

# Saturday Review

## SRI LANKA

Vol. 3 No. 45 22nd December 1984

# "SOME MORE MEASURES ARE COMING TO TOWN"

*"You better not shout;  
You better not cry;  
Some more measures are  
coming to Town."*

Even the mirthful Christmas rhyme assumes a melancholy note in the piteous northern peninsula and beyond.

Could we have imagined this twenty years ago?

Those were halcyon days, by any standard. Those were the days when politics was the lovable pastime of lawyer politicians, a means of inexpensive but thoroughly exciting entertainment to the salaried government servant, the toiling farmer and the ubiquitous pre-university student, what with the verbal pyrotechnics and platform polemics of Ponnambalam and Amirthalingam endlessly debating the pros and cons, the merits and demerits of the B.C. Pact and the D.C. Pact.

There can be no hope in hell that those days will be back again. Both the Pacts stand distinguished by their abrogation. The consequences of the abrogation of the first create atavistic fears among the present leaders dissuading them from entering into any pact whatever (except perhaps a defence agreement with a friendly country associated with Buddhist Theosophy).

Right now it is all hell let loose in Jaffna. Perhaps no other people in any other part of the country are paying so dearly, as those — the army included — living in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Vavuniya and Batticaloa for the unity of the country, and for that bookish principle of 'unitarism' introduced to this country by Lord Soulbury and Sir Ivor and subsequently made permanent, first shamelessly by a quondam Bolshevik and later faithfully by an apology for a bourgeois.

For how long can this process of achieving unity through shedding of the blood of the alienated Tamils and the misplaced Sinhala village lads be continued? Is it not a crime to turn a deaf ear to the wail of their mothers, their brothers and their sisters? Could anyone pretend that through this process unity could be achieved?

The cruel goddess of history will doubtless condemn those who are responsible, if not for chopping this Island into two bleeding pieces, but for making that crime a certainty in the distant, if not the near, future.

As for others who deceive themselves that they are unaffected people in un-

affected areas, they will feel the repercussions far too soon. The rest of the country cannot remain unaffected for long while a part of it is forced to go through an inferno. They will tumble down from the lap of luxury if the leaders among them do not bestir themselves and make a public outcry to STOP THIS MADNESS.

Within the inferno the security forces stand counterposed to the people of the area. It is not altogether unclear whether the strategy behind the ongoing measures are political or military. Brigadier Nalin Seneviratne who does not lose an opportunity to dissociate himself from the spurious claims made to serve political ends, recently confessed to Reuters: "All we can do really is to hold and contain. We control areas but the ones we really dominate stop at the fences of our bases..."

The appointment of Mr. Lalith Athulath Mudali as Minister of National Security raised expectations among the intelligentsia, both in the North and in the South, that a welcome shift would be made in the government's military policy vis-a-vis the National Question. While the Military Command in Jaffna seems to have developed

## Jaffna Mothers Say: Stop Raping Our Girls

"STOP RAPING", "WE LIVE IN TERROR AND TEARS",

"ARE YOU HERE TO STOP TERRORISM OR PLUNDER OUR MONEY?" were among the main slogans borne by the Mothers' Front March yesterday, from Trimmer Hall to Jaffna Kachcheri.

The marchers were not only middle-aged women but also young girls. There were several hundreds of them in spite of transport curtailments and they marched abreast.

At the time of going to press, there were no interventions by the Security Forces.

political savvy, ironically enough, their political mentor seems to have developed a military psychosis.

The recent emergency measures have enabled the security forces to reach the remotest parts of the Northern Province. We need not recount here the harrowing tales which people hear in the aftermath of security ventures.

Wailing mothers in quest of their missing sons arrive in bullock carts at a place which is the only surviving symbol of civil administration in Jaffna, the Jaffna Kachcheri. Ironically, this is also a colonial legacy! The Tamil people may soon develop an amnesia with regard to all that has happened in this country since 1948: the Constitutions, the flag, the anthem, the language and even the riots.

It was in front of the Jaffna Kachcheri, almost a quarter of a century ago,

that the Tamil-speaking people made a resoundingly collective response concerning an issue which touched them not so directly in comparison to the issues that have emerged today.

They discovered and achieved strength in collectivity and unity, even though they know nothing but privatisation in property. They also realized that individual whining and begging—a phone-call here, a petition there and a representation to somebody—would be of no avail.

Supine grovelling ensures neither security of life nor success in politics.

Jesus of Nazareth, son of a carpenter — sociologically speaking—born in a manger, relentlessly fought, without arms, the orthodoxy of his times and the Roman Empire. They took him to Calvary and crucified him. BUT HE DID NOT DIE. That is the message of X'mas 1984 under curfew, to all of us in the NO-GO AREAS.

## Lalith Shoots His Mouth Again

Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, the Minister of National Security, has stated that the proposals submitted at the All Party Conference would be implemented only if the Eelamists

drop their demand and accept the national flag, the national anthem and the official language. He was addressing a meeting at the Vidyalankara (Continued on page 12)



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### SRI LANKA

No. 118, 4th Cross Street,  
P. O. Box 122  
JAFFNA

Telegrams: SATVIEW

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Subscription Rates inclusive of local postage and foreign Air Mail Rate

Sri Lanka

Annual Rs. 170/-

Half-year Rs. 85/-

India

Annual Rs. 225/-

(Indian Rupees)

Singapore / Malaysia-

U. S. \$ 30

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Annual U.S. \$ 50

Cheques payable to

New Era Publications Ltd.

Advertising Rates

Contracts — Rs. 15/-

per col. centimetre

Casual — Rs. 20/- per col. centimetre

# RAJIV HEADING FOR A LANDSLIDE?

According to election forecasts, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi looks poised to lead the Congress (I) to a landslide victory at the coming elections.

The opposition parties have helped to pre-determine the outcome by their inability to avoid multi-cornered contests in a majority of the 225 seats in the crucial Hindi-speaking States of Uttar-Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya-Pradesh.

There would be more straight contests in the Southern States of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala.

The party line-up of candidates for the Polls viz. Congress (I) 491, BJP:222, Janatha:207, DMKP:153, CPM:63 and CPI:51 for the 515 Lok Sabha seats to which elections are held, clearly shows the incapacity of any Single Opposition Party to pose itself as an alternative to the Congress (I) at the centre. They can hardly convince the voters of the possibility of a government of coalition of Opposition parties after the

elections, having miserably failed to come to any agreement over the distribution of seats before the elections.

To complete the rout of the opposition, as it were Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has picked on two issues—the Security of India and its Unity. While elaborating that no other government than a Congress(I) government could ensure the Security of India, he is also castigating the Opposition Parties by alleging that all of them have supported the Anandpur Sahib resolution of the Akali Dal implying Sikh separatist demand.

According to observers, the issue is certainly not so simple as it has been made out to be and it may create fresh obstacles in resolving the Punjab crisis after the elections. Constitutional moralists would question the propriety of raising the Punjab issue at the elections from which the State of Punjab is excluded.

The serious domestic issues concerning large scale unemployment and rural

poverty seem to have been pushed into the background. If, at all, they would be hotly debated at the regional level.

For the first time, perhaps, the Indian elec-

tions are being watched with great interest in the neighbouring countries. It is as though the Indian elections have greater implications for these countries than for the Indians themselves.

## JESUITS EXPEL NICARAGUAN PRIEST

The Nicaraguan Jesuit Priest, Rev. Fr. Fernando Cardenal was expelled from his religious order, the Society of Jesuits, for his involvement in politics. He is the Minister of Education in the revolutionary Sandinista Government of Nicaragua.

Fr. Cardenal comes from one of the richest families in Nicaragua. He joined the priesthood as a Jesuit true to the philosophy of its founder, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and suffers the loss of his own soul". A Professor of Philosophy in 1970 he dedicated himself to the cause of liberating the poor.

In 1973 he had his second calling—to join the Sandinista Front on the side of the oppressed and the exploited against the wicked Somoza family. He made his decision in perfect accordance with the rules laid down by St. Ignatius Loyola—he could not say "No" without offending God. To him the Secular was suffused with the Sacred.

Although expelled by the Jesuit establishment, Fr. Fernando Cardenal has declared that he cannot betray the revolution. With the indult of a local Bishop he could yet continue his priestly functions in addition to his political obligations.

## A Century at Jaffna College

The U.S. Presidential this election month recalled memories to many in Jaffna of another election a hundred years ago, ie. November 4th, 1884 when Grover Cleveland was elected President of the U.S.

Jaffna College celebrated this event in a fitting manner because the President's sister, Mrs. Anne Hastings was a missionary resident at Jaffna College, Vaddukoddai, as the wife of the Rev. E. P. Hastings.

The Rev. Hastings was the last Principal of the Batticotta Seminary, which was closed in 1855, and he remained to become the first Principal in 1872 when it was reorganised as Jaffna College. Dr. Hastings was appointed Principal of the Seminary in 1849 and his principalship extended to 1889, when he was succeeded by the Rev. S. W. Howland.

Twelve mahogany trees were planted in the campus to celebrate the event of the

Principal's brother-in-law being elected President of the U.S. in 1884. Seven of these stately trees remain today to celebrate proudly the centenary, and are still referred as the Cleveland Trees.

These trees mean much to the missionaries, students, teachers, alumni and friends of Jaffna College.

We are reminded of that poem, "I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree". Generations have passed under the shade and cool of these trees and the trees have their inspiring tales to tell—of great missionaries and principals; of dedicated teachers and brilliant students; of great feats, festivals and celebrations; of schoolboy pranks and mischief; and of enchanting romances—making Jaffna College, "A College Home, We'll ever hold most dear."

A.K.

