

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

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ACID 'RAIN'

The latest report from Vavuniya states :

The streets are deserted and the entire town has taken on a funereal appearance. A helicopter flying low had allegedly sprayed acid and about 4 people at Maharambaikulam have been injured.

After the outbreak of violence at Vavuniya, nearly 6 refugee camps have been set up. Many Tamil residents along Vavuniya - Kandy road are reported 'missing'. The Vihare on this road is heavily guarded by security personnel who now conduct foot patrols.

Many rice mills on the Kandy Road have been ransacked and bags of rice were seen being taken away in lorries.

VAVUNIYA, TRINCO — THIMPU !

What the hell happened in Vavuniya and Trincomalee in the third week of August?

The Government would like the world to believe that nothing much happened. Just a few deaths here and there as, according to official spokesmen, the Security Forces took on 'terrorists' in a number of encounters. Nothing very unusual in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, where human life is dirt cheap!

But the reports we continue to receive from Vavuniya and Trincomalee are very disturbing. These tend to support the news flashed abroad by the British Broadcasting Corporation and other sources about "massacres" in both places.

Belatedly, the Government appears to have realised that something untoward happened at least in Vavuniya; hence the decision to appoint a "military commission" to carry out an investigation.

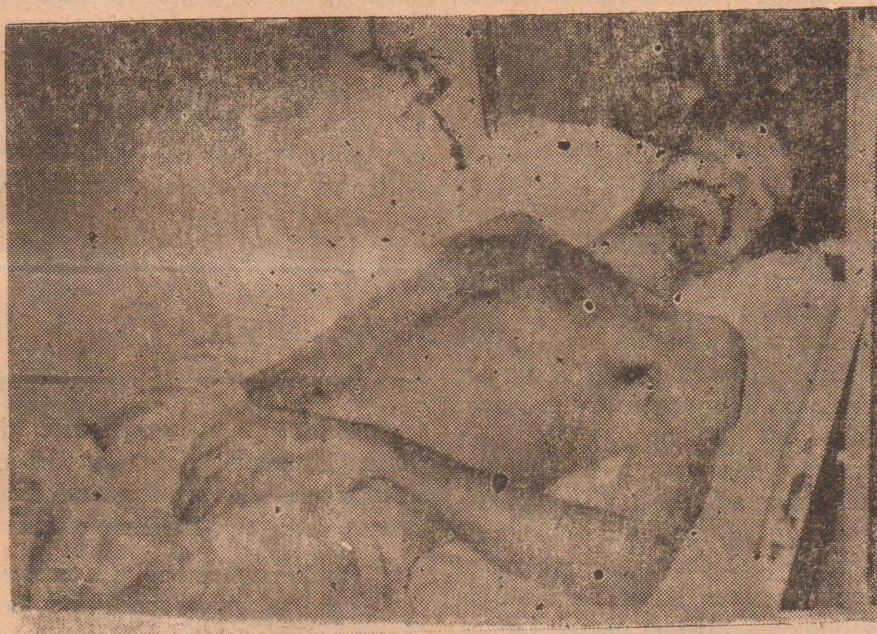
But this would be like asking the thief's mother about what actually happened!

Nothing less than an independent commission, in which the Security Forces will have no hand, can satisfy the discerning public.

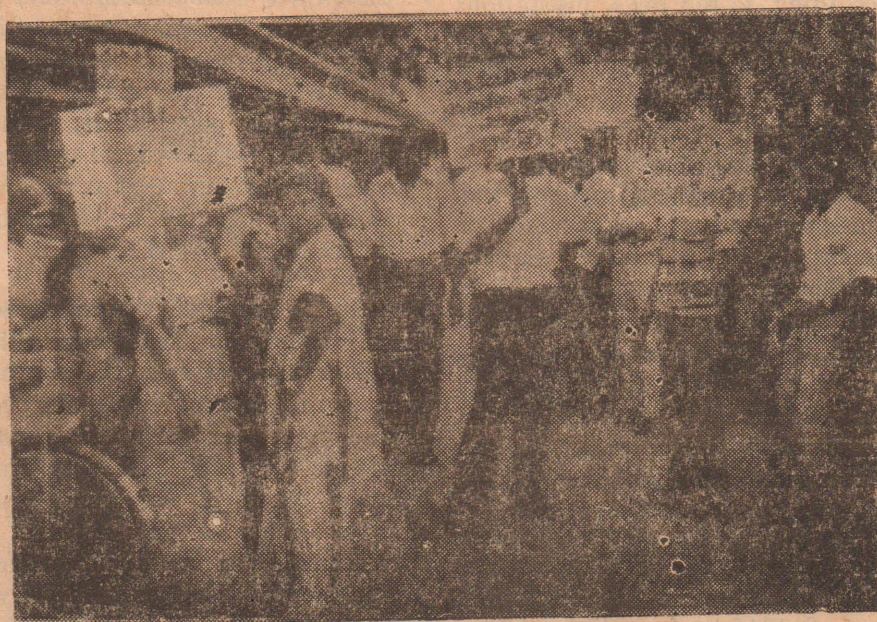
In the meantime we are publishing some of the reports we have received from a variety of sources.

According to an eye-witness, on the morning of 15th August, the Sinhalese people who were residing close to Thonikkal, in Vavuniya, shifted to Navagama, which is close to Eratperiyakulam Army Camp.

On the 16th morning, about 5 o'clock, a truck-load of Security Forces came up to a spot near a culvert close to the Sri Lanka Air Field Unit and planted something which exploded a little later causing only minor damage to the culvert.



Mr. Mahalingam of Vavuniya, who lost his wife and four children during last week's massacre, had a miraculous escape himself. He is now in Jaffna hospital in a serious condition. His other four-year-old child Mahalingam Manjula is missing.



Students from Jaffna University picketing in front of the Jaffna Kachcheri on 22nd August demanding the release of Tamil political prisoners at Welikade jail. (See Page 8)

That an almost empty bus from the CTB Depot was allowed to pass over the culvert round about 7 a.m., that day shows that the damage to the culvert was minimal.

Immediately after the explosion the forces advanced, shooting. The Security Forces were at the scene from 5 a.m., till about 8.30 a.m., killing innocent civilians and burning down houses. Houses in the vicinity were completely damaged.

In order to prevent the injured people from getting treatment, the Forces surrounded the Vavuniya Hospital and opened fire. They were reportedly there till 1.30 p.m. Doctors were threatened and the staff quarters also burnt. As a result, many doctors, nurses and other staff fled the hospital.

