

# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

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### Viewpoint

## From Homicide to Suicide

This is the time of the year when even Nature gets generous towards the Northerner; when the soothing, health-giving "Cholaham" breeze comes wafting in, rescuing him from the oppressive heat of the sun and acting like a balm on his frayed nerves. But of what use?

The political heat, denied an external outlet, is turning inwards now. Violence of course is at all times destructive, but violence is now changing direction. It is becoming self-destructive. In fact, there is a new terrifying chill in the political wind. The air is getting oppressive with a growing political intolerance. Brother is turning against brother; guns, taught to shoot at targets, find that the targets are no longer there. A society which learnt to put up with killings, by looking over its shoulder and recognising a goal at the distance thought there was a thing called justifiable homicide, as in law. Now they don't see the goal any more. It has been politically vitiated. Maybe there is something in what Oscar Wilde said: "Yet each man kills the thing he loves.... The coward does it with a kiss, the brave man with a sword".

One wonders—individual acts of violence or non-violence may have their own "karmic" consequences. But when either is converted into moral philosophy, for a whole nation or a people, the responsibility is greater; it has to be sustained to its logical finish. Did not the great Mahatma Gandhi the very apostle of Non-violence invite violence? There is surely a moral in this.

Whenever Pakistan's dictators tried to bring in an element of "democratisation" they brought disaster to themselves and to their country. When Mrs. Indira Gandhi, instead of continuing her "emergency rule", called for elections in 1977 she brought about her own precipitous defeat. Mr. W. Dahanayake got no thanks from his people for holding elections promptly and in record time, even when Fate pushed this commoner into the Prime Ministerial chair. As Rudyard Kipling said once: "Nothing is ever settled, until it is settled right."

The killing of Iraikumaran and Umakumaran, as we see it, is more than mere killings: it is more than terrorism. It shows all the portents of a new ugly phase in the Tamil man's political life. A society, now bereft of a rationale for homicide, is now turning to suicide.

It is tempting to draw a connection between the events in Tamil Nadu where two bosses of the "Tiger" outfit tried to maul each other and ended up in the cage with what happened to Iraikumaran and Umakumaran here in Jaffna; indeed the Police and Colombo's "national" dailies are trying to do that. That is one sure way of getting away from the truth. The lives of the two Alaveddy youths were too open a book to be linked with underground activities: anyway "terrorists" do not sleep in open verandahs!

The truth is that there is a new underground force in the making, an underground force without ideals, which if allowed unchecked could even bring about a state of civil strife in Jaffna, and plunge the whole peninsula into chaos. This has to be nipped in the bud, and if there is one leader who has sufficient weight and authority to do this, it is Mr. Amirthalingam.

Political youth violence which began in Jaffna seven years ago with the killing of the then pro-government Mayor Alfred Durayappah on July 27, 1975 and has been following a predictable course ever since, assumed a new dimension on Wednesday 26th May when a popular social worker and a Tamil liberation activist, P. IRAIKUMARAN (27) was gunned down along with his friend T. UMA KUMARAN (28) at Alaveddy, by a gang of seven youths. Alaveddy, a village about ten miles from Jaffna town is in the Kankasanturai constituency represented by Tamil United Liberation Front leader A. Amirthalingam.

The killings had occurred in the late hours of the night.

According to the statement given by Umakumaran's brother Sivakumaran, a group of seven persons on bicycles had walked into their house and woken up Umakumaran who was sleeping in the open verandah. When he and other inmates also woke up and came out, one of the men had brand-

ished a revolver and threatened them to keep quiet. They ordered Umakumaran to come along with them. Umakumaran's brother had then given him a shirt to wear.

Umakumaran was asked to get on one of the two motor-cycles parked in the compound and one of the gang mounted the bike. The other six youngsters had then deflated the tyres of the other motorcycle. Before taking Umakumaran away, the gang had warned the inmates not to raise an alarm; otherwise their house would be razed to the ground.

The gang had then proceeded to Iraikumar's house where they had forced Umakumar to call out Iraikumar's name. Iraikumar's father had replied that his son was sleeping in a hut in the garden.

The bullet-riddled bodies of Iraikumar and Umakumar were discovered the following morning lying side by side in a paddy field.

## Why is the Tiger crying? (See page 12)



# Jaffna violence takes on a new ugly dimension



P. Iraikumaran



C. Umakumaran

Iraikumaran, a Cultivation Officer, was the Organizing Secretary of the Tamil Ilaigiar Peravai Viduthalai Ani (Tamil Youth Front-Liberation Wing). He had previously been a member of the youth front aligned with the Tamil United Liberation Front and edited a pro-TULF paper ILAIGNAR KURAL (The voice of youth) in 1976.

When the TULF decided to support the District Development Councils Bill, Iraikumaran had broken away from the party and had since then remained a critic of the leadership.

Both Iraikumaran and Umakumaran according to eye-witnesses were present the afternoon of their deaths at the Jaffna University Campus when the undergraduates ended their 3-day fast.

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# 'Save Buddhism & the Sinhala race'

Sinhala Bala Mandalaya launches campaign

The Sinhala Bala Mandalaya has launched a campaign to protect Buddhism and the rights of the Sinhala people. Here are excerpts from speeches made in Kandy in this connection as reported by the "Davasa".

"The time has come to foster and project our two thousand year old Sinhala heritage and Buddhism. Having lived under alien rule for over 300 years we are yet to give Buddhism its rightful place. This disgraceful situation should not continue"—**Malwatte Maha Nayake Thero.**

A Sinhala Bala Vegaya has become vitally necessary in this country. The Sinhalese people do not get any benefit whichever government comes to power. Therefore all Sinhala organizations must join hands to work out a common programme to save the Sinhala race—**Asgir'ya Maha Nayake Thero.**

**'VISAS TO GO  
TO KANDY'**

"Attempts to divide this country have been made time and again. Now it is come in the name of Eelam. However much the President says that the country will never be divided the signs of division are not altogether absent. Should there be an Eelam, Buddhists living in Colombo will have to get visas from Tamils to come to the Daladamaligawa in Kandy. The Tamils in America have already promulgated Eelam before the United Nations. If Eelam comes to Kandy

where the Maha Nayakes live we will also come under Eelam territory closed. If we remain with our eyes shut to the danger we will be facing a catastrophe. We call upon all political parties to prevent this annexation of our land by aliens. We are not concerned about politics. Anybody can fight for any party he likes and we do not mind it but we cannot sit by and watch while the Sinhala race is liquidated."—**Ven. Madihe Pannasinha Maha Nayake Thero.**

**THE JAFFNA  
UNIVERSITY**

"We have closed our eyes and slept too long. That is why today in the Jaffna University there is no Sinhalese Vice-Chancellor or Sinhala Dean or Sinhala Professor. Because I belong to the United National Party I am appealing to my President to come forward and remedy this situation"—**Professor Kangaha Arachchi**, Vice Chancellor of Sri Jayawardhanapura University.

**MILITANT  
MONKS**

"The Buddhist clergy has come forward to save the Sinhala Race time and again over the last 2500 years. We have now with us a militant force consisting of 18,000 Buddhist monks. There is no one to come forward to battle by enlisting this formidable warrior force. There is not a single Sinhalese leader who is prepared to say 'I will go to battle and come back in triumph'. The battle can take place any time. When it happens this bikkhu regiment will step in. As far as we are concerned living or dying in battle is the same. Even if we die there are no

wives or children to shed tears for us. Whether I die in Kandy today or die in Kotte tomorrow it is all the same. There are thousands of bikkhus who are prepared to join the battle to save this country. I am appealing to newspapers like the "Davasa", "Rivi Rasa" to support us in this struggle."—**Ven. Sobitha Nayake Thero**

**A SINHALA  
BUDDHIST STATE**

"This country which has a population of 75% Sinhalese has still failed to bring about a Sinhala Buddhist Raj. In Malaysia they have an Islamic State with only 55% Muslims. To establish a Sinhala Buddhist State is our immediate objective"—**Mr. Siri Perera Q. C.**, President of the Colombo Y. M. B. A.

**Memorial**

**Schol. in**

**memory of**

**'Handy**

**Master'**

**HANDY PERINBANAYAGAM COMMEMORATION SOCIETY** at a meeting of the Executive held recently has resolved to instal a Memorial Scholarship in the Faculty of Arts of the Jaffna University with the fund realised by the sale of Handy Memorial Volume which was acclaimed a great success.

It has also appealed to prospective donors to the Scholarship Fund to enable greater financial assistance to deserving students.

The Vice-Chancellor, the Chairman of the Trust is empowered to receive donations. The Committee expressed great satisfaction over the public response and thanked all concerned with its efforts.

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We have seen how, over the years, the development of a full-throated Sinhalese nationalism, marked by Sinhalese political, economic and social self-assertion, has produced its antithesis in the form of Tamil nationalism. Both were inevitable developments, after centuries of foreign domination. The difference is that while the Sinhalese are now free, the Tamils feel they are not. They have a new master—the Sinhalese!

Notwithstanding the impressive list of fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, that "all persons are equal before the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the law", that "no citizen shall be discriminated against on grounds of race, religion, language,..." and so on, it is a fact that large segments of the Tamil community do feel that they are being treated as "second class citizens", a subject people in effect.

#### Physical

#### Security

What is worse, they find that there is now no guarantee of physical security even in the heartland of the traditional Tamil territory, let alone in other parts of the island.

I believe that a lasting solution to the problems of Sri Lanka's largest minority community could only be found, first, by the recognition by the Sinhalese of the legitimacy of Tamil nationalism and, secondly, by the provision of avenues for its full expression. Unfortunately, all efforts at a negotiated settlement in the past had failed mainly owing to Sinhalese intransigence.