## APPRECIATION

### MURUGESU SHANMUGAM Senior Superintendent of Police

The adage that whom the Gods love die young may offer some comfort and solace to some. However, the shock of the demise of Murugesu Shanmugam was a poignance of grief which was difficult to be endured and which only TIME alone can heal. We realise the harshness of Death only when its unrelenting hands are laid upon those whom we love and regard. This Police Officer 'Par excellence' was plucked from the prime of his blameless life at the early age of 45 years.

Having received his education at St. Anthony's College, Katugastota and later at Jaffna College, Vaddukoddai, young Shanmugam entered the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya where he graduated. He had then earned the honour of joining the tutorial staff of TRINITY COLLEGE, Kandy where he was very popular both with his students as well as his colleagues. Like his father

and his elder brother, the desire to serve in the Police Department saw him commencing his career as Probationary Assistant Superintendent of Police. It did not take him long to prove his mettle. Having served as Officer-in-Charge of various Police Districts, he was given the responsibility of being the Superintendent of Police in charge of Kandy Division. Dedication to duty, loyalty to the Service, thoroughness in his work and the welfare of his subordinates were the admirable attributes to his personality. The orders for crowd control, regulation of traffic, prevention of crime etc. for the Annual Esala Perahera were prepared by him with assiduous care and minutest attention to detail. The consequence was that Police arrangements were faultless and won the plaudits of his superiors and the general public.

As a friend, he was faithful, sincere and always willing to help anyone even

at his own inconvenience. Being a devout HINDU, he disciplined himself with austerity and sacrifices. There was no absurd pretensions of mere observance of ceremony. His tremendous bed-rock FAITH had the force of unflagging FERVOUR. I have had the privilege of accompanying him to Kathirgamam for the Kantha Sashti Fast—a special consecration and obeisance to GOD MURUGA. After completing the religious rituals, he had the magnanimity of offering alms to the poor and giving financial assistance to the needy.

After obtaining a Masters degree in Criminology, he was reading for his Ph.D. in California when illness took its toll. Those of us who knew him well always cherish the memory of a loyal friend, a dutiful son, a kind and understanding father and a devoted husband.

— R. C. THAVARAJAH



# MANNAR TRAGEDY

Your Excellency will remember that it was only on the 12th of August this year that the burning down of the Mannar Bazaar and the killing of innocent citizens by Army Personnel made a terrific impact not only on the country but also on the world, causing serious damage to the image of the country something we too least desire. It is therefore unthinkable that even before the people of the district could forget the shocking incidents of August 12th, Army Personnel should so callously commit the following savage acts of brutality described in detail below on the poor defenceless citizens of this district. The incidents we describe have been checked and rechecked and are not mere hearsay.

At about 11 a.m. on the 4th of December 1984 an army vehicle was reported to have been blown up by a landmine somewhere near the Jubilee Road Junction on the Mannar-Madawachchiya Road. One soldier lost his life and six were injured. Following this incident the army unleashed a wave of savagery detailed below on innocent citizens inhabiting a seven (07) mile stretch of road. Your Excellency would surely understand the sheer ferocious brutality of these acts on the part of those whom we depend on to defend us peace loving citizens:-

a) Army personnel marched into the Murunkan Post Office, lined up the officers working there against the wall and opened fire on them killing four (04) of them on the spot, leaving for dead the other six (06) including the Post Master who survived with serious injuries.

b) Thereafter for a horrendous five hours or more Army personnel attacked with machine gun fire innocent people living on the road side on a stretch of road for a distance of about seven (07) mile from the place of the incident. Innocent people who have nothing at all to do with the

incident concerning the army vehicle were mercilessly mown down by Machine gun fire.

c) A.C.T.B. bus going from Mannar to Vavuniya was stopped by Army personnel and all the persons aboard were ordered to alight. The Sinhala conductor, Kuda Devage Jayasena, whose bravery we record with gratefulness, told the army men that he was a Sinhalese and was responsible for the safety of the passengers and added that he would have to be killed if the passengers were to be harmed. The soldiers promptly obliged by shooting him dead first and after lining up the males passengers including the Muslim driver of the bus shot seventeen (17) of them dead.

d) Another C.T.B. bus coming from Vavuniya to Mannar was similarly treated and about twenty (20) persons shot dead the other passengers sustained severe injuries.

e) The village of Parapankandal which is away from the main road was attacked by Helicopters. With the umbrella cover provided by the Helicopters an army jeep went into the village and opened fire on innocent citizens. The death toll here was twelve (12) including women, one of whom was a young lady nursing an infant at her breast. The infant escaped with three (03) toes blown off while the mother died. We begin to wonder whether such inhuman savagery is possible in this Dharma Divipaya.

f) In the village of Uthavayankulam sixteen (16) people were killed including two Sinhalese ladies - R. A. Baby Nona aged seventyfive (75) years and Hemawathie Banda aged fortyfive years (45).

g) Apart from the above mentioned acts of unbridled savagery houses, mills, shop premises, a private nursing home,

tractors, and lorries were indiscriminately burned. Wanton killing, burning and looting were freely indulged in by frenzied army personnel.

Ninety (90) bodies of the unfortunate victims of the army massacre were brought to the Mannar and Murunkan Hospitals for Post Mortem examination and identification. We also understand that several more bodies, in slush and mud, highly decomposed were buried on the spot by villagers as there was no transport available and the state of the bodies will not permit of transport.

This is the text of a letter addressed to the President of Sri Lanka by the Joint Secretaries of the Mannar District, Citizens Committee following two Emergency Meetings of the Senior Citizens of the Mannar District held on the 7th. and 9th December 1984 to consider the very serious situation in the District, following the harrowing incidents that took place here, after certain events on the 4th of December, 1984.

The following were present at the meeting:

His Lordship the Bishop of Mannar,

Rev. Fr. Xavier Croos, Vicar General, Mannar Diocese and Vice President, Mannar District Citizens Committee.

Rev. Bro. Hillary Joseph F. S. C., Vice President, Mannar District Citizens Committee, Retired Principal, Director, De La Salle House.

Mr. John Thasan, Attorney, Joint Secretary, Mannar, District Citizens, Committee.

Mr. K. Akbar, Secretary to District Minister of Mannar, Member of the Waqf Board, Colombo.

Mr. S. H. M. Rasheed, J. P. Chief Trustee, Grand Bazaar Jumma Mosque, Joint Secretary, People's Committee, President Mannar Traders Association.

Mr. J. L. Selvarajah, Retired A. S. P.,

Mr. S. Christopher, President Mannar Lions' Club, Proprietor, St. Antony's Stores, Mannar.

Mr. K. Kunaratnam, Retired A. C. C. D.,

Mr. K. V. Muthaliyar, Manager Hatton National Bank, Mr. N. M. Iqbal, In-service Adviser, Department of Education,

Mr. H. M. Nizam, J. P., Chairman, Mannar Town East Gramodaya Mandalaya.

Mr. S. S. Thajudeen, Proprietor, Messers C. S. Sulaiman & Sons,

Mr. K. Panchalingam, Government Contractor.

We are to say the least, Your Excellency, most surprised at the denials over the Radio and T.V. of these blatant acts of army savagery.

The people of this district are living in fear and trepidation ready at any moment to leave home and hearth and run for their very lives. Almost the entire population goes into places of worship to spend sleepless nights. Such is the psychological impact that no house is lit at nights for fear of attack by the army. We wish to emphasise that these statements are true facts and not conjectures or wild guesses.

We attach for Your Excellency's personal perusal a care fully verified

those over fifty (50) years of age. We do not doubt Your Excellency's abilities to draw your own conclusion on this most savage episode in the history of the army in Mannar.

In the name of the "Dharmishta Society" which Your Excellency is so determined to establish and in which we are certain Your Excellency's government firmly believes, we request Your Excellency to order an inquiry into these tragic even events, take due actions against those responsible for acts of savagery and brutality on innocent people and take all necessary actions to restore peace and calm to this district noted for its peace and tranquility and enable the people to resume the even tenor of their lives - "Fiat justitia ruina caelum"

We also request Your Excellency to see that adequate compensation is paid to families who have been cruelly deprived of their bread winners and to those who have been injured and also to those who have lost their houses, vehicles, and other valuable property. We further request Your Excellency that Your authority as Head of State will be available to our people with due assurance that incidents of this nature will never be repeated.

## Black Madonna: Who shot padre?

The S. L. B. C. in the morning news broadcast on 19th December, 1984, announced that 'terrorists' had destroyed a church and the statue of the Blessed Virgin, in Kokilai.

In regard to another incident in Mannar in which a Methodist Minister and two others were shot and killed, the S. L. B. C. version of the incident that 'terrorists' were responsible for this killing has been contradicted by TULF spokesmen and citizens of Mannar.

statement of the identified dead. (The statement was disallowed by the censor for publication.) It will be noted that almost all those who have been killed are



# TRADE UNIONS SAY: REPRESSION NO SOLUTION

The capitalist U.N.P. Government which has denied the democratic-rights enjoyed by the masses of this country has destroyed their living standards by escalating the cost of living and increasing the unemployment of youth by dismantling the nationalised enterprises and the industry to satisfy their imperialist masters. This was manipulated by denying the masses of their right to elect a Government of their choice through a fraudulent "Referendum".

It is very clear that the Government which knows that their existence in power depends only on diverting the consequential animosity of the masses has deliberately complicated the national question leave alone settling it. The Government that summoned the All Party Conference to conceal their racist policy in the eyes of the world has dragged it on to a virtual stop and has declared war against the Tamil people, a sizeable section of nationals of this country.

Even the Government has realised that the national question cannot be solved by deploying the armed services to kill people. In the circumstances, an immediate halt should be called on the

war mongering action of the Government that causes mass destruction of valuable lives of people and resources of the country.

Public life in the North has been subjected to severe repression by imposing restrictions on transport etc. in violation of fundamental human rights. This course of action and the declaration of continuous curfew for a number of days has in our view completely dislocated the life of the residents and held them in house arrest.