According to another eye witness, "there was an explosion like a landmine followed by gun shots. About 50 of us ran in panic and took refuge in a big house close to my farm, which was owned by the late Mr. C. Suntharalingam. When we were in that house, soldiers rushed into the house and ordered us all out. We were all lined up under a tamarind tree. Some soldiers stood guard over us, while others rushed into the house, ransacked it and damaged the furniture.

"When those who had gone into the house came out, others who stood guard over us suddenly opened fire. Raising cries, we ran helter skelter. Many fell, mowed down by bullet fire. I fell down pretending to be dead. There were two women at my feet, groaning with bullet wounds. Among the dead I could identify Nadarajah, Balachandiran, Kathiraimalai, Letchumi, Sutharabanan (6) and Jeganathan (4)."

An official spokesman for Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF)

(Continued on page 8)

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Eastern Province: Traditional Tamil Homeland

That Trincomalee and Batticaloa Districts (including the present Amparai District prior to its creation in 1963) have been traditional Tamil Homeland is a historically attested truth is evident from the Cleghorn's minute. That is how the invading foreign power, the British rulers found the Island when they conquered it from the Dutch in 1795. Writing in 1799 on the Administration of Justice and Revenue Mr. Cleghorn has, among other things, this note regarding the composition of the country they conquered :

Native Inhabitants — Two different nations, from a very ancient period, have divided the Island. First, the Sinhalese, in its Southern and Western parts, from the river Walawe to that of Chilaw; and secondly, the Malabars, in the Northern and Eastern Districts. These two nations differ in their religion, language and manners. ('Malabars' means Tamils') Note Cleghorn's mention of Malabars (Tamils) inhabiting the East Coast.

The Kandyan Kingdom, prior to the arrival of the British invaders held the same view that Eastern Province is a Traditional TAMIL HOME — LAND. It is attested by the stand they took before the Donoughmore Commission. It was not until 1815 that the Kandyan Kingdom was annexed to the crown colony of Ceylon. "The most complex administrative problem that confronted the British was the absorption of the old Kandyan Kingdom into the crown colony of Ceylon" states K. M. De Silva in his book, *A History of Sri Lanka*. He further states, "under the terms of the Kandyan Convention, the British consented to the continuation of the traditional administrative system, without much change, 'according to the laws, institutions and customs established and in force amongst them'. Carefully embodied in the convention was a declaration of the inherent Right of Government to redress grievances and reform abuses in all instances whatever, whether particular or general where such interpretation shall become necessary'. This latter class of the convention became in effect, the source of British jurisdiction in the Kandyan provinces and the means of superseding Kandyan law and juridical institution in many respects".

Aggrieved at the way the British Conquerors have dishonoured the treaty and the terms of the Convention of 1815 made between them and the Kandyan chiefs, they proposed a solution to the Donoughmore Commission in 1929. Let me quote K. M. De Silva :

The most influential Kandyan political organisation the Kandyan National Association pressed for a federal political structure for Sri Lanka and urged in support of it the contention that "the most of the grievances under which the Kandyans labour at the present day are directly due to the amalgamation of government in 1833. They argued further that the fundamental error of British statesmanship has been to treat the subject of political advancement of the peoples of Ceylon as one of the homogeneous Ceylonese race.

Note the Kandyan Sinhala chiefs blaming the British rulers for treating the people of Ceylon as a homogeneous Ceylonese race. The Kandyans who had a king, a territory and whose rule extended even to the Eastern province of Trincomalee and Batticaloa in the not too distant past accept the fact and state it with authority that the country does not have a homogeneous race — the "Sinhala" only nationalists would do well to listen to their forefathers. So what is the solution they propose to deal with this multi-racial country? We quote :

by Fr. J. Joseph Mary S. J.

As a solution of those difficulties the Kandyan chiefs put forward a scheme for dividing the island into three self-governing areas

- 1 The Northern and Eastern province in which the Tamils predominate
- 2 The Kandyan provinces
- 3 The Southern and Western provinces peopled mainly by Low-Country Sinhalese. Each of these three Communities would be thus granted a government of its own. For the purposes affecting the welfare of the entire Island these three governments would be united in a Federal government thus ensuring that no one section would be in a position to dominate over the others.

Note the underlined words **Divide** Eastern province... **three communities**... **Government** of its own. The purport of the solution being that 'No one section would be in a position to dominate over the others. What wisdom, born of the horse-sense and experience of having ruled a kingdom. In proposing a solution to the peculiar Kandyan problem we have here the Sinhala evidence, very Kandyan at that, attesting the fact that "—the Eastern Province where Tamils predominate" — in other words Trincomalee and Batticaloa

Districts being **Traditional Tamil Homeland**. It is so even now despite colonising Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts with Sinhala colonists and carving Amparai District out of the former Batticaloa District in 1963.

In fact it is not until the 1950's that this predominance of the Tamils in the East began to dwindle, yet not to disappear altogether. It was achieved by calculated deliberation by the successive Sinhala governments of the United National Party and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. In Trincomalee District in the North of the Eastern Province colonisation was under the Kantalai scheme and in Batticaloa district it is under the Gal Oya valley scheme. This sort of colonisation was deliberately done by the Sinhalese successive governments in power to erode the ethnicity and negate the claim of the Tamils for their traditional Tamil Homeland. This danger has not abated. Now it is the Mathuru Oya settlement under the larger Mahaweli Development Scheme which threatens to suck the traditional Tamil Homeland North of Batticaloa District into the Sinhala — Buddhist expansionism and inundate the traditional Tamil Homeland with the flood of Sinhala — Buddhist colonists. In 1963 in

the South of the Eastern Province the former Batticaloa District, consequent to colonisation was carved into an additional Amparai District. Yet the truth is that the Amparai District in the East is no less Tamil as a Amparai District is still peopled with predominantly Tamil speaking populace because the Muslims too hold Tamil as their language and their mother-tongue. They outnumber the Sinhalese numerically in the district.

Patriotism in Ceylon is as much racial (i.e. communal) as it is national and that the best interests of the country have been regarded as synonymous with the welfare of the particular section of the people. Thus in 1928, reviewing the political situation in Ceylon we find the Donoughmore Commission stating:

Not only the population not homogeneous, but the diverse elements of which it is composed distrust and suspect each other. It is almost true to say that the concept of patriotism in Ceylon is as much racial (ie communal) as national and that the best interest of the country are at times regarded as synonymous with the welfare of a particular section of its people' (Great

(Continued on page 7)

'SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO BUTCHER US'

Text of an interview given by Sri Sabaratnam, leader of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) to Anita Pratap:

Q. Last year, were you allegedly arrested in Belgium for possessing false travel documents?

A. That was just false propaganda unleashed by the Sri Lanka government to misguide the Tamils. I guess it was their (Sri Lanka government's) intention to give the impression that I am vulnerable. I was now where near Belgium.

