

The Sansoni Commission Evidence

The Story of the Sri Lanka Race Riots 1977

WHAT THE S.P. TOLD THE S.I.

(according to the S.I.):—

No 3.

Saturday September 2, 1978

Re. 1

A LITTLE COMMENT on reporting styles!

On August 24, 1978, when our very first issue was only four days warm, all three English morning newspapers published reports on the reference made to us before the Sansoni Commission of Inquiry. In our last issue, we carried the relevant portions of the three newspaper reports.

The "SUN" under the sub-head "PAPER ON COMMISSION" said, *inter alia*, "The Commissioner said he too had got a copy that morning and asked Mr. Tennekoon to take the matter up with the Attorney General".

The "CEYLON DAILY NEWS" said "The Commissioner directed Senior State Counsel, Mr. P. Tennekoon to refer to the Attorney General a special publication called - "Sansoni Commission Evidence", published in English for necessary action."

The "CEYLON DAILY MIRROR" said: "...The one-man Commissioner Mr. M. C. Sansoni directed Senior State Counsel to consult the Attorney General as to what steps if any should be taken in regard to the publication."

We now take pleasure in giving OUR readers an ACCURATE, AUTHENTIC REPORT of the relevant portion of the proceedings :-

Mr. LUXMAN RANASINGHE: Might I be permitted to bring to Your Honour's notice that there is a publication issued under the heading "Sansoni Commission Evidence".

COMMISSIONER: I was shown a copy this morning.

Mr. TENNEKOON: With your Honour's permission, I will take up this matter with the Attorney General.

MR. LUXMAN RANASINGHE: We are bringing this matter to Your Honour's notice so that Your Honour can take the necessary action.

COMMISSIONER: I cannot take any action. I think the Senior State Counsel will discuss this matter with the A. G.

MR. LUXMAN RANASINGHE: This publication gives the view of one side only when the Commission is sitting.

COMMISSIONER: Is this a re-print of the evidence?

MR. TENNEKOON: Yes, Sir, with certain diagrams.

COMMISSIONER: Newspapers have been publishing the evidence.

MR. LUXMAN RANASINGHE: There are comments also. There is an editorial also, Sir.

MR. RUTHRAMOORTHY: There are no comments, Sir.

MR. TENNEKOON: I will take up this matter with the A. G. and let the A. G. decide on this matter.

COMMISSIONER: Yes. —The Editor

'I HAVE SEEN SEVERAL SUCH COMMISSIONS'

Mr. Thillaiampalam Thamotharam, Sub-Inspector of Police, Chunnakam, giving evidence before the Commission in Jaffna, said that during August last year, he was O. I. C. Crimes, Jaffna. He was serving under the then Superintendent of Police, Jaffna, Mr. A. S. Seneviratne

Mr. Thamotharam said that he told the S. P. on one occasion that he intended going before the proposed Commission (the Sansoni Commission) and giving evidence about the "utter disregard and indiscipline among the Police personnel". Said Mr. Thamotharam: "The S. P. Mr. Seneviratne took this matter very indifferently and told me not to worry about these things. He said he was a person who had seen several commissions including Royal Commissions..... I then turned back and came off."

D. I. G. of the range was Mr. Ana Seneviratne.

Q. When you talk of Jaffna District, what is the area that you refer to, where does it commence and where does it end?

A. It commences at Point Pedro and ends at Elephant Pass. The District in Police language is called the Jaffna Division.

Q. How many police stations are there in the Jaffna Division? A. About 9 or 10.

Q. On Monday will you be able to give the Commission the exact figure? A. Yes.

SUB-INSPECTOR'S EVIDENCE

Here is the complete text of the evidence given by Mr. Thamotharam.

I am here on summons issued by this Commission. I received the summons yesterday. On receipt of the summons I went and consulted my lawyer Mr. Somasunderam this morning. I have with me a statement which I am going to produce to this Commission. (The statement is marked XII) After concluding my evidence, I will sign the statement XII. I am now 56 years old. I joined the police service in the year 1942 as a police constable. In the year 1957 I was promoted as a Sergeant. I was promoted as a Sub-Inspector in 1971. I have served in Colombo, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Hatton, Maskeliya and Ratnapura.

Q. you have served in several districts and in some of these districts, the predominant elements of the population were Sinhalese, the others were Indian Tamils and the others were up country Sinhalese?

A. Yes.

Q. So, you have worked in all parts of this country?

A. Yes. This is the second time I am serving in Jaffna. I came to Jaffna on 1. 1. 1973. On the first occasion I served in 1967.

Q. When you came to Jaffna on the current tour of duty in 1973 what were the stations in Jaffna you were posted to? A. I was the O. I. C. Gurunagar. Then as O. I. C. Crimes, Jaffna. That is from 1. 7. 74 up to 7. 10. 77. In October, 1977 I was sent on special duty to Kopay and I was there for 3 months up to the end of December and thereafter I was posted to Chunnakam as O.I.C from 1st January, 1978. In the month of August, 1977 I was in Jaffna town as O. I. C. Crimes.

In August, 1977 my immediate officer was H.Q.I. Mr. Gunasekera. My A. S. P. was Henry Silva. Mr. A. S. Seneviratne was the S. P.

Q. Police personnel of all ranks, from constables up to officers, roughly about how many in the Jaffna Division? Can you give an approximate figure?

A. I can say roughly about 600 or 700.

Q. And also within that group of 600 or 700, are you able to say approximately what percentage Sinhalese, what percentage Muslims?

A. Sinhalese officers are in the majority; about 90 percent and balance, of course will be from the other communities.

Q. On this question; you may tell us how many A. S. Ps were there in Jaffna; you have referred to one Silva?

A. Besides him there was A. S. P. Mr. Noor Deen.

Q. And his office was in Jaffna town? A. Yes.

Q. Was there any officer above the rank of Sergeant who to your knowledge was transferred in the month of August from anywhere else to Jaffna?

(Continued on Page 2)

"Those who do not remember the past are condemned to relive it"

— Santayana - American philosopher 1863-1952

'INTERDICTED P. C. CARRIED A RIFLE'

(Continued from Page 1)

A. There had been some transfers, but I cannot say their names. I know one Inspector from Madawachiya was transferred.

Q. When was he transferred? was it in August?

A. I am not certain.

Mr. THAMOTHARAM: S. I., (Contd.)

"On the day the results of the elections were announced, on the same night or the day after, there had been an incident where some police officers were alleged to have gone in front of the Municipal Council Buildings, Jaffna, and upset the Coomaraswamy statue. I did not see this incident but I heard of this on the following day. There had been a talk in the police station that Kariyawasam and others had done it. I heard of this the same night and on the following day I came to know that S. I. Kariyawasam and S. I. Peramuna had done this. They mentioned the name of another officer whose name I cannot remember. Thereafter it is also learnt that they had gone to a boutique—Woodlands, along Hospital Road, and had some eatables and subsequently they had not paid for it.

