

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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Jaffna

to come

under a

tight security

blanket for

October polls

Viewpoint

What do you think is the easiest way to make quick money in this country now? **ROBBING THE TAMILS!** Those readers who have been systematically denied legitimate information over the past twenty five years under cover of censorship during racial riots, and by deliberate hush-up by the so-called national Press during other times might find this surprising and hard to believe, but if the statistics were totted up from 1956 onwards, the Tamil citizens of this country must have lost in terms of cash, property and jewellery amounts running to several millions! The beneficiaries were certainly not the governments that have been in power, not the vast majority of law-abiding Sinhalese citizens, but the thugs and hoodlums and ex-crescence of society. They have come to believe that if the State does not owe them a living, at least the Tamils owe them that!

The celebrated Belgian detective in Agatha Christie's crime fiction—Hercule Poirot, used to say that the first thing to do in catching a criminal is to analyse the psychology of the victim! Firstly, the Tamil man (and particularly the Tamil woman with her propensity for gold) have made themselves worthwhile targets for any thug who wields a knife. But what is worse is that the political process in this country has reduced the Tamils to a position of vulnerability in which they have ceased to have the kind of "clout" that any peaceful, ordinary citizen enjoys in any country that prides itself in the Rule of Law. That the Tamils are "inferior" citizens in the national polity, is a fact that any half-witted thug can recognise. The long arm of the law which in any civilised society is the main bulwark against the infringement of the citizen's rights has time and again, particularly during riot times not only failed to protect the interests of Tamil citizens, but had even acted in collusion and sympathy with the criminals themselves. This happened at several areas during the island-wide anti-Tamil riots in August 1977. There are more odds for the Tamil citizen. As it happened during that dastardly attack on passengers in the Colombo-Jaffna mail train in the early hours of Tuesday (see report on Page 12), the behaviour of State employees such as the 3rd class sleeperette attendant, who according to the victims of the incident was seen to be actively enjoying the proceedings, and the Engine driver who failed to stop when the Emergency chain was pulled repeatedly, but slowed down further on to enable the hoodlums to get off are open to suspicion, to put it mildly.

But what makes the Tamil citizen a pathetic target of criminal attack is the anti-Tamil animus that is lurking in Sinhala society—at all levels. What made the thugs from Galgamuwa and Polgahawela wait until they passed Vavuniya to begin their attack? Obviously to throw suspicion on "northern terrorists"!

And would you believe it? A so-called "national" newspaper, "The Island" in its editorial yesterday (Friday 24th September) comes out with gratuitous comments that suggest that the poor passengers in Tuesday's incident were victims of "lawless elements" in the North! Is it ignorance that made "The Island" fly in the face of Truth or is it racist bias, or a sheer perverse desire to provide an alibi for the "lawless elements" who made the trip from the South? Whichever it was, it revealed a more "monumental ineptness" than what the paper charged the CGR with.

President Jayawardene, Minister Mohamed and the Jaffna and Vavuniya Police have all shown a sense of responsibility in this matter which is admirable. Pity 'The Island' chose to come off in poor light.

A thick security blanket will descend on the North as the deadline for the Presidential election—20 October—draws nearer and the campaign starts hotting up.

Several thousand security personnel are to be deployed in Jaffna around election time, the Saturday Review understands.

Police and Army presence in the Jaffna peninsula itself is expected to be in the proportion of one per ten voters.

Police sources say tight security arrangements will be enforced, whatever the inconvenience to the public, as the authorities fear boycott calls might trigger off pre-election violence. "We are taking no chances. Once bitten, twice shy" they told the Saturday Review, recalling the violence during the run-up to the District Development Council elections last year.

Housing of Army

Personnel

The Saturday Review learns Palaly Teachers' Training College, which is near the Palaly Army Camp, and several leading colleges in Jaffna town will be commandeered to house the additional security personnel who will be sent to the North during election time.

Meanwhile the Presidential candidates are poised to descend on Jaffna in the coming weeks.

The United National

Party candidate President J. R. Jayawardene will helicopter down to Jaffna on 2 October. He is billed to address an election rally at the Jaffna Stadium that evening. The next day he will carry out a whirlwind election tour of Kayts, Kankesanthurai, Point Pedro, Chavakachcheri and Kilinochchi.

Earlier, President Jayawardene was scheduled to arrive in Jaffna on 3 October to open the production section of Lanka Cement Ltd's third stage project at the KKS Cement Factory.

K. K. S. Cement Factory Fire

The change of plans, the Saturday Review understands, is a direct consequence of the fire that broke out at the third stage project around 10 p.m. on 18 September, causing damage estimated at Rs. 10 million.

The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna candidate Rohana Wijeweera is expected in Jaffna towards the end of this month to address election meetings.

Hot on the heels of President Jayawardene will come the Sri Lanka Free-

dom Party candidate Hector Kobbekaduwe. His platform will accommodate top-rung Communist Party (Moscow) speakers who are expected to plug the line that the Tamil-speaking people should either vote for Kobbekaduwe or boycott the election.

The high command of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party is already in touch with politically influential people in the North probing the possibility of holding rallies to be addressed by its candidate Dr. Colvin R. de Silva.

The boycott campaign has yet to get off the ground, informed sources say. The Tamil Eelam Liberation Front and radical youth organisations are yet to muster their forces to launch a vigorous boycott campaign. The ambiguous statement issued by the General Council of the TULF last Sunday has not helped to enlighten the party supporters on the party's exact position. While some influential individuals in the party are openly canvassing support for President Jayawardene other militants within the party are likely to come out in open support of the boycott call.

NO TRIAL FOR THEM

The Mallakam Magistrate, Mr. C. V. Wigneswaran, discharged Lieutenant Mandukodi de Saram and Privates K.J. Silva and R. T. Silva on 22 September, on the instructions of the Attorney General Mr.

Shiva Pasupati.

The three army men were earlier remanded and then bailed out in connection with the shooting of a lame youth Kandiah Navaratnam at Atchuvvely on the night of 20 February.

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UNIVERSITY OF JAFFNA HOLDS ITS 3rd CONVOCATION TODAY

The third Convocation of the University of Jaffna will be held today (Saturday, 25th September) at Veerasingham Hall Jaffna.

Prof. S. V. Chittibabu, Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai University, will deliver the Convocation Address.

An Honorary Doctorate of Letters will be conferred, **in absentia**, on Mr. S. Durai Raja Singam, the well-known Ananda Coomaraswamy scholar of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The citation will be read by the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Prof. K. Kailasapathy.

This Convocation is notable for three firsts.

This is the first time the University of Jaffna is awarding a Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Mr P. Gopalakrishna Iyer will receive the Ph. D. in Hindu Civilization, the only one to be awarded this academic honour at this Convocation.

This is also the first time students of the Ramanathan Academy of Fine Arts will be awarded Diplomas in Music and Dancing.

Post graduate Diplomas in Education are also being awarded for the first time.

Altogether over 450 Degrees and Diplomas will be conferred.

Saturday Review SRI LANKA

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Beginning October 1st, 1982, New Era Publications Limited will take over the publishing of "SATURDAY REVIEW" from Kalai Nilayam Limited. The registered office of New Era Publications Limited will be No. 118, 4th Cross Street, Jaffna.

All future payments to SATURDAY REVIEW by cheques, postal orders etc., should be made out in favour of New Era Publications Ltd.

Calling our Readers

Reader demand for SATURDAY REVIEW has been increasingly outstripping advertising revenue over the past several weeks. Newspaper economics however demand that we cannot go on increasing the print order without suffering losses. We are therefore compelled to increase the price of the paper to Rs. 2/50 beginning with the next issue.

Readers who have paid in their regular subscriptions will however continue to get their copies at the existing price. As a further concession, we are keeping it open to new subscribers, both local and foreign, to send in their yearly or half-yearly subscriptions on the present rates-UNTIL THE END OF THE YEAR.



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Ramanathan Memorial Lectures

Vice Chancellor of the Annamalai University, Professor S. V. Chittibabu will deliver the Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan Memorial Lecture on the 27th and 28th of this month at the Ramanathan Hall of the University of Jaffna.

The two volumes of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan's biography (hard cover editions) by M. Vythilingam will be available for sale at the hall on these two days. Volumes I & II are priced at Rs. 60/- and Rs. 40/- respectively.

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As the battle for the Presidency gathers momentum let us see whether we, as armchair analysts, could come to any conclusion how the sovereign people of Sri Lanka may exercise their franchise.

The Presidential Elections Act stipulates that where any candidate receives "more than one-half of the valid votes cast", the Commissioner of Elections shall forthwith declare such candidate elected to the office of President.

Where no candidates receives such a number of votes, and there are more than three candidates at the election (as at the 20th October contest), the law stipulates that the Commissioner shall "eliminate from the contest the candidates other than the candidates who received the highest and second highest number of votes" and take into consideration the second and third preferences indicated in the ballot papers cast for the eliminated candidates in determining the winner.