We have warned the working class and the broad masses time and again of the threat of this Government marching towards naked dictatorship and have opposed at every turn their course of action that has led to this dreadful situation. Withdrawal of rice ration books, attacking opposition meetings, killing of a worker by thugs led by a Member of Parliament, dismissal of July, 1980 strikers and non-reinstatement of yet another about 5,000 of them, vindictive penalisation of reinstated strikers, sealing of Trade Union offices, bringing the Judiciary into contempt by thugs, killing of university students by the Police, breaking agitational campaigns of peasants and beating them,

invading meetings and attacking Buddhist monks and the Intelligentsia, barricading temples and deploying the army, interrupting the life of blind textile weavers and employing the Police to attack them, conferring promotions and honours on police officers found guilty of charges by court of law are a few instances of this Government's anti-working class and traitorous policy. While a rehabilitation tax of 1% was levied on every worker for a period of six months on the grounds of an emergency situation, the salaries of the Prime Minister, Ministers, Leader of Opposition and Members of Parliament were increased by thousands of rupees. Cost of living index allowance scheme won by the Strike of July, 1980 has been done away with from next year by dangling the poisoned carrot of granting Rs. 100/- to government servants divisible between husband and wife ignoring the private sector employees entirely.

In the wake of this ignominious repressive course of action, communalism is whipped up and Tamils are continuously harassed by the armed services, police, communal thugs and opportunistic marauders. In this situation the Government is making optimum use of emergency powers and the Prevention of Terrorism Act to smash their political movement, cripple the entire left movement and working class organisations.

After the inhuman pogrom on Tamils islandwide in July, 1983 three left parties were implicated and outlawed. Still the ban on Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna continues. Insidious propaganda still carried on against left parties implicating them, searches made in Trade Union Offices, all over the country and their inordinate retention clearly indicate that the Government is preparing for a witch-hunt of all left organisations.

We wish to point out that the propaganda carried on through the mass media of an imaginary invasion of India thus misleading the masses in order to ensure the existence of this Government would lead to a worse crisis endangering the whole country. Deliberate creation of fears in the masses and the war action carried on in this country would mean an attempt to invite war mongering America and other imperialist camps to our country.

In the circumstances, the propaganda that provokes neighbouring India should be stopped forthwith and steps taken immediately to restore the status quo of good relationship with that country. The Government should also take steps to commence talks with the leaders of the groups fighting for their rights and other leaders representing Tamil Organisations with a view to seeking a solution to

the present problem on the basis of withdrawing the army from the North and East, withdrawing the sixth amendment to the Constitution and revoking the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

We shall request of all Political Organisations, all Trade Union Organisations to urge the Government to solve this problem on the above basis.

Government Clerical Service Union.

Ceylon Teachers Union.

Sri Lanka Jathika Guru Sangamaya.

Industrial, Transport and General Workers Union.

Local Government Trade Union Federation.

United Federation of Labour.

Insurance Employees Union.

Estate Services Union.

Government United Federation of Labour.

Workers Peasants Liberation Front.

Lanka Podu Sevaka Sangamaya

United Workers Union.

Ceylon Trade Union Federation

90, Sir Chittampalam

Gardiner Mawatha

Colombo - 2

10th December, 1984.

## LET LIFE CONTINUE

As dusk descends on Jaffna the ghost-town empties of people. Only the bullet-ridden bodies remain a school girl and an old man, who'll feature as terrorists in tomorrow's news broadcast. As bombs echo in the background the crowds rush indoors for the sixty-one hour curfew mustering enough spirit for the struggle to preserve sanity in their solitary gloomy hovels; for the struggle against anxiety as their ears strain to catch the boot-steps that approach to bundle them into a truck and dump them into a cell for Lifetime.

Dusk descends on Jaffna but bright lights and balloons decorate a small house in a narrow alley: A child celebrates its first birthday! As protective elders crowd around defiantly dispelling traces of despair the child brims with laughter. Proud aren't you of completing one full mile on a risky road? Hopeful aren't you, of the half a century of adventures ahead? Let life continue whatever the odds.

— SURESH

### AN INSPIRATION FOR ASIAN PEOPLES

The Russian Great October Revolution ushered in a new epoch in the history of mankind, the epoch of socialism. It inaugurated the era of the liberation of all peoples from colonial oppression, and blazed the way to victorious national liberation, revolutions.

It was an inspiration for the peoples of Asia as they entered the struggle for emancipation from tribalism and feudalism, from colonialism and imperialism.

For a study of the impact and influence of the October Revolution on national liberation revolutions, because of its relevance in the present context of the re-emergence of neo-colonialist tendencies in the region, read the book "Lenin and Asia" by Attorney-at-Law T. Duraisingam, a pioneer of the anti-imperialist movement of our country.

Sinhala, Tamil and English editions of the book are available at bookshops.

Price Rs. 10-

Council for Socialist Studies, 31 Wilson Street, Colombo 12.



# Terrorism is not the Fundamental Problem

The following were introductory remarks made by Dr. Nihal Jayewickrema at a recent seminar on National Harmony held at the Scott Hall, Methodist College, Colombo.

Some of you have read in the newspapers a series of articles containing the results of part of the research done by Mr. Jehan Perera, a young Sri Lankan now studying at Harvard. He visited different parts of the country and met people, made friends with them and sometimes lived with them in their village homes. He was seeking to ascertain the Sinhala perception of the ethnic problem.

Many decisions are taken or not taken, by our political leadership because of what, we are told, that body of people described as the "Sinhala masses" either desire or do not desire. We are told, for instance, that those who stand in the way of genuine devolution of power are the "Sinhala masses".

At the two recent by-elections held in Minneriya and Kundasale, at least one political party complained that the Lion Flag (not the national flag) flies only over seven provinces now, and pledged to hoist it in the other two provinces as well if the "Sinhala masses" voted for that party's candidates, because those who spoke from platforms on behalf of that party probably believed that was what the "Sinhala masses" genuinely desired.

Therefore, there was nothing intrinsically wrong I suppose, in Jehan Perera wanting to find out for himself what it is that the much-maligned "Sinhala masses" actually feel and think and believe in, at least in regard to the ethnic problem.

In the village of Warawewa, deep into the heartland of Raja Rata, a relatively self-sufficient peasant community told him they were in favour of a political rather than a military solution. They had no objection to regional autonomy, provided the centre had ultimate con-

trol over the autonomous regions. In the village of Balalla, across the coconut belt of Kurunegala, he found a receptive community that recognised the existence of Tamil grievances and was willing to accept regional autonomy if it could be shown to be a viable solution which would not slide towards a separate State. Among the working class in Colombo, opinion was unanimous that the minority Tamils were not entitled to equality of status with the majority Sinhalese. Most of those interviewed favoured a military solution and believed the "terrorists" could be surgically wiped out without much difficulty. Opinion was near unanimous against the granting of regional autonomy.

Moving further up the social ladder, also in Colombo, among the more affluent professional classes the perception was that "terrorism" was the real problem, and that if "terrorism" could be eliminated, the Tamil problem would be solved.

The majority, particularly the Buddhists, stressed the need to give the Armed Forces more power, and were against any form of regional autonomy.

## Fundamental Problem

If Jehan Perera's research conclusions are reasonably accurate, there should be at least a few hawks among those present today. If there are, I would like to proceed immediately to tell them that, in my view, the fundamental problem that we are faced with is not one of terrorism, but of the denial or violation of human rights. How else would you describe the situation in which, for instance, 530 students find themselves in today? They sought admission to the Medical, Science and Engineering faculties of our universities in the academic year 1983/84, and secured the necessary grades and aggregates for admission, but were excluded because of the emphasis that is now placed on district quotas rather than on merit. Of this number, 23 were from

Kandy, 40 from Galle, 45 from Matara, 198 from Jaffna and 224 from Colombo. If you regard Kandy, Galle and Matara as exclusive Sinhala areas, and Colombo as mixed, then, the majority of those qualified students who are being denied university education today are Tamils.

I am not here trying to score a political point, because the position in, for example, 1975 was not any better. On the application of the district quota that year, Galle and Jaffna, both of which had approximately the same population, were each declared entitled to 29 places in the medical faculty. But while only 18 had actually qualified on the basis of merit from Galle, 61 had done so from Jaffna.

Similarly, while the places declared available in the Engineering and Science faculties that year for each was 20, 24 had qualified from Galle in comparison to 56 from Jaffna.

If international human rights law, to which we subscribe, to which our Government says it subscribes, requires access to higher education to be determined "on the basis of capacity", has there not been, for nearly two decades now, a violation of a human right?

How else would you describe the position in regard to employment in the state sector? Between 1977 and 1981, there were 9,965 vacancies that occurred in the clerical service. Those vacancies were filled by the appointment of 9,326 Sinhalese and 492 Tamils; i.e. 93.6% Sinhalese and 4.9% Tamils. 29,218 teachers were recruited during the same period, of whom 25,553 or 87.5% were Sinhalese, as against 2,084 or 7.1% Tamils.

Quite apart from international human rights law, our own Constitution prohibits discrimination on ethnic grounds, but can it be seriously contended by anyone that at least in the matter of selecting clerks to the state service, there has been no discrimination.

And if you shut out the average Tamil youth from education as well as from employment, what is it that you expect him to do? Even the cultivation of chillies and onions for the domestic market is not an economically viable enterprise in today's free and liberalised economy.