H. Q. I. summoned Anaicottai P. C.s

In August I am unable to say the date the carnival started. On 12th night and 13th morning I came to know there had been an incident at the carnival between some police officers from Anaicottai and some of the people on duty there. Regarding this incident I came to know the H. Q. I. had summoned the officers from Anaicottai and their statements had been recorded by another officer under his directions and it is on record in my crime branch. The statements were recorded in the Crime Branch I.B.

Injured Constable in hospital

"Subsequently, on the following day on the 14th morning, I was asked by the H. Q. I. to investigate into a case where some police officers attached to the Chavakachcheri police had been assaulted on the carnival grounds. I then went to the General Hospital, Jaffna and recorded the statement of a police constable whose number I cannot give and I gave a message to the Chavakachcheri police to record the statement of the P. C. who had got himself admitted to the Chavakachcheri Hospital,

"Subsequently this inquiry was taken over by S. I. Gurusamy, if I am not mistaken, as I was busy with a shooting case of some police officers on the night of the 14th. On the 15th morning when I was in quarters there had been a telephone call from Sgt. Thuraisingham to the effect that a bus conductor and some others had been assaulted and a lorry had been damaged near Muniappar Temple.

At the Muniappar temple area

"I immediately came to the station and went for inquiry. I went near the Muniappar (front) Temple and observed some stones scattered on the ground and pieces of the windscreen of the lorry lying on the road. I made a search for the assailants but I could not get at them. About the assault on a conductor I went up to the bund along the road—Munneswaran Road, but I could not find the injured. I went to the hospital and he was there. His trousers and shirt were soaked in mud and water. A C. T. B. conductor was there and he gave his name as Jesusdanan. The medical authorities had attended on him and he was complaining of pain.

Saw P. C. Bandara in hospital

"I turned round and saw P. C. Bandara who had been shot at the Puttur junction. He was brought to the hospital. He was in bed. I inquired from him and he said three youths fired at the police party and he sustained gun shot injuries the previous night. It is at that time there had been an order by Mr. Noordeen, A. S. P., who was acting for Mr. Henry Silva for me to proceed and take up inquiries. I was asked to proceed to Kopay.

"I immediately went to the alleged scene of incident and started the investigation and I was fully engaged on that on the 15th. I returned home round about 8 or after 8. On the 16 morning I came to the station in order to proceed to Kopay and continue the inquiry in order to find the assailants in that case. I made my out-entry and I was in the station. I saw a security officer dressed in uniform. He was there to make a complaint against some police officers who had gone the previous night in a jeep and burnt or damaged a building. He had a piece of

paper. I found the jeep number written on that. It was the number of a jeep attached to the Jaffna police station. As I was engaged in the shooting case I did not want to take up that. I directed him to the H. Q. I. who would direct an officer to record his statement.

A. S. P. Noordeen walked in

"When I was about to leave I saw Mr. Noordeen coming to the station. At the entrance he made a loud noise saying, "Police officers are attacked in the Town. What are you all doing here?" That is what the inspector said. I saw the H. Q. I. in his office, instructing the reserve to blow the siren and the police officers came in civil. They were put into a vehicle. They were armed and they went out. Among them I saw P. C. Ranasinghe who was under interdiction getting into the vehicle armed with a rifle. The time, I cannot say, might have been

my quarters. Then I got a call from the Station asking me to call over at the Station stating that there was another incident of a case of shooting and they wanted me to come to the Station.

Another case of shooting

The S. P. was in the Head quarter Inspector's office and he asked me to make an observation of the jeep. It was on the night of the 16th; the time was about 10 or 10-30. He asked me to make an observation of the vehicle. The vehicle did not go on that shooting incident. Two Police officers had received gun shot injuries; one of them was an office P. C., of mine by the name Alwis.

"I inquired from them and they told me that they took the R. P. C., who had sustained injuries on the 16th as a result of an assault by the public to leave him at his house at Manipay

not to allow anyone to come to the road, and to be firm.

"Thereafter in the evening of 17th I sent my son to buy some "gotukola" from the market. He said that when he was passing the rear gate of the Police Station some Police officers attacked him; they had assaulted not only my son but several others who were passing along the road when they were identified as Tamils. I complained to A.S.P., Noordeen about this incident and he said that he would look into it.

My son was assaulted

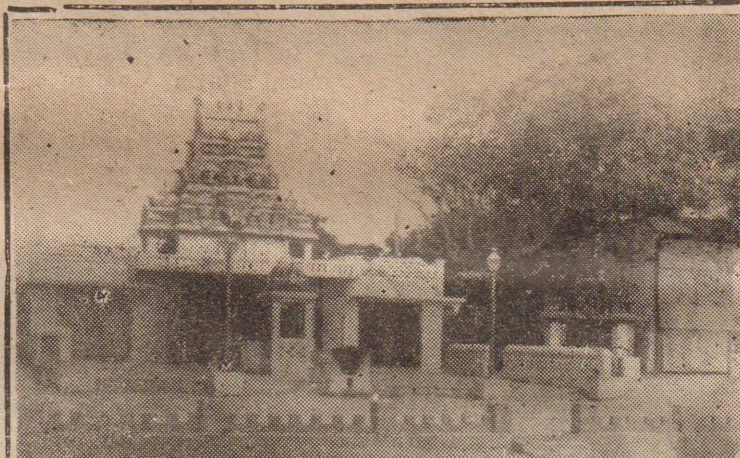
"Then on the 17th at about 9-30 or 10, Headquarters Inspector, Mr. Gunasekera, wanted me to perform Station Duty stating that on the previous night he had broken rest. I agreed and I came to the Station to perform this duty. I did not go anywhere. The S. P., Mr. Seneviratne, who was in the office of the Head quarters Inspector told me to go round the station and tell the men on duty at the points to wear their numerals as the Junior Minister, Mr. Werapitiya, who was at "Palm Court", might drop in there at any time.

I told them to wear the numerals

"I then conveyed this message to the Police officers who had been on duty at the Beach Road rear gate and at the front gate to the Station. Some of them collected their numerals from their pockets and some said that they had left them in the barracks. I told them to collect them and wear them.

"Then I went to the third point at the junction of Beach Road and the road that leads from the Station to the Fort. From there the road leads to Pannai. There were three P.C.s and I told them the instructions which I had conveyed to the others. They seemed to be not happy about my advising them to do so. At about 1 o'clock, I went round and checked the Police Officers on duty at the rear gate and main gate. When I went to the third place I found them not at the scene. I then searched for them at the Station premises. They were not to be seen. Then I instructed the P. C., in the Charge Room to go and see whether they are in the Fort Barracks. I was in the Charge Room without making an entry to find out what had happened.

(Continued on page 8)



The Muniappar Temple near Jaffna Esplanade:
The alleged scene of many Police assaults

9 or 9-30 a party went — all did not go together — they went one by one.

"S. P., Seneviratne came to the station. One P. C. informed him that there were 30 to 40 persons come to the place where the police officers' quarters are situated. He said that it was unusual and they had come to do some damage. Mr. Seneviratne wanted me to go and see to it. He said, Don't go alone. Take someone else." I took a P. C. and went there but found none and informed Mr. Seneviratne that the information was not correct. He asked me to come to the station and I came back. After a few minutes he wanted me to go back with some others to Pannai and I went there. He wanted me to look after the buildings there.