#### 'Cyril Mathew

#### Syndrome'

It is this intransigence, reflected in the intensification of Sinhalese nationalism, that has made Tamil nationalism take more extreme forms, in terms of both objects (secession) and methods (violence).

Can this vicious circle of Sinhalese nationalism (or communalism?) feeding Tamil nationalism (or communalism?) and vice versa, be ever broken without entailing genocide or sundering Sri Lanka?

Some Sinhalese leaders appear to believe that force is "the only solution." This is what has been described by some critics as the "Cyril Mathew syndrome." It was tried out in Jaffna in June 1981 and elsewhere in the island in August that same year.

# Political Causerie

by

Gamini Navaratne

But, as the late MP for Kopay, Mr. S. Kathiravelupillai once warned, "A confrontation between the two nations can defeat the very security, and therefore the existence and identity, of the Sinhalese nation, particularly as foreign intervention in such a confrontation will become inevitable." We have seen how liberation movements in full cry elsewhere in the world have attracted various foreign powers.



S. Kathiravelupillai

hundred years of British rule saw the unconscious creation of a myth by the English-educated Sinhalese and Tamils who entered the political arena that there was one country, one nation, and one people, though multiracial, but struggling for freedom from British rule. The British left this country in 1948 but the shackles and the myth remain. Full freedom, independence and the mutually unrestricted exercise of sovereignty for both the

island. Nilakanta Sastri has described in an article on 'Buddhism in South India' that 'from the dawn of history up to the 14th century AD, or even later, Buddhism held a considerable place in South India and left its marks in the monuments and literatures of the land.' Jaffna is only about twenty miles from the subcontinent. We have necessarily to draw the right conclusion from this unchallengeable fact.

#### Buddhist

#### Tamil epic

"The great commentator of the Buddhist scriptures, Buddhagosa, was a South Indian. So were Buddhadatta, Dhammapala, Sangamitra, Bodhi Dharma, Ilam Bodhiyar and Seethali Sattanar. The greatest Buddhist epic 'Mani-

# Ominous developments both in North & South

If force has to be ruled out in this day and age, the only remaining peaceful option is a rapid and real devolution of state power.

This was what was proposed when the establishment of district development councils was discussed originally. But Sinhalese nationalism stood in the way, just as it did when Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike proposed the establishment of regional councils and Mr. Dudley Senanayake planned to set up district councils.

In this regard, it must not be forgotten that in the vanguard of the Sinhalese opposition to the Bandaranaike Chelvanayakam pact was no less than Mr. J. R. Jayewardene.

The Sinhalese fear continues to be that any degree of regional autonomy would eventually lead to a situation when the Tamils of North Sri Lanka would link up with South India to pose a threat to them, as in the ancient past.

This fear may be a lurid exaggeration of the possibilities of the modern day but it is there. It is, in fact, the biggest stumbling block to Sinhalese-Tamil accord.

Fresh evidence of this is provided by the emergence of a new organisation to

"defend the rights" of the major community, the Sinhala Bala Mandalaya, which staged a show of strength in Anuradhapura last week.

This ominous development has come about even as President Jayewardene's Government, after protracted negotiations with the Tamil United Liberation Front, planned to delegate more powers to the DDCs, which now are no more than appendages of a central administration directed from Colombo, and the TULF is prepared to accept it as a half-way arrangement to separation.

Equally ominous, in the North a new and radical movement is emerging in consequence of the growing disillusionment of many Tamils, especially of the younger generation, with the present leadership which is regarded by them as being "too moderate". The recent student demonstration in Jaffna is eloquent evidence of the new manifestation.

I believe it is in the self-interest of the Sinhalese themselves, even at this late stage, to agree to a more equitable sharing of state power, which is at the crux of the Sri Lanka communal problem.

To quote Mr. Kathiravelupillai again, "...The last

Sinhalese and the Tamils now depends on the restoration and reconstitution of the Sinhalese and Tamil states... Pancha Sila or co-existence is thus the only solution to the problem of the two nations in Sri Lanka. ... Wise Sinhalese leadership should understand the problem in its full magnitude.

## 'Disillusionment of many Tamils with their leaders'

The discovery of remnants of Buddhist monuments in the North has given rise to the belief among some Sinhalese that their civilisation prevailed for a considerable period in that part of the country as well. Those who cling to this belief seem to discount the possibility at one time there were many Tamils who professed Buddhism.

The following excerpts from a lecture by historian James T. Rutnam should provide food for thought for such people: "...We are all heirs to the national legacy of Sri Lanka. We find Buddhist monuments in Jaffna; we also find Hindu shrines and temples throughout the

mekalai' was written in Tamil by a Tamil in the 2nd century AD. Even Kaccayana, the author of the first Pali grammar, came from South India, which over a millenium continued to be a centre of Pali Buddhism...."

Mr. Rutnam notes that Sir Charles Elliot, while ack-

nowledging that Buddhism came to the country under the auspices of Asoka, wrote that "Sinhalese Buddhism has probably a closer connection with South India than the legends suggest and Conjevaram was long a Pali centre which kept up intercourse with both Ceylon and Burma."

Mr. Rutnam concludes, "It is therefore not surprising that we have Buddhist monuments in Jaffna so close to the south-east coast of India. The megalithic burials in Pomparippu and other places suggest a South Indian culture in ancient Sri Lanka but there is no archaeological evidence at all to suggest a North Indian colonisation."

# Tension and torture in Vavuniya

The MIRJE Delegation to Vavuniya of 21st-22nd March 1982 was preceded by three earlier Delegations to the area: the first in June 1980, the second in November 1981, the third in January 1982.

The first Delegation was one of five active MIRJE members: Paul Caspersz, Kumar David, Keerthi Seneviratne, Monica Candappa and Jeevarajan. It interviewed refugees from the August-September 1977 racial riots, organizers of the refugee settlements, and those who had been, and were being, subjected to military and police harassment. At the MIRJE General Meeting of 25 June 1980 Kumar David made an oral statement of the findings of the Delegation.

The second Delegation consisted of two MIRJE activists: the National Organizer, Susil G. Seneviratne and B. G. Piyadasa of the Jaela Branch. They spent three days in Vavuniya visiting places and talking with several persons. On 30 November 1981 they submitted a Report to the MIRJE Committee which authorized Susil Seneviratne to communicate the findings of the Delegation to the President of the Republic urging him to take effective action against "the gross atrocities being committed by personnel of the State Armed Services against the Tamil-speaking people in Vavuniya and adjacent areas, under cover of State Emergency". This letter was published in *MIRJE News*, December 1981.

The third Delegation was that of the President of MIRJE, the National Organizer, Shelton Perera and Wilfred Silva of the Jaela Branch. Again, the Delegates took pains to ascertain the truth of the allegations of harassment of innocent persons in the Vavuniya District, were satisfied that these allegations were true and on 11 January 1982 telegraphed the President of the Republic urging him "to issue forthwith unequivocal public orders against inhumanity of state personnel in Vavuniya and to promise impartial inquiry into excesses already committed".

## NO INQUIRY WAS HELD

No inquiry was held into army and police excesses. Orders were not publicly issued to stop the brutality of state personnel in the Vavuniya area. If orders were privately issued, they were not complied with. It is therefore not at all surprising that reports continued to

pour into the MIRJE office of continuing harassment of people, arbitrary arrests and detention, terrible torture. MIRJE therefore decided to send the fourth Delegation to Vavuniya. The Delegates on this occasion were Paul Caspersz, Susil G. Seneviratne, Jayaratne Maliyagoda, J. Jayantha, Silan Kadigamar and S. Viswalingam. They spent two days in the area visiting places, meeting persons, carefully checking information, seeking to understand both the patterns and the causes of events.

## BACKGROUND

The background to these Delegations and to the Delegation of 21st-22nd March 1982 needs to be very briefly sketched. One needs to go back at least to 1948 which was the year in which Sri Lanka (then called Ceylon) received Dominion Status,

Sinhala was enshrined as the only official language of the country even though Tamil had also been in use in the country for centuries and had been the mother-tongue of the important and large Tamil minority. With the jettisoning in 1958—only a year after it was signed-of the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam Pact, large-scale language and race riots erupted in several areas of the country.

As far as the Delegation was able to judge the evidence, it seems that the first Tamil families—not estate families (for the estates were mercifully spared in 1958), but predominantly trader and lower middle-class families—gradually trickled, out of fear and for safety, into the Vavuniya dry lands in the aftermath of the 1958 orgies of

meant to be driven out on to the streets. From the streets, when even the dustbins began to be empty because of the chronic island-wide shortage of food, some families moved into the Vavuniya area. In 1972 most of these seem to have been estate families.

## THE 1977 VIOLENCE

For the estate families the Vavuniya and Kilinochchi areas were not entirely uncharted territory. They had been accustomed to go there as casual labourers during the lean estate seasons for onion and paddy harvesting. Furthermore, the language of the Vavuniya District is largely Tamil. There would certainly be a problem of caste, but facing this, as and when it arose, seemed infinitely easier than facing threats to property, employment, even life on the estates.

Came the General Elections of 1977 and the landslide victory of the UNP. Post-electoral violence was followed by racial violence on a scale that dwarfed even 1958. What is of special concern in the context of the present Report, the 1977 riots, unlike their 1958 predecessor, engulfed also the estates. A precise count was never taken so far as we know, and in any case precise figures were not available to our Delegation. But the Coordinating Secretariat for Plantation Areas in Kandy has estimated that not less than 5000 and maybe 7500 families, besides being subjected to bodily injury and in some cases rape and murder, lost all or nearly all the goods they possessed because of the cruel attacks on the estate population. Pace Sansoni and the unfortunate misrepresentations of his Report, the demand for Eelam was not the cause of the racial violence unleashed on the Tamils in 1977. But the demand for Eelam provided a convenient excuse for racialists. The irrefragable proof that it was only an excuse for the violence, the arson, the plunder, the rape, the murder that descended like the blackness of a starless night upon the estates in August 1977. For the estate people never asked for Eelam. They were attacked, crushed, humiliated only because they were Tamils and spoke Tamil.