This means that each voter will in effect have one direct vote and two indirect votes. But the voter is not legally bound to indicate his second and third preferences.

The voter could mark the figure "1" (and not "X" as at earlier elections) opposite the symbol and name of the candidate of his or her choice, put the ballot paper in the box and leave the polling booth. But if the voter wishes, he or she may specify his or her second and third preferences by using the figures "2" and "3".

The total number of registered voters now, with Sri Lanka taken as one vast electorate, is 8.1 million, or approximately 1.5 million more than at the 1977 general election.

If there is a voter turnout of 87.3 per cent as in 1977, "one-half of the valid votes cast" would be around 3.5 million. The figure will be less if the Tamil people respond to the call of the Tamil United Liberation Front and boycott the election.

Whatever the final figure, my assessment is that contrary to the claims and hopes of United National Party leaders, the winner will be known only after the counting of the second preference votes; that is, that no candidate will receive more than 50 per cent first preference votes.

Political Causerie

by

Gamini Navaratne

Granted that in 1977 the UNP secured 3,148,651 votes, or 50.9 per cent of the total votes cast, an achievement unparalleled in the election history of Sri Lanka. But we must not forget that the political and economic situation in the country at the time was also vastly different from what it is today.

promises of plenty and prosperity for the people?

Before 1977, parliamentary byelections, especially after about midway in the life of a government, provided some indication of probable future voting trends. (At byelections held close after the installation of a government the people tended to elect members of

the voting figures caused by the boycott call of the SLFP, LSSP and CP, we have to fall back on the proportion of votes polled by the UNP out of the total number of registered votes.

In 1977, the UNP secured 46 per cent of the total number of registered votes; at the DDC elections, it's

are concerned an advantage denied to the UNP candidate who cannot expect to pick up many second preference votes from those who cast the first preferences for opposition candidates.

So in a close finish in the first count, the UNP candidate could get worsted by an opposition candidate whose first preferences are supplemented by the second preferences of an eliminated candidate!

I am aware that this possibility has been discussed by the UNP's top leadership. This is something they did not anticipate when enacting the Presidential Elections Act. As one UNPer remarked to

Second preference votes only could decide the winner?

The UNP then was at the height of its popularity. Not only did it have the backing of its traditional supporters but it also polled a considerable portion of the 1.1 million new votes plus even many votes that in other circumstances would have gone to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist Party. UNPers and many non-UNPers were registering a massive protest against all these three parties which had faced the people together as a United Front in 1970 and won an impressive victory. That is the only way in which the record UNP vote could be explained.

Yet in 1977, when every thing seemed to go against the SLFP, when even the LSSP and the CP took the field against it, Mrs. Bandaranaike's party polled 30 per cent of the votes. In actual fact, the total votes received by it, at 1,831,115, was marginally more, not less, than in 1970, though the seats won were far fewer due to the distortions of the then extant voting system.

The question crucial to our analysis is: Is the UNP as popular now as when it swept to power majestically in 1977 with its dazzling

the ruling party if only to ensure that their electorates were not neglected). With the introduction of the proportional representation system in 1978, we have no by-elections. We also have no public opinion polls as in some Western countries.

To judge party popularity by crowds also has its hazards. During the closing stages of the March 1960 election, Mahajana Eksath Peramuna leader Mr. Phillip Gunawardene was drawing such huge crowds that he was being hailed as "the future Prime Minister". The final election meeting held by the SLFP at Maharagama in 1977 drew a bigger crowd than the UNP's held the previous day, also at Maharagama. But what happened in both cases?

Parties, especially ruling parties, have a tendency and the ability to bring crowds. Still, comparatively poor crowds throughout a presidential candidate's campaign, particularly in areas where the party had done well in 1977, could be a sign of things to come.

The only empirical data on which we could base our analysis is the UNP's performance at the District Development Council elections in June 1981. Because of the distortions in

share was down to 31 per cent of the total registered votes.

That was 16 months ago. Is the UNP more or less popular now than then, leave alone at the time of the 1977 elections?

If the answer is that its stock has fallen—this is something that has happened to every previous ruling party in Sri Lanka during the tail-end of its term—then it cannot expect to receive more than 51 per cent of the votes at the Presidential election.

From the figures quoted by me, it would be safe to conclude that the UNP's share of the total vote can only go down while that of the SLFP and the LSSP can only go up, unless there is a big swing to the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna.

There is another factor that could help swell the SLFP and the LSSP votes. Though they and the other opposition parties could not agree on a single candidate, there is considerable understanding and common ground between the SLFP and the LSSP leadership so that a large number of their supporters may respond to an appeal to indicate one or other of the two party candidates as their second choice. This virtually means two votes per person where these two candidates

me, there was no need at all to provide for second and third preferences. I cited to him the old saying that wise men also sometimes make silly mistakes.

POSTSCRIPT

When I said in this column on 11th September that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene would go down in history as a great leader if he took on Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike at the Presidential election after restoring her civic rights, I had no illusions that this would come about. For such a gracious and courageous act would have required statesmanship and political guts of a very high order which very few Sri Lankan politicians past or present, possessed.

Mr. Jayewardene gave the expected reply at a UNP rally at Kaluaggala, in the Avissawella electorate on 15th September when he said that the ex-Prime Minister would have to serve the full seven-year term.

But what if fate intervenes to free her after having served only two years and seven days?

How I arrived at my calculation I leave it to our readers to unravel as they revel in the election speeches replete with all manner of promises, of our Presidential candidates.

On the problems of Development and under-development of

The Palmyrah Industry in the Jaffna district

Introduction:

This paper is in response to the interest shown in promoting a Public Private Limited Liability Company for Palmyrah Products by the Chairman of the Jaffna District Development Council, the Federation of the Palm Products and Sales Co-operative Societies, the Palmyrah Development Board and the North Ceylon Chambers of Industry. The role of the Consultancy and Finance and Development Ltd is purely advisory in nature and is not a potential investor in the proposed company.

The objective of this paper, are as follows:

- To highlight the need for the formation of a Company (Public Private) for the further development of the Palmyrah Industry.
- To suggest a "Model" for the proposed company.
- To get a feed-back from concerned individuals and institutions on the proposals and recommendations contained in this paper.

The paper is divided into two parts. Part I provides a brief overview of the present state of the Palmyrah Industry, so as to provide the background for the proposal to promote a Public Private Limited Liability Company for palmyrah products.

In the second part of the paper a "Model" is presented which includes the objectives, the ownership and the Management structure of the proposed company. It also raises some "Issues" which need to be resolved before the actual incorporation proceedings are initiated.

PART 1

A brief overview of the present state of the Palmyrah Industry.

The theoretical potentials of the Palmyrah Industry is a subject which is well documented in numerous articles, papers and books written by experts in the field and, any reference to it in this paper, would be redundant. Suffice it to say, the Palmyrah Industry is an epitome of contradictions. It is on the one hand multi-faceted, with immense potentials as a base for rural industrialization and as a source of accumulation for capital formation. (The monthly sales turnover from the sale of Toddy alone is estimated to be in the region of Rs. 4 million per month) On the other hand, the Palmyrah Industry is also symptomatic of the process of underdevelopment or deformed development, as manifest in the chronic underutilization of resources (natural as well as human), acute exploitation of labour and its historical role as a repository of the caste system.

An attempt was made in 1972 to revive and resuscitate the Palmyrah Industry and to also alleviate the exploitative conditions which marked the Socio-economic existence of the Toddy-tappers. A committee was appointed by the Minister of Plantation Industries and Constitutional Affairs to investigate and report on the following:

- The commercial potentials of the Palmyrah Palm and its products;
- The problem of Palmyrah cultivation, both, as a plantation and as a small-holders' crop;
- The Economics of the setting-up of a palmyrah Research Institute.

Despite certain limitations in the report of the committee, it paved the way for the emergence of two institutions which, in essence, are inseparable and indispensable to the Palmyrah industry today. They are the Federation of Palm Products and Sales Co-operative Societies which was set up in 1972 and the Palmyrah Development Board which made a belated appearance in 1979.



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

The rest of the section will deal with the functions of these two institutions for the purpose of highlighting some lacunae which could only be filled by the emergence of a third "partner" in the development of the Palmyrah Industry—namely a joint-stock company for palmyrah products.

A. The Federation of Palm Products and Sales Co-operative Societies.

The palm Products and Sales Co-operative Society (19 in all with a membership of 12,000 toddy tappers) formed in 1972 with the abolition of the 50 year old Tree Tax System. The basic function of producing and marketing toddy, remained the same. However, in 1974 the Federation of Palm Products and Sales Co-operative Societies (hereafter referred to as the "Federation") made a fundamental policy decision of a progressive nature—namely, to diversify in order to encompass a much wider area of processing activities.

This was largely in response to the excess of production of toddy over consumption resulting in the large-scale destruction of toddy, estimated to be in the region of 350,000 gallons annually. Related to the above problem was the problem of under-employment and unemployment. The setting-up of the distilleries plant at Kaithady in 1974 and the opening of jaggery centres in 1975, to a large extent, eased some of the problems mentioned above. Further the restriction on the import of sugar in 1975 and the financial assistance granted by the Government provided the impetus for diversification into the production of jaggery.