## No Mere Goodwill

If you agree with me that minority communities no longer have to depend upon the tolerance and goodwill of the majority for their existence or livelihood, and that they have rights in common with, and no less than, anyone else; and that, as far as the Tamil-speaking people of the Northern Province are concerned, at least some of those rights have been denied or violated in recent years, it will be easier to understand a community that voted for the acceptance of the Soulbury Constitution and joined the late

But the position in Sri Lanka is different from that in South Africa—at least in some respects. We profess to respect human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. We have made commitments to the international community that we shall do so. We have recognised the right of other states to complain to international tribunals if we cannot do so. We have sought and obtained representation in these international tribunals in order that we may thereby monitor the performance of other states and ensure that they fulfil their obligations in the same way that we do.

And, if we occasionally overlook minor irritations like holding a general election, we have devised other machinery, such as the All-Party Conference, through which national problems may yet be resolved.

In that context, the right of self-determination means the right of a minority community to freely determine its political status and

by

Dr. Nihal Jayewickrema

Mr. D. S. Senanayake in charting the course of this newly-independent country, and thereby entered the mainstream of Sri Lankan political life, found it necessary to assemble at Vaddukottai on 14th May 1976 and declare not only that they, the Tamils of Ceylon, were a separate nation, distinct and apart from the Sinhalese; but also that they were resolved to establish the separate State of Tamil Eelam: a declaration that was enforced an year later at the general election of July 1977 by the large majority of the Tamil-speaking people of the Northern Province.

I am not advocating the bifurcation of this island and the creation of two sovereign states within its natural borders. As I understand it, the right of self-determination, which any minority community is entitled to exercise, acquires different meanings in different contexts. The native Africans of Namibia are entitled to their own sovereign and independent state in the territory which South Africa still regards as one of its dependant territories.

freely pursue its economic, social and cultural development within the sovereign and independent state to which they already belong, and in which they already live.

This, they are seeking to do by asking for regional autonomy, for an opportunity to participate in the decision-making process at the centre, for freedom from discrimination at least in the matter of education and employment, and for the restoration of other basic human rights.

Some among them obviously feel that they have waited too long in vain; made too many pacts which have not been honoured; relied on too many promises that have not been kept. It is good for us to remind ourselves that time does not stand still—not even in what we are told is paradise—and that a document as sanctified as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law.



# Welfare of Plantation

Strong traditions of social welfare in Sri Lanka have given the island very high indicators of physical well-being. Impressive national statistics, however, have tended to hide the existence of deprived pocket within the population. Perhaps the most deprived population group economically, politically and socially has been plantation labour, the descendants of Indian immigrants brought to work on Sri Lankan plantations in the mid-nineteenth century.

Based on the cultivation of tea, rubber and coconut, the plantation sector is even today dominant in the country's economy. It is the biggest contributor to the GNP, the biggest earner of foreign exchange and the largest employer. One of the essential ingredients of plantation agriculture is a cheap labour force. The original plantation crop, coffee, required a large input of labour during harvesting. Labour of the type required could not be obtained from within the country but the British planters found a close source for the necessary labour in the famine-prone districts of South India. Tea replaced coffee as the leading plantation crop by the 1880s and the seasonal migrations of cheap labour gave way to a permanent settlement. Still a dependent labour force, the migrants were housed on the estates in what came to be known as "coolie lines".

The plantations were nationalized under the 1972 Land Reform Law and its 1975 amendment. As a result, 63% of tea, 50% of rubber and 10% of coconut lands became state-owned; the bulk are managed by two state organizations: the Sri Lanka State Plantations Corporation and the Janatha Estates Development Board. Attempts to run some estates on a co-operative basis or as labour collectives either failed or came into political disfavour after 1977 and were abandoned. While nationalization has not resulted in any basic change in the plantation system, it has forced the state to take a greater interest in the health, housing and general well-being of labour.

Two specified characteristics of the labour force need attention. First, it was composed primarily of immigrants who were deprived of citizenship rights for a long time and were thus bypassed by many of the country's social and economic developments. The first attempts to reform the work conditions of Indian labour in Sri Lanka date to 1920 when plantation managements were obliged to provide primary education for estate children. In 1921, workers were empowered to break the bonds of indebtedness tying them to estates. The Indian government also began to take interest and, as a result, the Minimum Wages Ordinance was extended to plantation labour in 1927, marginally raising wages that had not changed since the nineteenth century. Second, more than half the plantation labour force is female. The women have traditionally been assigned to the two most labour-intensive tasks plucking tea and tapping rubber which could profitably be assigned to the cheaper labour. Women workers are lower-paid than males and are restricted to unskilled tasks. Subjects of traditional male domination both economically and socially, women form a further deprived segment within the deprived plantation sector.

## PQL Index

If a separate Physical Quality of Life (PQL) Index were done for the world's women, Sri Lanka would rate very highly. It has a female literacy rate of 82% (compared to a national rate of 86.2%), a life expectancy of around 67 and a maternal mortality rate of 1.2. Particularly remarkable are the literacy figures which are among the highest in Asia. However, despite these PQL indicators, women in Sri Lanka's rigidly patriarchal society are exploited at work and in the home, where the father is legally the head of the family. The low economic and social status of women is most evident in the plantation sector.

In the first 50 years of coffee cultivation in Sri Lanka, there were only 2.7 women workers to every 100 men. With the switch to tea cultivation, the numbers and proportion of women on the estates rapidly increased. By 1911, there were 84 women to every 100 men, rising to a 1:1 ratio in the next decade. The proportionate numbers of children on estates also increased and, like the women, the children became a good source of cheap, docile labour. In 1981, the total resident plantation labour force numbered 922,000. The resident labour force of the estates taken over by the two government plantation agencies after nationalization was 792,000 in 1981: 208,700 males, 220,000 females and 363,900 children.

by Dr. Kumari Jayawardena

Of these children, 26,300 were under age one, 98,600 were aged 1-5 years and 239,000 were aged 5-14. Women form 27% of the total resident estate population and over 50% of the work force; children form as much as 46% of the resident population, where the island figure of children under 14 is 36%.

Children between 14 and 16 years are, legally part of the plantation labour force; they are used for weeding and receive a special children's rate of pay. However, even younger children work at jobs which are often invisible and unpaid. They help their mothers in plucking tea and in cash plucking and Sunday plucking. The increased output is registered as their mothers' work. Similarly, when a family gets a weeding contract for a fixed amount of money, all family members work including small children. Children also perform other household tasks and it is their unpaid domestic labour that often enables the mothers to go out to work. The children affected (especially the girls) must drop out or forego

the opportunity of attending school, as borne out by the school statistics for girls. It should also be noted that many young estate children are employed as servants in other parts of the island, especially during periods of economic hardship.

In the nineteenth century, the proportional difference between men's and women's plantation wages was 25%. What is striking is that over a long period this proportion hardly changed although money wages rose. Even today, the estate women and children remain at the bottom rung in terms of quality of life. An estate woman works at her job from 7.30 a.m. until 4.30 p.m. On occasion, in the 'flush' season, she starts cash plucking work at 6 a.m.

for the extra money bonus offered and plucks tea until 5.30 p.m. if there is a good crop. But it has been estimated that, with her labour in the home as well as her job outside the home, she works an 18 hour day. The tasks of child bearing and child rearing fall heavily on these overburdened wage-workers. The estate women traditionally eat whatever remains after the men and children have been fed. This inevitably means that they are malnourished and anaemic. It is therefore not surprising that such overworked and undernourished mothers produce weak children and have inadequate breastmilk or that the rates of infant and maternal mortality on estates are higher than the rest of the country.

## Least Literate

Apart from being underpaid and exploited at home and at work, estate women are the least literate group of women in the country. They come mainly from the socially deprived 'low' castes, and they also suffer all the usual disadvantages of belonging to an ethnic minority which feels politically and economically insecure and which has been

in recent years subject to physical violence during communal rioting. Because of the high incidence of drunkenness on plantations, the women are also frequently victims of domestic violence.

## Income and indebtedness

The plantation wage structure is governed by minimum wage regulations. Periodically, the wage rates are officially declared 'for men, women and children separately. Plantations have always been a low-wage sector of the economy, paying subsistence wages and unequal wages for women.

The injustice of wage differentials between the sexes, currently around 15.4% has frequently been emphasized by women's organizations in Sri Lanka.

Although estate workers are drawing higher money wages than before, there has been increasing indebtedness and malnutrition among this sector as compared to the rural and urban sectors.

Indebtedness is a severe problem—especially for women and children who often suffer from the father's mismanagement of family income. It is sometimes customary on estates for the father to collect the pay of all working family members, including his wife although technically this is illegal. Money that should be spent on better food often goes for conspicuous or harmful consumption of drinks, clothing and, more recently, consumer goods—all items for which spending is increasing. Thus malnutrition can increase even when money wages have risen.

The general health of the plantation workers has always been much below the national level. In the nineteenth century, the plantation death rates were so high that periodically a Mortality Commission would be appointed to investigate the problem. By 1920, the national death rate was 27 per 1000 whereas



# Women and Children

the plantation rate was 52. Even in 1969 when the island death rate was 8 per 1000, the plantation rate was 12. The *Socio-economic Survey of 1978-79* introduced the recording of health status by various sectors which showed that sickness in urban areas was 7.5% of the sample population, compared to 8.6% for the rural sector and 9.7% for the plantations. Absence from work due to illness was also highest in the plantations where the number of absent days per person was 2.42 compared to 1.56 for the urban sector and 1.82 for the rural.

Commenting on the lower incidence and shorter duration of illness in the urban sector, the survey stated "The urban sector's better health facilities, both preventive and curative, explain its better health conditions... its population enjoys better quality housing and amenities, such as sanitary facilities. Also its more educated population and the medical propaganda... have probably resulted in their being more aware of the health hazards, nutrition, etc. than their counterparts in the other sectors". In contrast one may note that the estate sector lacked adequate supply of safe drinking water, proper housing and toilet facilities and was less educated and therefore less aware of minimum requirements for health.