"I was there till late in the evening till about 8 or 8-30. Then another set of officers were sent there and I came to the Station, made my off entry and went to

and while returning, at Oddumadam somebody fired and two of them had received injuries.

What I found subsequently

"My instructions were only to make observations and to go home. So, I did so. About this incident I have found subsequently - they had made notes - that the vehicle was shot at Pannai where the married quarters are situated. When I asked the P. S., as to why he visited the scene he told me that he was asked by the S. P. Mr. Seneviratne, do so and therefore he did it.

"Thereafter on the 17th morning I came to the station. The whole day I was in the office. There had been a talk to say that some people had attacked Naga Vihare and S. P. Mr. Seneviratne from the Station said — I only overheard it -

EX-D. J. RECALLS TARZIE VITTACHI'S BOOK 'EMERGENCY '58'



**SINNAPPAR THAMBI-
THURAI:** Affirmed.

Retired District Judge.

Mr. KADIRGAMAR: I mark this statement 'X9'.

Q. You are an Advocate of the Supreme Court?

A. Yes.

Q. You were a member of the Judicial Service?

A. Yes.

Q. From when?

A. From about the latter part of 1947 and I retired in 1966.

Q. When you retired you were a District Judge?

A. I was one of the District Judges of Colombo.

Q. Please read your statement?

A. (Reads) "I state that I can speak to certain events that occurred on the 16th of August 1977 and also to a personal experience I went through on 17th August 1977.

In regard to the events of August 1977 I state that at about 8.30 a.m., as I was proceeding past the house of Yogeswaran, M. P. for Jaffna I saw a large crowd gathered within his premises and I entered same and learnt that this crowd were getting restive having been the victims of assaults and harassment of police.

Abused the M. P. in Sinhalese

"When I was listening to their complaints a truck load of police personnel numbering about 30 to 40 in my opinion all armed came and stopped in front of Yogeswaran's house and some of them rushed in and entered the porch of the house and abused Mr. Yogeswaran in Sinhalese which I was not able to follow but the attitude was hostile and their language appeared to be offensive. Then Mr. Yogeswaran came from inside the house and told them that he was in touch with the Prime Minister and wanted them to get out of the house. It is his firmness that made them retreat and get into their vehicle. As the Police Constables entered the premises several people who were within the premises rushed into the house. Thereafter Mr. Yogeswaran requested

Mr. S. Thambiathurai

me to accompany him to various places where the incidents had taken place.

"In regard to the experience that I had on the 17th I state as follows: I have already made a police statement to A. S. P. Dissanayake who came to my house and recorded my statement. I have not got a copy of that statement. I recollect my experience as follows:

'Police aimed guns at us'

"By about 10 or 10.30 a.m. Mr. Navaratnam, Attorney at law took his car out a Morris Minor and asked me whether I would join him to go to the hospital to see the injured who had been brought from Anuradhapura. I agreed. Mr. Annalingam the Registrar of Lands also joined us. He was seated in the rear seat. After going and seeing the injured in the hospital we started to go towards our homes. He drove along Palaly road, I was in the front seat. As we crossed the Naga Vihara junction and proceeded about 20 yards we saw five or six policemen all armed standing on the road. As we proceeded they levelled the guns at us; we did not know why they were taking this attitude. Mr. Navaratnam stopped the car. Then these policemen looked inside the car.

"Thereafter I heard the rear dicky hit several times. At one stage I heard the rear windscreen being smashed and small pieces of glass fell on my coat and other parts of my body. While this was going on I was really shaken by this act of lawlessness.

Smashed the windscreen

"At this time I heard Mr. Navaratnam mentioning to them pointing me out he is one of our former District Judges. But yet they continued to hit the car at various places and at certain stage one of the men waved his hand as if to say we can proceed. Mr. Navaratnam started, changed his gear moved his vehicle 2 or 3 feet one of the policemen came right in front of the car and smashed the front windscreen with the butt end of the rifle, and pieces of glass fell all over the body and I escaped a hit by the rifle. Mr. Navaratnam moved the car and proceeded.

"We were badly shocked and shaken up. I reached

home. On the following day, namely, 18th I met the High Court Judge Mr. Cader, and the District Judge Mr. Aseervatham and told them of my experiences. On the following day or a day after that a police truck came and stopped in front of my bungalow and Mr. Dassanayake the A. S. P., came and introduced himself to me and recorded my statement.

Mr. G. P. S. SILVA: No questions.

Mr. KADIRGAMAR: No questions.

'The parting of the ways'

Mr. THAMBITHURAI: With your permission, in view of the fact that I am advanced in age, I have gone through two experiences like this involving my race. Might I be permitted to say my reaction and the way things could be rectified.

"In 1958 Mr. Tarzie Vittachchi in his famous book 'Emergency 1958' - I am sorry that I could not get at this book - at the end of it was posing a question 'Have the Tamils and Sinhalese reached the parting of ways?' With the incidents evidenced in 1977 I was reminded of that question that was posed by Mr. Tarzie Vittachchi.

"From 1958 to August 1977 most of us have been living in high hopes that the parting of ways would not come. I did hope that we could live in contented unity as one nation. The events of 1977 has driven me to think that what was apprehended by Mr. Tarzie Vittachchi in 1958 has become an accomplished fact and parting of ways has come but I do not know whether you would agree. In view of the fact that members of my community had suffered not so much by pain of body but dignity, that I am coming out with these things in the hope that a solution could be found.

COMMISSIONER: Can you suggest any other ways and means of solving this problem?

Mr. THAMBITHURAI: "I would have been very happy to suggest something which would form the basis of such a solution having regard to the events that took place in 1977. It is not so much the fear that the Tamils have but the development of the phobia on the part of the Sinhalese. The events of 1977 has shown that

whoever has been attacked was because he was a Tamil. The only remedy that I can think, I am very happy to say to one before whom I practised at one time and having the pleasure of serving under you, we have

to evolve a way where the Tamil man can live with dignity. After all the Tamils as a community have their traditional homes. They have been happily evolved. Theirs is a unit of their own living together as a nation. That is the only way in which equality among the various races in this country can be achieved. It would be advantageous to the Sinhalese if they leave us severely alone. That is my suggestion.

COMMISSIONER: If you have any other suggestions to make you can let me know.

Yes, thank you.



TARZIE VITTACHI

"EMERGENCY '58: The Story of the Ceylon Race Riots" was probably the most courageous act of publishing achieved by any Ceylonese. The "Manchester Guardian" called it "a valuable report, strenuously impartial".

The book was first published in November 1958 by Andre Deutsch Limited 12-14, Carlisle Street, Soho Square, London W 1.

The publisher's note on the dust jacket said: "... Mr. Vittachi Editor of the 'Ceylon Observer', decided to write as full an account as was possible of the frightening events which convulsed the island last spring, and of conditions since then. This account he brought

to England in August 1958. It could not, under Emergency Law, be published in Ceylon. It is a violently disturbing story by a man to whom considerations of race (he is a Sinhalese) and personal security are unimportant in the light of the old journalistic saw: Facts are sacred, comment is free."