Despite the presence of certain objective and subjective conditions favourable for the establishment of Jaggery Centres and the partial solution to the problem of under-employment, the Jaggery Centres were not able to meet the profitability—criteria, as could be seen below:

Year	Production in lbs (Lakhs)	Profit in Rs: (Thousand)	Less in Rs: (Thousand)
1975	6.99	2.5	—
1976	10.75	—	31.45
1977	8.42	—	33.73

Source: "Case study of Palmyrah Industry",

By: K. Sivalingam, Planning Officer,
Jaffna Kachcheri.

The reasons for the non-viability in commercial terms has been attributed by the above author to the following factors:

- Lack of skilled personnel in rural areas to man the Jaggery Centres.
- Lack of efficient management of the units by P.P. & S.C.Ss.
- Marketing difficulties.

The financial viability of the Jaggery Centres was further undermined by the import liberalisation programme of the present government initiated in 1977, and the "Federation" was compelled to abandon Jaggery production.

This paper was prepared by **KETHEESWARAN LOGANATHAN**, Vice-President, Consultancy and Finance and Development Ltd. and Chief Executive, The Centre for Development Research Education and Communication (D.R.E.C.).

An attempt was made recently by the Planning Division of the Jaffna Kachcheri to induce the "Federation" to diversify into sugar production. According to the programme of action, 5 Sugar Centres were to be started, with a production target of 100 tons of sugar per centres per annum. A grant of Rs. 1 lakh was allocated to each sugar centre under the de-centralised budget and a further sum of around Rs. 2.3 lakhs is to be given as a loan by the People's Bank to the respective P.P. & S.C.Ss. Despite the need to diversify into Palm sugar in terms of meeting the "Self-reliance" criterion, which is laudable, it is clear that the commercial viability of the Sugar Centres are very much in doubt. These are due to the following factors;

(1) High cost of production which undermines its competitiveness in relation to cane sugar.

(2) Inadequate research into the marketability of by-products that could be processed from the molasses.

(Continued on page 10)

It was in 1972 when the writer was stationed in Jakarta that one night lights went out. As this was a common occurrence (similar to what we experience in Jaffna), the writer did not take it seriously till he read the following day's morning paper. It stated that the electricity supply of the city has completely failed and that it would take at least three months for the resumption of the normal supply. The President has taken over the matter into his hands and has ordered the necessary machinery to be airlifted from the West for strengthening the city's thermal stations. How was it that this happened suddenly! The answer is that the population of Jakarta with less than a million during World War 2 had exceeded five million in thirty years and that only ad-hoc measures were taken during this long period for additional supply and so one day it had to fail. This type of failure is bound to happen not only for electricity but also for other public services in the developing countries unless those in power fully realise the implications of the demands due to expanding population and rising affluence.

RAILWAY - THEN AND NOW

Take for instance the railway in this country. When the writer was a student in the University College, Colombo in the mid-thirties, he frequently travelled between Jaffna and Colombo and always by third class. There was no difficulty in the purchase of the ticket needed for the journey just a few minutes before travel and for finding a seat in the train. Then there were two trains daily between Jaffna and Colombo in each direction. That was when the population was below six million. Now with a population nearing 15 million and the necessity for travel having increased many fold during the last 50 years, we have only 3 trains daily to cope with such a situation. If we consider all the private buses running between Jaffna and Colombo to be equivalent to an additional train, still we are short of one train on the population basis and possibly two short when we take into account other factors. All this is quantity wise but what about the quality? Are we getting the same service in punctuality and the courtesy from the railway staff? If one reaches the destination on time then it is one of the rare occasions in railway travel now.

Will services keep up with the expanding population?

Take another example: postal, telephone and telegraphic services. Fifty years ago if one posted a letter in Colombo for Jaffna before 2 p.m. on a week day, the person was sure that it would reach Jaffna the following day. Now one should be lucky if the letter reaches the following day. In this respect the service from Jaffna to Colombo is better than that from Colombo to Jaffna though the distance from Jaffna to Colombo is the same as that from Colombo to Jaffna! If one is observant in Colombo it would be noticed that occasionally those in charge of collection, empty the letters from both the green (meant for Colombo letters only) and red boxes into the same bag. This is typical of the indifference displayed by some of the staff. As regards letters to and from abroad the situation is better.

THE BRITISH INHERITANCE

Regarding internal telephone service all are aware of the situation. It may one day meet with the same fate as the electricity supply of Jakarta in 1972. The service to foreign countries however is satisfactory—Kandiah of Jaffna or Perera of Panadura does not make any foreign calls; as such priority should be to improve the internal service before the external services if the authorities are interested to serve the majority of the people.

The internal telegraphic service has lost its efficiency considerably—with all the handicaps, letters sometimes get to their destination quicker than telegrams.

In the two cases dealt with namely the railway and postal telecommunication services, we inherited a good service from the British and we have not been able to maintain the

quality. This has not been the case for some other services which we inherited from the British—the quality was no doubt good but the services were meant for certain classes. Say in health and education there was a limited service and in a way there was a backlog. It is surprising that these services cleared the backlog and have been keeping up quite well quantity wise. It has however to be remembered that these services are **not postponable** and successive Governments were forced to give priority.

Education like health is non-postponable and thus the service has kept abreast with numbers. The free education scheme came into being in the forties and the demand on the educational services has been high. For example when the school going children increased by about one-third from 1963 to 1980, the number of teachers increased by two-thirds. Statistics however do not reveal anything about the quality of teaching and about library and laboratory facilities. It is not out of place here to mention

restrictiveness the number of admissions is not increasing pro-rata.

Food like health and education is non-postponable. The position about food with population increase has been dealt with in these columns by this writer in the article entitled "Self-sufficiency in Food" dated August 7, 1982.

- Long-range planning
- Getting the priorities right
- Avoiding

Perspectives

by Nagamuttu

In health services one has to contend not only with expanding population but also with the increasing popularity of western medicine among the common people. Earlier when a rural person got ill, he/she would have tried some home medicine and also trusted in God or Nature to cure the ailment. Now the tendency is to rush to the nearest hospital or doctor. Thus the demand is high. This has been met by the increase in the number of (a) beds in hospitals, (b) doctors and (c) nurses. These numbers have more than kept up with the population—for example when there was a doctor for about 11,000 people in early fifties and now there is one for 7,000 people. In addition to the facilities provided by the State, private services are available for those who can afford them. Quantity-wise the health services has considerably improved but what about the quality? The queues are there for outdoor treatment and for hospital beds. It is not uncommon to see patients on the floor in some hospitals. However in fairness to the service, this service is a reasonably good service.

the remarks of the late Sir John Sheppard, Provost of King's College, Cambridge made to the writer when he visited this country in the mid-fifties that he hoped the authorities would not bring down the level of colleges like Royal and St. Thomas' to that of the Central Schools instead of attempting to raise the level of Central Schools to that of these colleges. Those in the profession should know whether what the learned Provost feared has happened or not!

UNIVERSITY INTAKE

In higher education, the intake for our Universities has not kept pace with the increase in the population or rather the student population while there has been a steady increase in the numbers of the teaching staff. For example from 1965 to 1979/80, the number of students increased from about 14,000 to about 17,000 while the teaching staff increased from about 1150 to over 1600. We are aware that unlike basic education for which all eligible children are entitled for admission, the university admissions are restrictive—but even with this

decisions on political grounds

Though far from complete some of the important public services touching the common man have been dealt with here. We are able to judge that some of them particularly the non-postponable ones are keeping abreast with the expanding population and increasing affluence while others are lagging behind. Regarding the former the writer is reminded of the remarks of a visiting American to the Aswan Dam in Egypt when it was completed, "that Nasser (then Egyptian leader) had to run as fast as he could only to remain where he was". What the visitor meant was the benefit due from the Aswan Dam in the meantime had been swallowed by the increase in the population. However it is not a hopeless race for the developing countries if the leaders give due consideration for long range plans and have their priorities right in serving the common man instead of taking decisions on political grounds.

Man is a community-building animal. He does not live in isolation but in groups. Group life is essential to ensure satisfaction of our wants. We satisfy some of our wants by our own effort without the assistance of others; some wants are satisfied through the process of exchange, i.e., by purchasing our requirements in the market.

But there are some wants which cannot be satisfied by purchasing the means of satisfaction in the marketplace. We want public highways to move about; we want security both against internal and external aggression. (In Ceylon we want security against security personnel). When we are wronged we want to mete out justice to the wrong-doer. There may be floods; flood-protection cannot be achieved individually. Infectious diseases might afflict us. There are a host of such wants for the satisfaction of which the group has to be organized effectively and satisfaction of wants achieved on a collective footing.

