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CONTENTS

Editorial.....	2
Madras Newsletter.....	3
US in Sri Lanka.....	5
Tamil history & culture.....	6
One government, but three voices.....	8
S. Thondaman hits back.....	10
Bishop Lakshman Wickremasinghe.....	12
News from India.....	16
News from Sri Lanka.....	17
From the press.....	18
S.P. Mylvaganam appreciation.....	19
Letters to the editor.....	20

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ALL PARTY CONFERENCE

WHAT CHANCES?

The Tamil United Liberation Front is attending the All-Party Conference summoned by the Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayewardene to discuss the ethnic problem which has plagued the country for more than three decades. The conference, which was initiated by the Indian government, commenced on January 11th and is to last until 21st.

The TULF had threatened not to attend the conference having raised objections to some of the 14 points suggested by the President for consideration at the conference. However, the intervention of Mr G. Parthasarathy, the Indian Prime Minister's Special Envoy, through whom the President offered certain 'clarifications', would appear to have resulted in the TULF deciding to attend the conference. Mr Parthasarathy, who has been in the island since January 3, has had discussions with leaders of all political parties and high-ranking representatives of Buddhist and Christian clergy and the Muslim community.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party, after boycotting the Conference on the first day, has returned to the conference table. The SLFP's announcement on the eve of the conference that it would not participate came as a rude shock. Although Mrs Bandaranaike, the leader of the SLFP, in a recent statement said that her party would not be so petty as to raise the question of the restoration of her civic rights as a quid pro quo for attending the conference, the turning down of her party's request to restore her civic rights by President Jayewardene on the grounds that it was an issue extraneous to the matters before the conference is attributed as the main reason for the SLFP's volte face.

The TULF's concern was raised when,

having submitted certain proposals for a substantial measure of autonomy to the Tamils in his discussions with the Indian PM and her Special Envoy, Mr Jayewardene began not only to hedge on this issue but also proceeded to harp on the issue of a 'national referendum', probably to mollify the hardliners within his government and certain extremist sections of the Buddhist clergy. The government's statement a few days before the Conference that the 14 points communicated to the political parties were not proposals for a settlement of the Tamil problem but only suggestions for the formulation of an agenda by the conference did not help to dispel the misgivings of the TULF leaders.

On the contrary, it was felt that, in avoiding the presentation of a package of proposals by the government and attempting to pass on the buck to the invited political parties to formulate an agenda, Mr Jayewardene was trying to evade responsibility in coming forward with some concrete suggestions on the basis of the broad understanding reached during his talks in Delhi.

Mr Parthasarathy would appear to have convinced the TULF leaders that the 'revisions' sought by them to the 14 points would be made to the agenda and that they would be circulated to all parties before the conference.

Meanwhile, the question that is being raised is as to whether the Conference would come up with any agreed set of proposals to settle the ethnic problem to the satisfaction of the Tamil people. Unless the conference came up with the proposals for a substantial measure of autonomy for the Tamils and a guarantee of full implementation of what is agreed at the conference,

TURN TO PAGE 24

LATEST

PRIESTS AT THE CONFERENCE

The conference has ceased to be one of political parties. High-ranking Buddhist priests were allowed to attend the conference from the second day.

Mr Jayewardene would appear to have succumbed to Buddhist extreme pressure. Ranged against the few

Tamil representatives at the Conference are a gang of known anti-Tamil extremists.

The President has now invited members of the Christian clergy to participate in an apparent attempt to give the appearance of even treatment.

DUTY OF LEADERSHIP

Never in the long history of the Tamils of Sri Lanka have they been so defenceless, helpless, persecuted, isolated and, above all, leaderless as they are today.

They faced the worst violence of genocidal proportions in July—August 1983. Thousands lost their lives and many more lost their properties. Still more became refugees in the land of their birth.

This tragedy did not bring any sympathy or support from the government which demands allegiance from them or from the majority Sinhalese community. On the contrary, there has been a concentrated campaign of anti-Tamil propaganda by the government, both within Sri Lanka and abroad. The Mathews, the S.D. Bandaranaiques, the Gamini Dissanayakes and some Buddhist prelates are beating the anti-Tamil racist drums ever so loud.

Inhuman torture

The Tamil youth are being hounded by the security forces on the pretext of their looking for 'terrorists'. Several of them have been arrested, detained and subjected to inhuman torture. Several have also disappeared without trace.

There are many thousands of Tamils still in refugee camps without adequate facilities and knowing not what to do or where to go. Many men and women have not yet returned out of fear to their places of work. Tamil university students and school-children who were studying in the South, by and large, have not returned and their educational future is bleak. Those who can afford are fleeing the country in search of security.