The main reason for the higher incidence of diseases on estates has been the general malnutrition affecting plantation workers. Environment and climate are also factors. For example, respiratory illnesses were the main killers and were caused by exposure to cold and rain and by overcrowded housing. Intestinal complaints caused by impure water supplies and bad sanitation were also very frequent on the plantations. According to the 1978-79 data, the highest incidence of illness on the plantations is caused by various types of fever (28%) diarrhoea and abdominal problems (12%), breathing

problems (18%) and 'maternal problems' (4.6%). In the case of maternal problems, the rural and urban rates were 0.74 and 0.56% respectively. The incidence of blindness was found to be greatest in the estate sector, perhaps due to Vitamin A deficiency.

The health deficiencies in the plantation sector are also reflected in the prevalence of stunting among infants, caused by protein energy malnutrition. While wasting is not a severe problem (village and estate figures showing no great difference), the incidence of stunting among plantation children is seen as a serious problem in the 1975-76 figures of the Centre for Disease Control's *Sri Lanka Nutrition Status Survey*. These show the percentage distribution of children aged 6-7 months by Waterlow categories as follows: 31.4% of the total rural population (weighted), 27.8% of the villages and 56.3% of the estate population fell into the stunting category. With regard to the wasting category, the figures for total rural, village and estate sectors were 3.3, 3.4 and 3.6%, respectively. For the wasting stunting category, figures for total rural, village and estate sectors were 3.4, 3.0 and 6.1%, respectively.

## Infant and maternal mortality

The differentials between the infant and maternal mortality rates between the plantation sector and the rest of the country have frequently drawn comment. These differentials are not new.

Samples taken in 1949 and 1966 show that the main cause for the high neonatal and infant mortality rates was immaturity and congenital debility which in 1949 accounted for 85% of neonatal mortality and in 1966 for 72% of infant deaths on estates (as opposed to 33% such deaths in the non-plantation areas). The other causes of infant deaths on plantations in 1966 were pneumonia and bronchitis (10%) and convulsions

(6.8%). The basic cause of the high mortality and debility of infants on estates is the severe and increasing malnutrition among mothers. Doctors working in the plantation sector have frequently commented on the gross anaemia among estate women. Other factors are the lack of hospital facilities, trained midwives and antenatal care and the low levels of education among estate workers as a whole and women in particular.

The mortality among older children and maternal mortality on plantations is also a cause for concern. The child death rates on plantations are higher than the rest of Sri Lanka, mainly due to malnutrition the hazards of pneumonia and bronchitis in the cold climate and the lack of hospital facilities. Maternal mortality on plantations has always been around double the national rates. The rates for 1969 were 2.7% per 1000 live births on plantations and 1.5% in the island, the island rate falling to 1.2% in 1975.

Linking infant mortality to maternal health, the Medical Director of the Estate Health Scheme of the Planters' Association reported in 1969 that the infant mortality in estates under the scheme had increased from 84.9 (per 1000 live births) in 1968 to 100.7 in 1969. Almost 67% of the infant mortality on plantations was of infants under one month of age: in this connection, 'the high neonatal mortality is undoubtedly due to the poor condition of the infants at birth—the direct result of the *unsatisfactory state of health of most of the expectant mothers, brought on mainly by anaemia and under-nourishment*'. The Medical Director attributed the high incidence of maternal deaths to gross anaemia and deliveries in insanitary 'line' rooms, pointing out that the extreme anaemia of most estate mothers leads to a tendency to haemorrhage and that overcrowded, badly lit 'line'

rooms are ill-suited environments for such an obstetric emergency. The State Plantations Corporation's data on births in hospitals and estate 'line' rooms reveal that even today, half the births still take place in the latter. The figure rises to 81% in regions like Nuwara Eliya and is lower for the regions with easily accessible hospital facilities.

The gravity of the problem becomes most evident in exceptional famine situations when the first to be affected are the weakest, namely the infants, children and mothers. In 1974 as a result of sudden price rises linked with the oil crisis, the plantation areas—non-food-producing regions—suffered famine conditions. In that year, the national infant mortality rate was 58 (per 1000 live births) but the plantation rate was 163; whereas the previous year it was 46 and 103 respectively. The dramatic increase can be seen from detailed statistics of infant mortality rates for certain plantation regions. In Kandy, infant mortality rose from 62 in 1973 to 92 in 1974; the figures for those respective years were: 18 and 119 for Nuwara Eliya; 56 and 73 for Badulla and 46 and 51 for the national average (Department of Census and Statistics, *Bulletin of Vital Statistics*).

The statistics provided by the State Plantations Corporation for its estates in 1980 also show regional variations in infant mortality in plantation districts: areas near important urban centres with better facilities had lower rates. For example, Galle and Kalutara, with plantations near important urban centres, had IMR rates of 42.9 and 47.8 while Hatton with the largest concentration of plantation population and no large urban centres, had the highest rate (86.5) and other plantation areas like Nuwara Eliya and Haputale registering rates of 83.8 and 83.9 respectively.

## Housing and health

For over 150 years, plantation workers have lived in 'line rooms': barracks-type rows of single rooms built originally for a migratory labour force. This remains the most usual form of housing despite some effort to provide separate 'cottages'. In 1877, the typical lines consisted of a long building, partitioned into rooms 10 feet by 12 feet, with a long verandah 5—6 feet wide. Whole families of eight to nine people would live in a room. A recent survey has shown that five to six people on average live in old-style 'line' rooms; and a 1973 survey of consumer finances showed that overcrowding in houses was 35% in urban and rural areas respectively, but was over double (75%) in the plantations.

A recent survey (1979) shows that 23% of estate households live in one room and 50% in two rooms, while the corresponding rural figure is 8.2% and 20.6%. Comparison with the urban and rural sectors also shows the poverty of the estate sector in terms of facilities and equipment. For example: 43% of estate households lack latrines, compared to 11% of urban and 26% of rural households; 1.7% of estate households have electricity compared with 38% of urban and 6.7% of rural households. With regard to pipe-borne water inside, 2.6% of estate households had this facility, slightly higher than the 2.4% of but much less than the 20.4% of urban households in the same category. The percentages of households with kerosene cookers the most prevalent type of cookers, were 26% for urban, 5.3% for rural and 0.9% for estates.

## Creches

Since the plantation sector had the highest number of working mothers some rudimentary provisions were made to provide creches in the interest of

(Continued on page 11)



# PALMYRAH FOR WEALTH

With the creation of the Palmyrah Development Board a bright future for this palm has been established. Now it is left to the efforts of this Board to make a success of the task entrusted to it. But to let everyone know of the great possibilities that this palm holds I wish to give here a few facts.

Till about the early twenties of this century there were large numbers of persons in the Jaffna district who planted palmyrah trees in small groves and paid such good attention that these trees grew so vigorous and it is such trees that we are making use of for various requirements. During the past five decades this habit has vanished from this area. The necessity for growing them has arisen again and hence any number of these trees may be planted by energetic and far-sighted persons today. Extensive plantations are what are required for the future needs. There is all assurance that this will give an equal income as any other crop that we grow for export.

A friend of mine is progressing with a determination to plant 7,000 palmyrah trees this year itself. Hence I appeal to all those who possess lands that are unutilised to plant the entire area with palmyrah. Though it takes about

12 to 15 years to give fruits the income that it offers after the fifth year is justified to plant them.

Mr. Kanagarajah, Proprietor of Milk White Soap Works, is perhaps the only person to my knowledge who promotes the growing of palmyrah trees all over the country. Whether you plant it in one acre or ten acres there is certainly a good income for you and for generations to come.

## Mechanisation

The processing of the product's mechanically is a feasibility. A few of the articles manufactured are successfully being produced on large scale with the aid of machines. All the other products too will be manufactured on a similar method once the required machines are fabricated. Necessity is the mother of invention. Now that the necessity has arisen we may be sure that the invention will follow. There are many persons in this part as well as other parts who can concentrate on the fabrication of the required machines. Due to the deep interest in this industry I got an engineering firm to supply us a machine to help man climb the trees without any manual effort and it was successfully done in 1962 but unfortunately the demand for it did not exist then and the

whole effort was closed down. The future is not going to be so and hence all of us can start planting hundreds and thousands of trees. Over thirty items may be manufactured from palmyrah in the future and hence we require millions of trees within the next five decades.

by

S. K. V. Achary

## How to Plant

The days when we considered the palmyrah as a wild crop are vanishing and now comes the age when we have to treat this as a cultivated crop for the export market. Hence we must plant them with care and give further attention to make it grow fast and with vigour to offer us the required yield and income.

If you expect to plant palmyrah for profit please plant them in rows 12 feet apart and maintain a spacing of 10 feet on the rows. This becomes necessary for the mechanised climbing of trees on which I had given sufficient thought during the past three decades. When you plant the depth at which the seed must be laid is one foot from the top surface. For this purpose a small hole made with a mamoty would suffice. In sandy soil this is done

easily and in other types of soil it can be done with some effort. Just because it gives good income you need not waste much on the planting just like the grapes on which most of the people waste much money in digging deep pits without knowing the fact that the roots of that plant are lateral ones. Though the hole is small the depth of it must be one foot since the seed must be placed a foot below and covered with earth.

It would be good if you select seeds from matured trees and let the nuts be as large as possible. It would be still better if the fruits that we select contain black skin. Since these trees are expected to give a bearing for over hundred years this aspect must be taken into consideration.

## In India

It is quite pleasing to see the very many items of edible and utility articles that are being manufactured in South India particularly at Kumarappapuram where a large palmyrah industrial unit exists. The products from the leaf and the stalk of the leaf are many including beds for daily use. The palatable soft drink prepared from palmyrah sweet toddy in an ideal and healthy drink for a dry zone village or town. There are hundreds of villages and thousands of men and

women who earn a living from palmyrah which has already become an export crop of some size there. It is certainly possible for us to make more use of it as we possess a very large number of trees that are in bearing and many more can be planted and must be planted at least in areas where man does not undertake rotational cultivation.