The more perceptive eye on the estates read the writing on the wall in 1958. In 1972 and 1977 there could be no further doubt. Life on the estates was going to continue to be difficult, insecure and dangerous. Is it any wonder then that more estate families looked down from their helpless hills to the plains of the Northern Province where they knew from those who had gone before that life would be very difficult but hopefully not insecure or dangerous.

## The Tamil Refugees Rehabilitation Organization (TRRO) and Other Relief Organizations

Until 1977, in so far as the Delegation was able to ascertain, there was no organization of any sort to assist the refugee families in the Vavuniya District or, for that matter, in any District. It seems plausible that the need for any such organization was not conspicuous before 1977 because the refugee families were relatively few, were scattered and arrived at the new settlement areas individually and irregularly. After the riots of August 1977, however, the situation changed dramatically.

While non-estate families which were the objects of racist attacks could flee for refuge to the base of their ancestral home areas, the estate families had no ancestral place of refuge of any sort whatsoever in the island. For them the choice was either return to their estate line-room or flight to the Vavuniya District or to remote areas of the Eastern Province. While the majority seem grimly to have opted for return to the estates, hundreds already in 1977 trekked towards Vavuniya. (We have to remember that ever since the Tamil estate people were lured away from their South Indian villages in the middle and late 19th century to the estates in Ceylon, they have been a people on the move from one situation of destitution and oppression to another.)

First to come to their rescue in an organized manner were the Tamil Refugees Rehabilitation Organization (TRRO), the Social and Economic Development Centre (SEDEC) of the Catholic Church which organized its relief and rehabilitation services from the Catholic Parish Church of Vavuniya and Gandhiyam.

In its Submissions to the Sansoni Commission the TRRO stated:

(To be Continued)

# MIRJE Mission

## Report of the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE) delegation to Vavuniya 21st - 22nd March 1982

from the British. By the Citizenship Acts of 1948 and 1949 hundreds of thousands of persons of 19th century Indian origin were deprived of citizenship and by the Elections Act of 1948 were consequently deprived of the franchise. These Acts gave solid ground for a deepening of the fears of the Tamils that the inter-racial situation which had begun to deteriorate since the 1920s would continue to be a situation of growing discrimination against them in vital areas of their life. The Citizenship and Election Acts affected those who were commonly and officially, yet most unfortunately, called Indian Tamils ('Indian' because they were the last wave of immigrants from India into the island, where nearly everybody is of ultimate Indian origin).

There followed the Language Act of 1956, whereby

various places where the Tamils had been attacked.

If in 1956 Mr. Bandaranaike sailed into power on the language wave—stirred largely by himself—of Sinhala-Buddhist populism. In 1972 it was Mrs. Bandaranaike who, countering the contrary winds of Sinhalese rebel youths, rode the crest of the land reform wave of the same Sinhala-Buddhist populism. By the first Land Reform Law the non-company estates were taken over. In several estates, chiefly of the Central Province, the estate workers and their families were summarily told, "The estates are now ours; get out!". Miserable though their line-rooms had always been, they had still been their homes for generations, and, in any case, they had no other. Unlike the Sinhalese peasant, they had no claim to a refuge base in a village. To be driven out of the estate



Prof. Arasaratnam

# The 1982 Chelvanayakam Memorial Lecture

## A Historical foundation of the Economy of the Tamils

### of North Ceylon (Continued)

(Continued from last issue)

#### Changes in Landownership and cultivation

A number of factors combined to cause changes to traditional patterns of land-ownership and cultivation. The steadying of the increase in population increased the pressure on land. There is evidence that, in the first half of the 19th century, parts of the Pachilapalai and Thenmarachi districts declined further in fertility and could not sustain even the small populations they did at marginal levels. There was thus a migration towards the older settled districts which increased in density. There was also a decline in whatever industry there had been which also had the effect of throwing more people on to the land. A notable casualty had been the weaving industry which was still active in the first two decades of the 19th century and had provided employment to some thousands of people.

#### Dependence on imports

This pressure of people on land had its inevitable consequence in the extent of individual holdings. Furthermore, there was always the incentive to switch from paddy cultivation to more remunerative crops, a factor which has operated for centuries previously when Jaffna was drawn by trade into the Indian Ocean economy. In the 19th century this consisted primarily of an increase of acreage under tobacco. The demand for fresh vegetables and fruits led to the growth of market gardening. The biggest disincentive to paddy cultivation was the import of cheap rice from India and Burma. The availability of cheap food was an axiom of imperial policy. Wages were tied to the price of food and it was imperative that there be an abundance of cheap labour for British investment and enterprise.

Towards the end of the 19th century, in the Northern Province which included the districts of Jaffna, Mannar and Vavuniya, the total annual consumption of rice amounted to between 1,100,000 and 1,200,000 bushels. In addition about

275,000 bushels of dry grains were also consumed. Out of these food grains consumed, in a year of good harvest, 650,000 bushels of rice would be produced within the province. But these good years were few and far between. In a particular year, such as in 1893, the output would drop to a very low figure of 155,000 bushels and around 400,000 bushels seems to have been a reasonable level of production. In addition, there was an annual output of about 275,000 bushels of dry grains. This meant that the amount of rice imported into the province ranged from 600,000 bushels in a good year up to 900,000 bushels when the harvest had failed. Thus the province depended on imports for anything between 50% and 80% of its consumption. This dependence on imported rice increased in the 20th century,

the population. Paddy land cultivators, that is those who lived on the cultivation of paddy but owned no land had risen from 2.1% in 1911 to 4.57% in 1921. Another index to the declining scale of cultivation was that agricultural labourers declined from 1.41% in 1911 to 0.73% in 1921. During this same period there was a small increase in owners of tobacco plantations: 1.17% in 1911 to 1.35% in 1921, an ever larger increase in labourers in tobacco plantations: 3.46% in 1911 to 4.82% in 1921. There was also a substantial increase in those categorised as general labourers: 3.16% in 1911 to 5.06% in 1921. All this shows a shift in economic activity in the peninsula away from paddy with enormous consequences to the monetization of the economy and patterns of consumption.

6½ cents per person. Muslim labour was paid more, 3 fanams or about 19 cents a day and no food. When related to the wages and prices prevailing in the 18th century, it is obvious that there had been a decline in real wages and that the money wage had not risen with rising prices of food and other necessities. It is clear that these agricultural labourers lived at or near starvation levels, a feature compounded by the seasonal nature of the demand for labour. On the other hand, skilled artisan labour wages appear to have been adequate to maintain reasonable living standards.

Detailed wage rates for agricultural labour are available for 1894 and it is possible to chart the movement of wages. Again rates fluctuated between provinces and in the manner in which payments were made—in cash, paddy and food. In money value, the highest paid area were the villages around Jaffna town, because of the great demand for labour here and the outlying districts of Karaichi, Pachilapalai and Punakari because of the inaccessibility of labour. The total money value of a daily wage was between 18 and 42 cents. Wages in and around Jaffna town were about 35 cents a day, including the cost of a meal when it was provided. A meal appears to have been costed at 6 cents a day. Wages were lower in the provinces, 18 to 24 cents in Valikaman east, 24 cents in Vadamarachi and 24 to 31 cents in Valikaman west. Where wages were paid fully in paddy, the money value of the wage was higher, going up to 42 cents a day. It appears that in fifty years time the wages of agricultural labour had risen about 2½ times. In the absence of reliable evidence on the movement of prices of essentials, it is difficult to relate this rise in wages to rise in prices. It appears that in 1842 a measure of paddy cost 4 cents and in 1894 it has risen to 7 cents. This would indicate that wages had risen faster than the price of paddy. But rice would be only one element in the cost of living and it is reasonable to assume that a number of

other essentials of living—clothing, rents, vegetables, edible oils etc — would have risen much faster.

There is the further fact that the dependence on imported rice left the price dependent on the vagaries of supply. Thus it is seen that in the first decades of the 20th century, the price of paddy could vary within weeks from Rs. 2.50 a bushel (8 cents a measure) to Rs. 6.00 a bushel (19 cents a measure). These fluctuations caused enormous hardships to the community and particularly to daily wage labourers. It appears that the rice import trade was dominated by a few chetty merchants of Jaffna and any shortage in Jaffna or a crop failure in India pushed prices up. They appear to have controlled imports to manipulate market prices. When this went out of hand, there would be threats of civil unrest in Jaffna and the Government Agent would have to intervene. When conditions were good and prices were low, the consumption of rice went up. But when local production was disrupted and prices rose, the poorer sections would look more to dry grains and to palmyrah produce for sustenance.

#### Importance of Tobacco

In this context, the contribution of the major cash crop of the peninsula, tobacco, assumes a new importance and should be dealt with in some detail. It was seen in the previous lecture that tobacco grown in Jaffna was capturing an increasing share of the Indian market in the 18th century. But while some quantities were exported to Madras, Tanjore and the Coromandel coast, by far the largest share was taken by the Malabar coast. It appears that the tobacco grown and cured in Jaffna was particularly suitable to the Malayalam palate and nostrils. The Rajas of Travancore, who had declared a monopoly in the import and sale of Jaffna tobacco into Malabar, found it a money-spinner. Because of the symbiotic relationship experienced between the Jaffna producer and the Malabar importer, the producers became completely dependent on this Malabar market and looked no further than satisfying year by year the demands of this market.

