Fiat coming
in the opposite direction
collided head-on with **Mr. Arulrajah's**
car. **Mr. Arulrajah** with a broken skull
died immediately on the
spot. His wife though she
did not have visible external
injuries also died before
she was taken out of the
car. Two of the six children
also died on the spot. Out
of the four children transported
to the Sokoto Hospital one
died two days later.

Mr. Arulrajah's father-in-
law who was at Ampitiya in
Sri Lanka was contacted by
radio transmitter by one of
our fellow Sri Lankans **Mr. J. T. Wijeratne** and informed
about the accident. With the
father-in-law's permission all
five bodies were buried in
Sokoto itself.



THE WORLD HINDU CONFERENCE

IN

SRI LANKA

FROM 21ST — 25TH APRIL, 1982

AT THE B. M. I. C. H., COLOMBO.

HIS EXCELLENCY J. R. JAYAWARDENE

PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA

WILL INAUGURATE THE CONFERENCE.

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Dr. (Miss) Padma Subramaniam (Dance)
Kumari Swarnamahi (T. N. Aasthana Narthagi Dance)
M. L. Vasanthakumari (Devotional Songs)
Ilayarajah (Devotional Songs)
Soolamangalam Sisters (Devotional Songs)
N. K. Pathmanathan (Nathasuram)
Karthiga Kanesar (Dance)
Vijayambigai Indrakumar (Dance)

and other popular local Artistes, giving performances in dance, music,
folk dance etc.

Organised by:

Ministry of Regional Development, Hindu Religious and Hindu
Culture and Tamil Affairs.

244, Galle Road,
Colombo 4, SRI LANKA.

"Why is it that you are always criticising this Government?" a friend known for his strong party loyalty pitched into me the other day. "Don't you ever see any good in this Government?"

This was not the first time I had been challenged this way. The same sort of thing had happened in the past, under every regime since 1956, most frequently between 1970 and 1977.

I told my friend that, in the first place he should not use words like "always" like a nagging housewife. (No disrespect intended to woman-kind whom I adore). I said, "The Oxford Dictionary meaning of the word is 'at all times; on all occasions; continually'. You probably have not read what I have written favourably about the Government, both in national and foreign newspapers."

"No, I haven't. And I don't care. What I am angry is that you have so far not written a single word of praise about this Government in the 'Saturday Review'."

"Praise? You expect me to sing hosannas? There are enough state-owned organs to do that. Why should I duplicate the excellent service they are performing?"

"Still, it is not fair to be so critical."

"The last regime would not have fared so disastrously at the polls had it permitted more criticism—and heeded this criticism. Its leaders behaved as if they were demi-gods, omniscient, all-wise, above and beyond criticism. They got drowned in their own propaganda."

"You know, you could earn more money by writing for the Government. I could arrange it."

"No thanks."

"Anyway, can't you see all the good work the Government is doing on a wide front? Take the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme, for instance. It is going to transform the entire economy, and even the landscape, of our country."

"Maha-keli, sorry, Mahaweli. Yes, yes, yes."

"Then how about housing and urban development?"

"Good in parts, bad in parts. Could have been better."

"At last, you have used the word 'good' for anything done by this Government."

"Like 'always', the word 'good' also has a precise meaning."

"Now, take public transport, especially the bus

services. There has been a tremendous improvement since our man took over.. Why are you holding your nose?"

"Is that enough?"

"Then, take the postal and telecommunication services, education, health, agriculture industry, tourism, fisheries—everywhere there has been tremendous progress. Then how about... Why are you going away? Wait..."

"Brother, I have no time to be talking gibberish with you. Cheerio!"

Is the President above criticism?



President Jayewardene

Most of our politicians say they welcome criticism, but they take umbrage the moment this is done, implying that the criticism is "destructive", not "constructive". Independent journalists and journals, however, cannot accept their definition of "constructive", by which they usually mean no criticism at all!

An editor of a daily newspaper once told me that though he followed an "independent" policy he would never allow criticism of the Head of State, whoever held the post.

Fair enough, if the Head of State is a mere figurehead performing largely ceremonial functions.

But quite a nonsensical policy if the same person is both the Head of State and the Head of Government, like Mr. Jayewardene.

On the theory of collective responsibility—the President

to an institution in which there was alleged to be much hanky panky. "If the leading bull goes on the correct track, so will those who follow it." The corollary is that otherwise they would go to their doom, like limpets.

One logical criticism I have to make—does it not prove that there is a paucity of talent or competence in government ranks for our good President to take on so many functions?

FERTILISER TOO!

Just imagine, Mr. Jayewardene is Minister of Defence, Minister of Plan Implementation, Minister of Higher Education, Minister of Power and Energy, Minister of Janata Estates Development and Minister of State Plantations, besides being in charge of the subject of Aviation and recently taking over the State Fertiliser Corporation!

NO SUPERMAN

Mr. Jayewardene is no superman. I believe that it is the overburdening himself with work that has not left him enough time to maintain more efficient and effective supervision over the various Ministries. If there were such supervision, then many of the things that have gone wrong with this Government, including largescale and widespread waste of money and other resources, would not have taken place.

by Gamini Navaratne

under our Constitution is a member of the Cabinet of Ministers and presides over its deliberations— Mr. Jayewardene is also responsible for all the decisions and all the actions of the Government. He in fact is more involved in, and hence more responsible for, everything the Government does. So how can he be above criticism?

I am reminded about what a yokel told me in reference

ONLY

ONE S. L. F. P.

The latest developments within the SLFP (M) tend to indicate that Mr. Maithripala Senanayake is destined to go it alone. Bereft of Mr. Anura Bandaranaike and Co., his group has lost much of its strength and stature. He is unwanted by Mrs. Bandaranaike and cannot join the UNP.

which is entitled to be so treated."

The law goes on to state that a political party shall not be entitled to be treated as a recognised party "if its name is identical with the name of any party which is already entitled to be treated as a recognised party, or in the opinion of the Commissioner so nearly resembles such name as to be calculated to mislead, confuse or deceive."

This would seem to preclude the existence of two parties both calling themselves the "Sri Lanka Freedom Party"

On this issue, the decision of the Commissioner "shall be final and shall not be called in question in any court."

QUOTE

"Your Excellency, why are some Buddhists criticising you?"

"Because I have restored all democratic freedoms and anybody could criticise me and my government. I don't close and seal newspapers. I have not placed restrictions on the freedom of speech. Nobody needs to be afraid of the Fourth Floor and Paget Road....."

(President Jayewardene in an interview with Prof. Tilak Ratnakara — Sunday Observer—April 11, 1982.)

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LETTERS

ALL CEYLON TAMIL CONGRESS

120, Main Street,
Jaffna,
6th April, 1982

The Editor,
"Saturday Review",
303, K.K.S. Road,
Jaffna.

Sir,

I refer to your editorial of the 27th of March 1982.

Your reference to the late G. G. Ponnambalam, Q.C., in that editorial is quite unwarranted. You would have been old enough in 1948 to know that the late Ponnambalam did not "suddenly make a nose dive and emerge as a minister whilst the audience held their breath." The All Ceylon Tamil Congress held a mass meeting at the Jaffna esplanade on the 21st of August 1948 at which meeting they asked the masses permission to coalesce with the then Government and the masses gave that permission by an almost unanimous show of hands. At this meeting, the late Messrs. Chelvanayakam and Vanniasingham spoke in favour of coalescing with the Government. Please refer to the daily newspapers immediately thereafter.

Since you refer to quick change artistes and tight rope walkers, I was wondering how you could have missed the performance of the now defunct Federal Party artistes between the years 1965 and 1968?

How is it that you have also missed out the contortionists performance of the TULF during the recent past and more particularly since the commencement of the "amity talks" illusion?