Certainly there are large extents of land that could be brought under this crop. To wait for the results of other new plantations would be too late and so please start in all earnestness if you want to invest limited amounts of money and make a fortune during the several decades that follow. Palmyrah sugar is being made use of for the bread that is being specially prepared for the patients in India.

In most of the places it is necessary to protect the crop from wild or rather open grazing by erecting fences. This may be done with a fence of Ipil Ipil for reasons of economy as well as further income. These may be planted at a spacing of nine inches and pruned at a height of six feet. The entire area of the plantation must be filled with ridges so that water is retained during the rainy season. Each such bed can be 20" x 20" and the ridge may be 18 inches in height. A crop of maize planted on this ridge would give the cost of making it. Annual tilling of the beds would be useful after the fifth year.

# The Red Bogey Again: NSSP

(Text of a statement issued by the Secretary, Nava Sama Samaja Party, Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratna):

In trying to seek a military solution to the Tamil national question J. R. and his faithful adjutant, Lalith have fallen from the frying pan into the fire. They said their sole aim is peace and stability; now they have a continuous war and a string of curfews. They said that they were totally committed to a unitary state; now they have de facto divided the country. On top of that

they are pressed by the international financiers to resort to austerity measures which will definitely create a tremendous opposition in the urban areas and also among the youth in Sinhala areas too. They have realized that a combined struggle of the people in the North and South could evolve in the coming period. Certainly this will not be isolated attacks as those that took place in the North during the last few weeks. It will be a combined mass struggle disrupting the entire fabric of the society. They have realized that too.

It is in this context that the government propagandists have started a malicious slander campaign against the Marxists under the pretext of exposing JVP activities. It is claimed that the JVP is linked with Tamil youth organisations and is preparing an attack in the South. All the so-called evidence they have put forward has absolutely no bearing at all. It is clear that the government is making use of the opportunity provided by the silly tactics of the JVP. The JVP could have used the mobilization of the left

forces that existed a few months back to come out and challenge the government openly. This is what the NSSP did and we made the government retreat. But they did nothing of the sort and allowed the government to launch a slander campaign and to terrorize their rank and file members.

Frightened by the campaign, JVP leaders are now proposing a "democratic front" with the SLFP whereas the latter accuses J. R. for releasing the

"terrorists" that they had safely put in prison in their times.

However it is clear that the campaign of the government has a deeper meaning than merely frightening the JVPers. The whole idea behind the malicious campaign is to confuse the workers and disorient the agitation at the workplace for higher wages and better living conditions. All left activists are to be isolated from the mass of workers. Fascist gangs are to be mobilized to intimidate these leading left elements. Such are the real aims of this treacherous campaign.



# History Warns Those Mad with Power

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

Hegel said once that what we learn from history is that we don't learn anything from it. The Portuguese Captain General de Aza Vado, appointed in the wake of an island-wide rebellion against the foreigners, wanted to prove his might as soon as he arrived in Colombo. He instilled fear by the most brutal measures. He ordered the massacre of every living person from the youngest child to the oldest inhabitant in Attanagalla, for the killing of a Portuguese soldier in the village (From *The Portuguese in Ceylon 1617-1638*, C. R. de Silva)

In 1616-17, according to Portuguese estimates 7000 Sinhalese were killed and over a 1000 crippled by injury in war in the 8 months of revolt. It is unlikely that this was an exaggeration. On their side 2000 Sinhalese soldiers, who were compelled to fight for them, died along with 200 Portuguese soldiers. On many occasions, the Portuguese killed all their captives to instil terror and to subjugate the land. (Ibid).

What was the end of the most efficient and cruellest Captain-General, who directed his successors to the most brutal 'scorched earth' policies, even after occupying the Viceregal Palace in Goa? He fell out of favour of his masters and was taken to Lisbon in chains and died in prison.

Let the wielders of power today turn the leaves of history. They cannot dupe their masters for long. The masses will come to know the tallies of the battles and will soon realize that they cannot afford the luxury of keeping a part of the country under military subjugation for ever. Let the intellectuals raise their voice and warn the rulers who are mad with power.

Toynbee had rightly warned America to adopt a policy of co-existence and keep off Vietnam. Now the Toynbee Award winner, Bultjens has raised his

voice against the foreign policy planners of Sri Lanka. Will his be a cry in the wilderness? Will it be heard in the corridors of power in Colombo?

— A Student of History

THANKS, LALITH!

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

The continued imposition of curfew, the introduction of 'Security Zones', 'Prohibited Zones', Permits (Green and Red), the ban on private vehicles including the popular bicycles, a la Gazette, has brought back the reign of the bullock cart in Jaffna.

The ban on motor vehicles has replaced the limousine with the stately stage coach drawn by one and more horses. So the funeral march to the cemetery now is led by the 'Stage Coach' of kings and princes.

Thanks to Lalith, the new generation will now be given an opportunity to see the bullock cart, buggy cart, hand cart, and stage coach moving gracefully along the motor-ways of Jaffna.

The bullock cart revolution has received added impetus by the scarcity of kerosene, the poor man's fuel. So now we will have 'Carols by Candle Light' and get into the real spirit of Christmas which has so long been lost in the hazy mist of modernity.

So share with us the scarcities of life, this 'Silent Night' of Christmas.

S. Anton  
Jaffna.

TELEPHONE

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

I thank you for publishing my letter under the above caption in your journal of 9.11.84.

Ever since then our telephone has been out of order, except for a few minutes on some days.

It is a shame since letters are published in newspapers to bring to light the mistakes of the higher authorities so as to correct them and to make them worse.

Saradha Ramanathan Jeyamenon  
Kondavil East.

FACTS WRONG?

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

With reference to Mr. D. Kulan's letter in your issue of 10th November, may I be permitted to say that this person should not to be confused with S. D. Kulanathan, a brilliant all-round sportsman that St. Johns' had produced and of whom the writer had much to comment in the sports columns of a prestigious group of newspapers in the past. He has got all his facts wrong with regard to the news item "The Three Musketeers from the North revel" I had referred to in your columns of 6th October.

vintage; be it N. Ethirveerasingham, V. D. Jeyaratnasingham or Ram. Sundaralingam; be it S. Segarasinghe, S. K. Mahalingam or Dr. C. Balakrishnan; be it M. Deivandra, M. Surendra, S. D. Kulanathan or C. Sooriyakumar; be it S. Mathivanan K. Ravindran, Buell or N. Nadarajasundaram be it Ignatius David, S. A. Benedict, L. Benedict, or K. Vimalarajan, be it V. T. Ganeshalingam or V. Kaneshalingam be it the Vethanayagam Sisters, Ranji & Ruckmani, Selvagowri Varatharajan, Malaimahal Ratnasingam, Sarojini - Nadarajah or Jeyanthi Somasegaram — to name but a few — have all in their own inimitable way brought credit to the North.

It was in this light that I had attempted to bring to record the achievements of some of these past performers who belonged to the wider Northern firmament of sports. I am

mously donating millions of rupees to help the victims, hoping that the aid would be utilised for the purpose for which it was given.

In the circumstances, the decision of the Government, through REPIA, to dole out part of the money as bank loans at 7.02% interest to the Tamil victims is but a blatant act of injustice besides being an affront to the donors of the aid.

One can understand if the capital is recovered on easy monthly terms; to charge interest on the capital which has come as a gift for those whose wounds are still dripping with blood, cannot be justified on any ground.

I am a retired Government servant. I have been made a destitute by the very state for which I toiled for 38 years. My house was smashed and my entire household goods were looted by the "terrorists" down South, resulting in my seeking refuge in a Colombo camp that fed me with dry bread and water, for whose fault? Probably my painful pilgrimage to a wrong ballot box.

Anyway, a Christ-like Rear Admiral Perera extended his usual Christian mercy, in allowing me a bank loan of Rs. 25,000 at 7.02% interest, payable out of my meagre pension at a time when mere pol-sambol and rice alone cost Rs. 15 a plate.

T. Thamotharampillai  
Colombo 6.

BLAME BOTH

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

Congratulations to you for the courageous and thoughtful appeal you made through the SR of 29th September. But it is not fair to blame the Sinhalese politicians only for worsening the minority problem. The Tamil politicians from the beginning were doing "business" with the Sinhalese politicians without knowing properly the likes and dislikes of the ordinary Tamils.

(Continued on page 10)

## LETTERS

I emphatically say that it was Muthiah Surendra and not his elder brother M. Devendra who had won the event along with the Bosconian lad from Hanwella, W. A. S. Fernando with K. Vimalarajan inches behind taking third place.

Mr. D. Kulan appears to have drawn the name of Centralite V. Sutharshanan into the fray. Surely he need not be reminded of the fact that Sutharshanan carried away the Bata Trophy for the Cricketers of the North in 1983 and 1984, a rare achievement indeed.

As for R. Naguleswaran being dragged into this, D. Kulan appears to be one who cannot discern the grain from the chaff.

Northern sports stars, be it V. G. George, R. R. Scott or M. Kibuka of the old

surprised that D. Kulan does not seem to consider these sportsmen and sportswomen as belonging to one northern unit but views them as separate units to suit his whims and fancies.

With regard to the official status of K. Vimalarajan, I admit that a wrong impression has been created. It was not intentional.

Victor S. Kiruparaj  
Jaffna.

WHAT PRICE AID?

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

The Tamil community has been the victim of an unending racial conflict since 1956. Civilised foreign countries showed their sympathy by magnani-



# Blame Both...

(Continued from page 9)

Being encouraged by your appeal, I would like to tell the following to our politicians, through your journal:

We all know that Mr. G. Parthasarathi came to this island as Mrs. Gandhi's special envoy to settle the racial problem of the country and we have been waiting since then to know the outcome of his mission.