(To be Continued)

## Part II The 19th and 20th centuries

as population increased, the pressure on land grew as did also the diversification towards other crops. The total amount of rice consumed in the province rose to around 1,500,000 bushels while the local output had declined to around 320,000 bushels in a good year and an average of around 250,000 bushels. This meant that imports had to be increased markedly by about 50% to around 1,200,000 bushels. The decline in rice produced locally was caused by a number of factors. The acreage of land devoted to paddy was constantly shrinking. Because of increasing population, village settlements were encroaching on paddy land. The process of diversification of agriculture was going on, in particular the boom in tobacco in the 1880's and 1890's was making itself felt. The pressure on land had the inevitable result of subdividing holdings which were now cultivated in small, largely uneconomic holdings.

The trend was clearly visible in the inter censal period 1911 to 1921. Paddy land owners in 1911 were 3.75% of the total population of Ceylon Tamils but had declined in 1921 to 1.02% of

#### Wage Rates and Standards of Living

It is interesting to see the movement of wage rates in the 19th and 20th centuries and make inferences from them about the standards of living of various sectors of the population. In 1833, a cooly labourer earned 3d. or 12.3 cents a day and an artisan 1 sh. or about 50 cents a day. In 1841, cooly wages seem to have risen to 4½ d. or 18½ cents a day. Detailed figures are available for the wages of agricultural labourers in the various provinces of Jaffna in 1842. Wage rates fluctuated as between provinces and forms of payment varied from full cash payment to cash plus one meal, cash plus two meals, full payment in paddy, paddy plus food. Payment in paddy and food was more common in Vadamarachi, Tenmarachi and the islands, while in the region of Jaffna town payment was mostly in cash. In Valikaman west and east, payment was in cash and food. The standard rate seems to be 2 fanams or 12½ cents a day to which was sometimes added one free meal, sometimes not. It appears that a meal was costed at 1 fanam or

# Sinhala nationalism or Sinhala racism?

50/2B, Siripa Road,  
Colombo 5.

In your editorial of May 15, written in answer to those friends of your paper in the South who have urged you to give it a more 'national' orientation, you write:

'1956 marked the beginning of Sinhala nationalism and Sinhala nationalism has come to stay. There is nothing wrong about it; not only that, it was historically inevitable. What was wrong about it was the anti-Tamil animosity that preceded it and then came in its wake.'

Leaving aside the historical inaccuracy contained in the first sentence (for 1956 marked not the 'beginning of Sinhala nationalism' but the capture of state power by social forces espousing this ideology), I wish to show that your position here is both inconsistent and unsound.

You concede not only the historical inevitability but also the legitimacy of what you call 'Sinhala nationalism' (some of us have a different name for it, but more of that later). Your objection, then, is not to 'Sinhala nationalism' but to the 'anti-Tamil animosity' that accompanied it. Yet in the following paragraph you write:

'The very bedrock of Sinhala nationalism was founded on Aryan descent, the Sinhala language, Sinhala culture, Buddhism and the historical tradition of Sinhala possession of this country, each one of which effectively excluded the Tamils from the mainstream of Sri Lankan life.' (My emphasis.)

Let me clarify what precisely is the meaning of the elements you identify as constituting 'the bedrock of Sinhala nationalism'. 'Aryan descent'—that is, the myth of the 'Aryan race' and of Sinhala descent from it (a myth that, not fortuitously has its origins in the doctrines of those 19th-century German racist theorists who prepared the way for Nazism). 'The Sinhala language and Sinhala culture'—that is, this language and culture used as part of an ideological construction which defines them in distinction from and opposition to Tamil and South Indian cultures. 'Buddhism'—that is, not the teachings of Gautama the Buddha but

a politicised creed which makes religion the vehicle of racial domination as well as an institutionalised structure which is manipulated by the State. 'The historical tradition of Sinhala possession of this country'—that is, the assertion of the right of the Sinhala people to possession of the whole of Sri Lankan territory, buttressed by the **Mahavamsa** myth of the consignment of the island by the Buddha to the protection of its guardian deity, and by the claim (with whatever shuffling of historical evidence) that the entire island was a Sinhala kingdom at the beginnings of its history.

In short, the elements you correctly identify as 'the bedrock of Sinhala nationalism' can be seen, when fully spelt out, as nothing other than the elements of a racist ideology (and that is why 'Sinhala racism' would be a more accurate term than your euphemism of 'Sinhala nationalism'). There seems to be some vague comprehension of this fact on your part when you say that each of these elements 'effectively excluded the Tamils from the mainstream of Sri Lankan life'. How then can you accept the legitimacy of 'Sinhala nationalism', complaining only against its 'anti-Tamil animosity', when, by your own demonstration, the very 'bedrock' of this 'nationalism' involves the exclusion of the Tamils from the mainstream of Sri Lankan life? You cannot have one without the other. This is the fatal intellectual and political contradiction in which you have placed yourself.

It is painful to those of us in the South who, with limited means and strength at our disposal, spend a good part of our time trying to combat Sinhala racism and to demolish the myths and fantasies on which its ideology is based, to see you conceding its rightness and even its permanence. For you hold not only that 'there is nothing wrong about it' but that 'it has come to stay'. You are, in other words, endorsing the legitimacy and viability of those very forces who are oppressing (and, whenever possible, slaughtering) you, who are using the myths and slogans of racism to project the idea of a 'unified Sinhala nation' (which necessarily involves

identifying the Tamils as the enemy against whom that unity must be forged), and who are striving by this means to submerge the other contradictions of our society and to arrest the struggle against exploitation and oppression in all its forms. You may believe that in taking this suicidal position you are speaking for the Tamil people. What gives you the right to speak for us and to issue certificates of legitimacy to that racism against which the best elements of the Sinhala people are fighting. What makes you think that, even if you get that separate nationhood you claim, we want to live in a racist society?

Reggie Siriwardene

raising of the self-respect of the Sinhalese, and rejection of western and alien influence. No Tamil could possibly have found any objection to this.

When Ceylon won its independence in 1948, State Power had already passed into the exclusive hands of the Sinhalese, but it was not until 1956 that the arrogation of this power took place as a matter of right. The choice of building up a homogeneous Ceylonese nationhood after independence was entirely in the hands of the Sinhalese people. If instead they had chosen to build it on an exclusive Sinhalese Buddhist foundation, as it happened, it was certainly an unfortunate development but that is some-

accept the fact of Tamil nationalism either. The longer the Tamils take to accept the fact of Sinhala nationalism the more vulnerable they become to the theory of assimilation; a theory which Trotsky, a Jew himself, favoured when Jewish separatism first surfaced in the Russian revolutionary movement.

522/1, Havelock Road,  
Kalubowila,  
23 May, 1982.

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

Dear Sir,

Re: SEEING THE PICTURE  
UPSIDE-DOWN

I refer to your editorial of the 15 May under the above title and would crave the indulgence of your columns to submit my point of view.

First let me record, that I came to know about your journal through the columns of one of the leading national (pardon me) English weeklies and in curiosity bought a copy of your issue and frankly was dismayed.

My dismay was primarily due to the realisation of the sad fact, that your journal displayed an acute sense of persecution mania and since it avowedly represents the cause of the Tamil people of this country, it logically attributes that the Tamil people of this country suffer from such a mania.

So let us briefly attempt to summarise the plight of the Tamil people in this country and whose plight to say the least is saddening. For the purpose of this exercise, I shall limit my review of the local political situation to the contemporary period i.e. up to the time this country achieved its independence from colonial bondage in 1948.

At this period in time and just prior to it, the people of this country of all races collectively appealed to the alien ruler for independence and which independence was granted not due to any major sacrifices made by the peoples of this land but due in large measure to the valiant struggle and sacrifices of our Indian brethren on the adjoining sub-continent.

(Continued next page)

## LETTERS

### NOTE BY EDITOR.

We recognise the fundamental divergence in our respective positions. Mr. Siriwardene virtually asserts that Sinhala nationalism is a **non-fact**. He sees only Sinhala racism. As for us, we see both:

We are prepared to concede to Mr. Siriwardene one point straightaway (although this is not going to please him either). When we said "1956 marked the beginnings of Sinhala nationalism" we **WERE** guilty of a historical inaccuracy. We should have said more correctly: "1956 marked the beginnings of the political entrenchment of Sinhala nationalism", because the beginnings of Sinhala nationalism could be traced to the early years of the century. Sinhala resurgence spearheaded by Anagarika Dharmapala left a perceptible and healthy influence on Sinhala thinking, culture and literature.

When Mr. Siriwardene argues: "how can you accept the legitimacy of 'Sinhala Nationalism' complaining only against its anti-Tamil animosity.... You could not have one without the other", our answer is this: the fundamental elements of this early phase of Sinhala nationalism were the

thing which neither Mr. Siriwardene nor we could have helped. All that can be done is to look at it as a **fait accompli**.

In seeking to reject Sinhala nationalism outright, Mr. Siriwardene, we are afraid, is only trying to throw away the baby along with the dirty bath water. We do not think the Sinhala cultural upsurge that occurred in the late fifties could have been an authentic by-product of Sinhala racism. Lester James Pieris, maiden achievement in the Sinhala cinema 'Rekawa' (1956) and Sarachandra's 'Maname' (1956) both of which remain as watersheds, and the emergence of a sensitive and celebrated critic of the Sinhala arts like Mr. Siriwardene himself could not have been all mere coincidences that could be de-linked from the Sinhala nationalism of that time.