Mr. Vittachi left Ceylon soon after the publication of the book, and has since then gained international recognition as a journalist and incisive commentator on public affairs. While his substantive assignment involves the field of Population Studies Mr. Vittachi is also contributing Editor of "NEWSWEEK", the first Sri Lankan journalist to achieve such distinction.

“NOT A SINGLE KILLED IN THE

Mr. VETTIVELU YOGESWARAN, M.P. for Jaffna, giving evidence before the Sansoni Commission in Jaffna, said that despite heavy provocation the Tamil people had acted with considerable restraint. As regards Jaffna district particularly in the Jaffna electorate, not a single Sinhalese person was killed, and not a single Sinhalese female was molested.

Mr. Yogeswaran was recounting the various incidents that happened in Jaffna beginning with the night of the 13th August. This, according to him, was what transpired on the 16th August, and after:-

“At About 5.15 in the morning I rang the Government Agent Mr. Lal Wijepala and told him that about 50 persons were in the front verandah, that they had a big tale of woes, that the police were running amok and that police had attempted to set fire to the old market. I told him a serious situation was developing and immediate steps must be taken to bring it under control. The Government Agent replied that he was going on circuit to Mulan-gavil and that he would convey my message to the relevant authorities and call me back. I was leaving to the old market immediately and as such I may not be available at home. However around 5.30 the Government Agent rang my home and told my wife that he could not contact the Superintendent of Police but he had informed the Assistant Superintendent of Police Mr. Noor Deen.

I phoned

Mr. Amirthalingam

“At 5.30 a.m. I phoned up Mr. Amirthalingam, the Leader of the Opposition and apprised him of the situation in the town. He told me that he will contact the Prime Minister and also assured me that he will be coming to Jaffna to see me soon,

COMMISSIONER: Where was he?

Mr. YOGESWARAN: He was living at Vaddukoddai. His residence was about 10 miles away from Jaffna.

Inspected damage with Kopay M. P.

Then at 6.15 a.m. I went to the old market and I saw the smashed shops, a portion of the old market burnt, many sign boards smashed the statues damaged. After reaching the old market, around 7 o'clock I sent my car to fetch the M.P. for Kopay Mr. Kathiravetpillai.

Both of us walked along Muneswaram Road and saw the cars damaged. One of the persons in the old market told me that police personnel had come on a truck bearing the number 23 Sri 3977.

“The M. P. for Kopay and I inspected the damage along Muneswaram Road and in the meantime a small crowd had collected around us and I assured them that all necessary steps will be taken by us and asked the crowd to disperse. At about 8 a.m. I went home. I heard later that there were two armed constables who had been chased by the crowd and that here was an incident involving them.

They abused me in obscene words

Mr. Noor Deen, the A.S.P. said that his jeep was damaged with the butt end of the gun snatched from one of the constables. At about 8 a.m. Mr. Kathiravetpillai and I went home. On the way I saw police constables and Sergeants chasing innocent passers-by. On reaching home, I found that about 200 to 300 people had sought refuge in my house, some out of fear and some had come to tell me that police were assaulting everybody. I told them to remain inside the compound and not to stand out.

“Around 8.40 or 8.45 the M. P. for Kopay tried to get the Prime Minister on the phone but could not do so. Then some people came and said that the entire old market and two shops in the new market were set on flames by the police and one or two persons had been shot and their bodies had been removed to the hospital.

“Around 9.30 a.m. while I was in my office, a crowd of about 15 to 20 armed policemen rushed to the verandah. I asked them what they were doing inside my house. They abused me in obscene language. I asked them to clear out of the house as I was about to speak to the Prime Minister. I knew one police officer there, one Mr. Aloysius. I



MR. V. YOGESWARAN

asked Sgt. Aloysius to take his men and get out. They left and Sgt. Aloysius also left after them.

“At about 9.45 a.m. I together with Mr. Thambithurai, a retired D.J. and Mr. T. Kandiah, an ex-M. M.C. went to the hospital and the Medical Superintendent told me that two dead bodies have been brought.

“At about 10.30 or 11 a.m. Mr. Amirthalingam came home. About half an hour later Mr. Amirthalingam, Mr. Dharmalingam and Mr. Nagarajah a former Mayor of Jaffna left to the Old Market to see what was happening there. We had in the mean time been informed that a high-powered team was coming from Colombo and we wanted to acquaint ourselves with the full facts so that we could make representations to them.



MR. LAL WIJEPALA, G.A.

“We went in Mr. Kadiravetpillai's car, and just opposite the hospital, near the O.P.D. we saw a crowd. Road blocks had been set up by placing some stones. A tyre was burning. We went past them and about 15 yards ahead of us there were about 20 to 30 police officers standing in a line.

“As the car approached them they directed their guns

at our car. We stopped the car and were going to reverse when the H.Q.I. Mr. Gunasekera came running asking the police officers to stop. He said, “They are M. Ps. Let them come”. We got out of the car and went near the police officers. The superior officers were in uniform. The others were in uniform but did not have their numerals on. A few were in bannian and shorts. We wanted to go round and see the situation for ourselves.

“A.S.P. Mr. Noordeen told us that bombs were being thrown at the police. Mr. Amirthalingam asked him whether in fact he had seen any bombs being thrown. He said, “No. But the H.Q.I. tells me so”. He asked the H.Q.I. whether any bombs were thrown. He replied “No.” He also said that he had not told the A.S.P. that bombs were being thrown. Mr. Amirthalingam told the A.S.P. that it was this careless talk which cost lives. He said he would take up this with the higher authorities.

You cannot do

this and get away

“About 50 to 70 yards from the police a crowd had lined up along the road. I thought I would walk up to them and ask them to disperse. I had taken one or two steps in the direction of the crowd when I heard Mr. Amirthalingam raising his voice and saying something. He said, “You cannot do this to the Leader of the Opposition and get away. I will take up this matter with the Hon. Prime Minister when I get to Colombo.

“Mr. Dharmalingam was standing there and I asked him what the trouble was and he told me that Mr. Amirthalingam had been assaulted by some police officers. Perhaps seeing this, the crowd became restive. They were shouting and gesticulating. I walked up to the crowd. As I was walking up to the crowd I heard something like gun shots. I went up to the crowd.

They told me that Mr. Amirthalingam had been assaulted and they were moving forward. I told them they could not have seen the assault and in fact nobody was assaulted and I wanted them to go home. They continued to remain there. After pleading with them for about 15 to 20 minutes, I came back and joined Mr. Amirthalingam and Mr. Dharmalingam.

“You dirty dog” said constable

“When I came back Mr. Amirthalingam told me that the police had shot in the direction of the crowd over my head. Subsequent to this all of us went to my home to phone up the authorities in Colombo and inform them of the serious situation that was developing in Jaffna.

“Around 12 O'clock whilst Mr. Amirthalingam and others were trying to get their telephone calls. I saw people who were in the front verandah getting restive and moving into the hall of my house. I went out and saw a jeep parked just outside the gate and about four police constables in bannian and khaki shorts coming toward me. One of them said “You dirty dog, you are responsible for these. I asked him to get out from my house and told him that I would take this matter up with the Superintendent of Police. As they went out of my compound some people inside the compound shouted at them and they took a large stone from the jeep and threw it into my compound.