Q. The TELO is known to be inimical to the LTTE. The rivalry between you and Prabhakaran (Leader of the LTTE) is almost as bad as between Prabhakaran and Maheshwaran (Leader of the PLOT). How did this unity between you and the LTTE come about?

A. What has motivated both the LTTE and the TELO to bury the hatchet is the desire of the majority of the Tamils from all over the world. The Tamils want nothing more than unity among the boys (militants). This unity can be achieved particularly in military operations.

So by uniting we are all responding to the Tamil people's need. TELO is the first Eelam revolutionary organisation. We started in 1970. Prabhakaran was with us and then he left us to form his own movement. And now we are all coming together in deference to the wishes of the oppressed Tamils - after all we are fighting for our people's deliverance.

Q. I am not talking about your past differences. As recently as last year, the LTTE and TELO were bitter foes. The LTTE was even trying to kill you.

A. Yes, it is true that in 1984, the LTTE made two attempts on my life. I don't want to talk about all that now because it will only generate hard feelings all over again. But in spite of our "rivalry" as you put it, we have come together. That is proof of the fact that we are willing to ignore all our past problems and make a fresh start. We are in a position to do this only because we realise that in the interest of the Tamil public we cannot stand on our pride and prejudices.

Q. How is your relationship with Prabhakaran now?

A. I, or my party, have forgiven and forgotten our past. I hope it is the same way with Prabhakaran.

Q. Why did talks with the PLOT break down?

A. Well, we have not given up. Experience has taught us that we cannot bring all the groups together at the same time. We three (TELO, EPRLF, EROS) came together. Now the LTTE has joined us. We hope PLOT will also unite with us.

Q. But then precisely because the LTTE is in, the PLOT may choose to keep out.

A. It's not necessary. After all, the TELO and the LTTE were able to come together despite serious differences. So, why not the LTTE and the PLOT?

Q. Why is it that the Tamils are now impressing upon the militants to close ranks?

A. Ever since the July holocaust, it is obvious to the Tamils that the Sri Lanka government is going from bad to worse and that they are determined to butcher us.

Q. Why do the Tamils want the boys to unite: is it to safeguard

their lives and property, is it to drive away the Sinhala armed forces or is it to achieve Eelam?

A. To do all three. The ultimate goal of every Tamil in Ceylon is to achieve Eelam.

(Courtesy: Sunday)

Cultural Genocide

Yet again another Public Library had gone up in flames at Vavuniya if not in its totality at least in part to fulfil the assertion made by Mr. Parthasarathy, the Special Correspondent of the MADRAS HINDU that army atrocities in the North amounts to cultural genocide in the MADRAS HINDU issue of October 28, 1984.

If some Tamil expatriate organisation for instance, the Tamil Information Centre in Madras or London were to compile a list containing the number of public and private libraries reduced to ashes by arson by the security forces in the North and the East as acts of reprisals for an ambush by the so called "Eelam terrorists" and bring out a publication, the apt phrase used by the MADRAS HINDU correspondent Mr. Parthasarathy could very well form its title.

THE TASK FACING MUSLIM RADICALS

The text of a press statement issued by the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF):

The various ruling classes and political parties that came to power in Sri Lanka since independence have continued to follow the British Imperialists' policy of 'divide and rule' and have driven a deep wedge between the Sinhala people and the Tamil-speaking people. By raising racial and chauvinist cries, which led to bloody racial riots, Sinhala politicians have sat comfortably in the seats of power. These megalomaniac politicians also resorted to driving a deep wedge between the Tamils, Muslims and the Tamils of Indian origin (estate Tamils).

The Tamil leadership, which was hitherto born out of the affluent classes, joined the bandwagon of the racist Sinhala chauvinist leaders by compromising, collaborating and surrendering the implicit trust the Tamils reposed in them. Likewise the Muslim leadership, participating in the game of political chess, has betrayed the Muslim masses who now face a dark and bleak future.

The Tamil people by drawing the correct historical conclusions from the betrayals of their political lead-

ers and political parties have decisively thrown these political buffoons into the dustbin of history. Through their courageous onslaughts on the Sinhala armed forces and their lackeys, they have raised aloft the banner of their freedom struggle and are marching forward victoriously to establish a glorious future in a socialist Eelam for the Tamil speaking people.

In the prevailing acute political crisis, the Muslim people should think seriously about their future and dissect the political activities of their leaders and social organisations. While vociferously pretending to safeguard the interests of the Muslim masses, these leaders collaborate with the racist, chauvinist Sri Lankan leadership to share the crumbs thrown to the Muslim affluent and elite. Meanwhile the Muslim masses suffer from utter poverty and complete backwardness in every sphere. To make the Muslim masses conscious of their condition is the historic task facing the radical forces among the Muslims.

The decision of the Sri Lanka Government to separate the East and to keep it out of a merger with the North is in keeping with the politics of Sinhala chauvinist Bud-

dhism, though it is touted as being in the interests of the Muslim people. This separation is fundamentally in the interests of the ruling classes: by separating the East, the ruling chauvinists hope not only to isolate the Muslims from the Tamils and the Eelam liberation struggle but also to achieve their ultimate goal of extending the Buddhist domination of the East. These schemings, and the opportunistic Colombo-based Muslim leaders who are aiding and abetting this, must be exposed.

We concede that there are reasonable fears and misgivings among a section of the Muslim people regarding the Eelam liberation struggle. These fears are due to the fact that the Muslim people have been unable to understand and arrive at correct conclusions regarding this struggle and the progressive forces at its helm. We are also aware of the fact that the Tamil parliamentary leadership in the past gave step-motherly treatment towards the Muslim people. The opportunism of the Colombo Tamil leaders and the Colombo Muslim leaders (both of whom claimed to represent their communities as a whole), the erroneous concept of the Tamil leadership that the Muslims were 'turncoats' and the bitter experiences of

the Tamil-Muslim riots of recent origin in the East have created a 'fear complex' among the Muslim people. We are fully sensitive to these fears and it is to allay such understandable fears that we put forward the following proposals in all seriousness: (a) to demarcate the areas where the Muslim population live in density (b) to declare such areas as traditional Muslim areas (c) to establish 'Muslim People's Councils' in such recognised, traditional Muslim areas (d) these councils will be recognised as seats of Muslim political power and guaranteed as Muslim autonomous areas (e) representatives from the above autonomous councils will be represented in the Eelam State (f) with the assistance and advice of these councils the Islamic religion, Islamic Art and Culture, Islamic heritage, Islamic traditions, the Arabic language, Education, Employment opportunities, Regional development and other rights and defence of these autonomous regional councils will be undertaken effectively, efficiently and with enlightenment, without discrimination and without partiality (g) the Eelam State will at every turn, even if the problem is insignificant, consult the Muslim People's Councils for decisions.