Administration of justice, security against internal and external aggression, health measures, educational facilities etc. have to be provided on a collective basis. This function of satisfying the wants which have to be satisfied on a collective basis requires an organized society and that organized society is the State with power to coerce the individual who does not fall in line and enforce an orderly set-up.

It is the people who will form the organized society called the State. The State is constituted by the will of the people. No State can be there without the people's will to be members of the particular State. If a group of people do will to form their own State, others have no moral right to say "No".

GOVERNMENT BY CONSENT

Mr. Chelvanayakam once theorized in the Parliament that the Government did not have the consent of the Tamil people to govern them, that such a consent was secured with the signing of the B-C pact and that with the abrogation of the B-C pact that consent disappeared. The notion of government by consent is now an obsolete concept. The scope of governmental activity has widened and Governmental functions have so proliferated that the concept of participative government has replaced

the concept of government by consent; the concept of government by consent applied to the monarchic form of governments. Thomas Carlyle thought that the people conferred kingship on the person whom they deemed to be a hero. Then according to the great faith in heredity, the hero's son was deemed to be the most suitable

person to succeed to the kingship when the reigning king died. Consent is evidenced partly by acquiescence and partly by the hallelujahs sung in praise of the king.

The concept of participative government implies the presence of certain elements in the polity. The people concerned must have free, frank and unfettered discussions about all matters brought within the scope of governmental activity. They must all be of one mind as to what is good for the community as a whole; they must be open to conviction and reach a decision which will achieve the highest good of the greatest number. Group prejudices, group conflicts and other disruptive forces and pre-conceptions would vitiate the process of reach-

ing an acceptable collective decision. The norms and values cherished by the people forming the polity, their urges and aspirations, their outlook and attitude must exhibit something in common. There must be a broad community sense among the people concerned. Otherwise not merely the process of collective decision making but

also the much more important process of observing and implementing such collective decisions would be negated and the purpose of the State defeated.

It is important to observe in this connection that the issue is not that the values, norms, aspirations and urges should be ideal and above reproach; these must be common for all the people forming the polity; that is the requirement. It is the community of outlook that is vital. It is said that the British cabinet follows the doctrine "It does not matter what we say but let us all say the same thing". This doctrine merely reflects the community of outlook prevailing in the nation as a whole and that explains how that nation piloted

herself successfully through all crises. The whole nation stands and acts as one man behind the leader who is the man of the hour and who is somehow or other discovered and brought to the fore by a collective choice. We do not find in British history instances of the inept leader being blamed for a calamity; the inept leader

is thrown out well before the crisis deepens, the right man is chosen to lead and the correct course is charted before the situation gets out of control.

The secret of such success is this; the concept of participative Government is fully understood and appreciated and the various elements essential for the success of participative government are present in full measure. Democracy is government by public opinion and public opinion is continuously reviewed and moulded by the free, frank and unfettered discussion among a people who have a broad community of outlook in ample measure. **The polity should be constituted on the principle of quality and not quantity.**

HEELAM

Good for the Tamils but better for the Sinhalese

(also for Uncle Sam and Auntie Maggie)

by

Somasundaram Vanniasingam

In the preface to his *magnum opus*, which revolutionized economic thinking in the early thirties, the late Lord Keynes wrote that the composition of the book was for him a struggle to escape from habitual modes of thought and expression. He added that the path-breaking ideas he put forward therein were after all, extremely simple and ought to be obvious and that the real difficulty lay not in the new ideas but in escaping from the old ones which ramify into every corner of our minds.

We have in this Island become prisoners of certain ideas which are wrong-headed; but such ideas do however ramify into every nook and corner of the minds of many of us. One such wrong-headed notion is typified by the expression "United nation", "United Ceylon". Another is the notion that the division of the country is something horrible.

UNITY NOT A GOAL BUT CONSEQUENCE

Unity can never be the goal or objective to be sought; unity is the automatic consequence of something else. If the objectives and aspirations of the different groups of people involved are compatible, if the outlook, values and norms cherished by them are common, unity is automatic as night follows day. If these elements constituting the community of interests are not there, the exhortations to unity would fare no better than King Canute's command to the waves. Let us not waste our lungs shouting "Unity". The whole complex of such values, aspirations and urges, norms and beliefs, habitual modes of thought and expression form what is called the national character.

NATIONAL CHARACTER

A story frequently retailed about in Colombo and which probably originated with sailors and set down in the form of a conversation between two wise old owls is given below:

1st owl: Suppose a ship gets wrecked and the sole survivors consisting of two gents and a young lady found themselves in a deserted sea shore of a big land mass. What would happen?

2nd owl: Well it depends on the nationality of the two gents.

(Continued next page)

Part I of a series

(Continued from page 6)

1st owl: Suppose the two gents were Englishmen?

2nd owl: Nothing would happen (after a pause) for want of introduction.

1st owl: Suppose they were Americans?

2nd owl: The two gents will engage themselves in animated conversation about the prospects of setting up a trading establishment to promote American exports to that country. The young lady would be left severely alone.

1st owl: Suppose they were Spaniards?

2nd owl: Again nothing would happen to the young lady because the two gents will enter into a bitter fight for the hand of the young lady and both of them will get maimed and mortally wounded and unable to get up.

This story seeks to bring forth dominant traits in the national character of these peoples in an interesting and humorous manner.

SUICIDE TOO EXPENSIVE

Here is another story reproduced by a historian. It is again given in the form of a dialogue.

A: When the Britishers reach a new island which they intend to colonize, what is the first step they take in the process?

B: They construct a road leading to the interior.

A: What do the Germans do when they reach an island which they intend to colonize?

B: They build a Fort near a possible port.

A: What do the Frenchmen do when they reach an island which they intend to colonize?

B: They build a cafe on the beach where the sea is shallow.

Here is another story which relates only to one particular nationality, i.e. the people of Scotland.

Two youngsters, students from Oxford walked into a Chemist's shop one evening and wanted to buy some arsenic. The Chemist suspecting the persons and the purpose entered into tactful conversation with them. It transpired that

both the students had performed rather poorly and wanted to commit suicide. The Chemist found out the names of both and these began with "Mac". He got in touch over the phone with the Warden of the Hall where the students resided and conveyed the developments. The Warden after ascertaining their names heaved a sigh of relief which was easily discernible over the phone and told the Chemist; "Don't worry; quote a price three times the usual rate and they will give up their plan to commit suicide". The Chemist did, as advised, and was pleasantly surprised to hear the students exclaim "Is it so costly?" and quietly turned their back on the Chemist's shop. They were Scottish.

to cast his vote although Bhikkus were seen in the neighbourhood). Honour and respect should be showered on the Bhikkus to secure the votes of laymen. The nominative of address employed by President Jayawardene is conditioned by the norms and values prevailing among the Sinhalese public.

Now let us suppose that Mr. Appapillai Amirthalingam, the Tamil leader and, of late, a close friend and admirer of President Jayawardene took it into his head to emulate his counterpart the very successful Sinhala political leader, President Jayawardene. In framing the Nominative of address to the political meetings he addresses in the North and the East he would begin

‘There is a strong
impression among
the Tamils that
President J.
nurses a keen
sense of grievance,
towards them.....’

All these stories coined by men with deep insight into human affairs merely emphasise that there is something called national character, i.e. people cherish certain values which they as members of the national group have inherited and which conditions their conduct, actions and thought in a manner vastly different from that of others.

Now let us advert to situations in this Island. When President Jayawardena (and other politicians of Sinhala Lanka) addresses a political meeting, the nominative of address is pronounced with great solemnity and begins with the words "Maha Sangha". He does that because in order to harvest votes, a politician must show the utmost respect to the Maha Sangha. It is not that the votes of the Bhikkus themselves do count. (The writer functioned as Presiding Officer at polling booths in three places in Sinhala areas but no Bikku came

with the words "Bhramanonthamaraa". ("பிரமனந்தமரே"))

If Mr. Amirthalingam were to begin addressing a political meeting in the North or the East in the aforesaid manner emulating President Jayawardene, the Tamil youths will not hesitate to take Mr. Amirthalingam into physical custody and expeditiously ward him in the mental hospital at Angoda.

Already Tamil youths are very sceptical of the mental balance of Mr. Amirthalingam. The writer saw a writing on the wall near the Jaffna Campus which read—

"Asking J.R. for development; Asking M. G. R. for Swaraj; Why this mental derangement for Amir?"

This should make clear to anyone the vast difference between Sinhala approach to politics and the Tamil approach to politics.

Here is another instance of Bhikku influence in politics. The Central Bank of Ceylon was established in 1949 or 1950. The Sinhala name appeared on the building as "Sri Lanka Maha Bankuwa". The Central Bank publishes various publications including the statutory Annual Report; these appeared in Sinhala but the Tamil publication would not come out. It later transpired that there was a dispute about the name in Tamil for the Central Bank. The Tamil staff of the Bank put forward the name "Ilankai Madhya Vanki" but the authorities were insistent that the name should be "Sri Lanka Maha Banku".