MR. S. KATHIRAVETPILLAI
M. P. for KOPAY

“Thereafter I heard that a crowd had collected opposite a bakery close by to my house known as Leela Bakery. I took Mr. Thambithurai, walked up to the crowd and asked them to disperse. I met the bakery proprietor, whom I knew well and assured him that no harm will befall him and in any event in case of any trouble he was to contact me immediately.

“Then I walked up to Ariyakulam junction which is very close to Naga Vihare

SINHALESE WAS JAFFNA DISTRICT''

and I saw a crowd there. I asked all of them to disperse. I also requested the people living in that vicinity to be very alert and see that there was no trouble. At least for two or three hours I spoke and there were constant complaints of Police excesses. Around 2 p. m., we were informed that the Deputy Minister of Defence and the Inspector General of Police would be at the Residency round about 4 p. m., and that we could attend the conference.



MR. V. N. NAVARATNAM
M. P. for CHAVAKACHCHERI

"Around 5 p. m., the M.P. for Kopay, the Leader of the Opposition, the M. P. for Manipay, along with some others went to the Residency of the G. A. At the conference we told the Deputy Minister of Defence about the Police excesses in Jaffna and considering their conduct that we thought it unwise to declare a curfew as this might provide cover for further Police excesses.

A. S. P. Dharmarajah telephones

"About 7 p. m., this conference was over and we went home. On the 17th morning we received information that the train that was coming to Jaffna Railway Station was bringing some people who were injured and some refugees. The M. P., for Kopay and I went to the Railway Station. Prior to this we had contacted Deputy Superintendent of the C. T. B. and requested him to send some buses to the Railway Station to transport people.

"When we went to the Railway Station there was a crowd of people there. The M. P., for Kopay and I persuaded the crowd to go away, as we felt that it would be unwise for anybody to be at the Railway Station as the crowd was becoming restive. We telephoned the Station Master at Navatkuli which is about two stations from Jaffna and asked him to stop the

train there and detain all the passengers there. We sent the buses there, collected the passengers in the buses and transported them to their homes. On the 18th or 19th August, Mr. Dharmarajah, A. S. P., who was attached to the Co-ordinating Secretariat in Jaffna telephoned me and wanted some of us to go there as the Co-ordinating Officer had requested that some of us to be present at the King's House at a conference.

Mr. Navaratnam had a flag on his car

"I told the A. S. P., that I had serious reservation about going to King's House because we had to pass the Police Station and we had repeated experience of Police mis-conduct. In this connection I must say that I was also one of those who went with Mr. Amirthalingam to the Prisons about six to eight months prior to this and I was very nearly assaulted and stoned by the Police personnel inside King's House. So knowing this I told the A. S. P., that I had serious misgivings of going there. Mr. Dharmarajah assured us that he would send the Police jeep to escort our car. I said that in any event I would come. Perhaps my misgiving about the Police attitude was correct.

"On the way to the King's House the M. P., for Chavakachcheri, Mr. Navaratnam, had a flag on his car and as we were passing the Police Station the Police Officers came rushing out, hooting vociferously and gesticulating threateningly.

1-40 a. m. : Bus Stand shops aflame

"At the conference we brought this to the notice of the Co-ordinating Officer, Mr. Rudra Rajasingham. He assured that this type of thing would not happen again. On our way back from the conference about one hour later at 6 p. m., while leaving King's House, we found Police Officers, some in uniform and some in civil, lined up on both sides of the road from the entrance to the King's House up to the Police Station hooting and howling at us as before in a planned pre-arranged way. After I went home I telephoned Mr. Suntheralingam who was also attached to the Co-ordinating Officer.

"On 26th August, 1977 around 1.40 a. m., some officials working at the Power House telephoned me

and informed that the row of shops opposite the bus stand were aflame. There was a curfew on this night. I told the officer that I would come there. I telephoned the Hospital immediately and requested them to open the gate to the Nurses Home which is directly opposite my house. After they opened the gate I went to the Nurses Home and through the hospital nearby to the place where the shops were burning. I feared that the fire might spread to the hospital because it was in close proximity.

"I saw Army Officers making a valiant effort to bring down the fire under control. I saw the Headquarters Inspector also there, directing the Police Officers who were carrying buckets of water to that place. Around 4 or 4.30 the fire was brought under control and I returned home.



MR. A. NAGARAJAH,
a former MAYOR

'Tamils acted with restraint'

"Throughout those days there was one redeeming factor and that was that the Tamil people had acted with considerable restraint. As regards Jaffna District, particularly, Jaffna electorate, not a single Sinhalese person was killed or not a single Sinhalese female was molested.

MR. KADIRGAMAR: It may be useful, Sir, if he will give you now the figures of the Jaffna electorate roughly and the extent of the electorate and also the number of Sinhalese who were resident.

MR. YOGESWARAN: I will not be able to give it off hand but I will give it later. The Sinhalese students

at the Jaffna Campus number about 300 or 400 and they were looked after by their fellow Tamil students well and absolutely there was no incident at the Campus.

"But I understood later that two stones were pelted at the buses which took them away from Jaffna. There were a large number of letters written by undergraduates to their friends here and to the owners of the houses where they lodged thanking the owners for the kindness showed to them.

"Your Honour has been authorised to ascertain the causes of this holocaust and suggest remedies. As regards the remedies, Your Honour will be pleased to give us a chance, after the evidence is led, to suggest the remedies that we consider best. I will myself suggest the remedy at the appropriate time, Sir, but as regards the causes, it is my humble view that the causes can only be ascertained by a careful reading of the hostilities of these two communities, the inhabitants of this land.

'80% Jaffna Police knew no Tamil'

"These two communities who occupied this land did not always live in amity and peace and from 1947 onwards, the relation between the two communities had deteriorated due to the action and perhaps sometimes the inaction of the authorities. This is what I consider the far reaching, the long term causes of this holocaust, but as regards the immediate cause of this holocaust, I think it is nothing but appropriate that one should refer to the conduct of the police.

"Eighty per-cent of the police personnel in the north did not understand the language of the people; they had been recruited with no reference to height, weight or character but only by race and a feeling had been given to the members of the police that they could do anything here and get away.

"On the 10th of January, 1974 nine people were killed as a result of police action in Jaffna, but no action was taken. On the contrary, Sir, the A. S. P. who was in charge then was given a pat on the back and promoted. A young boy was shot at Chemanni. This matter is now sub judice, but I will only refer to one fact, Sir. Some of the lawyers who appeared to watch the interests of the deceased, after the two constables had been reman-

ded by the Magistrate, had to go to their homes in a jeep with the Magistrate.

"The immediate cause might have been the carnival, but the steady deterioration of the relationship between the police and the public of the North was the one prime factor. Many letters had been written by Sinhalese students attached to the Jaffna campus to their friends here. At the moment I have about two or three letters with me.