Indian & Lankan Govts. Caught In A Trap

"But when did property ever listen to reason except when cowed by violence?" This question was posed by C.L.R. James in his classic work on the uprising of slaves in the West Indian island of San Domingo during the last century. (C.L.R. James, "The Black Jacobins", Allison & Busby, London, 1980 Ed., page 70).

The word "property" here is used only as another name for the capitalist class which owns property or capital. The question raised by James has much relevance in understanding the change in attitude of the United National Party Government towards the National Question.

President Jayewardene has recently blamed all governments, including his own, for the "explosive growth of militancy" among the Tamil youths. "We should have crushed it at the very beginning, that is, when they started demanding a separate state" (Interview with the Indian magazine "Gentleman" as reproduced in The Island of 22nd July.)

This statement is a clear indication of the fact that the capitalist class is always prone to violence in the face of a demand by any section of the oppressed masses even if such a demand is not fortified by violence.

It is incorrect to say that no measure were taken to crush the movement for a Separate State for the Tamil-speaking people in the North and East from its very inception. History will bear it out that it was the severity of the very measures adopted to crush it that led to the rise of militancy.

It was the inability of successive governments to solve the National Question within the bourgeois set-up that gave rise to the separatist demand.

CULMINATION

The July 1983 Holocaust was the culmination of the policy of systematic breeding, planned manoeuvring and ruthless use of Sinhala chauvinism by the predominantly Sinhala ruling class with the help of the Sinhala petty-bourgeoisie under its wing. This policy has been proved to be not only counterproductive but destructive even from the standpoint of the survival of capitalism.

If the government seeks to preach anti-chauvinism in order to solve the national question at least temporarily by giving autonomous status to the Tamil areas within an unitary state, the Sinhala masses who were taught the language of Sinhala chauvinism the other day will soon learn to love and not to hate their oppressed class-brothers who had made property listen to reason.

This will mean the dawn of a new era in the mass struggle for emancipation irrespective of racial prejudices.

If on realising this, the Government continues to follow a military course of action, it will spell disaster both militarily as

Meanwhile, the Indian Government through its "good offices" as a powerful neighbour, is pressing for some sort of a settlement of the National Question in Sri Lanka. The anxiety of the Indian Prime Minister is quite understandable. The Indian bourgeoisie is far more advanced and experienced than the Sri Lankan counterpart so much so that the latter looks really petty indeed in every sense before the former. India's ruling class is well aware of the repercussions a prolonged civil war in the northern and eastern region of their neighbour's territory, although small, will have on the entire Asian region, apart from the present problem of the influx of Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka.

by **H. A. Seneviratne**

Secretary, Industrial and General Workers' Union

well as economically. Then the system itself will grind to a halt and here again the people will rise irrespective of racial prejudices. Though placed on the horns of a dilemma, the Government just cannot continue to mark time either.

Thus the Government has become desperate. This accounts for the Minister of Finance's recent cry of despair regarding the mounting costs of defence. (See SR, 3rd August).

That is not all. Foreign aid on which Sri Lankan capitalism depends so much will stop flowing in, as the Finance Minister told Parliament on 12th July after returning from the Aid Group Meeting where donor countries had "expressed without reservation their deep anxiety and concern that a satisfactory solution should be evolved for the ethnic problem as early as possible."

He told the House: "We will face complete disaster if we do not solve this problem early. I have said this so many times in this House in the past. I will say so again. I will repeat it ad nauseam for those who have ears to hear and for those who may be deaf."

Pran Chopra in an article in the "Illustrated Weekly of India" has said that "At best, Eelam will become a prickly client for India to look after and a further complication in India's own 'southern politics.' At worst it will become a dangerous precedent. That is the trap in which India finds itself."

MARXIST PHOBIA

What Pran Chopra has failed to mention is the fact that some of the Tamil militant groups are feared to the Marxist-oriented revolutionaries by both Governments. The Sri Lankan and the Indian Governments will like very much to suppress such a development in a combined effort, preferably with the assistance of the Tamil Nadu Government. But it is not possible and feasible to do so as things stand today. Such an action will alienate millions of Tamils in South India from the North Indian Central Government and strengthen the links between the Tamil people of Southern India and Northern Sri Lanka to hasten a South Asian conflagration. That is the real trap both the Indian and the Sri Lankan Governments find themselves in. That is in fact the trap that even the imperialists will find themselves in.

No bourgeois Government in Sri Lanka can solve the grave economic and social crisis caused by the decay of late capitalism made more acute and insoluble by the crisis in world capitalism. Therefore, any such government would like to make the National Question and the militant movement in the North and the East a *acaepgoat* as long as possible. But it has become no longer possible to do so. The political crisis created by the militant movement has become too serious for that.

The longer the government takes to find some sort of "solution" to the National Question, the narrower the gulf between the Sinhala and the Tamil masses will become. This will again mean the beginning of the end of the capitalist rule in this country. It will, thereafter, not end with this country because the whole of South Asia is simmering with the latent molten lava of pent up feelings of the masses suffering under its unprecedented capitalist crisis.

In this situation, it is almost certain that both the Indian and the Sri Lankan governments will -- blessed by imperialism, of course seek to find some formula acceptable at least temporarily to the militants. Within such a formula, the militants will have to work forwards while the Indian and the Sri Lankan Governments will work backwards at the talks along with imperialism.

One day again, sooner or later, the question: "But when did property ever listen to reason except when cowed by violence?" will arise much more sharply.

PLEASE HELP!

Since the eruption of ethnic violence at Vavuniya, people in the areas of Neriyaikulam, and Illupai-kulam have been forced to take refuge at St. Sebastian's Church, Mannar with only the clothes they were wearing.

Although the needs of the refugees are being looked after, we are looking forward to help from the general public and other public and social organisations to render assistance to these refugees.

General Secretary

*Relief and Rehabilitation,
Organisation,
Bishop's House, Mannar,*

CROSSING BORDERS

A young man known to me went to the embassy of a NATO country to obtain a student visa. Ahead of him was another student with all his papers in order and was almost heaving a sigh of relief towards the end of his interview with the immigration official. Then he made the mistake of getting into a friendly social chat with the official. The official asked him what he hoped to do on completing his studies. The student replied that his brother was abroad and that he was the only one left to look after his aging mother, thus making it obligatory for him to return home. The immigration official promptly dropped his mask of friendliness and told the student, 'if you have to look after your mother why do you want to go abroad for study?' and proceeded to stamp 'entry refused' on the student's passport. Thus came to an end one youth's hopes of advancing his knowledge, plans carefully nourished over a period of one or two years, dashed to the ground by some capricious and uncaring official. The first youth too was going to tell the truth about his aging mother whose only child he was. But when his turn came, he gave instead patriotic reasons for wanting to return home. He was granted his entry.