How would you describe the performance of the Hon. S. Thondaman and his troupe who have been bouncing high on the UNP mat since September 1979?

By ignoring the above performances of your friends were you not attempting to create an illusion yourself? Come, Come, Mr. Editor, Sir, please do not allow your family connections, or your political convictions or your dutiful obligations to your Master, Kalai Nilayam Ltd., to turn you into a circus clown with this type of selective performance on your part. Please try to be objective, even if you do not want to be honest.

Incidentally, the All Ceylon Tamil Congress Working Committee did not "express gratitude" to Sritharan or Vaikunthavasan. One does

A Father's son in politics

not know from where you get your information. The Working Committee only "congratulated" them. You will concede that there is a vast difference between expressing gratitude to one and congratulating someone.

Anyhow, the question is: what is the policy of "Saturday Review"? Is it not the fact that some of you who are actively responsible for "Saturday Review" are yourselves silent and shy advocates of the Eelam Devilry?

I am sure you will not want to be a spineless wonder yourself by not publishing this letter.

Yours truly,
G. G. Ponnambalam (Jr)
General Secretary.



Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam Q.C.

Note by Editor

It is no doubt a touching scene to see a son stand up for his father, but if Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam (Jr.) was half as good a politician as a son, he would not have challenged our critical reference to Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam (Snr.) joining the D. S. Senanayake Government in 1949. Coming so soon after Independence and particularly after a million hill-country Tamils were made stateless by legislation, Mr. Ponnambalam's entry into the Cabinet and subsequent events comprised one sordid chapter in the political history of this country which every Tamil would like to forget.

Let us quote a foreign political observer's comment in this connection. Professor

Robert N. Kearney, a member of the Department of Political Science at the University of California in his book "Communalism and Language in the Politics of Ceylon (1967)" says:

"An indication of the direction majority-minority political relations were to take appeared in the contest for the city of Jaffna seat in the 1947 election. Labeled the 'Battle of Jaffna' by the newspapers, the contest produced a direct clash between two prominent Tamil politicians who symbolized the opposing political courses open to the Tamils. G. G. Ponnambalam sought election as a candidate and the founder leader of the Tamil Congress, an explicitly Tamil political organization. His adversary

have sent Arunachalam Mahadeva instead- who fought on that specific plank. This is one political ethic which politicians time and again choose to disregard. If a politician thinks he has to reverse the mandate of the people who elected him, the obvious thing open to him is to resign his seat and seek a fresh mandate if he thinks the changed situation warrants it—not by holding a mass meeting at the Jaffna esplanade and getting permission by an "almost unanimous show of hands".

If Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam (Jr.) likes his memory to be refreshed, of how his father's joining the D. S. Senanayake Cabinet represented the first shameful betrayal of the Tamil voter, let us quote for him some excerpts from the book "Three Prime Ministers of Ceylon" — An inside story by J. L. Fernando (M. D. Gunasena & Co Ltd. 1963).

"Senanayake's political moves also were shrewdly executed. In his first Cabinet he excluded representatives of the Tamil Congress which had been led by G. G. Ponnambalam who campaigned adroitly for 50 per cent representation for the Tamils in Parliament although the Tamil population was a small minority in the country. Senanayake's reply was to leave the Tamil Congress out of his first Cabinet, a step which stunned Tamil Congress personalities. Gradually they came to realise the value of office which had been denied to them. The younger men of Senanayake's own ranks, J. R. Jayawardene and Dudley Senanayake, were very keen that Ponnambalam should be taken into the government. They realised his worth as a first-rate debater who would be an asset to the government benches to withstand the debating powers of the Marxists in the Opposition. To all appeals in favour of giving Ponnambalam cabinet office, D. S. Senanayake turned a deaf ear. I remember being asked by that young set to plead with Senanayake myself. But the old tactician allowed these knocks at the door to continue unheeded for long weeks and, while the guessing continued, he did not open the door.

The newspapers were themselves keen on the scent and one afternoon I was asked to check with Prime Minister Senanayake. On my way home I called at "Temple Trees" together with a friend and found the Prime Minister in. To my inquiry whether Ponnambalam was being

given a place in the Cabinet, Senanayake's cryptic reply was "Sit down and you will see". A few minutes passed and we heard a motorcar running into the portico. Senanayake rushed out of his room, warning us not to be seen. When we heard the car door shut and the car moving away my friend and I came to the verandah and seeing Carolis, the Prime Minister's faithful valet, I asked him, "What happened?" It was a historic reply that we heard, "Sir, the Tamil worshipped the 'Sinhaya'." He described how Ponnambalam on seeing Senanayake coming out to the verandah had bent down low and made obeisance in Oriental fashion to the Prime Minister.

In the eyes of Carolis who kept in close touch with current political affairs, the "Sinhaya" (emblem of the "Lion Race" from which the Sinhalese are alleged to be descended) had been victorious in the end...

"Later, when I met Senanayake I told him a story that my friend and I had seen how Ponnambalam, his former political enemy, had greeted him. Senanayake got me to promise that I would not describe that incident in the newspapers. Once Ponnambalam was on his side, Senanayake stood by him loyally in his characteristic way."

As to G. G. (Jr's) reference to our "friends" and "family connections etc., etc." we choose to ignore such remarks; they are unworthy of a reply. It is certainly foolish to mix friendships and family connections (particularly father and son relationship) with politics and public interest.

Mr. G. G. (Jr) is being a poor Advocate when he says, "there is a vast difference between expressing gratitude to one and congratulating someone". Pardon us, we do not see this "vast difference" in the context of the Tamil Congress stand (or non-stand) on Eelam. Is the Tamil Congress for Eelam or not? Could Mr. P. give an unequivocal answer to that question? We know he cannot right now because the moment he gives an answer to that question, his party, small as it is, will split into two—the old brigade to whom Eelam is anathema and the young ambitious set who would like to look at the chandeliers in Kotte's Parliament by espousing an Eelam which they do not believe in!

In concluding with the remark "I am sure you will not want to be a spineless

(Continued on page 9)

The 1982 Chelvanayakam Memorial Lecture

The late Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, revered leader of the Tamil-speaking people of Sri Lanka for about three decades, had a deep and abiding faith in the self-sufficiency, autonomy and integrity of the Tamils of Sri Lanka. The foundation of his political programme of autonomy for the Tamil-speaking districts of the island was his belief in its economic viability. In these lectures dedicated to his memory, it seems appropriate to examine the evolution of the economy of the Tamil communities in the recent past and identify the bases of its strength and its weakness, the elements in its continuity and change and chart its ups and downs over a period of about 300 years.

The Population of North Ceylon

The demographic map of the northern Tamils has shown a remarkable consistency at least from the 16th century. The Jaffna peninsula, divided into its four provinces of Valikamam, Thenmarachchi, Vadamarachchi and Pachilapalai, has been the solid core of the northern settlements. These have been the most densely populated settlements while, across Elephant Pass on the mainland, were scattered villages in the areas of poonery, Mannar, Vavuniya and Mullaithivu. Unlike the Jaffna villages, the population, in these mainland settlements did not grow with any intensity until the 20th century when they started absorbing the excess capacity in the overpopulated villages of Jaffna. There has, however always been a seasonal movement of labour into the paddy lands of the Vanni from Jaffna.