'We are very grateful to you'

MR. KADIRGAMAR: "I can give an idea of what he has in mind, Sir. I have with me a letter written by a Sinhalese student to Mrs. Sathasivam. I think she was staying with Mrs. Sathasivam and perhaps I will read an extract from it. She refers to the incident where the bus was stoned as they were leaving Jaffna. She says "When we got to Anuradhapura, we heard that Anuradhapura people were told that all the Jaffna campus Sinhalese students had been killed by Tamils; therefore they have attacked the Tamil people who were travelling by the mail train. Some of them are sorry about what they did. It is clear that some persons deliberately incited the people to loot and murder. They had spread false rumours about the Jaffna Campus Sinhalese students. Dear teacher, Mrs. Sathasivam, I am very sorry about what happened in Jaffna. During the period, you have been of very help to us. Thank you".

'Salu Sala, CWE were looted'

"In another letter written by Vasantha de Silva to Baladevan, she says "We are very much grateful to you for having taken over the belongings of five of us into your custody without allowing them to be looted. It was good to open the locked cupboards and please do not let waste the food items that could go useless..... (reads)

"So, Sir, these rumour had been spread there that the Sinhalese students had been attacked.

MR. G. P. S. SILVA, Deputy Solicitor General. May I ask a few questions, Sir?

COMMISSIONER: Yes.

(Continued on Page 7)

Journalist says he interviewed the S. P.: Jaffna

**Lourdes Antony Augustine
Saverimuttu : Sworn.**

(Reads) "I say that I am a reporter of the Times Group of Newspapers stationed in Jaffna. I also state that I am the General Secretary of Subhas Tourist Hotel, Jaffna. I was previously in the Public Service attached to the Inland Revenue Department as a clerk for about ten years and I retired prematurely in 1962.

"On the morning of 15th August, 1977 at about 8 o'clock, I believe, I phoned up the then Superintendent of Police, Mr. A. S. Seneviratne to his residence and told him that I would like to come and meet him with regard to incidents that occurred in Jaffna. Mr. Seneviratne informed me that he had been out of Jaffna and had returned from Colombo late the previous evening and therefore he was not aware of the incidents

that had taken place. He told me that he was in a hurry to get to office and suggested to me to come and meet him at 3 p. m., the same day.

"I agreed and at about 3 o'clock I proceeded to his office and at about 3.30 p. m., when I met him I asked him about the carnival incident and he told me that he had given specific instructions to his officers not to go to the carnival in their uniform and he had gathered that Police Officers had gone to the carnival in civil and created some disturbance got themselves involved in a brawl and got injured.

"I next asked him about the Muniapper kovil incident where a C. T. B., employee was said to have been assaulted by Police personnel. He told me that there was an allegation but there was nobody who could identify the Police Personnel

POLICEMEN TURNED UP AT CARNIVAL DESPITE S.P.'S ORDERS

**DR. JOSEPH PATRICK
PHILIPS: Sworn: Medical
Practitioner: Residing at Main
Street, Jaffna.**

I am a medical practitioner practising at No. 106 Main Street Jaffna. I shall read out my evidence from my statement I have typed out. (Witness reads)

The Jaffna Rotary Carnival Exhibition was organised by the Rotary Club and St. Patrick's College Old Boys' Association, Jaffna. I am the Vice President of the Old Boys' Association, St. Patrick's College, Jaffna and Joint Chairman of the Carnival Committee. The Carnival and Exhibition was started on the 30th July, 1977 and went on till 10th August. Three days extension was sought from the S. P. Jaffna who, in turn got the permission from the D.I.G and with his approval the Carnival was extended and the Carnival went on till the 13th of August 1977.

'Buy at least the Children's tickets'

On the 12th of August 1977 there were a few Police Officers from Jaffna and Anaicoddai in civil who tried to enter the carnival grounds without the entrance ticket. The person at the entrance (Mr. Kulenthiran) requested them to buy at least rupee tickets (children's ticket) and enter the grounds stating that the carnival was organised for a good cause, namely, the establishment of a Cancer Treatment Centre in Jaffna, Rotary Community Projects and the maintenance of the St. Patrick's College, Jaffna.



Dr. Philips

These Officers subsequently obtained the tickets and entered the grounds but passed unnecessary remarks at that person who was at the entrance. Later on these police Officers had consumed liquor within the grounds which I am told they had brought, and later entered into an argument with this person who was then within the grounds and slapped the person. There was an uproar from the crowd and the crowd wanted to attack the Police Officers but that person prevented the crowd from doing so.

H. Q. I said S. P. has given orders

The next morning, on 13th August, in view of the incident, I wanted to contact the S. P. Mr. A. S. Seneviratne but unfortunately he was out of Jaffna. I contacted the M. P. for Jaffna and informed him about the incident and he said that he would meet the S. P. Jaffna. I contacted the Headquarters Inspector Mr. Godfrey Guna

sekera and related this incident and told him that something might go wrong on the last day and see that none of these police Officers come to the grounds. He said that already the S.P. had given orders to all Police Officers in the Jaffna District not to go near the grounds nor be seen near the carnival grounds and he further said that he would remind them and that he would send messages to the various Police stations.

He saw blood - stained shirts

On the last day, that is the 13th Saturday night nothing unusual took place until about the closing time, that is, close upon 12 mid night, we saw suddenly there was a noise and the crowd moving towards the exit gate and entrance. At that time I was in the office with the other officers. We from the office came out and saw one or two people from the crowd with blood stained shirts.

Later we inquired, we heard that on the further end of the ground, close to one of the stalls, viz Plaus Stall, there was a fight between some Police Officers in civil said to be from Chavakachchari Police Station with the carnival goers. That was all. Thereafter the crowd disappeared and the carnival was also terminated.

(A copy of this witness' statement is handed over to the commission marked X8)

S. P. SAID : THE TAMILS ARE GOING TO PAY DEARLY FOR INJURING P. C.

responsible for this assault. Mr. Seneviratne stressed on the Kopay incident where a Police Constable had been shot and injured in his hand. Immediately after that he told me that the Tamils are going to pay very dearly for that act.

"At that time I did not comprehend the intent of the statement. However, I thought that there was going to be trouble in the country. I could not expect further information from the Superintendent of Police.

'Relationship not cordial'

"I could not extract further information from the Superintendent of Police and as his relationship was not very cordial, I therefore decided to leave him.

"I then proceeded in the direction of the Jaffna General hospital because I was anxious to contact the C.T.B. official who had been assaulted by the Police. But when I went near the hospital, I gathered that there was tension building up in that area owing to police action and there might be a clash, and so I decided the best thing to do was to go home.

"On the 16th morning round about 7, Mr. A. Sangaran who is the proprietor of Subhas Cafe and the managing Director of Subhas Tourist Hotel came to my residence in his car and informed me about the incidents that had taken place at about 2 a.m. that morning where the Bazaar had been damaged. He told me that some Members of Parliament were there and suggested that I should dress up and accompany him to go to the Bazaar. I immediately got dressed up and went in his car.