A nationalism built on race, language or religion is certainly distasteful, looked at from the classic marxist ideology. But socialism itself, like nationalism, can have two faces like Janus. If Mr. Siriwardene cannot bring himself round to accept the fact of Sinhala nationalism we cannot possibly expect him to

## LETTERS

## Continued

But just as independence appeared to be a reality, an egoistic Tamil politician in the shape and form of G. G. Ponnambalam soured the national atmosphere by his demand for 50-50, which as another journalist summed up was 'a preposterous equation that was tantamount to saying that three Tamils were equal to seven sinhalase' and with this unfair and unwarranted demand this Tamil politician started the Tamil Congress and so introduced racism into the national politics of this country. So it must be appreciated, that it was a Tamil that first introduced racism into the national politics of this land. And this wretched introduction of racism with the inane 50-50 (equality) demand was made at a time, when the Tamils by sheer merit were enjoying a lion portion of the national cake.

There were Tamil heads of Department like Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan (Defence), J. N. Arumugam (Transport & Works)—Dr. S. F. Chellapah (DM&SS)—Alvapillai, Kanagasabai and others—a vast army of Tamil Government servants, Doctors, Engineers and many others.

But even after this inane demand of Ponnambalam—the first national government of this country led by D. S. Senanayake continued to maintain a non-racial attitude in the public life of this country and continued to treat all races alike and even appointed Tamils as head of the Army (Muttukumaru) and also the Navy (Kadirgamar).

Ponnambalam then joined the first national government as a TC/UNP member and was permitted to construct the first cement factory in this country in the north. But during his alliance with the first national government of this country, Ponnambalam proved his pro-Tamil stance to be a fraud, when he voted with that Government to deprive the up country Tamils of the franchise and which deprivation was prompted by that national government not on racial motives but purely for political reasons, as the then opposition including a very young radical Thondaman and seven other fellow members of the CWC too had thrown in their lot with the opposition over a motion of 'No-Confidence' that was brought against this first national government.

Subsequently the people of the North (Tamils) discarded

and rightly too the charlatan called Ponnambalam who had taken the Tamils on a ride to sate his own egoistic jingoism. But the racism introduced by him was then continued by Chelvanayakam with the demand for federalism and now by his successors for separatism. Now if it is conceded that Ponnambalam was wrong, then it must be granted that the subsequent developments such as federalism and separatism that flowed from Ponnambalam's policies are also wrong.

It must be conceded that the cry for 50-50 by Ponnambalam was akin to the bogus cry of 'Wolf' by the shepherd boy and sadly for the Tamils, the wolf did appear nine years after independence in the shape of Bandaranaike's MEP in 1956.

And as every person now knows that 1956 was the dawn of Sinhala racism, which erroneously has been dubbed as Sinhala nationalism, when it is nothing of that kind and this sinhala racism was the answer to the Tamil racism started by Ponnambalam and continued by his successors—this Sinhala racism resulted in Sinhala only with Tamil also—the Sri car number plate—change of name from Ceylon to Sri Lanka and numerous other anti-Tamil pin pricks, which have not only harmed the Tamils but the entire country.

So you will grant that the term Sinhala nationalism in your editorial under review is in effect Sinhala Racism and is the direct bi-product and answer to Tamil racism started by Ponnambalam in 1948.

The miseries that the Tamils experienced during the past twenty five years, may be mistaken and attributed entirely to the Sinhala people when in point of fact it was a reaction of the sinhala people to the actions of Tamil politicians and not the Tamil people. It is now evident that the present set of Tamil politicians who have been leading the Tamils up the creek are now struggling to find a way out not so much for the Tamils but more for themselves and the Tamils can help them by ignoring them at the next polls and voting for able individuals belonging to other political groups devoid of a racial label. It may well be stated that the other parties are all pro-sinhala but that is like stating that 'if you are not with us, then you must be against us' and that would be an incorrect assessment.

Bandaranaike the so called christian turned Bud-

dhist—the so called English scholar turned Sinhala scholar was put to sleep by none other than a Buddhist priest—Ponnambalam the saviour of the Tamils was discarded by the Tamils to die a sad death away in a foreign land—that then is the due rewards of individuals who toy with the sensitive emotions of their people—so let us not continue this wretched state of racial politics but cry halt to it for all times.

The best way the Tamils can improve their lot is to act sensibly and to think with their heads and not with their hearts—to stay put in the North and East and to build it up, without going in search of pastures anew. The bane of the people of Jaffna, has been their nomadic desire to roam and wonder and if we fail at this crucial stage, then we shall have failed our peoples for all times. Let us remember that division leads to sub-division and finally to destruction and that an united land is the best bet for all races and no other group knows this better than the Sinhalese, who have resisted federalism and separatism for this very reason.

So I say to the Tamils of this country, do not lose heart, all is not lost, stay put and persevere and extend your hand of friendship to the other peoples in your midst and your hand will never be rejected.

Yours faithfully,  
S. Ramanathan.

## NOTE BY THE EDITOR

Saturday Review has given generous space to reader Ramanathan's letter based on the belief that every man is entitled to his own views at all times and to his own ignorance at least once.

In saying that Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam "started the Tamil Congress and so introduced racism into the national politics of this country" Mr. Ramanathan is like Rip Van Winkle who slept in the mountains for a number of years and came back to life later on. Long before Mr. Ponnambalam "introduced racism" there was the infamous "Pan-Sinhalese Ministry" of 1936. Around the same time S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike started the Sinhala Maha Sabha restricted to the Sinhalese only, an organisation elder to the Tamil Congress at least by five years. Mr. Ramanathan and the unknown journalist he quotes are also wrong about the nature of the fifty/fifty demand. Fifty/Fifty equation was not a Sinhalese/Tamil one but a Sinhalese/Minority equation. As Mr. Ramanathan's arm chair remarks about the persecution mania of Saturday Review we can only advise him to come

down from the mountains and get mentally if not physically involved with the problems of the Tamil people. He might make a start by reading the MIRJE REPORT of Vavuniya which we begin serialising in this issue.

## WHAT INTEGRATION MEANS TO TAMILS

116, Hultsdorf Street,  
Colombo 12,  
19-5-82.

Sir,

Please accept my congratulations on your Editorial of the 15th inst. It has spelt out the relationship between the two communities today much better than anybody else has done up to date. Your editorials are usually clear and forthright.

I wish to mention an experience of mine a few years back. Some of us were invited for a meeting with some Christian priests to discuss a solution of the differences between the two communities. One priest repeatedly stated that integration of the two communities was the only solution. I asked him "What you mean is the Tamils must liquidate themselves as a community and become Sinhalese" He didn't repeat it thereafter showing that was what he meant.

Yours faithfully,

A. C. Nadaraja.

## LIKE EATING THOSAI &amp; VADAI IN DARWIN

1 Schultze Street,  
Darwin, 5790,  
Northern Territory,  
Australia.  
16-5-1982.

Sir,

I have enjoyed reading your journal. It is like tasting "Thosai and Vadai" after a bare subsistence on Seeni Sambol and appa with an occasional splash of stale coconut toddy all these years.

I wish you would expand your "News Briefs" column to cover a whole page so that people will be able to get a fuller picture of events in the north and east. We will also like to read about the lives of the Tamils who live in the hill-country. I wish you all success in your news magazine.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. K. Tharmarajah.

## LEADERS AND THE 90% SUPPORT

204, Kasturiar Road,  
Jaffna,  
17-05-82.

Dear Sir,

The year of our Lord 1982 being election year, I sorely expected our heroes to emerge from the high level amity talks with bagfuls of cotton wool, sticking plaster, and cicatrine (anti-biotic powder) to be distributed with fanfare among the offsprings and dear-ones of the victims of the 1981 May-June rape of Jaffna and elsewhere to be used in such future eventualities.

Alas! Our leaders have grown wiser (or is it because of the "ninety percent" support they enjoy) and are out in the field with sheafs of "Senkathir" tucked under their arms and a fire-extinguisher at the ready to douse the spirits of those who are wont "to play with fire".

It looks as if they will have a field day this time, considering the fact that, in addition they have the blessings of Hon. Mr. Cyri Mathew.

Yours faithfully,

P. Ramachandra.

## LEADERS AND SKIPPERS

Varivalavu,  
Karainagar,  
12-5-82

Dear Sir,

I feel that it is my duty to reply the letter by Dr. S. Srinivasan of Essex, U.K. which appears in your issue of May 8. He talks of taking orders without questioning. I think that he should travel a few thousand miles from his snug dwelling in Essex to see what is happening here; because the world in which we live is a fast changing world. Nothing is static; what was solid yesterday might be rotten today and may be non-existent tomorrow. I do not see any point in continuing to uphold a set of leaders who are becoming insensitive to the sufferings and feelings of the people who elected them. The learned Doctor compares the leaders of the freedom movements to the skipper of a sailing ship; unless it is an aircraft carrier the skipper cannot fly away when there is trouble around. Most skippers go down with their ships. That is the naval tradition.

(Continued on page 9)

# ICJ REPORT

## Application of the Terrorism Act

(continued)

(11th weekly instalment)

**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.**

The provisions of the Sri Lankan Terrorism Act are not only objectionable from a human rights point of view but it is doubtful that the

These reasons are strikingly similar to those mentioned by the Sri Lankan government for adopting the Prevention of Terrorism Act. In a brochure entitled "Investigations into Acts of Terrorism" prepared by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 25, 1981, it is stated that,

"These arrests and detentions (of 27 persons in April) had to be made under the new (Terrorism) Act and not under the provisions of the Criminal

at their hands. In fact, a number of vital witnesses have been killed in the past while investigations were being conducted."