There is no single national or regional newspaper which is voicing the plight of the Tamil people. The two weeklies *Saturday Review* and *Suthanthiran*, continue to remain banned.

In this context, those who claim to lead the Tamil people, and that includes the Tamil United Liberation Front and the Tamil liberation groups, should have acted and should act with a sense of duty and responsibility that the situation demands.

Hour of need

It is no good for a people, in their hour of need, to have leaders who choose to live away from the people and outside the country in relative security. One is not unaware of the risks and dangers faced by these leaders at the hands of a government and its security forces, which have lost all sense of political or human decency. One is only too conscious of the murderous mentality of the men in military uniform.

However, those who claim to lead or aspire to leadership of a people must consider and recognise these risks and dangers as occupational hazards and be prepared to face them with a degree of courage and a sense of sacrifice. If those at the helm run away from the scene of the struggle and if they are not there alongside their people to take a share of their daily suffering at the hands of the instruments of oppression, then they would have demonstrably abdicated their claim to leadership.

The Tamil liberation groups, by their actions, have contributed a great deal to qualitatively elevate the struggle of the Tamil people against oppression. Every action

on the part of the different liberation groups has resulted in incalculable suffering inflicted upon the Tamil people, in general in the form of 'retaliatory action' by the security forces and Sinhala racists.

Spirit of unity

In this context, it is imperative that the liberation groups act responsibly and above all in a spirit of unity. The Tamil people have one aim and that is to ensure that their rights as a nation are secured. In the absence of a single and unified liberation organisation, one must at least assume that all the liberation groups subscribe to this basic aim.

If that assumption is correct, then there must be a basis of agreement among the different liberation groups. Instead of dissipating their energies in inter-group warfare — verbal, written or otherwise — their central aim should be to mobilise and consolidate all the available resources, both human and material, for resisting oppression.

Enormous sacrifices

The Tamil people have the right, considering the enormous sacrifices they have made and the incalculable penalties they have paid, to call for, nay, demand, a united effort by all the liberation groups. The leaders of these groups should respond to this call immediately and positively.

Let not posterity condemn the leadership of these liberation groups of abdicating their duty at a time when the Tamil nation is facing the gravest peril in its history.

ROUND TABLE TALKS AND DECEPTION

There is a story told of the depressing days of World War II when Hitler and his ruthless military machine were threatening to over-run half of Europe. Every day the British media reported fresh disasters; every morning newspapers ran banner headlines on new Nazi advances. Then one day it so turned out that there was no shattering development to report, but one enterprising Fleet Street editor thought he must not disappoint his readers. So he ordered the usual banner headline and it read: **OMINOUS SILENCE ON THE WESTERN FRONT!**

I was reminded of this story when I met a Tamil friend who flew into Madras from Colombo around Christmas time. 'How is the situation in Colombo?' I asked him. 'It is calm,' he said, 'very calm, in fact too calm. I don't like it one bit.' I thought it was a profound observation, and it set me thinking: Have the Tamils in Sri Lanka reached a point in life when even calm can be disturbing?

The answer probably is Yes — if calm merely means the absence of overt disturbance; if that calm does not mirror the true emotional state of the people, be they Sinhalese or Tamils; if it is a deceptive calm, one that does not reflect the simmering undercurrent of tensions on both sides of the ethnic fence. Well, as the wartime newspaper put it, it could be an **OMINOUS CALM**.

A new distraction

But now there is a new distraction. I am writing this from Madras in the first mid-week in January, and between Christmas and now there has been a sudden acceleration of political developments. First came the news that the all-party Round Table Conference on ethnic issues scheduled to commence on January 10 in Colombo had run into unexpected difficulties.

Signed invitations dated December 28, 1983, were sent by President Jayewardene to ten recognised political parties, including the Tamil United Liberation Front, which also contained an annexure that set out fourteen specific proposals 'for the formulation of an agenda for the conference'. It was this annexure that started the problem. The TULF not only smelt a rat, but saw in it a rat-trap. The very first proposal said: *The giving up the idea of a separate state!*

Now it must be remembered that President Jayewardene having rushed through Parliament the Sixth amendment to the constitution prohibiting the campaigning for separatism, took the position that he cannot engage in talks with the TULF until the party disavowed separatism. This stand he modified after other parties insisted at a preliminary meeting on December 21 that

**By S. SIVANAYAGAM,
Editor, 'Saturday Review'**

the TULF should be invited for the all-party conference without any pre-condition. Was he now trying to smuggle back the pre-condition by placing it first on the agenda?