The insistence on both sides was such that the Tamil publications were held up for years. Then Mr. Dudley Senanayake became Prime Minister in 1965. The protagonists of the name "Ilankai Madhya Vanki" sought to press their case. The staff of the Central Bank took up the matter through Chelvanayakam. The writer also took an interest in the matter in his capacity as a student and teacher of Economics and put up a memorandum and got the matter raised by G. G. Ponnambalam. The writer himself drafted the letter from Ponnambalam to the Governor of the Central Bank and the memorandum of the writer went up as an annexure to that letter from Ponnambalam.

Sometime later Ponnambalam forwarded to the writer the reply from the Governor of the Central Bank. The reply to Ponnambalam was fairly chatty and informal extended to almost one page half foolscap; a copy of the reply sent by the Governor to Chelvanayakam was also forwarded therewith. The letter indicated that the matter was being placed before the Prime Minister for his decision.

THE FUNCTION NOT THE SIZE

From the letter to Ponnambalam by the Governor of the Central Bank it transpired that the Sinhala name was decided upon by the Bhikku Mandalaya and that the argument was that the names in both languages must be identical. The writer in his innocence had urged that in the teaching of the subject, explaining the role and functions of Central Banking would be

inhibited by the use of the word "Maha" whether it be in Sinhala or Tamil. The word Maha derived from Sanskrit meant something like mammoth or very big whereas the Central Bank, depositwise would be much smaller than commercial banks; It was essential that the idea that the Central Bank was in the centre of a complex banking mechanism ought to be brought out in the name and it is the functional aspect and not the size that distinguishes the Central bank.

A MATTER

BEYOND REVIEW

He took the view that the Sinhala as well as the Tamil name should preferably be "Maaya Banki", as in India, or at least Madhya Banki / Banku to bring forth the functional significance. The Governor's letter to Ponnambalam contained an outburst against this poor writer for having dared to question the correctness of the Sinhala name which was decided by the infallible Bhikku Mandalaya. (The Governor did not use the word infallible but that is the significance; the Governor indicated that the Sinhala name was not open to review; it was so to say immutable. It is only God's word that is not open to review and immutable and God's word is infallible; hence a decision not open to review and immutable must have been made by some infallible authority)

Years later when Prof. Malalasekera came to Jaffna College as the Chief Guest at a Prize distribution the writer received enlightenment on the true significance of Sri: Sri is the abbreviation of the name of the Hindu goddess Sri Devi and the use of the prefix Sri will bestow on the subject abundance of wealth. The learned Professor insisted that the prefix should never be dropped lest there should befall some evil. It is a matter of faith and others should respect what is a matter of faith with some one. It would however be interesting to visualize how it would look if the people of England, where Central Banking theory developed, cherished the same values: the Bank of England would carry the name —Mammoth Bank of Holy England.

(To be continued next week)

As a writer, 76-year-old pensioner D. R. Singam seems a total failure.

He had written more than 30 books in 50 years but until last year, not a single publisher was interested.

So he turned publisher himself. He became a one man band — as writer, editor, publisher, and salesman all rolled into one. And he lost money on every book he published.

The break finally came last year when a publisher agreed to put out a reprint of his fascinating **PLACE NAMES IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA**. That book the first of its kind in this country, is enough to give Mr. Singam a distinguished place among the country's writers.

Numerous books and articles

This ex-teacher, who has taught in various schools in Pahang for 45 years, has written numerous books and articles on local history, India's cultural influence on Malaysia, the history of the local Ceylonese Tamil community, and the life of the Indian art critic Ananda Coomaraswamy.

He has corresponded with some of the greatest Indian personalities. He has interviewed Gandhi, Tagore, and Nehru, among others and corresponded with Bose, Radhakrishnan and Coomaraswamy.

Proud of his

Ceylonese descent

Mr. Singam takes great delight in meeting important people, corresponding with them, writing about them, and hearing compliments from them.

Almost every one of his books carries a foreword from Prime Ministers, Cabinet Ministers or VIPs, printed in bold black type with full page photographs.

He can't explain this obsession.

"May be because when I was young I always dreamt of being a great leader and of travelling around the country delivering fiery speeches," he said.

"But then," he giggles, "the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. I remained secure and happy as a humble schoolmaster."

Things almost changed once. In 1927, Mr. Singam received a sudden surge of inspiration after meeting one of his heroes, Rabindranath Tagore, who visited Malaya.

He hastily sent in his resignation letter to the Education Department, and prepared to go to India to study under Tagore. How-

A profile of Malaysian-born citizen of Ceylonese descent — S. Durai Raja Singam — whom the University of Jaffna honours today (in absentia) at its convocation with an Honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. This article on Durai Raja Singam written by Patrick Pillai was published in the Malaysian Straits Times two years ago.

ever, relatives "pressured" him into changing his mind and Mr. Singam relented.

Durai Raja Singam was born in Port Weld, Perak, in 1904, the fourth child of a Ceylonese station master. He is extremely proud of his Ceylonese parentage.

He was educated at the Methodist Boys' School in Kuala Lumpur, and went to various colleges in Sri Lanka for his tertiary education. In 1925, he returned to Malaysia as a teacher. He spent most of his time in Pahang and became a headmaster before his retirement in 1959. All along he has kept writing, right through his retirement.



S. Durai Raja Singam

"I never give up. Once I submitted articles for six years to the Straits Times Annual. They were rejected always, but one was accepted the seventh time."

Without any encouragement

In spite of Mr. Singam's disinterest in ideas, his inability to relate historical facts to a wider social context, his suffocating sentimentality and long windedness, his books are interesting. They arouse your curiosity.

When one considers the fact that he published most of his works while teaching in the remotest parts of Pahang without the help of public libraries, the

Jaffna recognizes a Malaysian — born son

belong to that corpus of memorabilia that hint at society's history and collective experience.

"Malaysian place names too echo with stories and lessons from the past. But unfortunately, these have been muffled by layers of different foreign regimes as well as the indifference of Malaysians themselves."

Ex-M. P. Tungku

Abdul Rahman

Another friend of Mr. Singam, Tungku Abdul Rahman, whose biography Mr. Singam edited, describes his writings with characteristic simplicity: "I have always found great pleasure reading his essays because he often tells me unusual things about our country which I did not know before."

Mr. Singam's other well known publication is his **A HUNDRED YEARS OF CEYLONESE IN MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE** published in 1968. The work is a pioneer study of the role of the Ceylonese Tamil community in both countries.

He has also published about 15 books on the Indian art critic Ananda Coomaraswamy, who was the research fellow at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts between 1917 and 1947.

But all his writings on the art critic, just like many of his other works, over-emphasise the person rather than his ideas. They consist mostly of reprints of articles, photos, and quotations in praise of the man.

Coomaraswamy himself found this irritating. In reply to a request for biographical information, he wrote to Mr. Singam in 1946:

"I must explain that I am not at all interested in biographical matter relating to myself. I consider the modern practice of publishing details about the lives of well known men nothing but a vulgar catering to illegitimate curiosity."

But he never gave up

"You should deal with the nature and tendency of my work. I wish to remain in the background, and will not be flattered by any details of myself", Coomaraswamy added.

But Mr. Singam will never give up. He says he will go to the greatest lengths to lay his hands on anything that has to do with the man. He calls his obsession, "Coomaraswamimania."

He admits to having "very little originality," but says that he always felt he had something to contribute.

general lack of encouragement given to local writers during his time, and his lack of training and specialisation, you must admire him.

"Never say die. That's my advice to young Malaysian writers", he says, "Someday, somewhere, you will receive recognition."

He should know.

When the Dean of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Jaffna Professor K. Kailasapathy reads the citation and presents the recipient of the Honorary Degree. S. Durai Raja Singam today, the University of Jaffna will be honouring a man who has been a vigorous bridge-builder between Malaysia Singapore, Ceylon and India.

Mr. Durai Raja Singam who had his education in Jaffna was one of the early nationalists who helped to found the Progressive Youth Movement in Jaffna; in the twenties along with the late M. Balasunderam he was the Joint Secretary of the Students' Congress which later grew into the Jaffna Youth Congress.

When the Jaffna Public Library was set on fire last year Mr. Durai Raja Singam was one of those who acutely felt it as a personal loss. The bulk of his collection on and by Ananda Coomaraswamy which he had gifted to the Library was reduced to ashes.

In this centenary year of the birth of the great poet Subramania Bharati, a number of his admirers have commented upon the different aspects of his writings. Bharati has been subjected to critical scrutiny for the past 50 years, and much of the criticism happens to be full-throated praise. Rightly so for his poems are generally simple to read and understand as he knew the art of speaking in an intelligible language to his countrymen.

The spring-freshness of his images and the stern adherence to the path of Truth in his writings weave a magic-scripture for us. It is good that he is not relegated to the dust-laden shelves of public and private libraries. School texts carry his poems enthusing youngsters to memorise at least 100 lines. Bharati came in the great Indian tradition and in his poems lighted a lamp for future generations to read the tablets of India's ancient past anew. India has been the lighthouse of the Spirit to the rest of the world.