DILEMMA

The profession of the unproductive immigration official where decisions are random and fanciful (i. e. the colour of the skin matters) represents the world on the horns of a dilemma. On the one plane the needs and problems created by technological advances is driving us towards an inexorable need for a world government. For example, the problem of pollution cannot be tackled by one country alone. Industrial waste gases in one country can cause acid rain and the destruction of forests in another country. Britain has blamed Sweden for its share of acid rain. Another aspect of pollution is that its intensity has thrown out of balance nature's ability to correct itself. One scenario envisaged is the progressive increase in atmospheric temperature as a result of the sun's rays being absorbed by the polluted atmosphere (hazy skies and hot spells have become common in some cities). This, it is said, can result in the melting of the polar ice-cap resulting in the flooding of low lying areas.

There is also technological pressure towards a single (or a few) world language(s). To-day the air traffic controllers and pilots by international agreements communicate in English (except in Canada where French is also used). But on the other hand, since the introduction of passports after the First World War, national states, especially those better off, have become increasingly reluctant to allow aliens to pass through their borders. This

dilemma is also reflected in the individual psyche. While many may find the idea of a 'global village' comforting on an emotional plane, their actual acceptance of it lags far behind. Thus a Guardian editorial was to lament that the people of Britain who had rallied with enthusiasm to the cause of the starving in Ethiopia, were now being churlish about a few hundred Tamils at the gate.

The reality now is that immigration controls are becoming increasingly irrelevant and at best a way of passing the buck. If people are under strong pressure to leave their country, they will do so come what may, even death. One hears of Vietnamese boat people drowning or being attacked by pirates and having their women sold to brothels in Thailand for the enjoyment of tourists. Many Haitians too die in the attempt to cross the sea to the US. Guatemalans and other Central Americans die in the Mexican desert enroute to the US, escaping bad governments or starvation. As for our Tamils the vocal media of Britain, our former master having more than a little to do with our current problems, made an

What has been happening today is that the West has been increasing the price of its services behind the protection of national boundaries against a diminishing capacity by the Third World to buy these services. This has led to the spectre of mass unemployment in the West coupled with misery in the Third World. Instead of facing up to this long term problem squarely, the West has adopted the palliative of giving fake loans through organisations like the IMF and sometimes directly. These are fake loans because it is inconceivable that they will ever be paid back.

When countries like Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Sri Lanka are threatened with bankruptcy as a result of borrowing heavily, the West has two choices. Let them go bankrupt and this will stop the flow of goods from the West to these countries or give them another loan and let the flow of goods continue. Thus when Sri Lanka wanted to purchase fast Katamarans from Cougar holdings in England for cash it did not have, the British government provided the credits, insisting that the armaments should not be

by M. Ratnam

indignant noise over a thousand Tamil arrivals, eventually accepting them with bad grace, while West Germany having little to do with our problems has accepted 30,000 Tamils with hardly a whimper. Thus immigration controls in Britain have only meant more Tamils for Germany and France.

THORNY ISSUE

The thorny issue of immigration also comes within the purview of the North-South dialogue, a debate that takes place against a background capitalist ideology. Adam Smith, for whom Marx had a profound respect and who in his 'Wealth of Nations' formulated the principles of Capitalism, envisaged not merely free markets and a free flow of good and capital, but also importantly, a free flow of labour. The last is what immigration controls seek to prevent. Many influential economists have been telling the western countries, Forget about giving sermons to the Third World and forget about aid. Simply be honest to your capitalist principles and allow a free flow of labour.

Then labour will move to places where there is potential for creation of wealth, resulting in a much improved distribution of resources,

mounted in Britain as a sop to its human rights conscience. This measure perhaps temporarily saved Jobs at Cougar holdings.

GUT REACTION

The movement of persons has been the natural order of things in the annals of mankind. But if people, as is normal, do not want to be suddenly flooded by others with different ways, this is understandable and should be respected. People will not normally move en masse away from their places of birth if their rulers are fairly good and life can be reasonably settled. The almost lunatic immigration controls

resorted to by nations of the world is also a consequence of the powerful nations, especially of the West, being unwilling to take responsibility for identifying and disciplining (say by financial control measures) bad governments which systematically violate human rights. On the other hand some western nations have adopted purblind policies which encourage bad governments and support banditry in the name of freedom. The reasons for these are complex and hardly make sound economic sense. But there is undoubtedly a racist element in this - a gut reaction to other people questioning what a section of white society has taken for granted for a few generations: that the world and its people are theirs to dispose. US machinations in the tragedy of Indo-China is an example of this. When a Shi-ite suicide bomber attacked a US naval base in Lebanon in December 1982 causing the US to withdraw, the hapless Lebanese population was given an airborne gift of 300 16 inch shells by the US feet. Though US servicemen have been attacked in Europe such reprisals are inconceivable.

The Sri Lanka government, kept afloat by Western aid, used much of its resources to generate corpses and refugees rather than capital. It spent valuable resources purchasing arms and in giving dinners to the UN Human Rights Sub-Commission than in tackling poverty and malnutrition. The scenario is being played out in Central America and elsewhere. Only it is several times worse. The US is now said to have a population of at least 10 million Hispanic illegals (mainly from Central America and Mexico). Our small country too has the distinction of having created 200,000 external refugees. If this trend in refugees continues, the West will be turning a manageable external problem into an unmanageable internal problem.

Unless the West takes a lead in changing the economic and political order in the world, immigration officials are going to be with us and they are likely to become more obtuse. Be patient with them.

Publications Received

WORKERS MARXIST REVIEW

Marxist League-Vol.I-No.1 July 1985. 75, Korlawella, Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. Price - Rs. 5.00

DALIT VOICE - The Voice of the Persecuted Minorities.

Vol.4 - No.19 - July 16-31, 1985. Price Re.1.

Published by the Dalit Sahitya Academy,

109/7th Cross Palace Lower Orchards, Bangalore 566003, India.

EVELYN MY FIRST FRIEND AND OTHER POEMS

by Basil Fernando, 51/2, Sivali Lane, WATTALA, SRI LANKA. ".....Fernando has tutored himself into good English, into a kind of language, that is simple, natural, concrete and spontaneous." — NAVASILU 1976.