Jayewardene's second agenda proposal again seemed a deviation from his New Delhi position. It read: The merger of the District Development Councils within a province after the acceptance of the Council's members *and a referendum in the district*. The President's fixation for referendums was surfacing again. But the real sting was in the tail. The last and fourteenth proposal said: *United opposition to the use of violence to attain political objectives*. Interpreted in the true Gandhian spirit it seems unobjectionable, but what it implied was that the TULF would be called upon to sell the entire Tamil Liberation forces down the river!

TULF reaction was like that of a married woman with children 'running to Mamma' every time she had a problem with the husband. The TULF leadership rushed to new Delhi. Two 'maternal uncles' Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao and Special Emisary G. Parthasarathi apparently consoled the leadership, promised to seek clarification from Colombo and ensure that the Conference did not get dead-locked even before it started.

Result? GP flew to Colombo on Tuesday January 3. The TULF leadership which had been exhibiting distinct signs of packing its bags to Colombo even before the official invitation had reached Madras flew to Colombo the very next morning — minus the burly, bearded V.N. Navaratnam, ex-MP for Chavakachcheri. The seven-member TULF politburo (it was not known whether all seven were present with two of them reportedly becoming drop-outs lately) had decided on January 3 that a four-man team would fly to Colombo, consisting of A. Amirthalingam, M. Sivasithamparam, R. Sampanthan, and V.N. Navaratnam; the last-mentioned was named although it was known to politburo members that he was booked to participate in a Human Rights Conference in Singapore and was flying there on the 5th, on an invitation that had nothing to do with the TULF.

So there they are now, at the time of writing, the TULF trio in Colombo. By the time this appears in print, the agenda differences would in all probability have been smoothed out, and the RTC would have got to a start even if it does not conclude by January 20 as scheduled. But the real question is: What bearing will the outcome of this conference have on the future of the

Tamil people? Can a settlement emerge that will satisfy BOTH the Sinhalese and Tamil people? Does the TULF leadership genuinely reflect the feelings and mood of the Tamils today? Does it have the necessary clout to mobilise Tamil opinion in its favour in the event of a 'political settlement'?

Does President Jayewardene have sufficient authority to fly in the face of an organised opposition by hawks in his own government camp possibly led by powerful sections of the Buddhist clergy? How about the Tamil youth militants? How can any negotiation process succeed that does not come to terms with the very force that has gained ascendancy in shaping Tamil thinking and politics today? Has the TULF leadership any share at all in the determination of the political and socio-cultural fate of the Tamils. Let us take a logical look at recent events.

Elections to local bodies in the North took place on May 18, 1983. The militant youths called for a boycott, but the TULF leadership persisted in contesting the elections, along with the UNP. What was the result? Only 8 per cent of the electors turned up to vote — probably the lowest low in the history of any democratic elections anywhere in the world! Came July, and the TULF's party conference on the second day — July 24 — had to be abandoned at Mannar when news came of the ambush of the army men in Jaffna.

The leadership found itself in the same pathetically helpless situation as the vast mass of the Tamil people. The TULF was not only *not* shaping events (as any leadership should do) but was merely trailing behind events. Their inability to provide even a moral leadership was made worse by their removing themselves even physically from their people and going into a deep freeze in Madras. But thanks to the (now-expired) ticket to power that the Tamil people gave them in 1977, and thanks to the negotiation process initiated by the Indian government, which process is still going on after five months, the TULF leadership continues to occupy the centre of the state. But how true to life is this picture that the world sees?

It might help to assess the situation even better, if a little known event (or rather non-event) is recorded here. A 'Unity meeting' was called by the TULF leadership in Madras, the meeting to take place on the morning of January 4. Invitations in Tamil signed by TULF Secretary-General Amirthalingam were sent to all Tamil groups, including PLOT, LTTE, TELO, TELF . . . An invitation was also extended to S.C. Chandrasekaran. By the evening of the 3rd it was very clear that none of the invitees showed any inclination to attend

TURN TO PAGE 18

MISCELLANY

THE JULY ANTI-TAMIL VIOLENCE A REVOLUTION!

Who said that the anti-Tamil violence of July 1983 in Sri Lanka was inspired by right-wing racists or left-wing anarchists? It was a revolution according to President J.R. Jayewardene!

The prestigious *Washington Post* of August 8, 1983, carried the following report of an interview its correspondent, William Caliborne, had with the President:

When asked why he waited five days after the outbreak of violence before making a televised appeal to return to normal, Jayewardene replied: 'In addition to the Sinhalese-Tamil racial conflict, there was a political motive. Who would have listened to what I said? I might as well have asked George Washington not to start his War of Independence or revolution.'