The strength of the Jaffna settlements has been this concentration of population and their density. This has enabled them to develop viable economic relationships among themselves, has encouraged regional specializations and exchange of commodities and services. It has also enabled the region to grow in isolation from the rest of the island and sheltered it from the vicissitudes elsewhere. Fortunately, there is some evidence of the demographic growth of the Jaffna Tamil population from the 17th century. Immediately after the Dutch conquest of Jaffna (1658), the first Dutch Commandant made an informed estimate of the population of the whole Commandement (Jaffna and the mainland) as about 120,000. A more regular census taken in the 1680's put the total population at 169,299 and, in another census in the mid-18th century the population was found to be 187,599. About 85% of these were to be found in the

A historical foundation of the Economy of the Tamils of North Ceylon



PROFESSOR SINNAPPA ARASARATNAM, who delivered the Chelvanayakam Memorial Lectures for 1982, is one of Sri Lanka's best known historians in the field of South Asian Studies. He was born on 20 March 1930, in Navaly, Sri Lanka, and completed his early education at Jaffna College, Vadukoddai. He graduated from the University of Ceylon in 1951 with first class honours and won the H.M. Corbett Prize for Ceylon History.

Jaffna peninsula. Thus in the 18th century, Jaffna would have had a population upwards of 150,000. This gives a crude density for the peninsula of 350 people per square mile which was high for pre-modern communities. The first Census taken after British occupation, that of 1814, records for Jaffnapatnam (the Dutch Commandement of Jaffna) a population of 103,849, a remarkable drop from the Dutch figures for the 18th century. The British 1814 figures are further followed up by a 1827 census record of 123,188 for Jaffnapatnam.

Until 1961 he was a lecturer in the University of Ceylon and was a Founder-Editor of the Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies.

In 1961, he joined the Department of Indian Studies in the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur and became Professor of History in 1968. He is now Professor and Chairman of the Department of History in the University of New England, Australia.

He has published many research papers and books. Among his best known publications are "Dutch Power in Ceylon 1958-1959" (Amsterdam, 1958); "Ceylon" Modern Nation in Historical Perspective Series, (Prentice Hall, 1964); "Indian Festivals in Malaya" (Kuala Lumpur, 1966) "Indians in Malaya and Singapore" (London, 1970).

These early British figures cannot be explained except in terms of errors on the side of overcounting by the Dutch or undercounting by the British. That the latter ought to be the case is established by the figures of the first properly constituted census of population taken in British Ceylon. In this 1871 Census, the Northern Province, which corresponds broadly to the area of the old Commandement of Jaffna, had a population of 281,666 of which Jaffna district had 246,063. This would have meant an annual population increase from the 1827 figures

of about 1.3%, an increase which was not recorded in any of the subsequent decennial censuses from 1871 till 1931. After 1871, the Tamil population of the north has gone on increasing steadily but again the Jaffna peninsula continued to bear the brunt of this increase and there was no substantial shift in the density patterns of the Tamil districts. It is noted that the average increases in population of these northern Tamil districts is not in keeping with the national increase. The increases over decennial periods from 1871 to 1921 are respectively 8.1%, 5.1%, 7.5%, 8.7% and 1.2%. These low increases are attributable to disease, epidemics, a continuing decline in the standards of living and emigration. The period 1911 to 1921 was particularly bad because of general ill-health in the population and substantial emigration south of the island and to the Malay peninsula.

Within the peninsula itself, patterns of settlement have continued with relatively little change over the last 400 years. There has been little internal movement of population except within small distances in areas of little productivity and areas subject to salination. Portuguese land registers refer to a total of 128 villages, 61 in Valikamam, 24 in Thenmarachchi, 15 in Vadamarachchi and 28 in Pachilapalai. The Dutch Predikant, Reverend Baldaeus who served in Jaffna from 1658 to 1664, lists 44 villages in his map of Jaffna and, in the course of his account, names and describes 29 of these. Reverend Valentijn, writing about 50 years after Baldaeus names 42 villages in these four provinces.

It is clear from these accounts that population density has changed little in the intervening years. The province of Valikamam was the most densely populated and the most populated villages of three hundred years ago remain so today. There has been some movement away from Pachilapalai which appears to have had more settled villages and perhaps Vadamarachchi has attracted more recent settlements and an increased acreage of land brought under cultivation. There also seems to have been some movement of population towards the islands, Karainagar and Kayts. The movement towards the Vanni is a 20th century phenomenon, caused both by the increasing pressure on land in the heavily populated villages and the government's initiatives in the reclamation of tanks and in land colonization. The migration of Indian labour to some of these settlements has provided further incentives in this direction.

Social Institutions and Legal Framework

Next to population, an important ingredient to orderly economic activity is the establishment of permanent social institutions and a legal framework in which relations within society can be conducted. This was important for a migrant society like the Sri Lankan Tamils who brought with them institutions from a wide area of their lands of origin. The establishment of unencumbered private property in land was, in this respect, an important achievement which appears to have been accomplished by the 17th century. It is not known when the pattern of smallholdings in landed property originated. But it is clear that by the time the Dutch began to register landholdings in 1675 this had become the standard pattern of a Jaffna village. These holdings were of two type. There was garden land with a house in the centre, a cluster of which formed the lived-in portion of the village. Just outside the village was the farm land which was also owned in small divided plots. The growth of private property rights and the respect of these is seen in the fencing off of properties from a very early date. Colonial Secretary Tennent remarks on this feature and contrasts it with the Sinhalese areas of the south where there was scant respect for individual property.

(To be Continued in the next issue)

From the pages of Hansard - 50 YEARS AGO

Debates in the Legislative Council of Ceylon - Thursday

November 8, 1928

(Continued from last issue)

The number of Indians—when I say Indians I mean those Indians who are not domiciled in this country—in this Island to-day is 880,000 or 885,000 to be exact. Out of that the estate population numbers about 719,552, and there is a permanent addition to this population. When I say permanent addition to this population, I take into account the number that is going out—I deduct that number from the number coming in. Besides, I am also making an allowance for the returning labourer. There is an addition of 71,917 to the estate immigrant labour population and of 2,158 to the non-estate immigrant labour population. Thus, there is a permanent addition of 74,075 every year to the 885,000 immigrant labourers, and these numbers are ever increasing.

If these people are given the vote, what will be the result? The Indians claimed before the Commissioners, on behalf of those that are not domiciled in this Island—mark you, Sir, they claimed on behalf of those who were not domiciled here, and not on behalf of those who were domiciled here—they claimed on behalf of those people who are not absorbed into the permanent population, and not on behalf of those who are so absorbed, five seats in the Council, and a proportionate increase if the number of Members of the Council was increased from forty-nine to eighty. What have the Commissioners recommended? They have recommended that from 70 per cent. to 90 per cent. of these people should be given the vote. What will happen now? There are 885,000 immigrant labourers in the Island, and they will be able to return ten Members to the Council, if they voted bodily. But if they are so distributed as to be able to influence the return to Council of certain particular Members, they will be in a position to return not ten Members but twenty or even thirty or forty Members.

My honourable friend the Second Indian Member, in giving evidence before the Commissioners, said that the Indians did not mind the abolition of communal representation and, that they

wanted to be given the vote on a literacy test. He told the Commissioners that the Indians did not want special representation. On being asked why the Indians did not want special representation, my honourable friend replied that the Indians would certainly be able to secure a seat in Colombo North. It will take me a long time, Sir, to read out the evidence given by my honourable friend before the Special Commissioners.

The Hon. The VICE-PRESIDENT:—You can give the gist of it.

The Hon. Mr. E. W. PERERA:—He has got to speak.

The Hon. The VICE-PRESIDENT:—I hope you will finish your speech to-day.

The Hon. Mr. C. W. W. KANNANGARA:—I am afraid I will not be able to do so, Sir.

The Hon. The VICE-PRESIDENT:—We will go on till 7 o'clock and adjourn.

The Hon. Mr. C. W. W. KANNANGARA:—My honourable friend the Second

What C. W. W. Kannangara said

Indian Member told the Commissioners that the Indians will be able to capture a seat in Colombo North and some other seats where the Indians are to be found in large numbers, and he mentioned the Sabaragamuwa, the Central and the Uva Provinces. He said that the Indians would be able to capture a number of seats in those places.