"POAR NIRUTHAMUM POIMAIGALUM,

(Ceasefire and falsehoods), Sugantham Publications, University of Jaffna, Jaffna Analyses the effectiveness and the future of the ceasefire; the role and the stance of the militants are also discussed.

Linking the North and the East

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

President Jayewardene has said that the Northern and Eastern Provinces cannot be linked, as it will be dividing the country.

Premier Premadasa has supported him and said that the division of the country will never be allowed.

The present division of the Island into provinces was done during the colonial times when administration of the whole island from the centre was the easiest way to administer colonial rule and have control over the whole island. Now that the people of Sri Lanka are politically free, it is open to them to make what changes they think are desirable.

Two races have lived in Sri Lanka for centuries, the Tamils in the North and East and the Sinhalese in the rest of the Island. To recognise the existence of two separate races with a different language, religion and culture living in the same land is not to divide the country. Great Britain is a classic example. In it live the English, Scotch, Welsh. Though they all speak the same language, have the same religion and culture, they live in strictly demarcated portions of the island and will stoutly resist any division of country occupied by them. And yet it has not led to a divided Great Britain. In fact it has led to a united people and they pointedly call themselves the United Kingdom—U. K., as we all refer to her.

The attempt to divide the Tamils in the North and East will lead to a feeling of frustration on the part of the Tamils, which will not be conducive to evolving a United Sri Lanka.

Dr. R.W.C. Thambiah

Jaffna

SINHALA JOURNAL A MUST

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

The eyes of the international community and the peace-loving people of this country are now focussed on the Thimpu talks.

But whatever solution that may be evolved at Thimpu will only be a bourgeois solution, which at best, can only ease the prevailing tension. The final solution will have to await the emergence of a Socialist set-up. Nevertheless, the people are prepared to welcome and accept with the utmost alacrity any solution that will afford them a breathing-space that will enable the restoration of amity among the estranged communities and normalcy.

A change in the form of Government, for instance, from unitary to federation or even the introduction of Regional autonomy within a unitary form of government, will be tantamount to changing of pillows to cure a headache; what is required is that any change in the political framework, must be basically built upon a Socialist foundation.

There are federal forms of Government like the United States, India and South Africa, where rights of the minorities, though constitutionally guaranteed, are a veritable mockery in practice. The Negroes in the U.S. are virtually treated as untouchables, unapproachables and unseeables in practice, while the Puerto Ricans and the Red Indians are deprived of their fundamental rights. In South Africa, apartheid rules the roost, backed by the Imperialists. India, with various races and a multitude of tribes and scheduled castes, is no better.

The question is not whether a country is federal or unitary, but

grievances to the Sinhala people down South, through a widely circulated Sinhala journal, which in due course will pay high dividends.

Nelliady

V. Mahalingam

EMULATE PUNJAB ACCORD

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

We all fervently desire the Government to act with boldness as well as foresight to pave the way for a credible and durable solution to the National Question.

All parties concerned should strive for a complete success this time.

The admirable statesmanship of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in solving the Punjab crisis should be an example to our leaders. With political will, nothing is impossible. If our President leads the Sri Lanka team, a tangible solution can emerge.

S. Jeyaratnam

Chavakachcheri

LETTERS

REIGN OF TERROR

Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

Reference the news item titled "SRI LANKA LAND OF REFUGEES" which appeared in your esteemed journal of 10th August 1985, I wish to point out an important omission.

The historic village by name "THENNAMARAVADI" (Then-nan - Marapu + Adi—the descendants of Pandiyas, the early legal settlers from South India), geographically lies on the border between the northern and the eastern province in the Trincomalee district bounded by Padaviya scheme, Parayanaru channel, Kokkilai Lagoon and Pulmoddai in the Kutchaveli A.G.A division. It had a population of 125 Hindu families, consisting of 800 individuals approximately.

On the 31st of December 1984, the entire population were made to flee the village leaving behind worthy dwellings, valuable belongings including new tractors, livestock and poultry numbering in thousands, vast acreage of paddy

ready for harvesting and subsidiary food crops. These had either been set ablaze or looted. Even the Post Office, School, Co-op stores, temple and library were not spared by the looters. Nearly fifteen people including women were murdered in cold blood. The entire population left when unidentified armed hoodlums unleashed a reign of terror and are presently accommodated in several refugee camps at Mullaitivu, undergoing immense hardship. Unlike others places affected in the eastern province, this village Thennamaravadi is the only village now completely deserted without a single human being.

S. Vyramuthu

(Ex-Grama Sevaka, Thennamaravadi and presently a refugee)

Thondaimanaru

STRIKE, A SACRED TOOL

The Editor

SATURDAY REVIEW

It was heartening to read in the newspapers the President's warning to partymen: "MPs should not be power-drunk."

We, the peace loving, duty-conscious people of Sri Lanka should be grateful to him for the challenge thrown to his own partymen. In the light of this warning I understand that they are going to be more duty-conscious and work hard for the good of the people, as the next election is only a few years away.

Against the same background, it is interesting to read the letter of Mr. H. N. Fernando, the General Secretary of the Ceylon Teachers' Union, in the Saturday Review of 13th July, 1985 regarding the plight of the July 1980 strikers.

The strike is a sacred tool in the hands of the workers, teachers and the down-trodden masses.

It is fitting that we congratulate the workers of Kahagalle Estate, Haputale, for standing together united in a three-week old strike to win their self-respect.

I being a Sinhalese, boldly say that no Sinhalese man has any right to slipper a Tamil estate worker on the face or even threaten to do so. So also, no Tamil has any right to insult a Sinhalese person.

Whether Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim or Burgher, everyone has a right to self-respect as a man among men in equality, justice and truth. This is the basic principle in the tenets of all the great religions.

Let those in power, in whatever form and in whatever state, know that their power is for service not to themselves but for the common good of all.

Strikes make those in power think that everything is not well with society. If everything was well, that is there would no be any strikes, if those in power had done their duty well.

Fr. Mathew G. E. Silva

Boragas

LEST WE FORGET...

In 1961, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party made political capital of the accord reached between the late Mr. Dudley Senanayake, leader of the United National Party Government, and the late Mr. S. J. V. Chelvanayakam, leader of the Federal Party, on the ethnic issue — just as the UNP itself did in 1958, when the SLFP Government led by the late Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike signed an agreement with Mr. Chelvanayakam.

In both instances, the settlements had to be scrapped and the people in Sri Lanka, had to pay dearly for the perfidy of their politicians. The SLFP is up to its tricks again.

There is no other explanation for the formation of the Sinhalese Buddhist "National Front" with Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike as the axis.