I also remember the appeals made by Pandavas to Duryodhana through Krishna and others and Moses' several appeals to King Pharaoh on behalf of the Israelites were turned down. Consequently, the mighty Duryodhana and his men were killed in a war and King Pharaoh and his soldiers were drowned in the Red Sea. The stiff-neckedness of both Duryodhana and Pharaoh destroyed not only them but also those who were in association with them. Justice was resurrected at last.

Let these be a good lesson for our politicians and us who have chosen them as our representatives.

Rani Mary  
Chavakachcheri.

## C.O.L. ALLOWANCE

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

The Government pays a cost of living allowance to state officers monthly with their salary. Earlier, from 1981 to March 1984, this allowance was paid to all state officers without any discrimination, whether married or unmarried. But suddenly the Government decided, without any valid reason, to pay only half of this allowance to unmarried officers.

As it is a discrimination against a section of state officers, I brought this matter to the notice of the President. My letter had been directed to the Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and Planning but the position remains unchanged.

Although there are several trade unions working for the welfare of state officers, none of them has raised this matter with the authorities.

V. S. Anantha  
Sinnakkadai,  
Mannar.

## GOOD PEOPLE

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

I read Ramani's letter in the 17th November issue of your paper. It is nice to know that there are nice people like Ramani and her parents.

I think the majority of the Sinhalese are good people. In all communities there are good people and some bad people. Some of our politicians, too, are good. But most of them are weak minded and in order to be in power they fear to do the right thing.

Dear Ramani, let all of us children pray to God to give strength of will to these ripe politicians.

As you say they don't realise that our days on earth are fixed. They talk about Buddha but don't have courage to follow his path.

## LETTERS

I am eight years old and I am in Jaffna after the riots. Even our Tamil leaders fled to India forsaking us when we needed them most. I wish all our politicians are bold like Mrs. Indra Gandhi who lost her life in an attempt to keep India united. Our leaders are sitting at the round table for more than a year with no solution.

I suggest to them two solutions:

Treat all citizens alike as Sri Lankans.

Or give regional autonomy as advised by India.

Good bye and keep writing Ramani.

Sritharan Sivaganesan  
Jaffna.

## HOPES BELIED

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

I read with great delight the views headlined 'T.U. L.F. protests to J.R.' in your issue of 17th November.

From the time the All Party Conference began I had great hopes that some settlement might come out but when the proceedings started to drag on for almost a year, I lost all hope.

I am forced to write this letter because many a time I went on the road to be of service to our brothers who have suffered at the hands of the Armed Forces. On several occasions I was forced to run for safety myself. Many are living in fear.

The time is running out and it is no use to sit at

table and discuss these things again and again.

Chidrapananda

Point Pedro.

## BEYOND THE GRAVE

The Editor,  
SATURDAY REVIEW

The passing away of Bishops Leo Nanayakkara and Lakshman Wickremasinghe are indeed providential. For, their present state of deathlessness has a greater impact on Sri Lankan society, as they were keenly working for justice

and peace in this land of ours, than had they been alive. So also with the great apostles of social change and worker world, Rev. Frs. Peter and Pillai Henle Schraam.

Their very death make them live in the hearts of thousands of those who suffer injustice and oppression and also in the hearts of those who work earnestly and sincerely for **TRUTH, JUSTICE, and PEACE** in our land.

Fr. Matthew G. E. Silva

Parish Priest,  
Boragas.

# Rupavahini's Young Artistes

A new feature of introducing young artistes in the presence of a limited invites at the Studio itself was commenced by Rupavahini on November 27, 1984.

Introducing young artistes on the Television is a sure way of encouraging them and also keeping alive the continuity of the fine arts.

In this brief note I will confine myself to two of the items telecast on November 27th under this programme. The first of the items was a ballet presented by Mudiyanse Dassanayake and Shirani. Both are talented dancers and their theme is from Hindu mythology. It is a ballet based on Lord Shiva and His Consort Parvati. Hindu tradition has it that Lord Shiva sustains the universe by His Cosmic Dance. It was indeed magnanimous on the part of the two dancers to have transcended the insular and parochial thinking on the lines of language, religion, ethnicity and whatnot, which have plagued and endangered the very entity and peace of this country, and selected a theme on their own from Hindu mythology, a theme very much suited for a dance or ballet. Although this is a national programme and because the hours allocated for Tamil programmes are relatively less than the time allocated for even English programmes, it is a pity that a synopsis of the theme

was not given in Tamil and English. If this had been done, there would have been a larger number of people who would have understood and appreciated this programme.

The next item under this programme was the dance by Miss Priya Ganegoda. This dance bore evidence of a mixture of Bharata Natya, Kuchchupudi and Kathakali dance forms. Priya Ganegoda has been a student of Padmini Dahanayake who was one of the earliest Sinhalese dancers to be trained in Bharata Natya and other forms of South Indian dances in India. Bharata Natya is not Indian dance as conceived of by some Sinhalese brethren—they pronounce Bharata Natya as Bhaa-ra-ta Natya (Bhaa-ra-ta—meaning India). Bharata Natya is a dance art — conforming to the Bharata Sastra - i.e. the science of Bharata. Some recent researchers seem to think that Bharata Natya is Bharata's Natya Sastra-named after Bharata i.e. the dance art evolved by its founder Bharata Muni. It is indeed a matter of pride that Padmini Dahanayake and those of her category who studied Bharata Natya and other forms of South Indian dances have on their return adapted Bharata Natya art form to present ballets based on Jathaka stories etc. This

has certainly enriched Sinhalese ballets. Vasanthakumara, the renowned dance teacher and Pani Bharati the brilliant exponent of dance, have always advocated the adaptation of Bharata Natya and other South Indian dance forms to suit local traditions and environs.

The theme of Priya's dance too is based on Hindu mythology—a piece from the legends connected with Lord Vishnu. The song for this dance had been well composed in Sinhala. Priya did her best. Here again, if a synopsis of the theme had been given in Tamil and English, better understanding and appreciation by a greater circle could have been achieved.

Indivari Ariyasinghe's recital of the song composed within the ambit of folk music was really good.

The producers of these programmes will do well to remember that these are national programmes and redeem themselves from the fetters of parochial thinking and give a synopsis of the themes in Tamil as well. They must also realise that there is an international community resident in this country and a synopsis in English too cannot be ignored, if they are truly bent on doing justice to fine arts and the artistes.

A. Theva Rajan



## HEALTH SERVICES UNDER CURFEW

## DON'T FALL SICK DURING CURFEW

Text of a letter sent on 17-12-84 to President J. R. Jayewardene by the Staff of the Jaffna General Hospital and the Faculty of Medicine:

It is with much grievance and perturbation that we, the staff of the General Hospital (Teaching), Jaffna and the Faculty of Medicine Jaffna present this Memorandum, which depicts the state of the Health Services in Jaffna, since the enforcement of the curfew and other restrictions.

This is in contradiction to the picture painted by the mass media.

Doctors have not been issued with curfew passes. Permits to possess a vehicle have been issued to a few, but a majority of the staff have difficulty in obtaining the same. No travel permits have been issued by the Competent Authority as yet.

Only a petrol restriction was announced, but no petrol is available in Jaffna since 10th December 1984.

The use of Ambulance has been extended to transport Doctors and other category of staff as there is no petrol, permit or pass. This vehicle at present is in a state needing repairs: even if repaired it will have no fuel: even with fuel one wonders as to how many employees it can offer transport to and from hospital in a day.

Transport restrictions had been so severely imposed that the minor employees could only give a few hours of service in the hospital each day. Firstly, there are restrictions on bicycles, because no permits have been issued so far. Secondly, the Mini-bus service had been completely stopped without improving the CTB service which was already in a deplorable state. Thus, the few CTB buses on the road could transport only a meagre commuters at a bus halt. With the imposition of curfew, the employees had to join the winding queue at the central bus stand from 2 p.m. onwards. The no fuel state will very soon force all the employees to keep off work.

Even the simple drug Panadol had gone out of stock; a state which precludes comments on the supply of other drugs and other facilities.

With long hours of curfew, transport restrictions, and no fuel state, feeding the patients has become a great problem, leave alone finding food for the resident staff.

With restrictions of transport (no mini-bus, no cycle permit, no permits for private cars, no petrol and a few CTB buses) and use of roads, and with long curfew hours, the patients are unable to come to the General Hospital which is situated in the heart of the Jaffna town. The follow-up of patients suffering from chronic diseases such as epilepsy, diabetes, asthma and hypertension, had been completely disrupted such that many patients simply die at home. There is no specific procedure to follow for a sick person needing urgent treatment or an expectant mother in pain, in order to reach the General Hospital during curfew as well as non curfew hours. (The latter situation is due to transport restrictions and no fuel state.) Repeated representations to the Government Agent and the Competent Authority have not yielded any arrangements being announced for transport of the public needing urgent medical help during curfew hours.

A child had died in the ward as the Surgeon could not be summoned due to lack of fuel for the Ambulance.

Medical Teaching has come to a stand-still. Medical Students and staff find travelling between the Hospital and the Faculty is not only difficult but also beset with danger as in the instance of a female medical student being recently the victim of an indiscriminate firing by the Government armed forces.

The Final MBBS Examination has been suspended in a halfway state bringing an immeasurable agony to the students.

Doctors appearing for the Post Graduate Examin-

ations in Colombo had found that their years of preparation had gone waste simply because travelling to and staying in Colombo was fraught with danger.

The student nurses preparing for the Final examination in March 1985, are facing a psychiatry training programme in Colombo next week. But it has become an impossible task to go for such training in Colombo and so far no arrangements have been made for an equivalent training programme in Jaffna which is recognised for training Doctors.

Needless to say that our academic work had come to a stop.