Now, Sir, with an ever-increasing Indian population and with that deliberate statement of the Honourable the Second Indian Member, what will be the position?

Do our Tamil friends think that because there is no chance for the Indian labourer to flourish in the North there is not the Indian labour menace in the Central, the Uva, and the Sabaragamuwa Provinces? Cannot they realize what we feel, that the permanent population will be swamped by migratory labour?

Suppose it becomes necessary some day to pass legislation to stop immigration.

country. And it is not this country only that feels the danger. It was only the other day that Iraq was trying to stop immigration. Then, the Federated Malay States have told our friends from the North that they are no more required in those States. Early this year, Sir a Bill was to have been introduced in the F. M. S. Legislative Council to restrict the immigration of labourers into the Federated Malay States. That proves, Sir, that other countries besides ourselves are concerned about restricting immigration into those countries, and we are not a day too late in uttering a note of warning about this danger. The Objects and Reasons of the Bill which was to have been introduced in the F. M. S. Legislative Council are as follows:—

It is the inherent right of every Sovereign State to take measures to prohibit or regulate the immigration of labour from abroad. This is necessary not only in the public interest (for it may

the First FRANCHISE debate

What will happen if this Indian population should send in Members who are opposed to the enactment of such legislation? If we grant these people the vote will there not be an ever-increasing number of Indian Members in this Council whose sympathies will be antagonistic to the sympathies of the people of this country?

The Hon. Mr. I. X. PEREIRA:—Question!

The Hon. Mr. C. W. W. KANNANGARA:—Well, Sir, there is not the slightest doubt that these arguments of mine cannot be refuted. I am sorry that the Honourable the Second Indian Member is not in his seat.

That is the position with respect to Indian labour. In this connection it is very necessary to point out that this immigrant danger is felt, and felt very seriously, in this

be politically or socially undesirable that there should be unrestricted immigration in ever-increasing numbers from one particular country or territory), but also in the interest of the labouring classes of such State, for the influx of

unskilled labour in vast numbers tends not only to depress the standard of living, but gives rise to economic distress.

During recent years there has been a rapidly increasing influx of unskilled labourers

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into the Colony and the tide of unrestricted immigration has attained such proportions that grave concern has been caused to this Government with regard to the problem of unemployment and the shortage of house accommodation.

Under favourable conditions the vast majority of immigrants find a ready market for their labour in the Malay States under British protection.

But when trade is stagnant and the local industries (tin and rubber) are depressed, large numbers of unemployed labourers stream into Singapore and abide there in the hope of obtaining employment.

The resultant economic distress and overcrowding in insanitary conditions is a grave menace to Singapore, which from its geographical situation, is not merely a conduit pipe, but is forced to play the role of a filter bed to intercept and retain very undesirable elements.

This Bill is designed to provide means for the regul-

ation of such immigrants.

An "immigrant labourer" is, generally speaking, defined to be any person entering the Colony or a Malay State under British protection by sea as a deck passenger for the purpose of performing domestic service or manual labour and the onus is thrown on him to prove that he is not such a person (Clause 2).

That is what appeared, Sir, in a local newspaper on January 31, 1928, and I have no doubt that the Bill has since been passed.

Adjournment.

The Hon. The VICE-PRESIDENT:—We will now adjourn until 10.30 a.m. to-morrow. The Honourable Member can continue his speech to-morrow morning.

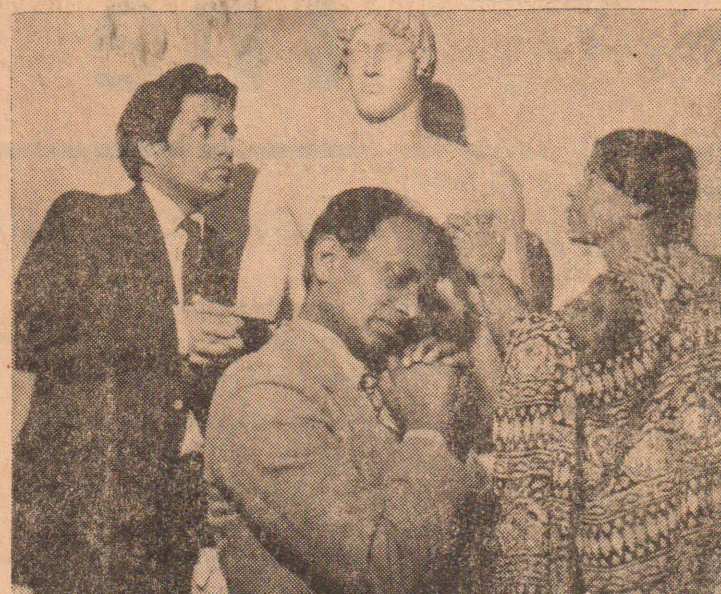
Council adjourned accordingly.

(Next week:
Hon. Mr. K. Balasingham's contribution to the Franchise Debate.)

Homer's Iliad on the BBC Tamil service

One of the great epics of world literature, The Iliad of Homer, is to be broadcast by the BBC Tamil Service. It has been adapted into dramatic form in Tamil by Shankaramurthi, who is also producing and performing in the series of eleven episodes. With him will be some of TAMILAIS's regular contributors—Anandi Suryaprakasan, Gita Balasubramaniam and Vimal Sockanathan. Also appearing will be a previous producer of TAMILAIS on a visit from Madras, Sivapathasundaram, Balasubramaniam Reddy, also a broadcaster—from Singapore—on a business visit to London, and several others.

The Iliad, written by the 8th century BC blind poet, Homer, tells the story of the battle between the Greeks and Trojans in



In the picture: Apollo, one of the gods of the Trojans in Homer's Iliad, is surrounded by suppliants. They are members of the cast of the BBC TAMILAIS production of the Iliad, from left: Vimal Sockanathan, Shankaramurthi and Anandi Suryaprakasan.

front of the gates of the city of Troy over the most beautiful woman in the world, Helen of Troy.

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■ Gross Assets	135,977,000	201,311,000	329,154,000
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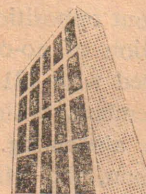
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STRENGTH BUILT ON PUBLIC CONFIDENCE.

(Continued from
last issue)

The I. C. J. Report

Historical background to the present ethnic conflict (continued)

The August violence was widely reported in the Indian press and was the subject of editorials in major Indian newspapers. In Madras, India, hundreds of students demonstrated to protest the attacks against the Tamils. Prior to the declaration of the state of emergency, the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka conveyed to the Sri Lankan government his government's concern over attacks against Indian Tamils. In Lok Sabha, the Indian parliament, a number of M.P.s expressed concern. In response the Indian Minister for External Affairs, Narasimha Rao, stated that the incidents were an internal matter for Sri Lanka, that he had been assured that the violence was being brought under control and that he hoped that there would be no disruption of the traditional good relations between the two countries.

"A FOREIGN HAND"

The outbreak of violence in August 1981 has been attributed variously to organized gangs, to a "foreign hand" to a backlash of the Sinhalese population because of Tamil youth terrorism and demands for separation, and to animosity against Tamils stimulated by Sinhalese elements within the government. The Sri Lankan Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting, Anandatissa De Alwis, announced on August 16 that "a foreign hand" was behind the communal violence. He did not identify the foreign country allegedly involved. The accusations of involvement of the Sri Lankan government relate particularly to a no-confidence motion in Parliament in July against A. Amirthalingam, Tamil United Liberation Front opposition leader. The motion of no-confidence was passed with 121 Government members voting for it and two abstaining. (Mr. S. Thondaman, the Minister of Rural Industrial Development and the President of the Ceylon Workers Congress representing Indian estate Tamils, abstained). The M.P.s of the TULF and the SLFP did not participate in the vote. Such a parliamentary procedure is highly unusual since it is a vote by the Parliamentary majority party of no-confidence in the leader of the opposition party. It is clearly a deviation from normally accepted rules of parliamentary procedure.