Subhas Cafe was damaged

"We parked the car near the Subhas Cafe and we walked up to the old bazaar where we found that the old bazaar had been damaged. There we found M. P. for Jaffna Mr. Yogeswaran and M.P. for Kopay Mr. Kathiravetpillai who were surveying the damage and we joined them in their survey for sometime and later we left them in the old bazaar and

Mr. Sangaran and I proceeded in the direction of the Jaffna General hospital. We stopped for a while near the Subhas Cafe to survey the damage that had been done there. Subhas cafe had also been damaged.

"There was a crowd collected in front of the Cafe and a little while later I saw two reserve police constables coming from the direction of the Jaffna general hospital towards the bazaar. They had the ordinary breech loading gun with them. The crowd immediately gave chase and I did not know whether they assaulted them, but I saw one member of the crowd returning with a gun which obviously had been wrenched over from one of the constables. This person was with his gun almost opposite Subhas Cafe.

Gun flung at

A. S. P.'s jeep

"A little later I saw a police jeep coming from the direction of the Jaffna general hospital. As the jeep came there, I discovered it was A. S. P. Mr. Noor Deen who was driving the jeep; he was in his civil at least I saw him wearing a shirt, the crowd became angry and starting pelting stones at the jeep. The man who was standing near Subhas Cafe flung his gun at the jeep and the gun struck the door of the jeep and it fell on the ground. Mr. Noor Deen who was driving the jeep drove it very fast perhaps to escape.

I was told

S. P. was out

"At that stage I suggested to Mr. Sangaran that it was not safe for us to remain in the place any longer and I told him that it would be better for us to go to his residence. He agreed with me and then the two of us got into the car and we went to Mr. Sangaran's residence.

"At Mr. Sangaran's residence, I made an attempt to contact the S.P. Mr. Seneviratne on the telephone in order to find out whether there was any connection between what he told me the previous afternoon and what had happened that morning. I phoned his office, but I was told that he was

(Continued next Page)

Mr. Yogeswaran's evidence (contd.)

'BURNING TYRES WERE PLACED TO CURB MOBILITY OF POLICE ON RAMPAGE'

(Continued from Page 5)

Q. Were there any state institutions that were damaged?

A. Yes. On the 19th evening I heard that Salusala had been looted and set on fire. The C. W. E. had been looted and set on fire. The Book shop of M.D. Gunasena & Sons had been looted. Some damage had been done to the Building Material Corporation. On the 17th morning I went to see these places and some damage had been done.

Road blocks set here & there

Q. Fairly serious damages?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you hear on the 15th night that the police have arrested certain persons who were alleged to have been looters?

A. Never heard that they were arrested, but I have heard that some persons when they came out of a cinema had been assaulted by the police. If there were cases of arrests, they would have come and seen me.

Q. On the 16th were there road blocks placed at the entrance to the Bazaar area?

A. Not at the entrance, but road blocks had been set up here and there; burning tyres had been put up here and there. Even when I went at 11 a. m. I saw some tyres.

Q. I am asking this because the Magistrate who held the inquest proceedings regarding the death of two persons who were fired at, in the course of his order, says: "Bon-

fires made of burning tyres were placed at road junctions: for what purpose it was done, I don't understand"? Can you recall whether there were bon fires?

A. Bon - fires were there but not close to the town.

Q. You said that not a single Sinhalese person was hurt?

A. I said killed.

Q. Were they harmed or injured?

A. I don't think any Sinhalese was harmed or injured but I am sure that no one was killed.

Q. What about business places?

A. I am aware that one bakery called Chandra bakery had been damaged. That is along Station road. I heard that City Bakery along Hospital Road was also damaged.

It is correct that the Government Agent, Jaffna told me on the morning of the 16th at 5.15 that he was going on circuit.

Q. Did he tell you that he had arranged for this circuit prior to that day?

A. I cannot be certain about that; I cannot remember.

Q. You said on the 16th some police constables came armed into your residence?

A. Yes.

Q. That was about what time?

Bus drivers told to run over bicycles

A. About 9.30 a.m. They came thrice. They came thereafter at 12 noon. Then once again on the 17th. Some youngsters were standing near my house. When they saw the police, they left their bicycles and some of them came into my compound. I was not present at that time. Then the police came there assaulted a young boy who was standing there with the butt end of his rifle. Some buses were parked in front of my house to transport people who were in my premises. Police had called the driver of the C. T. B. bus to drive over these bicycles.

Q. On the 16th night, did you hear that there was an attack in the buffet of the mail train at the Pankankulam Station?

A. Yes, I heard that there was some trouble.

Mr. UNDERWOOD:

Q. Mr. Silva asked you the question about the road blocks. Did you find out from anybody why these road blocks were erected?

A. Yes, subsequently I heard that these burning tyres were placed on the road to affect the mobility of the police who were on with this rampage.

Mr. KADIRGAMAR:

Q. You referred to some bakeries.

Q. Name those bakeries?

A. One is Chandra bakery close to Station road.

Q. Can you recall when it was damaged?

A. Perhaps on the 18th or the 19th

Q. The other bakery?

A. The City Bakery at Hospital Road.

A. Can you assist the Commission by saying when it was damaged?

A. I am not sure, but it must have been on the 18th or the 19th.

Q. I think you will be in a position to give His Honour after the Tea adjournment the figures that I asked for about the Jaffna electorate voting strength, the population figure and also the number of Sinhalese people residing in Jaffna?

A. Yes.

Q. You have told His Honour that to your knowledge no Sinhalese person was killed during that period?

A. Yes.

To Mr. KADIRGAMAR:

Q. Did you hear or was there any report made to you or information given to you that any Sinhalese person was harmed?

A. Yes. But not in Jaffna.

Q. The information was that they were harmed in Palaly?

A. Yes.

Q. Was it one individual?

A. One individual - a C. T. B. driver was shot at.

Q. On about what date?

A. Round about the 19th.

Q. That is the only incident you are aware of?

A. Yes.

To Mr. UNDERWOOD:

Q. Was any Buddhist temple or shrine attacked or damaged?

A. No.

Q. Was any Hindu temple damaged?

A. No.

To Mr. de SILVA, Deputy Solicitor-General:

Q. On the 26th when the row of shops were on fire, was the curfew on?

A. Yes.

(Adjourned for a few minutes)

(Resumed after recess)

Mr. KADIRGAMAR submits:

What I propose to do is to get through the evidence as fast as possible. The witnesses I will call is a part of a cross-section. The witnesses I call have prepared their statements and they could give evidence from their statements. I want to place before the commission sufficient basic material of the incidents in Jaffna. As I mentioned earlier I have a large number of affidavits. I have got them computerised. I will call some of the witnesses that have been listed. If other Counsel want to call any other witnesses they could

do so. There are about 60 witnesses. If I call them all I will be holding up the commission unduly. I would outline the position briefly and would relieve the commission to proceed to any other station it desires. The principal witnesses have given a rough outline of the incidents. In the map submitted the lay-out of Jaffna is given

Mr. YOGESWARAN:
(Contd.)

Mr. de Silva the Solicitor General wanted to know whether any damage was caused to the temple property. Some damage was caused. I found the chariot of the temple turned upside down. Even the till box was tampered with. I do not know whether the person injured in Palaly was a Muslim or a Sinhalese. That happened on about the 15th. or 16th The Ambal Cafe and the City Bakery were broken into by service personnel on the 18th night. I am not sure whether it was service or police personnel. Most likely the police personnel were responsible.