### Gardiner Committee report

The extra-judicial methods adopted in Northern Ireland to combat terrorism included prolonged detention of suspected IRA members. Widespread detention of suspects was terminated in 1975 in Northern Ireland following recommendations of the Gardiner Committee, appointed by the United Kingdom government, whose terms of reference were "to consider what provisions and powers, consistent to the maximum extent practicable in the circumstances with the preservation of civil liberties and human rights, were required to deal with terrorism in Northern Ireland, including provisions for administration of justice." The report of the Gardiner Committee concluded,

"After long and anxious consideration, we are of the opinion that detention cannot remain as a long-term policy. In the short term, it may be an effective means of containing violence, but the prolonged effects of the use of detention are ultimately inimical to community life, fan a widespread sense of grievance and injustice, and obstruct those elements in Northern Ireland society which could lead to reconciliation. Detention can only be tolerated in a democratic society in the most extreme circumstances; it must be used with the utmost restraint and retained only as long as strictly necessary."

(To be Continued)

## Effectiveness of the Terrorism Act

Act is effective in controlling terrorism. The limitations on human rights, therefore do not seem acceptable as a necessary means of maintaining public security. Since 1979, when the Act was adopted, Terrorism has not declined but rather increased in the northern Tamil area. Increased police and army surveillance of the population have not curtailed the violence but seemingly stimulated it. This experience is similar to that of some other countries which have attempted to control terrorism by armed force rather than dealing with the fundamental factors contributing to the recourse to violence.

### Northern Ireland

The experience of the United Kingdom in dealing with terrorism in Northern Ireland is instructive. It demonstrates that provisions for prolonged incommunicado detention of suspected terrorists may be counter productive. According to the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the case of Ireland against the United Kingdom extra-judicial powers were adopted to control violence in Northern Ireland in the 1970s because

(1) normal procedures of investigation and criminal procedure had become inadequate to deal with IRA terrorists, and

(2) widespread intimidation of the population

often made it impossible to obtain sufficient evidence to convict a terrorist in the absence of a confession of police or army testimony.

Procedure Code for very good reasons:

(a) If the Police are to conduct and complete their investigations successfully, it is important that these detainees should not have access to their lawyers and relations for a certain minimum period, during which time it is expected that the Police will be able to complete their investigations and obtain the necessary information to the cases in Court. If the detainees are able to reach their lawyers and relations during this period, they could interfere with the witnesses and evidence and thus prejudice the investigations.

(b) Unless these persons are detained for a certain minimum period, informants and witnesses will not come forward to give evidence or assist in the investigations, for fear that they would suffer violence

Concerning the allegations of torture and mistreatment, the Court found that violence had been used against C. Kulasegarajasingam at Elephant Pass Camp prior to his transfer to Panagoda. The judgment stated that the detainee had been examined by a doctor after the filing of the application for writs of habeas corpus and "The doctor ended his report with the euphemism—'There is no evidence of any unreasonable harsh force being used to amount to torture.' There is no doubt, however, that violence had been used on him at the Elephant Pass Camp and we reject the denials of his custodians that he was not assaulted." With regard to allegations that S. Arunagirinathan had been assaulted during detention the Court found that, on medical examination, he had "two non-grievous contusions on his buttocks and there is no doubt that these indicated that he had been beaten by a blunt weapon."

### Use of violence on a prisoner

The judgment also said that the allegation that V. Sivaselvam was severely assaulted "appears to us to be exaggerated. However, the use of violence of whatever degree on a prisoner is illegal and is not only an offence under the Penal Code, it contravenes Article 11 of the Constitution. "No person shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment."

Physical assaults against detainees in order to elicit confessions are common occurrences in many countries during prolonged detention incommunicado under executive order. The Court has now confirmed that violence has been used against detainees held under the Terrorism Act in Sri Lanka. The Court's finding that assault occurred against three of the four detainees was presumably based on affidavits of Judicial Medical Officers who examined the detainees in May on orders of the Court and on the detainees' own statements. The medical examinations had been re-

quested by attorneys for the petitioners.

The Court held that the arrests without warrant were in accordance with the provisions of the Terrorism Act. As regards the allegations that the detainees were not informed of the reasons for their arrest, the Court held that it was unable to verify whether this had been done or not. Referring to Article 13 (1) of the Constitution which states that a person arrested shall be informed of the reason for the arrest, the Judge said "these provisions are mandatory and any infraction of them is illegal and must be strongly condemned as a serious encroachment on the liberty of the subject guaranteed under the Constitution." They pointed out that failure to inform the arrested person will make a police officer liable to be convicted under the Penal Code for assault and wrongful confinement.

The Judges stated "what is the mischief aimed at by this Act? Everybody knows that this Act is intended to rid this country of terrorism in all its recent sophisticated manifestations. To achieve this end, the legislature has invested extreme powers in the courts, the executive and the police which they do not have in normal times, in the interest of national security and public safety. Conscious that these powers are of an extreme nature the legislature has laid down that this Act certified on July 20, 1979, shall be in operation for a period of three years from the date of its commencement."

By its frequent invocation of constitutional safeguards, its findings of violence during detention, and its references to the expiration date of the Act, the Court's judgment makes abundantly clear the exceptional danger to human rights implicit in the Terrorism Act. The petitioners for writs of habeas corpus in the case have appealed to the Supreme Court against the decision of the Court of Appeals denying the petitions.

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T'grams: "Ceyma Silk".

# Palmyrah sugar: A breakthrough

The Planning Division of the Jaffna Kachcheri and the Palmyrah Development Board have jointly made a breakthrough at last and are manufacturing about 100 kilos of palmyrah sugar a day from palmyrah sugar toddy at the sugar manufacturing centre at Sarasalai in Chavakachcheri.

The plant and machinery was fabricated locally at a cost of about 3 lakhs of rupees by Promoters Engineering Co. Ltd. who specialize in design engineering. A similar plant was set up at Manthikai in Pt. Pedro a couple of months back and has not been commissioned yet for no other reason than that the District Engineer of the CEB has not condescended yet to give them the current despite the personal request made to him by the Chairman of the DDC a fortnight back to expedite matters.

The production can be doubled by working two shifts at each of these two

centres as nature is bountiful enough to give them enough sweet toddy at this time of the year, the peak season, provided they can devise a way of propitiating the official deities that preside at the outposts on the far side of Elephant Pass.

This sugar is available for sale at Rs 16/50 a kilo at Katpakam, the sales centre of the P.D. Board housed in the new Co-op. Complex Building along KKS road in the Jaffna Bazaar. The officer said that the tentative cost is Rs 15/- a kilo and there is every possibility of cutting down the cost to less than Rs 12/- when the residual molasses is either converted into palmyrah arrack or sold to the Distilleries Corporation. At the moment they make palmyrah syrup and treacle with the molasses. Two more manufacturing centres are to be set up at places where sweets toddy is available in plenty as the fresh toddy has to be processed before it starts fermenting.

The Palmyrah Development Board has also established two distilleries at Naranthani in Kayts and at Urany in Kankasanturai to distil the fermented toddy that is left unsold at the toddy taverns popularly known as 'corporations' in those villages. The distilled toddy with about 90% concentrated alcohol is sold to the Distilleries Corporation along with the residual weak spirit.

A Sales centre has been set up at 244, Galle Road, Bambalapitiya where palmyrah flower bouquet, a curio priced at Rs 40/-. palmyrah wall hangings and other handicrafts are available for sale. Similar production and sales centres are to be established at Mannar and Trincomalee. The demand exceeds supply and they are moving fast to open up handicraft centres to train personnel to turn out these handicraft products. They are also bottling palmyrahjam, sauce, cordial, pulp and syrup.

## Red Power and Youth Power

"A Red Indian Chief called his tribe to the long house and said, 'my people, I have always spoken to you with a straight tongue. When I had a good thing to say, I said it, when my tidings were bad, I told them without delay. Today I have some good news, and some bad. I will tell you the bad news first. The white man has decided he can no longer afford to feed his red brother. From now on, we will have to eat buffalo dung.

There was a moment of silence, then a brave man arose at the back of the hall. 'That is the bad news' he said, 'what is the good news?'

"There is plenty of buffalo dung," the Chief replied.

This little joke is told by Walter Stewart in his article on Red Power in the compilation of Minority Responses on the ethnic and racial situation in North America, U.S.A. & Canada.

A new aggressiveness has taken root in the Red Indian Community—which some call "Self-determination" and others, younger and bolder, call "Red Power" deliberately drawing a parallel with Black Power or the revolt of the Negroes. The Red Indians

are the most pacific of all the ethnic groups in Canada and U.S.A. and when they are talking like this, the situation of the others can be well-imagined.

The Negroes have passed through a violent phase and the Italians have taken the help of the Mafia, but the Red Indians are getting impatient with 'liberalism' as well as the representations approach. They have been pushed around and are now ready to do some pushing on their own. Their faith in non-violence is waning. Says one Red Indian, "Well, violence is part of our society. If it has to come, it has to". Says another, "There are terrible things happening every day to (Red) Indians in Canada.....there are many communities like powder kegs, ready to blow up."

These views are typical of the younger generation. Here is a beginning of a letter by a young Red Indian to Dr. Howard Adams, a Red Power Advocate: "Dear Sir let me introduce myself, I am a revolutionary."

They have already outgrown the non-violent resistance of Martin Luther King, and are, instead, inspired by the theories of Che Guevara."

## LETTERS

(Continued from page 7)

Finally, a newspaper, in my opinion, should highlight both the right and wrong that take place in this world. One must always remember that while committing a crime is an offence it is also an offence to let a crime take place and do nothing about it. In this respect I feel that Saturday Review is doing a very good job and a service to the Tamil community.

Yours sincerely,  
R. Thiru Amaran.