The vote was preceded by comments by majority party members strongly critical of Mr. Amirthalingam for

Ethnic Conflict and Violence in Sri Lanka: Report of a Mission to Sri Lanka in July - August 1981 on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists by Professor Virginia A. Leary.

speeches abroad on the situation of the Tamils. An article in *The Hindu* (India) of August 21, 1981 referred to these comments as "declamatory, Tamil-baiting rhetoric." The *Sun* (Colombo) of August 8 reported that as a follow-up to the no-confidence motion a group of government M.P.s led by Dr. Neville Fernando wanted Parliament to sit as a Judicial Committee to take action against Mr. Amirthalingam

the Tamils. The speeches were followed by slogans on walls and posters on the same lines as those speeches. The direct connection between the speeches and the posters and writings on the walls is obvious."

The *International Herald Tribune* of August 31 reported "In July, posters began appearing on walls in Colombo saying: 'Alien Tamils, you have danced too much, your destruction is at hand. This is the country of us Sinhalese'. Tamil leaders claim the posters were inspired by radical elements within Mr. Jayewardene's government and party." The same article reported that the President had said the posters had been removed and action taken to prevent their publication under the state of

"...The President said he would resign as head of his party if some of its leaders continued to encourage ethnic hostilities"

emergency. On September 11 the *New York Times* quoted President Jayewardene as saying "I regret that some members of my party have spoken in Parliament and outside words that encourage violence and the murders, rapes and arson that have

been committed." The article continued by stating that the President said he would resign as head of his party if some of its leaders continued to encourage ethnic hostilities.

In July, it was announced that a planned visit of the Indian President to Sri Lanka had been postponed. Indian newspapers alleged that the reason was recent racial tension in Jaffna, although government sources denied this.

With the declaration of the state of emergency on August 17th the situation in Sri Lanka stabilized and violence ceased. A large number of Tamils remained in refugee camps.

(To be continued)



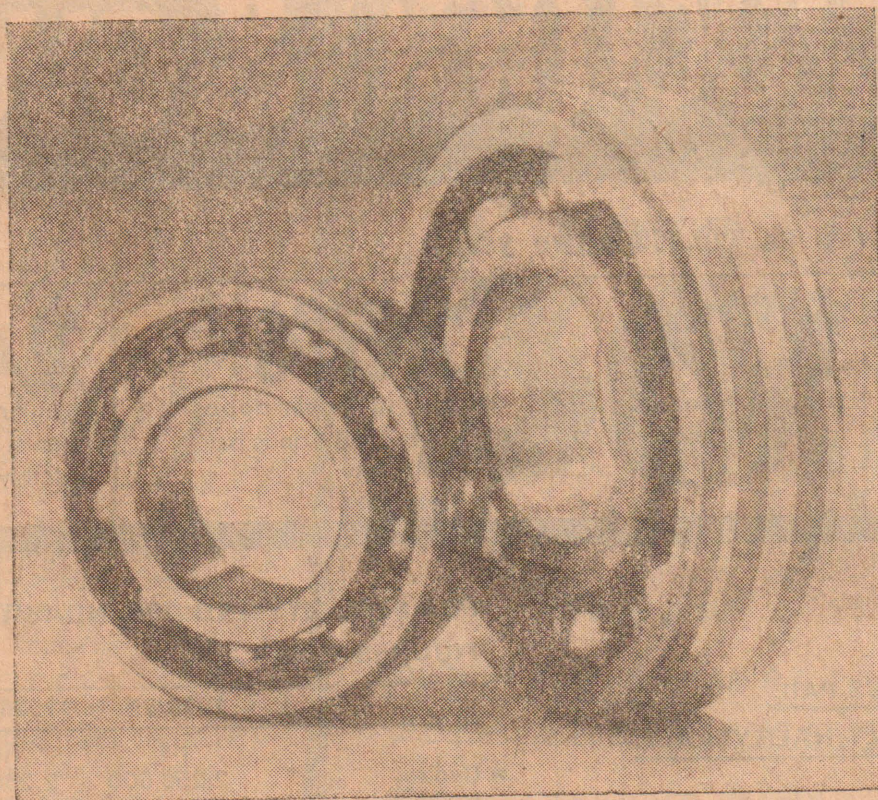
S. Thondaman

'He abstained from voting

on the grounds that he violated his oath of Allegiance and the Constitution by the requests to foreign governments to interfere in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. On the 13th of August, during the violent outbreak against the Tamils, Mr. Amirthalingam wrote to President Jayewardene referring to the influence of the parliamentary moves on the then ongoing violent incidents: "The law and order situation in all parts of the Island has deteriorated very badly and, as has become usual now, the Tamil people and their property are the targets. I am sorry to say that the climate for this was created by the inciting speeches of some governing party members of Parliament and even some responsible ministers....The impact of these speeches and statements on the Sinhalese masses has been to rouse them against

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LETTERS

(Continued from
page 4)

wonder yourself by not publishing this letter" Mr. G. G. P. (Jr) has effectively proved that he has yet to make a proper assessment of the SATURDAY REVIEW. Since he is comparatively young, we have no doubt he has yet time to learn more of political principles and principled journalism.

— The Editor

Anaicoddai,
5th April, 1982.

Dear Sir,

PROBLEMS OF LEADERSHIP

Your editorial of 13-3-82 under the above heading has obviously caused a flutter in some quarters.

What you have said consists of political axioms, an undebatable analysis of the present political situation, but two debatable points, viz., the fortunes of the TULF being tied up with accidents and the cause for the overwhelming victory for the TULF at the D.C. elections.

What Mr. Arul M. Rajendran has observed in his letter appearing in your paper of 27-3-82 is also largely undebatable except for his contention about some collaborators of Mr. A. Amirthalingam placing obstacles and trying to pull him down.

But Mr. V. Sinnathurai, in his letter appearing on 3-4-82 (fortunately not on 1-4-82) discovers that the Captain has lost his bearings and that the people have come to know the truth and that they cannot be fooled any more.

In the first place it is a downright insult to the people to say that they have been fooled, for, it is only a fool who can be fooled, and he is apt to be fooled again and again. Does Mr. V. S. seriously contend that the people are fools? This is an allegation which has been very loosely and freely used by politicians ever since adult franchise to satisfy their inner pride. This allegation has been used against Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayagam also.

Secondly, you say the hour produces the man.... Is it not also true that it is the people, through their feelings, that produces the man? Mr. A. M. R. says that it is the lotus stalk which can keep above the water level, that flowers. But what happens to the flower if the water level subsides after swelling. It too falls.

Thus if the water level falls, i.e., if the people's feelings change, then the leader will also have to change or fall for as you say "leaders are after all, creatures of historical forces which operate independently of the leader."

When Vasco de Gama sailed round the Cape of Good Hope, during the crucial stage, he sailed in a zig-zag manner, and never once did he sail in the direction of his mission. But his crew did not mutiny, because they understood him.

When De Valera went completely against his earlier policy—a policy which led to civil war and the assassination of his earlier leader Michael Collins — people naturally accused him of political betrayal. But he won, and now history lauds him and says that his tactics worked.

Anyone who has even a superficial knowledge of wars, will know that in certain battles, commanders, even in the face of near victory, decide to withdraw in the interests of larger and later benefits.

Anyone who understands politics will readily accept that politics is intrigues within intrigues, and also that these intrigues cannot be made public.

It is only history that can judge the behaviour of the present day leaders. We are all actors in a drama that is being unfurled slowly and we cannot judge a drama where we are the actors unless of course one's purpose is to destroy the hero.

A people get the leadership that they deserve and the strength of the leaders lies in the attitude of the people.