The range of Bharati's poetic inspiration is amazingly vast. There are his poems on patriotism and national regeneration: hymns to the various god-heads of the Indian pantheon; Vedantic poems which make a direct descent from the great Upanishads; poems on nature; ecstatic outpourings on Shakti; emotional songs on Krishna; epic and narrative poetry.

TRADITION AND MODERNITY

Himself a good singer with a deep knowledge of classical modes, Bharati wrote some songs to be sung in specific ragas. Tamil folk music prodded him to indite some of his famous poems while the Siddha tradition of poesy led him to write quite a few moving verses. And of course, the entire poetic canon of Bharati is sustained by his firm knowledge of classical Tamil prosody. In his poetry tradition and modernity make a perfect union of form and content.

VISION AND HUMANISM

The part played by tradition in his poetry is best seen in his devotional hymns. A child of Hinduism, Bharati had a lifelong reverence for the Hindu scriptures. He translated into simple Tamil chosen hymns from the Vedas, the Samadhi Pada of Patanjali and transcreated passages from the Mahabharata for Panchali Sapatham. Bharati's translation of the Gita is justly famous.

Building a brave new world with Bharati

But then, he was no obscurantist in religion and assimilated diversified expressions of religious experience in India, including Islamic and Christian practices. From the crucible containing these many-coloured honey-drops he realised his own version of the Deathless Knowledge (Para Vidya). This realisation is in accordance with the oldest and widely persistent tradition of a Supreme Consciousness, and is termed by him as the Parashakti or the Great Mother.

The Mother Goddess has been worshipped since the Chalcolithic civilisation; she appears as the Athene of Hellenic Greeks, Mahasaraswati of orthodox Hindus, the Savitri of Sri Aurobindo, Tara or Manjeshwari of Mahayana Buddhism and Kwan Yin, the Compassionate of Chinese Buddhism. The main attributes of the Parashakti are immanence; no form but the vision would be of a shining one like a jewel or a flame. This vision would be attainable to a Yogi after strenuous effort. Bharati was able to achieve

this vision, no doubt through sustained effort kept up throughout his life. The uttering of the word 'Shakti' was mantra to him, and there are verses written by him entirely made up of this single word.

Bharati was a great admirer of the Alvars and has written poems inspired by their style of expression and their deep devotion. And yet it is somewhat disappointing that his poems which call for devotion and urge the ethical values have not been harnessed to bring about renaissance in society.

In order that his poetry may be used to bring about social reform (through awareness) we could perhaps take heart from the text of the New Testament which implies that where three are gathered in God's name, divine influence can be felt. Rightly interpreted for the Indian context, the messages could be got across to our intellectuals for harnessing the stream of Bharati's poetry to generate new paths in social regeneration.

The word 'three' in the text of the New Testament can be interpreted in a restricted sense. In the diversity of aptitudes and experience amongst human beings, a rough grouping is in their choice of the path they are inclined to follow. In our tradition the paths are termed those of Knowledge, of Dharma or Ethics, and of Bhakti. The need is that those talented in these fields of human endeavour should act in unison for social goals.

Not long ago a Bhakta, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was able to attract and influence a diverse group of men and start a social revolution. Subramania Bharati also can influence those that know Tamil and he can continue to benefit this society provided the Vignanis or savants and political leader whose field of action is Dharma, are able to rally those who prefer the path of devotion.

Subramania Bharati's poetry can certainly act as the nucleus of a renaissance for has he not spoken in favour of sincere devotion:

"We know not what is good or bad

O Mother! Foster the good, chase away the evil

"We know not what is good or bad

O Mother! Foster the good, chase away the evil
O Kannamma!"

and pleaded for scientific and technological advancement (Bharata Desam); spoken against the continuation of the caste system; feelingly espoused the cause of Harijan upliftment; ceaselessly striven to give a new deal for the Indian woman; and encouraged the Indian to gather the knowledge from all countries and climes?

Above everything else, is he not the visionary poet of humanism who erupted like Etna:

"If a single man should have no food,

We shall destroy the world order!"

Bharati's poetic voice burns in the power and splendour of universal love for humanity. He shows that the earth is indeed a lamp of God (How many wonders hast thou devised, O Lord!) love for humanity is the lamp of God (Forgive thy enemy, O Heart!) and if only one burns within oneself this lamp (a burning which is tapas) the vision of God becomes a constant reality. It now remains for us to build the brave new world with the sterling legacy left to us by Subramania Bharati.

(The Hindu)

LETTERS

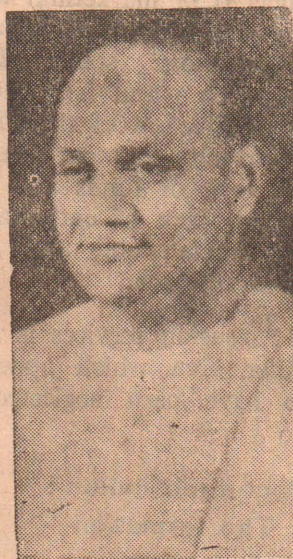
23, 3rd Cross Street,
Jaffna,
20th Sept., 1982.

The Editor,
"Saturday Review".

Sir,

Reader Arul's flight on the wings of CRICKETING PARLANCE into the REALMS OF FANTASY, in defence of Amirthalingam, does really make interesting reading.

We do agree with Reader Arul that it is the batsman at the crease who is the better judge. But Arul ought to know better that it is the QUICK, SHARP REFLEXES of the batsman that enables him to punish even the menacing GOOD LENGTH DELIVERIES, hurled at him, with studied nonchalance to the ropes or over it.



A question of reflexes?

As for Arul's lament of Mr. Amirthalingam's predicament of having to face the haunting music of hostile bowling on a very unfavourable pitch with barracking from certain quarters thrown in for good measure, may I venture to say that many a PERFORMER with less standing and

Keeping the wicket intact

stature, has often withstood such trying conditions, revelling in the STICKY MIRE, so to speak, to score freely, with the aplomb of a seasoned campaigner. One could surmise from Arul's logic that Amirthalingam's reflexes, of late, have begun to fail him. If that be so, Arul ought to know that Amirthalingam should no longer stand in the middle, pathetically struggling to keep his wicket intact. Instead, he should gracefully step down paving the way for another to take his place.

Mr. Arul seems to be afflicted with the PHOBIA of the barrackers succeeding in getting Amirthalingam RECALLED or RE-

PLACED. In such an eventuality, Arul appears to doubt the capabilities of such a REPLACEMENT. In this context, what Arul does not seem to understand is that NO ONE IS INDISPENSABLE. He ought to be aware that there are a few ACCOMPLISHED ONES—brilliant all-rounders at that—who could make EXCELLENT REPLACEMENTS. It is a pity Mr. Arul, that these few excellent all-rounders have been left out of the TEAM for reasons best known, perhaps to Arul or his erstwhile leader.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,
Victor S. Kiruparaj

Books should not remain mere ornaments decorating a well stacked shelf. They must play an active role in developing children's sensitivities and opening out new vistas to them. In this parents can play a crucial role by arousing the interests of children in books and reading through encouragement and personal examples. Unfortunately, most parents in Singapore do not read.

A recent survey on the reading habits and interests of 2,000 Singaporeans between the ages of 15 and 49 showed that reading is not part of the lifestyle of the average adult. Most preferred to watch television (43 per cent), or listen to music (15 per cent). This can be attributed in part, to the low average education level of Singaporeans as demonstrated in the 1980 Population Census.

However, a recent experiment in Britain showed that the low

Singaporeans make poor readers !

literacy level of parents need not be a hindrance to a child's reading ability. It was found that parents had improved their child's reading ability tremendously by devoting just a few minutes a day listening to them reading.

A recent seminar on the Promotion of the Reading Habit concluded that, to make reading a lifestyle of the average Singaporean and to achieve an intellectual and cultural climate equal to that of the developed countries, a multi-pronged effort involving the education system and teachers, parents and local libraries, and the mass media has to be initiated now.

The present education system has an overloaded

curriculum with a great emphasis on examinations. Such a system can work against the development of a reading habit. The seminar called for a re-examination of the education system "to create an interest in reading as a means to life-long learning".

The Chairman of the National Book Development Council, Mrs. Hedwig Anuar, strongly believes that "our education system should emphasize more on self-learning than on syllabus. It is more important to know where you can find some information than to learn it by heart (for the exams) and soon forget it!"

(The MIRROR, Singapore)

NEW YORK—Rajendra Singh, the general secretary of the Rashtriya Ahyamsewak Sangh (RSS) sees a change in the attitudes of Hindu religious leaders who now say there is no scriptural sanction for untouchability or a caste system "by birth".

Singh, who is on a visit to the United States, told INDIA ABROAD that the main problem of Hindu society was the divisions in it, of which others had taken advantage.