Jaffna,  
19-5-82

That mini-Parliament gimmick Sir,

I cannot understand the gimmicks of the President or the D.D.C. Jaffna. The other D.D.C.s have not done anything similar. The powers of the D.D.C.s have not yet been defined. In fact it is only centralisation of village council powers without any devolution or decentralisation of central government power. His praise for the government for the expansion of

the cement factory at K.K.S. shows his politically immature and puerile mind. He has forgotten that the Paranthan Chemicals is on the verge of closure. Cey-Nor development being is strangled and stopped. He cannot see a sinister move in the expansion of the Cement Factory at K.K.S.

Land up to Alaveddy has been acquired for excavating lime-stone. The lime-stone deposit is a non-renewable resource. Once removed, it is lost for ever leaving a crater and risk of salination of the ground water. Even if the crater is filled with sand the ecology of the Jaffna peninsula is changed. Before the bad effects appear, Lanka Cement Ltd. and the Government would have made their profits and will be in a position to pack up. Even to build the breakwater for the harbour precious lime-stone is being used. This only shows the government's intention of exhausting the lime-stone deposit soon.

Why are these so called leaders licking the hand that is cutting our throat? Why are they resorting to gimmicks and wasting Tamil public money?

Yours truly,  
S. S. Senathirajah

Udayar Valavu,  
Training College Road,  
Kopay, 19-5-82.

Dear Sir,

K.K.S. Cement Factory

I come to know that at one time safety nets were available at the above factory. Whenever workers had to climb up on structures which were hundreds of feet high these nets were to be spread and tied firmly a few yards above the ground in the manner such nets are used in the circus arenas for the purpose of protecting acrobats from falling down on the ground. It is very doubtful whether these nets were used at all. There is all possibility that these were sold to some outsiders by some unscrupulous persons. If the KKS Cement Factory authorities had some consideration for the lives of the workers, they could have provided safety nets and could have saved the lives of all the youths who fell down from high structures and died.

Now it seems that many workers have given up their jobs, even though they have to face sure starvation. Will the authorities concerned let the public know whether there were nets for the purpose mentioned above?

If so, what happened to them? The public would also like to know why the simple precaution of providing protective nets was not taken even after the first death. It is hoped that the protective nets will be supplied as early as possible, and the workers who resigned their posts will be re-employed.

It reflects very badly on the authorities concerned that they had the heart to send up a man to work on a high structure without providing protective nets.

Yours faithfully,  
T. Selvadurai.

"Gokulam",  
Kokuvil,  
20-5-82.

Dear Sir,

In every field, whether it is spiritual, moral, economic, political or literary, the absence of proper leaders is the root cause of all the distress, fear and anxiety that torments the world.

I shall therefore be grateful if you will kindly publish in your Review Josiah Gilbert

Holland's poem—"God Give Us Men" reproduced below. A time like this needs this.

**GOD GIVE US MEN**  
God, give us men, A time like this demands strong minds, great hearts, true faith and ready hands; Men whom the lust of office does not kill;

Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;

Men who possess opinions and a will;

Men who have honour; men who will not lie;

Men who can stand before a demagogue;

And damn, his treacherous flatterers without winking!

Tall men, sun crowned who live above the fog;

In public duty and in private thinking;

For while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds,

Their large professions and their little deeds;

Mingle in selfish strife; Lo! Freedom weeps,

Wrong rules the land and waiting justice sleeps".

Yours faithfully,  
S. Ponnuchamy.

# EDUCATED ESTATE YOUTHS IGNORED FOR JOBS

Educated estate youths have been ignored in the appointment of creche attendants, welfare officers and teachers, states the General Secretary of the National Union of Workers.

In a letter sent to President J.R. Jayawardene, the General Secretary states "We are faced with an unhappy situation even in the selection of candidates for teaching posts on estates. We understand that when applications were called, persons who live outside the

district and without estate connections have obtained certificates from the Grama Sevakas stating that they are residents in the district and gained admission to sit for the test. This fact, we understand, had come to light when the local youth found outsiders sitting for the tests. This unfortunate situation could have been avoided had the officers scrutinised the applications and called the right party for the test."

Stressing that the jobs 'should go to the children of estate workess who are permanently resident in the district', the Union wants the Education Services Committee to re-examine each case and then make the appointments.

The letter adds "It would not be fair or just to allow the children of workers to be mere pruners and pluckers.

## Paranthan Workers are 6 months in the cold : An Appeal

The Joint Trade Union Committee of the Paranthan Chemicals Corporation has appealed for funds for the Paranthan Factory workers who have been on strike for the last six months.

The appeal, addressed to the public and to fraternal movements, reiterate the resolve of the Paranthan

workers to continue the strike till they win their demands.

"The Paranthan struggle" states the appeal, "is not merely the fight of a section; the historic theme of the struggle is whether the working class enjoys its rights and lives with self-respect or lives as slaves."

## NEWS BRIEFS

### GOVT. BANS 3 FILMS

The Foreign Ministry has censored the films "Victory at Entebbe", "Rise and fall of Idi Amin" and "Operation Thunderbolt", fearing that these might impair Sri Lanka's non-aligned foreign policies.

### TRINCO: OFFERS CALLED

International offers were invited by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation for the development of the Trincomalee Oil Corporation and Oil Companies from four countries including India have responded.

### WORLD BUDDHIST CONFERENCE

The Government has allocated Rupees 1.5 million for the World Buddhist Conference to be held in Sri Lanka from June 1 to 5.

### VOTER STRENGTH GOES UP

The number of voters in the Jaffna Electorate has risen to 493,711 according to a current estimate. This is an increase of 20,938 over the previous year.

### M.P.'s NOMINEES FOR MIDDLE EAST

The Ministry of Labour has asked the employment agencies to select candidates for jobs in the Middle-East from lists of 15 nominees from each electorate. The lists will be supplied by the respective M. Ps.

### YOUTHS TAKEN FOR A RIDE

Eighteen Sri Lankan youths, 16 of them girls — each of whom paid Rs.6,500/ were duped by an Executive of an Engineering firm who promised them lucrative jobs in Singapore. On arrival in Singapore they were housed in two small rooms and had to walk five miles to their place of work and were paid a paltry sum of the Sri Lankan equivalent of Rs. 19/- a day. The incident was brought to light by a Buddhist prelate in Singapore and most of the youths are now back in Sri Lanka.

### SACKED M. P. FINED RS. 2 m

Mr. Anura Daniel former UNP M. P. for Hewaheta and a Colombo businessman were each fined Rs. 2 million on charges of smuggling into Sri Lanka goods worth about Two million Rupees.

### ARMY MAN KILLED IN JEEP CRASH

The driver of an army Jeep was killed and five other army personnel injured when the jeep in which they were returning to the army camp at Elephant Pass crashed into a tree near the Elephant Pass Saltern.

### CTB STRIKERS REINSTATED

All 162 workers of the Northern Region Transport Board who lost their jobs after taking part in the 1980 general strike have now been reinstated.

### CEMENT SHORTAGE IN GALLE

An acute shortage of cement is reported from Galle owing to the fact that the Ruhuna Cement Factory there is working only at one-fifth its capacity.

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### SPORTS TOUR OF PENINSULA

JEDB Planters spent a week in Jaffna playing cricket badminton and tennis matches against local teams.

Father Hyacinth Singarayer David is easily one of the few brilliant brains Sri Lanka has produced. His academic achievements are incomparable. He passed the London B.A. Honours in history in the first class division from the University College, Colombo in 1936. He also won the gold medal for economics.

As an admirer of the late scholar Nallur Swamy Gnanapragasar he interested himself in linguistics. While teaching at St. Patrick College he cycled every week-end to learn Sanskrit from the author of the Etymological and comparative lexicon of the Tamil language, Fr. Gnanapragasar who was a pioneer and revolutionary in philology. Most of the European scholars who then flourished in this field were ignorant of Tamil. Fr. Gnanapragasar shocked them by proposing that of all the spoken languages Tamil was radically the nearest to the original language of the human race.



His theory was fortified by the visit of Fr. P. H. Heras S. J., who interpreted the seals and inscriptions unearthed at Mohenjodaro and Harappa since 1922. Fr. Gnanam clarified and confirmed his interpretations with his historical and linguistic competence. Fr. Heras was astonished to discover some 25 inscriptions in verse of which 5 were in Kural meter. No escape, Tamil was nearest to the Proto Indian Pictographic and phonetic language of 3000B.C.

Fr. Gnanapragasar died in 1947 and Fr. David set out immediately to equip himself for the stupendous task of completing his gurus' undertaking. He went to India to study Sanskrit and other Indian languages. From

# The late Fr. David - martyr to national unity

there he proceeded to England to qualify himself in Aryan and Dravidian languages. He studied and lectured at a German University. He lectured in Sanskrit at the London University. He toured the whole of Europe and penetrated even the Iron Curtain. He returned to Ceylon in 1953 with an M.A. in Indo-Aryan languages and a Ph.D. in Tamil.

## That June 1 night!

But alas the precious library of Fr. Gnanapragasar had been pilfered of its treasures and the manuscripts of the Lexicon and the English-Tamil dictionary lost. Fr. David had to start afresh in his own way. In the meantime he was learning languages while lecturing at St. Patricks College. He was also in the board of examiners for the Ph.D. of Madras University. He became proficient enough to read literature in 32 languages. His 33rd was Russian. He had a working knowledge of many more from the hundred odd languages quoted in his publications.

He was concentrating on Brahmi, a Dravidian tongue spoken in Baluchistan when it dawned on him that the Sinhalese he had learnt in 1926-31 was more Dravidian than even modern Tamil. Carter and Sorata Thero helped him. For a second time he changed the plan of his lexicon and started his "Api Nayo" series. In these he shows that the people of Sri Lanka are racially and linguistically one.