If the people are steadfast in their objectives and single-minded in purpose, then their leaders and representatives too will be steadfast and single-minded. On the other hand if the people lose sight of their mission and start clamouring for jobs, transfers, quotas etc., then their representatives and leaders too will have to clamour for them.

Hence instead of labelling and calling leaders names, unless of course one's intention is to destroy them, let us give them the strength and support that they need until such times that they without doubt betray us.

"Men are mortal while ideals are not.

Let us stand for ideals and forget the personalities."

Yours faithfully,
D. P. Agasthiyan.

NEWS BRIEFS

NEW INDO - CEYLON FERRY SERVICE

A private company (partners: a retired top-ranking police officer, a West German citizen and another Ceylonese)—starts a new Indo-Ceylon Ferry service on 26 April. The ferry will ply between Talaimannar and Rameshwaram on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

MPCS PRESIDENT TURNS LORRY DRIVER

The President of a multi purpose cooperative in the Jaffna District was forced to turn lorry driver recently to ensure that essential consumer goods reached the society's branches in time. The reason? At the crucial time, some lorry drivers had done the vanishing trick.

250 WORKERS GET AXED

Two hundred and fifty KKS Cement factory workers have been suddenly served with quit notices by the management. They had been recruited through Rural Development Societies.

'NO AUTHORITY TO ISSUE EVEN A CIRCULAR'

"Minister C. Rajadurai who is in charge of implementing the provisions relating to the use of Tamil, hasn't the authority to issue even a circular about the subject" observed Kayts MP K. P. Ratnam, speaking at the annual general meeting of the Govt. Nurses and Officers Union.

TC MMCs RESIGN

Tamil Congress Municipal Councillor Mrs. Antonia Swaminathan — the only woman member of the Jaffna Municipal Council—has resigned from the party (this means she automatically loses her seat in the Council). Her resignation was triggered off by the party's demand that she should quit so that fellow party member S. Kanagalingam could replace her in the Council. Another TC Councillor, S. Mariampillai, has resigned from the Council to make way for Attorney-at-law S. Selvarajah.

JAFFNA CENSORS BAN WHAT COLOMBO CENSORS OKAYED

'Puthu Kural' (New Voice), the Moratuwa University Tamil Society's variety show, has run into trouble with Jaffna's Censor Board. The censors' scissors have snipped off all the songs and large portions of the dramatic text in a programme earlier okayed—and performed—in its entirety by Colombo's censors.

BOY SCOUTS' SHRAMADANA AT MAHADEVA CAUSEWAY

Boy Scouts in the Jaffna District performed shramadana at the Mahadeva Causeway, Pooneryn, on 7 April. This was part of their observance of International Scouts Year.

THREE FARMERS GET BARGAIN TRACTORS

Three lucky farmers in the Mullaitivu District got tractors at cheaper-than-usual prices, thanks to a Bank of Ceylon loan scheme. Mullaitivu Govt. Agent K. Gnana-chandran handed over the tractors.

NON-STOP WEAVING COMPETITION

T. Tharmaratnam wove 17 sarees to win the non-stop 60 hour weaving competition conducted by Thanga Weaving Centre, Ariyalai. Second and third places went to Kingsley Ganesan (14 sarees) and P. Amirthalingam (13 sarees).

RECEPTION TO JOURNALIST

The Free-lance Journalists Association of Jaffna feted Thinakaran Editor R. Sivagurunathan at the Town Hall, Jaffna, on 11 April to honour his election as President of the Working Journalists Association of Sri Lanka.

COMMUNITY CENTRE DRAMA CONTESTS

More than fifty community centres took part in the two day (10, 11 April) drama and music competitions organised by the Jaffna District Federation of Community Centres. The contests were held at Jaffna Central College Hall.

MPCS OPENS TIMBER DEPOT

The Nallur Multipurpose Cooperative Society opened a Timber Depot on 11 April.

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(NEAR KANNATHIDY JUNCTION)

Text of a paper read at the World Hindu Conference organised by the Visva Hindu Parishad and held at Allahabad, India on the 25th, 26th and 27th January 1979.

Hinduism and Sri Lanka

"I come from Eelam, the Tamil name for Ceylon. As most of you know, it is an island at the southern-most end of India and separated from the Indian mainland by the Palk-Strait by about 20 miles. The island is roughly 25,320 square miles, with a population of about 14 million people of which Hindus represent approximately 3 million. The majority of the people are Sinhala Buddhists. People who embrace Christianity and Islam also occupy this island.

Hinduism, as you all know is the mother of all religions. Its historic origin cannot easily be traced. Likewise, the origin of Hinduism in Ceylon goes back to pre-historic times. According to some scholars, Hinduism (Saivism) was the religion of Ceylon for a full period of 240 years in the pre Buddhist Kingdom of Vijaya (L.V.III Y.V.M.). In the opinion of Sir William Jones, Scholar of the 19th Century A.D., Hinduism was in existence from the pre-Vijayan times. Sir Williams, after examining various monuments of Hindu antiquity, expressed the opinion "that this island was peopled, time out of memory, by the Hindu race". This fact is supported by no less a person than Rev. Walpola Rahula, Buddhist monk, in his book "History of Buddhism" (page 44). "Even before the arrival of Vijaya in the 5th Century B.C. there is historical evidence for the prevalence of Hinduism in Ceylon". Reverend Nilipus Baldeus the Dutch prelate who lived in Jaffna for seven years from 1658, observed that there were at his time 329 Hindu temples in Jaffna—today the number of Hindu temples in Jaffna could be counted in thousands. The number of temples in the entire island should exceed 10,000.

Outstanding temples

When speaking of Hindu temples, I am tempted to mention the names of so many renowned temples in the island, but space does not permit me to name them all or go into their details. But at the same time, I will be failing in my duty if I do not name a few outstanding temples in the north and east of the island, the historic homeland of the Tamils of Ceylon. Kandasamy temple at Nallur, the former capital city of the Jaffna Kingdom, Mavidapuram temple a

Kankasanturai, the port of Jaffna, Naga Poosani Amman Kovil at Nainathivu, Karainagar Sivan Kovil, Vallipuram temple at Point Pedro, Chelva Channithi Murugan temple at Thondamanaru, Mamangeswara temple at Amirthagali, Thanthontri Eswaran Kovil at Kokkadicholai and Uganthai Murugan Kovil at Pottuvil are a few that should be mentioned even within this limitation.

In the south of Ceylon, Ponnambalavaneshwara temple situated in Colombo needs special mention because of its attractive Dravidian architecture.

Before Vijaya's arrival

Sir Paul Peries, an eminent Sinhala Historian, was in no doubt when he categorically stated "Long before the arrival of Vijaya (543 B.C.) there were in Lanka, 5 recognised Iswarams of Siva which claimed and received adoration of all India. They were Thiruketheswaram near Mahathitha, Muneeswaram dominating Salavatta and the pearl fishery, Thondiswaram near Mantota, Thirukonaswaram opposite the great bay of Koddiair in Trincomalee and Nakuleswaram near Kankasanturai. Their situation close to these ports cannot be the results of accident or caprice and was probably determined by the concourse of a wealthy mercantile population whose religious wants called for attention".

Of the temples mentioned above, Thirukoneswaram at Trincomalee occupies a unique place. St. Gnanasambanthar of the 7th Century Tamil Nad, and Saiva Saints of the later period have sung in praise of this deity. According to St. Gnanasambanthar, Trincomalee was densely populated with Tamils who were followers of Hinduism. A great Catholic priest by the name of Fr. Francis Xavier described the temple and the district of Trincomalee as the "Rome of Heathens of the East" (The History of the Catholic Church Vol. 1 Father Gnanaprasagar). Though he has described us as Heathens, we are still thankful to him for declaring the importance of this temple by calling it "the Rome of the Heathens of the East".