"Fortunately, there is a change," he added. "The sadhus and the sanyasis in the earlier days felt there was something in the scriptures (to justify these). But now a very good section of the top (leadership of the religion) has come forward to say that there is nothing in the shastras (scriptures) to back up the caste system by birth or untouchability and that they (justification of the caste system on the

No Hindu sanction for Caste

basis of birth) have been interpolated or edited."

Singh, 62, is a former physics professor of Allahabad University, and has been associated with the RSS for 35 years. He is called "Rajju Bhaiya" within the organization. As "sarkaryawah", he is the No.2 man in the hierarchy of the strongly disciplined group, which has an estimated membership of over a million.

Stopping here on his way to Los Angeles to attend the ninth Hindu Conference sponsored by the University of California at Los Angeles and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America, he answered questions on a wide range of issues in an interview and later during a news conference.

(by Arul B. Louis, INDIA TODAY)

The Palmyrah Industry in the Jaffna district...

(Continued from page 4)

(3) Lack of enthusiasm on the part of the "Federation" which has given priority to the Distillery Projects as being the most profitable.

The various issues highlighted above makes it clear that unless the commercial viability of projects pertaining to the Palmyrah Industry is established, most of the projects will either remain in the drawing board or be abandoned. It is also clear that the promotion of the palmyrah require an integrated marketing strategy, which would obviously include a system of cross-subsidy, and efficient management and accounting systems. It is, doubtful, that the "Federation" is capable of gravitating to a higher stage on its own. The formation of a public private Limited Liability Company with participation in its equity capital by the "Federation" is, therefore, a prerequisite for further development of the palmyrah industry and, in turn, the development of "Federation" and its members. Further, the formation of a Company will also contribute to the undermining of the caste stigma associated with the Industry by our caste-ridden society.

B. The Palmyrah Development Board.

The genesis of the establishment of the Palmyrah Development Board could be found in the "Report of the Palmyrah Industry Committee March 1972" which strongly recommended the establishment of a Palmyrah Development Board or Co-operation with adequate powers to foster, regulate and control the industry from the cultivation stage to the point of selling, marketing and promotion. The powers entrusted to the Board, which was finally constituted in 1979, fully satisfy the above conditions. Theoretically speaking, therefore the PDB will be the catalyst for the further development of the palmyrah industry.

In practice, the role of the PDB has been constrained for the following reasons:

(1) The inevitable "teething-problem" that any young institution is bound to have in relation to sources of funds, organisational and the management structure and financial arrangement.

(2) The task of the PDB was further made difficult and complicated due to the inherent characteristics of the palmyrah industry highlighted earlier.

(3) However, there are certain factors which are within the control of PDB and which ought to be rectified, if it is to play the role that it was meant to play. It is, indeed, unfortunate that of the Rs.2 million annual allocation from the Ministry of Regional Development (which is inadequate in any case) the major portion is allocated to the buying and selling of palmyrah products (i.e., marketing) and the maintenance of the administration staff. The Research and Development function of the PDB is virtually dormant due to the lack of funds and an overall lack of enthusiasm for fundamental and applied research.

Extension services is another area which appears to have been neglected.

Recommendation : The formation of a company

It is, therefore, recommended that a Company be formed which would take on the marketing functions of the PDB and run it along commercial lines, thereby, enabling the Board to concentrate on the following areas of activity which is legally within the purview of the PDB.

- (i) Preparation and Implementation of short-term and long-term development plans for the development of the Palmyrah Industry.
- (ii) Organize new cultivations of palmyrah on a systematic basis.
- (iii) Regularise social and economic relationships within the palmyrah growing areas, so as to prevent exploitation and victimization.
- (iv) Organize artisans, tappers, weavers and all others concerned with palmyrah growing areas, so as to prevent exploitation and victimization.
- (v) Arrange and organize training of workers in modern and improved techniques.
- (vi) Provide agricultural, industrial, technical, management and other extension services.
- (vii) Operate guaranteed price purchase schemes for palmyrah products; manufacturing and demonstration centres on its own or jointly, or assist co-operatives and

individuals in establishing such centres.

- (viii) Operate guaranteed price purchase schemes for palmyrah products.
- (ix) Assist and undertake research into improved cultivation and processing techniques, and disseminate findings of such research widely.
- (x) Voluntarily or compulsorily acquire or lease properties on which palmyrah is grown or could be grown, or premises where palmyrah products are manufactured or could be manufactured, for the purpose of the development of the industry.
- (xi) Fix minimum and maximum rentals on leases of palmyrah plans in specified areas.

Most of the functions cited above are already within the purview of the PDB. Intervention by the D.D.C. might be necessary in relation item (x).

(Part ii of this paper will appear next week)

NEWS BRIEFS

AMIR'S SON REMAINED

Bahirathan, the second son of TULF Leader, Mr. A. Amirthalingam who was arrested along with five other youths on a charge of obstructing Cricket Fans at the India-Sri Lanka five-day Test Match held at the Chepauk Grounds, Madras, was ordered to be remanded for ten days at a Madras Court.

RESTRICTED TO PENINSULA

Ten Tamil youths who were released from the Panagoda Army Prison in June this year along with undergraduate Vimalarasa have been forbidden from leaving the peninsula for a further three months beginning September 7th.

SELVAGOWRI DOES IT

Selvagowri Varathakumar (Radchakan) qualified for participation at the Asian Games in New Delhi, when she won the heats of the 100 metre hurdles for women clocking a record timing of 14.9 seconds at the National Athletic Championships in Colombo on September 18th.

COLOMBO GALLE IN 2 HOURS

The Ceylon Government Railway has inaugurated a special express train service between Galle and Colombo daily with the journey lasting just two hours leaving Fort Railway Station at 3.45 p.m. There will be two stops at Hikkaduwa and Ambalangoda.

THE PALMYRAH SEASON IS HERE

The palmyrah fruit season has begun in Jaffna and the Palmyrah Production Board has opened a new section to manufacture jams and cool drinks out of the palmyrah fruit.

Rs. 55 MILLION FOR POLLS

The Treasury has authorised Rupees 55 Million for expenses in connection with the Presidential Election to take place on October, 20th.

CHARGED UNDER WRONG LAW

Mr. C. V. Vigneswaran, District Judge, Mallakam allowed bail in Rs. 5,000/- to Muthusamy Perumal alias Sivan who was earlier remanded under the Prevention of Terrorism Law on a charge of house breaking and theft. Mr. R. J. Selvaratnam, Attorney-at-Law, pointed out that the suspect's case should be considered under the normal charge of robbery and not under the Prevention of Terrorism Law.

PASSPORT OFFICE IN JAFFNA

The long promised Passport Office in Jaffna began functioning from the 15th of this month.

STRIKE VICTIM TAKES HIS LIFE

Sugathapala Gunasekara (32) of Yatigama, a former employee of the Inland Revenue Department, who lost his job for participating in the July 1980 strike committed suicide after drinking malathion. He died at the Matara Hospital after being taken there in an unconscious state.

U. S. STUDENTS ON STUDY TOUR

20 American Students who are in Sri Lanka under the Inter Collegiate Sri Lanka Programme (ISLE PROGRAMME) will be in Jaffna end of September. The ISLE Programme is sponsored by five American Colleges. The Students will be in Sri Lanka for 17 weeks familiarising themselves with Sri Lanka history, culture and religions.

JAFFNA COLLEGE INSTITUTE DAY

The Jaffna College Technical Institute celebrates "INSTITUTE DAY" on Monday 27th September at the Institute premises in Vaddukkoddai. The Government Agent and the District Secretary Mr. Devanesan Nesiah and Mrs. Nesiah will be chief guests.

LOUDSPEAKER WARNING

The SLFP Presidential Candidate Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa was warned by the Ambalangoda Police that according to the Election Laws he cannot use loud speakers fixed to a vehicle except at the site of an election meeting. Mr. Kobbekaduwa was on an electioneering tour in the South.

DEPOSIT REFUNDS AFTER POLLS

The three independent candidates whose nomination papers were rejected by the Commissioner of Elections Messrs. N. H. Keerthiratne, Mudiyanse Tennekoon and S. C. Wijesuriya—will get their deposits of Rs.75,000 each only after the October 20th elections.

PASSENGER SUES AIR LANKA

An Air Lanka passenger M. Z. Abdeen of Hulftsdorf has claimed a sum of Rs. 90,000/- from Air Lanka for the loss of his unaccompanied baggage. He said that when he called over at the Katunayake Air Port Customs he found that the contents were pilfered and the baggage contained instead some pieces of rusted iron and newspapers. Action was filed in the District Court of Colombo.

POPULATION CONFERENCE

The third Asian and Pacific Population Conference began in Colombo on the 20th and will continue till the 29th September. President Jayawardene inaugurated the Conference at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall.

EX-SRI LANKAN JOURNALIST FACES CHARGE

The former Sri Lankan journalist Guy de Fontgaland, 38, who was a Senior Program Specialist of the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC) faces a charge of graft in Singapore. His passport was impounded and he was allowed bail in Singapore 10,000. The case will be taken up on October 14th.