Mrs. Bandaranaike cannot forget that it was the introduction of standardisation for university admissions — through her Minister of Education, Mr. Badiuddin

Mahmud — in 1970 that gave birth to the students' movement in Jaffna.

In 1972, she had a wonderful opportunity to settle the ethnic issue while enacting Sri Lanka's first home — made Constitution. But she refused to yield an inch — prompting the Federal Party to withdraw from the Constituent Assembly, with Mr. Chelvanayakam lamenting that "the new Constitution has given everything to the Sinhalese and nothing to the Tamils.... Only in a state of our own can the Tamil people live with self respect and dignity."

That was 13 years ago, when there was no "terrorism" in the land.

Then followed the formation of the Tamil United Liberation Front, combining the Federal Party, the Tamil Congress and the Ceylon Workers' Congress.

But the "separatist slogan did not enter Sri Lanka's political lexicon until 1976", as recorded in the booklet "Sri Lanka Beyond Conflict" issued by the UNP Government after the July 1983 Holocaust.

This was a reference to the resolution adopted by the TULF at its convention held at Vaddukoddai that year, setting Tamil Eelam as its goal.

In the meantime, the students' movement had begun to turn militant. On suspicion, 42 youths were taken into custody and held without trial for long periods, some for nearly five years. Out of their ranks sprang the leaders of the present militant groups.

The first victim was the pro-SLFP Mayor of Jaffna, Mr. Alfred Durayappah, who was killed in 1975.

Now, Mrs. Bandaranaike claims to have a "solution" to the ethnic problem. If so, for God's sake, please come out with it — instead of waiting until the SLFP is returned to power, if ever, to implement it. For then it might be too late: she may be President of only part of Sri Lanka!

It would be well for Mrs. Bandaranaike to remember that 1985 is not 1971, that is, if she is thinking of a military solution. Then she was up against an untrained band of youths, armed with only pop guns and tin-bombs and minus such simple gadgets like walkie-talkies!

Her son, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, Leader of the Opposition, has said (according to "The Island" of 10th August 1985) that "a problem that could have been tackled with the thumb had been so badly and hopelessly neglected that even an axe could not do it now."

Few politicians have spoken truer words in recent times. How true! But also how tragic!

EASTERN PROVINCE...

(Continued from page 2)

Britain, colonial office, Ceylon : Report of the Special Commission on the Constitution imd 3131 Page 31.)

The subsequent Soulbury Commission Report (Ceylon: Report of the Commission on Constitutional Reform. 6697) observed:

When political issue arises, the populace as a whole tends to divide, not according to the economic and social issues which in the West would ordinarily unite individuals belonging to a particular class, but on communal lines. It is this factor which make difficult the application of the principles of Western Democracy to Ceylon.

Nevertheless the report failed to recommend adequate safeguards for the minority which was reflected in the constitution. Lord Soulbury has time and again, both, publicly and in private communication confessed upon the errors in both his commission findings and the Constitution he recommended. In his foreword to the book 'Ceylon, a Divided Nation' by B H Farmer Soulbury states :

The commission, of course, had a knowledge of the age long antagonism between these two communities but might have been less hopeful of a solution had Mr. Farmer's book been available to underline the deplorable effect of the centuries of troubled history upon the Ceylonese

of today. Needless to say the consequences have been a bitter disappointment to myself.

In a letter which he wrote subsequently to Professor C. Suntharalingam he regrets :

In the constitution I recommended, there seemed to me at that time to be ample safeguard for minorities — but section 29 has not been as efficacious as I hoped and now I wish I had recommended a "Human Rights clause as in the Constitution of India — and elsewhere. (Eylom : Beginning of Freedom Struggles with Candid Comments and Criticisms by Lord Soulbury).

Indeed and precisely from this human angle we of the Eastern Province, hailing from Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Amparai Districts vehemently protest that the traditional Tamil Homeland of the Eastern Province must be brought to the negotiating table and not be dismissed with the wave of a hand as Bhandari seems to imply.

We emphasize the human angle from the experience of the communal and racist riots engineered by the Sinhala racist politicians and carried out by the Sinhalese Colonists settled in the Traditional Tamil country of the East in Trincomalee and Batticaloa and Amparai Districts. At the receiving end have been the poor Tamil

people who have lived in these areas traditionally. And during these days of Elephantine tiger-hunt the forces too have joined hands to humiliate and discipher the Tamil population from our traditional habitat of Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Amparai Districts. It is from this bitter experience that we Tamils of the Eastern province persist in our protest that colonisation of East by the Sinhalese must cease and our traditional land be restored to us Tamils to be administered by ourselves.

That the colonisation of Tamil land by the Sinhalese has been a key factor in the racial riots is, in fact, the conclusion of Tarzie Vittachi, himself a Sinhalese. In his book, (Emergency the story of the Ceylon Race Riots) he raises the question "why did it happen?" and answers it himself. I quote :

The most persistent and most prickly questions were : what had been the cause of communal troubles? Had they been organised or had they occurred spontaneously without any drive or direction from anyone?

The short answer to the first question is that the cause of the communal troubles must be sought in time, circumstances and events far removed from the riots of 1958. The short answer to the second question "were the riots organised or spontaneous?" is that the truth is somewhere between these two explanations.

After advancing the reason for the racial riots of 1958 in the Economic superiority of the minority over the majority, he concludes to another factor, namely, colonisation that had contributed to the racial riots of 1958. This reasoning is more valid now for the racial riots of subsequent years. It is worth quoting Tarzie Vittachi:

When liberal minded people ask nostalgically of the glorious past of forty or fifty years ago when the Sinhalese and Tamil leaders such as Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan fought shoulder to shoulder with Sinhalese like F.R. Senanayake and Burghers like Sir Hector Van Cuylenburg, they rarely ask themselves the question that must logically follow. What is the difference between then and now? The answer to this question will indicate the real issue at the bottom of the race troubles.

Thirty years ago, for that matter, ten years ago, Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers of Ceylon meant the same thing when they spoke of being independent of foreign control in managing Ceylon's affairs, or freedom from domination by Whitehall or of an indigenous culture decayed by antiquity and ill-use but uncontaminated by Western modes and forms which had dominated South and South-East Asia for four hundred years.

(To be continued)

Saturday Review

SRI LANKA

RELAY DEATH FAST IN WELIKADE

Three out of the five Tamil political prisoners who began a protest death fast at Welikade prison on 8th August are unconscious.

These political prisoners who were transferred from Tangalle to Welikade Prison, began the death-fast campaign to protest their continued illegal detention without trial even though more than 18 months have passed since they were taken into custody.