Religious opportunism and political perversity are responsible for the present division, discrimination and turmoil in Lanka. By pub-

licising the truth that we are one people with a history of some 5,000 years he hoped to bring about amity and unity that will lead to fraternity and prosperity. He planned to write his last 9th part of the lexicon in Sinha-

lese. In fact his sixth presents us with a reader in Hela Basa.

But his prognostications were blasted. Reason did not prevail. Communal hatred was gaining momentum. Political expediency and not practical commonsense was

guiding the leaders of state. The guardians of law and order were metamorphosing into thugs and thieves. He was sad and ailing.

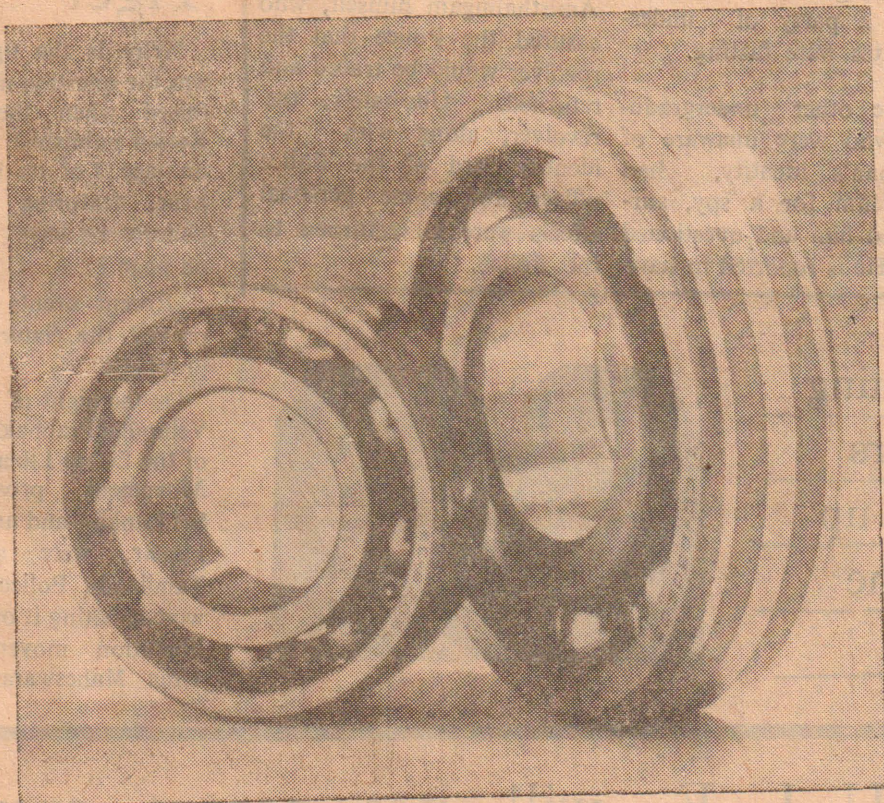
In the late hours of the 1st of June 1981 the Jaffna Public Library went up in flames. About 95,000 volumes, some of them rare and precious perished in it. Next morning Fr. David was discovered dead.

We may reconstitute most of the library. Never a Fr. David, master of 33 languages, scholar in Tholkapiam and Rigveda, educationist and philanthropist. But his message stands. Let politicians pause and ponder.

M. Pavilupillai, O.M.I.

# NTN

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# Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

## Amir's bodyguard loses his revolver (and gets it back)

An Inspector of Police, the bodyguard of Opposition Leader A. Amirthalingam was roughed up at the Jaffna Campus on Wednesday morning.

The incident occurred when Amirthalingam, along with Kayts M.P. K. P. Ratnam and Jaffna M.P. V. Yogeswaran called on Vice-Chancellor S. Vithianathan to discuss the Vimalarasa affair.

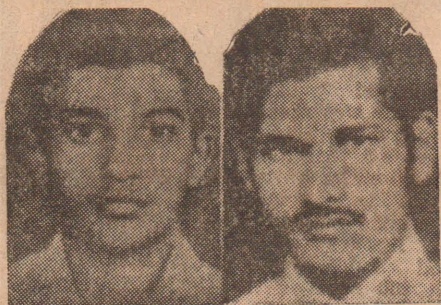
The MPs were in the V.C.'s office upstairs when the bodyguard, in plain clothes, had got out of the jeep and gone near the tent where a party of undergraduates were fasting.

Some other undergraduates, who were unaware of the man's identity, had taken him for a spy, surrounded him and questioned him. He is reported to have

claimed he was from the C.I.D. and attempted to pull out his service revolver. A scuffle followed, in the course of which someone on the scene, snatched his revolver, and ran away. The bodyguard who was manhandled badly was thrown out physically over the Campus wall.

What could have turned out to be a major incident with the Police preparing to enter the campus to recover the snatched revolver was averted by the joint intervention of some undergrads, two Catholic priests who were on the scene and Mr. Amirthalingam himself, who assured the Police that the revolver would be traced and returned. Ultimately, the revolver, along with the identity card of the Police officer and some personal effects were all returned to the Police.

## Fighting Tigers end up in the cage



# Undergrads smell victory

The undergraduates climaxed their boycott campaign to free fellow-undergraduate A. Vimalarasa—held, without trial, at the Panagoda Army Camp for over 400 days - with a three-day protest fast (24 - 26 May).

The undergraduates resolutely refused to call off their fast even though broad hints had been dropped that Vimalarasa would be released soon—provided they called off their campaign.

Undergraduate spokesmen said that it is their sustained campaign which has forced the authorities to sit up and

take notice; they are dead against politicians of any hue taking the credit for the fruits of the struggle they have waged.

It is in this perspective, these spokesmen argue, one should view the undergraduates' refusal to parley with politicians - including the Leader of the Opposition, Appapillai Amirthalingam—during the duration of the fast.

Vimalarasa's mother ceremonially ended the fast by offering fruit juice to the fasting undergraduates at 4 p.m. on 26 May.



Undergraduate leader K. N. Rasanayagam

## Why is the Tiger crying?

'Why is the tiger crying?' was the question many readers raised when the **Saturday Review** published **Tiger Story** on page 1 of its 13th March issue, featuring the same picture we have used today on page 1.

Recent events in Madras proved the **Saturday Review** prophetic.

On the night of 19th May Velupillai Prabhakaran—leader, of the Eelam Liberation Tigers Movement proscribed in Sri Lanka—and an aide, Sivakumar, were arrested by Tamilnadu Police when they were shooting it out with rival liberation movement leader Uma Maheswaran and his

lieutenant Jothiswaran at Pondy Bazaar, Madras. Jothiswaran was hospitalised with injuries while Uma escaped.

In the man-hunt that followed, Uma Maheswaran was finally arrested by Tamilnadu detectives at Gummudipoondy Railway Station on 25 May while attempting to flee Madras.

### FLASH

Tamilnadu lawyers joined the public in shouting out "Long Live the Tamil Eelam Liberation Tigers" when Prabhakaran and Sivakumar were produced yesterday before the Saidapet Magistrate.

## Decks are being cleared

The decks are being cleared for President J. R. Jayawardene's first official visit to the North—the fruit, observers think, of the amity dialogue which has brought the Government and the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) closer together after the mayhem and violence of 1981.

President Jayawardene is expected to visit the North in August to ceremonially inaugurate the K.K.S. harbour and the first phase of the Kankesanthurai Cement Factory's 3rd stage.

Observers underline the various steps the Government is taking to pave the way for the visit.

The Cabinet recently approved the Lionel Fernando Committee's recommendation that the Jaffna victims of the 1981 violence be given compensation totalling more than Rs. 22 million.

The President has also given an assurance to TULF Secretary-General A. Amirthalingam that about fifty youths, including undergraduate A. Vimalarasa, taken into custody under the Prevention of Terrorism Act will either be released soon or brought to trial.

## T. U. L. F. will not accept any office — M. P.

The TULF will not accept District Ministers' posts according to Mr. V. Dharmalingam, M. P. for Manipay. Denying a part of our report in our issue of May 22, Mr. Dharmalingam writes:-

My dear Editor,

In your issue of May 22, 1982 (Vol. I No. 17) at Page 1 under the Banner Headline "Will T.U.L.F. Accept District Minister Posts?" you say, inter alia, that a recent speech made by me has also fuelled speculation that the T.U.L.F. was going to accept District Ministerships.

In that speech alleged to have been made by me I am supposed to have said that "Industrial Development of Tamil areas had taken place when G. G. Ponnambalam was Minister..... a Cement Factory was put up at Kankesanthurai and a Paper Factory at Valaichchenai....."

Needless to say that I never made such a speech nor could I have made such a speech. You and I know that the acceptance of office by Mr. Ponnambalam was in no way responsible for the setting up

either of the Cement Factory or the Paper Factory. When Mr. Ponnambalam assumed office the Cement Factory was nearing completion. As regards the Paper Factory Mr. Ponnambalam himself told the House of Representatives (Hansard Vol. 15 Col. 1774) the matter of setting up the Factory in the Batticaloa District had been finalized before he assumed office.

How then can a non-existent speech fuel any speculation in any mind, unless such a mind had some sinister purpose?

You also say that "the talking point in political circles

is T.U.L.F. and District Ministers' posts." One can easily identify the political circles you speak of. These circles have nothing to talk about themselves. Their only pastime is to invent stories about the TULF. I am only sorry that your journal should get inspiration for its stories from the idle gossip of these political circles.

At no time did the TULF even consider accepting any office under this Government. Your reference to "internal opposition" is all a myth. If anyone thinks that the TULF is going to accept District Ministers' posts, I will assure such a person that he is in for a big disappointment.