T.U.L.F. M.Ps fail to agree on development priorities

The Mahadeva Causeway—which will link up Jaffna and Poonakari—has caused a breach in the monolithic unity of the one hundred per cent TULF Jaffna District Development Council.

A resolution—moved at the DDC meeting on 15 September—seeking to allocate a further Rs. 8 lakhs for work on the Causeway sparked off an acrimonious debate, with some members, including parliamentarians, vehemently opposing the move.

When the resolution was moved, Kayts MP K.P. Ratnam after observing that electorate-wise a sum of Rs. 22 lakhs had already been allocated for the Causeway asked "Why don't you make an attempt to obtain the money already promised by the District Minister?"

YOGESWARAN'S INTERVENTION

Chairman S. Nadarajah then pointed out that money was urgently needed for ongoing work on the Causeway.

"Where is the money?" interjected Manipay MP V. Dharmalingam.

The Chairman's rather incautious (as it turned out) reply to this query brought several members—including Kayts MP K. P. Ratnam, Kopay MP M. Alalasundaram and Udupidy MP T. Rasalingam—simultaneously to their feet in protest: "Money allocated for development work is lying unused" said the Chairman.

This immediately touched off a furore. "If you have failed to carry out development work, don't touch a cent of the money allocated for it" was the Manipay MP's curt rejoinder. The Kopay MP stressed other urgent priorities: "The expansion of hospitals and teachers' training colleges is just as important to us as the Mahadeva Causeway" he said.

Jaffna MP V. Yogeswaran stepped into the arena at this stage to cross swords with the Kopay MP.

Observing that hospitals and training colleges could wait, he said he totally disagreed with what the Kopay MP had said. "As far as the Tamil people are concerned, the Mahadeva Causeway is very important" he emphasised. He went on to add that not only this year but next year too an eight lakh allocation should be made for the Causeway.

It was left to TULF President and Nallur MP M. Sivasithamparam to play the role of peace-maker. In a bid to soothe the ruffled tempers and give time for a cool re-thinking of the issue, he moved that the resolution be taken up at the next DDC meeting for a decision: the minutes should not record that the resolution had been thrown out, he pointed out. His proposal was accepted and the debate postponed.

Kilinochchi MP Ananda Sangary—in whose electorate the Causeway lies—was a conspicuous absentee.

Will Kilinochchi M. P. lose his place in D. C. ?

Is the TULF's Kilinochchi MP Ananda Sangary likely to lose his place in the Jaffna District Development Council?

At the DDC meeting held on 15 September, DDC Chairman S. Nadarajah (TULF) dropped a hint that the Kilinochchi MP's head might roll for giving several successive meetings a miss.

The Chairman said they have been forced to think of nominating a substitute as the Kilinochchi MP has kept away from Council meetings for a long time.

Informed sources say the MP's virtual boycott of the Council stems from his disagreement with the high command over the non-representation of the Kilinochchi area in the Councils elected membership, and his abortive campaign for making Kilinochchi a separate administrative district.

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

Tamil place names in Vanni to be Sinhalsed

The Cultural Ministry has, the **Saturday Review** reliably learns, commissioned a writer to "Sinhalsed" Tamil place names in the Vanni.

The writer concerned some time ago authored a Sinhala version of the **Ramayana** which was serialised by the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation.

The serial was stopped abruptly when TULF President and Nallur M.P. M. Sivasithamparam protested, pointing out it was highly derogatory to the Tamils.

Veerasingham Hall suddenly becomes 'non-political'!

The TELF's meeting to explain their policy regarding the coming Presidential elections, scheduled to be held in the Veerasingham Hall, Jaffna, on the 19th of September, was arbitrarily cancelled at the last minute under controversial circumstances.

The Hall had been officially booked for the meeting on the 10th of September, and the charges paid and receipt obtained on the 14th. Following this, leaflets had been printed by the TELF to publicise the meeting.

But on the 16th, the President of the TELF **Dr. S.A. Tharmalingam**, was summoned to the Jaffna Police Station, and was told that no permission had been obtained for the use of loudspeakers in the meeting. **Dr. Tharmalingam** had explained that hitherto there had been no practice of obtaining permission from the Police for meetings held inside the Hall, and there was no instance in the past in which permission had been obtained for political meetings in Veerasingham Hall by any political party.

On the 18th September **Dr. Tharmalingam** received a letter from the Hall Authorities that permission had been refused for the meeting under orders from

the Head office in Colombo as "Veerasingham Hall is normally not given for political meetings."

It has happened again and again, and now again. On Tuesday the 21st at 2 a.m. passengers in the Jaffna bound Colombo mail train were attacked and robbed by armed thugs. This time their target has been very selective: the robbed passengers were the slightly well-to-do Tamils travelling in the third-class sleeperette with consideration for comfort and security.

THUGS GOT IN AT GALGAMUWA

The armed thugs are believed to have boarded the train at Polgahawela and Galgamuwa and had been travelling in the train's buffet car; when the train passed Omanthai, about 20 of them joined by aerated water vendors, had rudely awakened the sleepy passengers, armed with what appeared to be revolvers, knives and broken bottles, and had blocked the exits so that the 50 passengers in the compartment couldn't escape to other compartments. Many passengers through fear had voluntar-

China Bay to be groomed as Trinco district capital?

Will China Bay displace Trincomalee and become the new capital of the Trincomalee District?

A blueprint for the proposed move is ready, the **Saturday Review** understands, and only awaits President J. R. Jayawardene's assent—which is likely to be given after the Presidential election on 20 October.

Informed sources say

recent activities indicate there is a well-thought-out plan to boost China Bay at the expense of Trincomalee, the traditional capital of the district.

The latest project, these sources point out, is the new Cement Factory that will come up at China Bay a joint Japanese venture with Sri Lankan business magnate Anthony Gnanam.

The **Saturday Review** learns the blueprint has

spelt out plans to shift government offices and public enterprises to China Bay within a specified period. Once **Operation Shift** gets under way the private sector too will take the cue, it is forecast.

Longtime residents of Trincomalee fear that the proposed shift is primarily motivated by racial and religious considerations.

Hindus particularly are perturbed that Trincomalee, with its historic Koneshwaram temple, is to be deliberately downgraded for a parvenu capital where outsiders can be massed.

JAFFNA TRAIN PASSENGERS ROBBED AGAIN

ily handed over their jewellery, thalikodis, wrist watches, cash and suit cases.

One aged lady had found it difficult to remove her 20 sovereign thalikodi from her neck; a thug, after minutes of struggle, had wrenched the thalikodi, leaving the lady injured. 18 year old Gowri after parting with one of her "gypsy" ear rings had found it difficult to remove the other from her ear; a thug had violently extricated it with part of Gowri's ear!

A man who attempted to retaliate against the thugs was stabbed in the chest with a broken soda bottle. Another woman who was stabbed with a broken soda bottle fainted immediately. The thugs are reported to have jumped off the train with their booty when the train slowed down at a point close to Puliyankulam.

EMERGENCY CHAIN IGNORED

It was surprising, according to the passengers, that though they repeatedly pulled the emergency chain the train failed to stop. But after the looting, the train had slowed down very conveniently at a particular point enabling the thugs to jump off. The cabin-boy John Koralamage too had left the doors

of the sleeperette compartment open, whereas it is normally locked from the inside. The police have taken both the engine driver and the cabin-boy into custody.

The Police have arrested three youths in the Omanthai jungles with 13 wristlets, jewellery and cash. They were produced on the 22nd before the Vavuniya Magistrate. They are **Abeyasinghe Dissanayake, J. Chandrapala and Galpoththa Liyanage Premadasa**. The Magistrate, **Mr. K. D. M. K. Pethiagoda** has ordered that the suspects be remanded and presented in an identification parade on 4-10-82.

Meanwhile, following telegraphic protests by the Presidential candidate **Mr. Kumar Ponnambalam** and Jaffna M.P. **Mr. V. Yogeswaran** to **Mr. J. R. Jayawardene**, the President has ordered **Mr. W. P. Rajaguru (D.I.G. Northern Range)** to submit a comprehensive report on the incident. The A.S.P. (Jaffna) **Janab Nizzam** who is leading the investigations has questioned the General Commissioner of the Railways, regarding the following:

(a) Why the train failed to stop even though

the emergency chain was pulled?

(b) Why the doors of the sleeperette - compartment were not locked?

(c) Why the eight security personnel who should normally be on duty failed to travel on the day of the incident?

MAYOR'S SUGGESTION

A statement released by the Mayor of Jaffna **Mr. R. Visuvanathan** on the 22nd says, "Considering the fact that the usual excuse given for such attacks is that they had been conducted by factions defeated in the elections, the Tamil people should conduct themselves in the coming days with care and wisdom. If the Government feels that it lacks the strength to control such occurrences which are expected in the near future, then in an effort to save its good name it should consider the possibility of inviting a U.N. Peace-keeping Force."

CONVOCATION TODAY

The third Convocation of the University of Jaffna will be held today (Saturday, 25th September) at Veerasingham Hall Jaffna.