We are not upset for want of an even ounce of social activity in Jaffna, for our concern at present is survival. The Government Armed Forces, in an effort

to contain terrorism, has shown scant concern to the public, their living and lives equally, in spite of the fact that their duty concerned provision of security to the members of the public. A glaring instance

**These are only some instances which clearly show the threat on our lives, and who after all have signed the Oath of Allegiance to the Constitution**

was where a hospital employee had been killed on the way to the hospital by the army. Some others were harassed and arrested on the way even after production of the national and hospital identity cards. A medical student commuting in the public transport narrowly saved her life from an indiscriminate firing by the army. A Doctor's house had been broken into by the Government Armed Forces, who were then seen taking a radio

away. Sons and brothers of many employees had been arrested as terrorist suspects. A Doctor's father-in-law, a cancer patient with a naso-gastric feeding tube and a tracheotomy tube for breathing, had been pulled out of the house and shot by the army at Mannar. These are only some instances which clearly show the threat on

our lives, and who after all have signed the Oath of Allegiance to the Constitution.

Human life is precious. We, who cure at times, comfort many times and relieve of pain at all times of the sick, appeal that the sick should be cared for always and not allowed to die without treatment, in any country, developing or developed, and even under conditions of war.

## WELFARE OF....

(Continued from page 7)

seeing that the women came to work. The scandal of the creches was described in 1973 in the Agency House report: 'These creches are in the care of an old or crippled woman who cannot work. On the estates visited by the Commission, the creche was a small bare room, with not even a mat or chair, let alone equipment or toys to keep the children occupied'. The children received no meals and the conditions were so deplorable that many mothers preferred to leave their children at home in the care of older siblings.

One of the biggest obstacles to social amelioration on the plantations is the continuing (and increasing) illiteracy of the workers. Schools have remained the least important sphere of reform and, ironically, after the government's take-over of estate schools (a long-standing demand by the trade unions and others) they have deteriorated further. A number of schools have actually closed down and the school-going population on estates has

declined in recent years. It is particularly unfortunate that Sri Lanka, which claims to have the highest literacy and educational standards among Third World countries should be retrogressing in the case of estate education.

A recent Socio-economic Survey report (1979) commented on the fact that of all ethnic groups the Indian Tamils, the majority of whom are plantation workers, recorded the worst educational profile. As many as 45% of the Tamils were found to have no schooling and only 7.4% of them had proceeded beyond primary education. A majority of the Indian Tamils live in estates where educational facilities are limited. Another factor is that employment opportunities in this sector are available for those of a relatively young age without minimum educational requirements. Finally, in 1977 there were 723 estate schools offering primary education up to Grade V. Children who then wish to proceed to a secondary education have to go to schools in the nearest town or village

where they can be taught in Tamil. Moreover, there are only a very few government schools in the plantation areas teaching in Tamil and few can afford to go to a private fee-levying school.

Some recent data are available for 436 estate schools with a total of 60,891 children (35,925 boys and 24,966 girls). The total child population on these estates was 91,225, indicating that only 66% attended schools. The disadvantages the girls face is seen in the breakdown of figures: girls form 41% of the students between 5 to 10 years and 39% of those between 11 and 15.

We have argued that low wages and oppressive living conditions (especially for women and children) are a structural ingredient of the plantation system and that the nationalization of the plantations did not materially affect its basic characteristics. However, nationalization created a situation in which the state was compelled to look more closely at the conditions of plantation labour.



# Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

## ALL PARTY CONFERENCE

### Lalith Shoots...

(Continued from page 1)

Pirivena, Peliyagoda. Ven. Walpola Rahula Thero was also present at the meeting, the SLBC reported.

The statement caused surprise among opposition circle in Colombo. They felt that the Minister has once again shot his mouth off without addressing his mind to the implications of the statement. These circles query, whom does the government consider to be Eelamists? Is the government in touch with them?

Have they been given copies of the proposals? How will the government obtain the views of the Eelamists on the proposals or ascertain whether the Eelamists are prepared to drop their demand and accept the national flag, the national anthem and the official language?

Many wonder why the government spokesmen are resurrecting these issues for discussion now? They also feel that many leading UNPERS are in a great hurry to take an early lead in the race for succession.

## LSSP 49 Years

### COLVIN DOES A RIP VAN WINKLE

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, the LSSP leader, said in Colombo, that he does not foresee the draft bills presented at the All Party Conference being of much value in finding a settlement to the ethnic problem. He was addressing a meeting held to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the LSSP. The meeting is reported to have been attended by over 2000 party delegates from different parts of the country.

He further said that the Conference summoned by the President cannot be called an All Party Conference. All the parties are not participating at the Conference. Besides, the President is unable to control the representatives of his own party. Both the President and Prime Minister seem to be taking others for school children.

Dr. de Silva pointed out that if the just demand of the Tamils had been granted earlier, the country could have been spared the traumatic consequences of their denial. The fact that Sinhala is the only official language is also creating problems. There are two minority groups

who speak the Tamil language. If Tamil also had been made an official language the problem would not have become so aggravated.

Recalling the President's address to the nation over Radio and Television during the July, 1983 disturbances, Dr. de Silva stated that one has to conclude that the President is not the President of Sri Lanka but of the Sinhalese only.

Drawing attention to the happenings in Jaffna, the LSSP leader said that innocent civilian are being killed by the army in Jaffna and that atrocities are being committed in every home in Jaffna on account of the misdeeds of a few. Are they taking all the Tamils to be terrorists? he asked.

He also blamed the government for always acting on the advice of American imperialism. He concluded by saying that Sri Lanka cannot be a free country until the people living here are able to enjoy all their rights.

(Based on a report appearing in the Virakesari of 19.12.84).

## North Faces Blackest X'MAS Since '77

### Searches, Arrests etc. Escalate

Security personnel swooped down on several areas in the North, carrying out searches and arrests, especially of youths.

On Monday, 17th December, Army personnel surrounded the Thirunelvely area and carried out a meticulous search, arresting several youths.

Residents of Thirunelvely area, which was combed-out on Monday, complained of looting and rape of a young, pregnant woman.

On Tuesday, 18th Dec., the Security Forces laid siege to Kaladdy, near Thirunelvely, and arrested several youths.

Wednesday, 19th Dec., turned out to be a BLACK DAY for Jaffna Town. Armed personnel blocked all the entry-and-exit points of the Town round about 8 a. m. catching almost everyone by surprise. They even checked the wards in the Jaffna General Hospital, the Nurses' Quarters, shops and other institutions in the Grand Bazaar area. According to eye-witness reports, more than one thousand youths were taken away for questioning in a convoy of

nearly forty vehicles which had converged on the area from the Gurunagar Camp.

Till the detenus were taken away in the buses and vehicles commandeered by the armed forces, they were forced to stand or squat in the stinking drains skirting the Jaffna Hospital, under the burning sun.

A shop-keeper in the Town area told the media that during Wednesday's search he lost Rs. 1000/- which he had entrusted to an employee for the purchase of cigarettes, which are in short supply in Jaffna at the moment. Asked whether he would complain to the Army High Command about this highway robbery, he said No, thank you. I don't want to be harassed.

Earlier, the Armed forces raided Chulipuram, Mathagal, Sillalai, Pandaiteruppu and Thenmaradchy areas arresting hundreds of youths.

In Chulipuram, some parents have alleged that their young daughters were raped in the course of the search.

Informed sources say that these escalating searches and arrests of males especially

between 16-32 years of age, are part not merely of a pattern of terrorisation but also of "hostage taking".

These sources go on to say that between 10,000 to 15,000 hostages, especially youths, are to be taken into custody to ensure the safety of the Sri Lanka Armed Forces.

The Mothers' Movement of Jaffna is planning once again to demonstrate to protest these indiscriminate arrests of innocent youngsters the rapes committed by uniformed personnel under the guise of searches and the withdrawal of the recent emergency measures which have converted the North into a 'prison'.

Here are some of the statistics of those arrested in various areas in the Jaffna peninsula: Anaicottai 100, Sillalai-100 Chulipuram-400 Kaithady - 300; Jaffna Town - 1200; Alaveddy, Siruvilan and Elavalai - 60 Thirunelvely-Kalviyankadu-80. (These are approximate figures).

Some of the arrested youths have been released but most of them have been transported or shipped down South.

## Thattayas' Confab

The current joke among security personnel in the North which has surfaced during interrogation, is that the THATTAYAS (bald heads) in the North are talking to the THATTAYAS in

the South. These THATTAYAS, they go on to add, will never come to a political settlement. The ultimate result? Only the THATTAYAS will be left alive.

## APC KAPUT

The All Party Conference which met in plenary session at the B.M.I.C.H. on 21st December adjourned after the President addressed the Conference briefly and requested the participants to submit their views in writing.

## NO MIDNIGHT SERVICE

The X'mas Midnight Service this year will not be held in the Churches in the Jaffna Diocese, due to the prevailing circumstances, even if the night curfew is lifted, the SR understands from Official Church Sources.

## AN APPEAL

The several thousands of people who had been living in the recently declared 'Prohibited Zones' are now faced with real threat of starvation.

Requests for help and assistance are pouring in daily. We wish to appeal to the generosity of all those who can afford to support us in our attempts to help the affected people. Contributions in whatever form are welcome.

Cheques to be addressed to: "THE REFUGEES REHABILITATION LTD". Chairman, T. R. R.O 66, Chapel Street, Jaffna.

**SATURDAY REVIEW** regrets that it cannot conventionally wish all its readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, due to the prevailing circumstances.

Our next issue will appear on 5th January, 1985.

Printed and published by New Era Publications Ltd., 118, Fourth Cross Street, Jaffna, on 22nd December 1984. Registered as a newspaper at the General Post Office, Sri Lanka under QJ 101.