According to Sir Emerson Tennent, "Trincomalee, though a place of great antiquity, derives its ancient renown, less from political than from religious associations. The Malabar invaders appear to have adopted it as the site of one of their most celebrated shrines and a Pagoda which stood upon the lofty cliff, now known as the Swamy Rock and included within the fortification of Fort Fredrick, was the resort of pilgrims from all parts of India, with this edifice which is still spoken of as the temple of a thousand columns is connected to one of the most graceful of the Tamil legends". According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, Vol. 22 p.477, "the town was one of the first Tamil settlements in Ceylon".

SINHALA KINGS TOO EMBRACED HINDUISM:

If we would historically trace the prevalence of Hinduism in Ceylon, there is sufficient evidence to prove that all Tamils who assumed Kingship in Ceylon were Hindus. There is evidence of ancient Sinhala Kings having followed the Hindu faith.

by M. K. Eelaventhana

Vijaya who is considered the founder of the Sinhala nation was himself a Hindu. Kings like Pandukabaya, Vijayabahu were also Hindus. It was only during the reign of Devanampiyatissa with the arrival of Mahinda and Sangamitta that mass conversion to Buddhism took place.

Buddhist philosophy, leaving aside its merits and demerits is not within the comprehension and the understanding of the ordinary man. Therefore, even when the Sinhalese embraced Buddhism, many Hindu aspects have got incorporated into it. There is no place for God or soul in Buddhism but strangely enough, many Buddhists unconsciously believe in God and a Soul. I think in this context it will not be out of place if I mention in passing that it was the Anantha and Atheistic doctrines of Buddhism that prompted Saint Manicavasagar of the 9th Century Tamil Nadu to condemn in very strong terms the philosophy of Buddhism as one that is based on a shallow and shaky foundation (Ref. Chapter Thiruchalal, Thiruvagam).

It is also to be noted that very often the Sinhala Kings took South Indian Tamil brides who were Hindus and whose influence dominated the Royal Court to the extent that Hindu temples were built side by side with the Buddhist temples. There is ample evidence to prove this aspect of life in historical records.

After the conquest by the Portuguese in the 16th Century and followed by the Dutch and the Britishers, a section of the Tamils were converted to Christianity which consists of Catholicism and other Protestant Schools of thought. The advent of Christianity had an adverse effect on the Hindus by denationalising them. Christianity was identified with the western way of life. The oriental way of life was neglected and forgotten. Fortunately for us, even after 443 years of foreign domination, Hindus in Ceylon have succeeded in preserving their identity. In this context, I must make special mention of the contribution made by Arumuga Navalar in the 19th Century, who

of Hindus today would be a sad one.

Last but not least the ever inspiring saintly life of Yoga Swamigal of Colombuthurai and his noble thoughts (Natchinthanai) which have been compiled into a book are a source of divine inspiration for Hindus of all generations. In passing I may also say that I have had the rare and unique privilege of being a disciple of him.

Though to a very great extent we have effectively counter-moved the impact of the western dominations their evil effects are still haunting us. In the north-western Province of the island, there is a widespread Tamil population, who mainly came and settled down from the coastal line areas of South India. They have been successfully converted to Catholicism and Hinduism in this area has had its permanent downfall. This has taken place in spite of the existence of the famous historic temple by the name of "Munneswaram" in the Chilaw District. What had taken place in the north-western province of the island had not only been a religious conversion but also had resulted in a racial conversion as well. People who originally were Tamil Hindus have become Catholic Sinhalese to all intents and purposes. We find it extremely difficult to countermove the effect of this conversion as they had been effected by the powerful combination of the state and the church; we have virtually lost them in the process.

Following the granting of Independence to Ceylon in 1948, political power has passed into the hands of Sinhala Buddhists who are numerically higher than us. The developments that followed the transfer of this political power is well illustrated by the following statement of an outstanding contemporary Sinhala Historian, Prof. K. M. de Silva. He says "Concept of a multi-racial polity ceased to be viable any longer. The emphasis on the sense of uniqueness of the Sinhalese past and the focus on Sri Lanka as the land of the Sinhalese and the country in which Buddhism stood forth in all its pristine purity earned an emotional appeal compared with which a multi-racial polity was a meaningless abstraction. Moreover, the abandonment of the concept of multi-racial polity... justified by laying stress on a democratic sanction deriving its validity from clear numerical superiority of the Sinhalese Buddhists". (Discrimination in Sri Lanka in 'Case Studies on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms - A World Survey, The Hague 1976) (Continued next page)

Voice of Hinduism in Sri Lanka on the decline:

(Continued from page 10)

1958|1977 riots

"Though Buddhism as a philosophy does not belong to any racial or linguistic group, it is really a way of life propagated by the great Buddha. But the Sinhalese have taken upon them as their responsibility to safeguard Buddhism. This has resulted in having very disastrous consequences to the Country.

The Constitution of 1972 in section 6 of it speaks in this manner. "Republic of Sri Lanka shall give to Buddhism foremost place and accordingly it shall be the duty of the state to protect and foster Buddhism" etc. Not satisfied with the prominence given to Buddhism in the 1972 Constitution the present Government headed by Mr. J. R. Jayawardene who claims that he believes in the 'Dharmista' rule has declared in the Constitution of 1978 in the following manner. "The Republic of Sri Lanka shall give to Buddhism the foremost place and accordingly it shall be the duty of the state to protect and foster the Buddha Sasana" etc. As a first step towards the implementation of this provision, the national flag of Sri Lanka which was a flag agreed upon by a Select Committee of Parliament in 1948 comprising representatives of all groups in the island's plural society was unilaterally changed to provide for the inclusion of 4 bo-leaves (leaves from a tree under which the Buddha gained enlightenment) in the four corners contained in that section of the national flag which has the lion depicted on it.

The foremost position given to Buddhism by the successive Sinhala Buddhist Governments make it unmistakably clear that Hinduism and the Hindus who follow this religion are driven to a corner. The non-Buddhist tax payers' contributions and the State funds are now being utilized to propagate Buddhism. The voice of Hindus in the affairs of the state has diminished. In fact, it may be said "our cry is a cry in the wilderness".

The 1958 Sinhala-Tamil riots and the recent Sinhala-Tamil riots of 1977 have revealed to us the danger that is in store for the Hindus of this country. During the 1958 riots large numbers of Hindu temples were destroyed. There was a classic case of a Brahmin Priest attached

to the Panadura Kandasamy temple (situated in the Down South of the Island) who was killed by pouring petrol on him and setting fire.

During the 1977 riots thousands of Hindu temples were destroyed, burnt and damaged by the Sinhala Buddhist fanatics.

A live peacock belonging to the Murugan temple of the Peradeniya Campus of the University of Ceylon was cut into pieces. The Gopuram and the entrance of the temple was also damaged. Many of the figures of the deities were damaged beyond repair. In Trincomalee the image of Lord Ganesh was removed from the temple by the Sinhala Buddhist thugs and probably thrown in the

sea and the following words in Sinhala inscribed on the walls of the temple. "Gane Theio Nanda Gia" (Lord Ganesh has gone for a bath). There was another interesting incident at Katugastota Pillaiyar temple where a stone aimed at the image of Pillaiyar struck back at the person who aimed it and he died on the spot, proving the power of Divine and also make the doubting 'Thomases' to realise miracles do occur even in space age. In short the atrocities committed on the Hindu temples cannot easily be described in words. To know the gravity of the damage done it is necessary that we should have witnessed them.

(To be continued)

M. S. Subbulakshmi gets standing ovation in London

Indian Carnatic vocalist M. S. Subbulakshmi's three public performances in London, highlighted what critics there described as that indefinable magic, which is the gift of only the greatest artists.