(Mr. Rudramoorthy is permitted to produce the documents he wishes to produce, at Colombo)

Journalist Interviewed The S.P....

(Continued from Page 6)

not in office but he was in the police station. I telephoned the police station and I gave my name and my designation and told the person who answered the telephone that I wish to speak to the S.P.

"A little while later I was told that the S.P. had gone out. I was not interested in making a report of what Mr. Seneviratne told me to the press because the incidents in Jaffna was so numerous after my meeting him, I thought it would be best not to send a report as it is likely to create tension and unrest in the country.

No questions by Counsel.

The Sansoni Commission Evidence

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 — Rudyard Kipling.

The Sansoni Commission Evidence

The Story of the Sri Lanka Race Riots 1977

HEADS WRAPPED IN TOWELS, THEY PUT UP THE WRONG MAN AT 1-30 A. M.

(Continued from Page 2)

"A few minutes later the P. C., whom I had sent came along with them. I asked them where they were and they said that they had gone to the barracks and I advised them that it was not the time to do that when they were on duty and that they should not behave in this manner. I made no entry. I felt that I should not make an entry at that time but those three P. Cs appeared to be in an angry mood and while going they said something sarcastic. I cannot remember what they said.

I told S. P. about police behaviour

"I brought this to the notice of S. P., Mr. Seneviratne the following morning. I am not certain whether it was in the morning or evening. I think it was in the evening. I told him that when I was asked to do Station duty. I also told him about the behaviour of the Police Officers at the Station. They were not behaving in an orderly manner. I also felt that sometimes they might attack the Tamil Officer at the Station.

"It was in that stage when I told him about the three P. Cs. He asked me the names and the numbers. I told him that I could not remember. Then I referred to the I. B., and took the numbers. He said that they were the so called trouble-makers, and that he would see that they were punished. I told him about the assault on my son. I also told him, "What is the difficulty you have in controlling this situation? Why not send responsible people in the party along with one or two Tamils so that there will be no trouble and then this can be controlled. Then there can be no bad name for the Police Force."

'I mentioned

Mr. N. C. Perera

"He said that he would not send one hundred percent Tamils. I mentioned the name of Mr. N. C. Perera. I knew him. He was one with a sense of responsibility. I said that an officer like him would not bring a bad name to the Service. I advised him to send senior responsible officers. Then he did not say anything.

"Thereafter, I told the S. P. that as a Commission has been appointed I would give evidence about the utter

disregard and indiscipline among the police personnel. The S. P., Mr. Seneviratne took this matter very indifferently and told me not to worry about these things as he is a person who had seen several commissions including Royal Commissions. He mentioned the names of two Commissions before and he mentioned about a Royal Commission. I then turned back and came off.

"Once he walked up to me and said, "There are people planning to shoot me" and that he would be taking firm action against them. He said that they had arrested two or three persons but I did not see them.

I was made to understand that people had been arrested and put in the cell. I did not see them. I was told by P. C. Deen and P. C. Krishnapillai that Police Officers had gone into Sivan Temple premises and had opened fire on the 16th of August. As he was the driver of the vehicle, he saw this and another police driver informed me that M. D. Gunasena's book shop was attacked by police officers, P. C. Sivagnanam told me. I am unable to say whether it is true or not, but that is what he told me.

"There is one P. C. called Gerrard. He was attached

to the crime branch and later he was transferred to Delft. When that police station was closed down, he was brought here on special duty. Gerrard told me that on the 15th he went to see a late film show and slept in the Fort barracks.

"At about 1.30 or 1.45 a. m. some police officers,

some dressed in sarongs and some in shorts with towels wrapped round their heads came and put him up saying 'machan, machan'; when he got up, they identified him as Gerrard; then they said 'No, you sleep'. Then they put up some other P. C. and went away.

next week

S. I. Thamotharam continues his evidence

NEWS FLASHBACKS '77

From the 'INDIAN EXPRESS' dated August 20, 1977

By K. NADARAJAH
Express News Service

COLOMBO, Aug. 19
Fourteen people have so far died in violent incidents in various parts of the island following last Tuesday's clash between police and civilians in Jaffna, Premier J. R. Jayewardene told Parliament last night.

He said, of the dead, eight were Tamils and six Sinhalese.

Curfew has been declared from 4 p. m. to 5 a. m. in the entire North central Province in Kurunegala and Matale in Central Province and in Panadura barely 20 miles from Colombo. No. (curfew) was declared in Jaffna at the request of the Leader of the Opposition and leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front.

Curfew in Kandy: Looted in A'pura

The Premier today declared curfew in Kandy in Central province from 11 a. m. to 5 tomorrow following widespread lawlessness and looting of shops and houses of Tamils.

Mr. Jayewardene disclosed that, from reports reaching him, the situation in Jaffna was under control though no buses were running.

Some Government offices and 'Kachcheri' have not started functioning.

In Anuradhapura, where looting and communal trouble seemed to be still prevalent, about 100 Tamil houses had been looted in the town area. Boutiques



Mr. M. SIVASITHAMPARAM

belonging to Tamils had been burnt and ransacked. Three Tamils were also killed.

The Premier also gave details of looting and arson in several areas and promised appointment of a commission to probe the incidents which led to the outbreak of the disturbances in Jaffna and in other districts.

According to police the Government has been able to contain the situation which could have led to a communal holocaust by imposing immediately curfew in several trouble spots. The Premier had also instructed police to deal firmly with looters and law-breakers irrespective of race or political colouration.

'Consider reaction among Sinhalese'

Premier Jayewardene appealed in Parliament to leaders of the Tamil United Front to desist from making inflammatory speeches. He said he was not asking them to give up the demand for a separate State for Tamil-speaking people, but he would ask them to consider what the reaction to such separatist sentiments would be among the Sinhalese.

He added Tamil leaders should not forget that large numbers of Tamils lived and worked in eight provinces outside the Tamil-speaking Northern and Eastern Provinces and their lives and property would have to be safeguarded in a situation of emergency.

Earlier, Tamil leader Amirthalingam described the incidents in Jaffna and the assault on him by two policemen. He said the inci-

dents in Jaffna were purely the result of a police-civilian clash and had no communal touch about it. It was not the start of the Tamil campaign for a separate State for Tamils, and the Tamils would give adequate notice before the campaign was launched.

In Parliament yesterday the Tamil members spoke in English and Government members replied in English to matters pertaining to the disturbance.

Initiating the debate on the Government's statement of policy, Mr. M. Sivasithamparam, deputy leader of TULF, declared that the Sinhalese had no "legal or moral" right to rule over the Tamil minority population of the island (adds Samachar).

'Sri Lanka Tamils a separate nation

He said the Tamils of Sri Lanka were a separate nation by "all internationally accepted standards." The republican constitution of 1972 did not bind the Tamils as they had boycotted the constituent assembly which adopted the constitution.

Tamils, he said, wanted co-existence and not confrontation with the Sinhalese and the Sinhalese should allow the Tamils to constitute a separate State