The fasting detenus are Sellathurai Ganesharatnam alias Suresh, a Science Faculty undergraduate of the Peradeniya University, Karunakaran alias Vadivel of Vavuniya, Don Cyril Antony, Poopalapillai Yogendrarajah and Manoharan alias Prabhu. A sixth detenu who joined the fast, Thavarajah of Araiampathi, has since been released.

Ganesharatnam, Karunakaran and Don Cyril Antony are in an unconscious state in the Prison hospital. Yogendrarajah is reported to be in a very weak condition.

The detenus propose to fast in pairs till their demands are met.

Here's the translation of a letter written by a detenu at Welikade, dated 9th August. The writer's name is withheld:

"I am writing this letter under critical circumstances. Apart from enforcing the brutal laws, the authorities impose on us brand new 'laws' and 'acts', according to their whims and fancies."

"Besides all these, many of us here are being detained for well over 18 months, which is contrary to the Prevention of Terrorism Act. So far, we have not been produced in courts, no inquiries have been held and no action has been taken at all."

"We informed the Prison administration and the authorities concerned about this but nothing happened."

"At last we informed the Ministry of Defence that we would start a fast unto death campaign from 8th August until our reasonable demands are met."

"Our demands are that those in custody for 18 months should either be released or produced in the courts."

"As there was no reply, we started our struggle on 8th August."

"In the first phase of our struggle, a science student from the Peradeniya University Sellathurai Ganesharatnam (Suresh) and Karunakaran from Vavuniya started their fast on 8th August."

"Myself and other political prisoners will follow in turn."

VAVUNIYA..

segaran(27), C. Sellathurai (38), S. Nagalingam (33), Muniyandy (34), S. Nadarasapillai (42), S. Ramaraj(45), V. Govindaraj(40), P. Vilvarajah (22), V. Thevathas (20), Mahalingam Pathmini (30), Mahalingam Stella (12), Mahalingam Thanaluxmy (8), Mahalingam Mahaluxmy (5), Mahalingam Sasikala (2),

At Trincomalee, on Saturday, 17th August, Security Forces, both in civils and in uniform had allegedly entered houses and fired at men, women and small children.

DELHI FEELS LET DOWN

For the present, the Thimpu talks on which millions of people in Sri Lanka and abroad had pinned their hopes, have stalled.

The excuse of President Jayewardene's Government is that the militant groups had not observed the cease-fire as agreed upon. This is a flimsy excuse, to say the least.

Below is a commentary in "THE HINDU" of 19th August by G. K. Reddy on the Thimpu talks:

The new policy-makers in Delhi, who have been giving the benefit of doubt to the Sri Lankan President Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, hoping that he could be persuaded or placated to adopt a more helpful attitude towards the Tamil problem, are now feeling dismayed and badly let down by him.

They now realise, much to their embarrassment, that the wily old President of Sri Lanka has gone back on his promise to give the Tamils the substance of autonomy and has started toying once again with his totally unacceptable scheme for token devolution.

The current Indian efforts are directed at preventing a complete breakdown of the Thimpu talks and keep some sort of dialogue going between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil leaders, if only to avert the danger of renewed violence. It is with this objective in view that the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Romesh Bhandari, has been asked to find some way out of this tangled situation to enable the Tamil leaders to return to the negotiating table without compromising their position.

After Mr. Bhandari returns to Delhi and reports to him on what exactly happened at Thimpu the Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, will probably speak to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene on the telephone to

urge him to adopt a more constructive approach to these negotiations. Mr. Jayewardene is likely to be told that the talks have not moved forward because the limited devolution offered by the Sri Lankan delegation has fallen far short of what had been promised by him during the summit talks in Delhi on the basis of which the Government of India had prevailed upon the Tamil militants and moderates to seek a negotiated settlement.

The Sri Lankan Government is reported to be proceeding on the assumption that the Tamil militant groups continue to be divided over the very concept of autonomy within a united Sri Lankan State, leading to a virtual abandonment of the ideal of Eelam. Its strategy is evidently aimed at pushing these militants into a corner and compelling them to take up a rigid stand in the hope of provoking the Government of India into denying them the advantage of functioning from Madras.

But Mr. Jayewardene and his advisers are making the big mistake of imagining that India is going to walk into this trap and withdraw its support to the Tamil cause. On the contrary, there is considerable disappointment in Delhi that Mr. Jayewardene has clearly gone back on his commitment by shying away from the idea of fuller autonomy for the provinces.

According to reports reaching Delhi, the leader of the Sri Lankan delegation, Mr. Hector Jayewardene, was in frequent contact with his brother in Colombo since yesterday seeking fresh instructions on what more could be offered to enable the Tamil leaders to return to the negotiating table. The Indian Foreign Secretary has been pressing him to come forward with an enlarged package approximating to what had been contemplated in Annexure "C" to give the offer at least the semblance of substantial devolution.

There have been some disquieting reports from Colombo that the Sri Lankan Government has been utilising the ceasefire to reorganise and reequip its trigger-happy security forces.

At a time when the new Government in Delhi was inclined to take a more sympathetic view of Mr. Jayewardene's concerns and constraints, his latest bid to wriggle out of his solemn commitment to offer fuller autonomy to the Tamil minority has shaken India's faith in him. It is going to be extremely difficult for Mr. Gandhi to rely on his assurances if the Sri Lankan delegation in Thimpu is not going to come forward with a more credible scheme for greater devolution.

Among those killed are reported to be - Thiruchelvam (35), Manickam (60), Kanganthevi (32), Manickam (65), Nageswari (40) Sasikala (1 year and 2 months) Jeyanthi (12) Inpam (6), Sankar (10) and Ravindran (1 year).

The following were reportedly injured - Nalini (12), Amutha (18), Sasikala (28), Vanitha (3), Lalitha (7), Sasikala (2 years), Isakimuthu (74) and Pasupathi (50).

While on their way after this massacre, the forces were reported to have shot people on the road. Many were killed or wounded at Anpuvalipuram and Kanniya and some houses were set on fire.

(Continued from page 1)
has told Reuters in New Delhi that none of the guerilla groups was responsible for the blast. He accused the Sri Lankan Security Forces of having planted and detonated the mines, and later massacred some 200 Tamils.

Here's a list of the names, received so far, of those killed in Vavuniya:

Thambimuthu, Murugesu Krishnarajah, Thirumani Kathiramalai (25), P. Balachandran (64), Sellamma Balachandran (55), A. Ponniah (35), A. Thevasagayam, N. Nadarajah, P. Pushpakanthan (10), M. Samiluxmy (60), Sutharsan (8), Jeganatha (7), Singaravelu Sivalingam (14), Ranjan (8), G. Singaravelu (60), K. Sandra-