When M. S. gave a brief but impressive display of her unique and matchless talent at the inaugural concert of the 'Festival of India' at the Royal Festival Hall, London on March 22, the highlight of her visit was the full length recital she gave for 'Nadabrahmam' on March 26 at the Great Hall of the Imperial College of Science. 'Nadabrahmam' is a pioneering association recently formed in London and M. S.'s public appearance at its first major concert prompted its president, Mr. M. Varadarajan to say that "the lamp of classical music lit by M. S. on this day should burn for years to come in London."

M. S. started with the Purandaradasa kriti, "Charanu Siddhi Vinayaka" in Saurashtaram. Her elaboration of Shanmukhapriya thereafter and Ranjani were totally enchanting. The infinite pathos of Ranjani was soulfully portrayed not only in alapana but also in the kriti, "Sada Saranga Nayane."

As the music critic of *The Guardian* observed, "the words

of this song" were set with precision and love as a jeweller would set precious gems. The Pallavi Gopaliar kriti "Needu Charana", in Kalyani was the piece de resistance of the evening.

The audience included many North Indians and Westerners and M. S. captivatingly rendered bhajans by Tulsidas, Surdas and Meera along with a shabad. The concluding portion of the recital consisted of Gandhiji's favourite bhajan "Vaishnava Janato". Earlier there were songs of Tagore, Bharati and Rajaji as well as bhajans and kritis in Sanskrit, Telugu, Punjabi and Malayalam.

The violin and mridangam accompanists, Kandadevi Alagiriswamy and Guruvayur Dorai gave a scintillating performance and Radha Viswanathan gave her vocal support. Harishankar's thrilling display on the kanjira and T. H. Vinayakaram on the ghatam, provided moments of sheer ecstasy.

As the audience of nearly a thousand gave a standing ovation, Lady Thompson, wife of British High Commissioner to India, garlanded M. S. on behalf of Nadabrahmam.

(THE HINDU, Friday, April 2, 1982.)

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Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Army truck crashes into temple pandal

An Army truck heading towards Amparai on 5th Monday night crashed into a pandal put up in front of the Periyakallar Sri Sithi Vinayagar Temple (in the Paddirupu Electorate).

Complaints have been made that the truck, having demolished the pandal, drove off immediately.

When this incident occurred, the pandal was filled

with worshippers and the "poosaipattai" (ceremonial offering) was being ceremonially brought to the temple, it is learnt.

The crash led to devotees panicking and scattering in all directions.

The people of the area, who were both frightened and incensed by the incident, contacted the Kaluwanchikudy Police.

HARASSMENT CONTINUES IN VAVUNIYA

The President of the Vavuniya branch of the MOVEMENT FOR INTER-RACIAL JUSTICE & EQUALITY (MIRJE), REV. DR. D. J. KANAGARATNAM, has sent the following communication to the President:

"It is with deep regret that I inform you that in spite of several appeals to you regarding the harassment of poor innocent people of the Vavuniya District by the Police and Army on the 16th and 19th of November 1981 and 7th of January 1982, the harassment continued from time to time since then, causing tremendous hardship, sufferings and insecurity to these poor village people.

"I wish to bring to your notice, that on the 31st of March, '82 M. Raveendran of Koolankulam was taken into custody again by the Army personnel in civil costume and severely assaulted and questioned and later released. On the 21st of March '82, the Police and Army entered the Village — Kallaru and arrested M. Nagendran, S. Ganeshan and C. Kumar who were released on 25th of March '82 after torturing and questioning. On the 6th of April 1982 at about 2.30 p.m., the Police and Army in large numbers entered the Village of Maniyarkulam and arrested S. Shanmugam the village leader, his brother Panchavarnam and Annamalai. They were taken into the jungle,

harassed, questioned and were released late in the evening.

"The people of Maniyarkulam are also further harassed by the Sinhala people encroaching on their land and intimidating them. These Sinhala people are from the village Varikoddiyoar, where a model village was created by the Government giving houses only to the Sinhala people, causing tension in the area.

"This kind of continuing harassment and intimidation by the Army, Police and neighbouring Sinhala villagers have created a very pathetic situation of insecurity, fear and tension in the minds of the hill country Tamil people who came as refugees to Vavuniya after immense suffering and hardships during the communal riots of 1977. Such incidents are driving these poor people to lose all confidence in the Government and its leaders.

"Though we admit that the army and police have the right to exercise their duties according to the laws of the country, we humbly appeal to you to exercise your good office and influence in stopping the cruel methods employed by the Police and Troops of State, to harass the poor innocent Tamil people who have come to Vavuniya as refugees and are just beginning a new way of life as hardworking farmers".

Buddhists Object to Hindu Pilgrim Rest at Kataragama

Regional Development and Hindu Affairs Minister Chelliah Rajathurai has come up against an unexpected obstacle—almost on the eve of the World Hindu Conference he has convened (21 — 25 April).

Minister Rajathurai planned to build a Hindu Pilgrims Rest at Kataragama to make up for the previous regime's takeover of the Ramakrishna Mission Madam there, under cover of declaring Kataragama a "Sacred City".

Rs. 5 million was set apart to put up this new building; the building contract too has been signed.

The foundation stone laying ceremony was scheduled for 9 April, after the Ministry's Asst. Director of Hindu Affairs, S. Thangavelu, ins-

pected the building site and made all arrangements for the ceremony.

But just a few days before the deadline, Moneragala District Minister R. M. Abeykoon—who oversees Kataragama—asked the Regional Development Ministry to postpone the ceremony indefinitely. The reason? Kataragama residents, the D.M. made out, are opposed to the Minister's plan to build a Hindu Pilgrims' Rest at Kataragama. The Kataragama residents referred to are all Sinhalese Buddhists.

So that was that. Minister Rajathurai had to content himself with laying the foundation stone for the Sri Karumariamman Temple at Maligawatte in Colombo—the day before the abandoned Kataragama programme.

The Minister did not let the Kataragama set-back cramp his rhetoric at Maligawatte. Pointing out that the new Hindu Temple will stand next to an already existing Buddhist Vihare, Rajathurai said this is a symbol of the peaceful co-existence of the two religions and tangible proof of the harmonious relations between them, dating from ancient times.

MEDICAL EXHIBITION

ORGANISED BY JAFFNA MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

A Medical Exhibition organised by the Jaffna Medical Association at St. Patrick's College, Jaffna, will be open to the public from 21-25, April, between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. each day.

The Ambassador for the Federal Republic of Germany will inaugurate the exhibition at 9 a.m. on the 21st.

This exhibition has been organised to enlighten the people about Clinical conditions in Sri Lanka and make known to them the basic facts about Medical Science. The Association also intends to raise a fund to set up a Medical Library.

Common diseases like diabetes, infections, blood pressure etc., will be made easy to grasp, with the use

of functioning models. Other useful features of the exhibition include Anatomy and working of the various organs of the body, diseases of the brain, demonstrations about cancer etc.

The J.M.A. was formed in 1941 under the Presidentship of the late Dr. S. Subramaniam. Its ideal is "To promote the advancement of Medical and allied sciences, propagate information and diffuse knowledge".

Ramayana - English Commentary to be Published

The Tamil University of Thanjavur will take up the publication of the English commentary of Kambaramayanam written by V. V. S. Aiyar, according to Prof. V.I. Subramonyan, Vice-Chancellor.

The Vice-Chancellor said this while receiving the album containing the special cover and collection commemorating V. V. S. Aiyar released at a function held at the

Headpost Office here today by Mr. G. Mohanakumar, Director of Postal Service, Tiruchi.

Sri Suddhanada Bharathi, contemporary of late V. V. S. Aiyar recalled the services and scholarship of the great revolutionary. Mr. M.V. Ramamoorthy, President of the Philatelists' Association under whose auspices the function was held, welcomed the gathering. (HINDU, April 3, 1982)