'You people think it is a (communal) riot. It is not. It is a revolution and we have to adopt counter-revolutionary methods.'

'TAMIL TIMES' IN SRI LANKAN PARLIAMENT

'*Tamil Times*' had the rare privilege of being quoted in the Parliament of Sri Lanka. In a characteristic anti-Tamil and anti-TULF speech made in Parliament on October 20, Mr Gamini Jayasuriya, Minister of Agriculture and Food, said:

'Their propaganda arm abroad had circulated a publication called the '*Tamil Times*', published in London.'

'It distorts the facts and some of its headlines are: Sri Lanka Barbarism; Government Obstructs Relief Work; Barbarism with a Vengeance; Sri Lanka Slaughter; Thugs Take Over Sri Lanka; Eyes Gouged out in Sri Lanka Goal; Tamil Nadu Marches and Fasts Continue; Civil War in Sri Lanka.'

'Its editorial comment adds: 'Instances where the blood of Tamil victims was drunk by the attackers in a gruesome display of victory and where the thugs partook in a feast of sharing among themselves the roasted bodies of Tamils have been reported, causing the obviously sickening question whether, after 2,500 years of the practice of Buddhism, cannibalism has returned with a vengeance.'

'They have tarred the image of Sri Lanka and insulted the Sinhalese; they now turn their tirade at Buddhism. This is the unkindest cut of all.'

Mr Gamini Jayasuriya, like many other Sinhala leaders, may be justifiably concerned with the 'tarring' of the image of Sri Lanka,

but what he has not said is that what was reported in the '*Tamil Times*' did not happen there in July. When such inhuman horrors occur, does he think that they should be swept under the carpet to present a false image of the so-called Paradise Isle!

EXPENSIVE EMERGENCY

On the recommendation of the President of Sri Lanka, in his capacity as Minister of Defence (he is also Minister of several other Departments), the Cabinet approved a supplementary estimate of Rs 54.9 million for 'defence' purposes, of which Rs 51.4 million is to meet additional expenditure incurred during the current emergency.

THREAT BY FREE POST

Several VIPs in Sri Lanka have recently received threatening letters, which in itself may not be unusual if the VIPs happened to be Tamils. What is intriguing is that the threatening letters were addressed to Sinhalese VIPs too in government pre-paid envelopes bearing official franks. The question is as to which Minister or Member of Parliament supplied these envelopes to the organisers of this 'threatening campaign'.

MINISTER WITHOUT AN OFFICE

Mr M.A. Bakeer Markar was appointed Minister without Portfolio on his being forced to resign his Speakership of the Sri Lankan Parliament. It is now revealed that he is also a Minister without an office or staff. The All Ceylon Muslim League has protested against the treatment meted out to this senior Muslim MP.

UNITY — BECOME BUDDHISTS!

The Sri Lankan newspaper '*Daily News*' of December 19, 1983, carried the following report of a speech made by President Jayewardene at Anuradhapura:

'Today there is dissension between the Sinhalese and the Tamils. That would not have happened if the Tamils were Buddhists.'

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'Sri Lanka had earned a worldwide reputation as a country which protected and followed the teachings of the Buddha. It was essential therefore that this country be united through Buddhism.'

No wonder that Hindu Temples have increasingly become one of the main targets for destruction during inspired racial violence in Sri Lanka.

MORE TAMIL VOTES FOR U.N.P.

'The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) does not represent all the Tamils in the country, and more Tamils, both Indian and Sri Lankan as well as other Tamil-speaking minorities, have voted for the United National Party (UNP) than the TULF,' said President Jayewardene according to a report published in the *Ceylon Daily News* of December 10.

As a favourable quid pro quo for more Tamils voting UNP, the Tamils were subjected to at least four major racial pogroms since the UNP came to power in July 1977!

RACIAL HARMONY WITH A DIFFERENCE

At a meeting in Paris on December 12, the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Mr A.C.S. Hameed, said: 'There is no racial discrimination in Sri Lanka. We have a proud record for centuries of racial harmony.'

'Racial harmony' has a different meaning in the lexicon of government ministers and many Sinhala politicians. In actual practice, it is demonstrated in the form of mass attacks on Tamils including murder, arson, rape, etc.!

SRI LANKA KNOWN BY VIOLENCE

The Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Australia, Lt-Gen. Denis Perera, in the course of a recent visit to Fiji is reported to have said that many people in the West had hardly heard about Sri Lanka before the July violence. However, in Australia, 'Sri Lanka had been known only through its cricketers'.

Incidentally, the High Commissioner was totally boycotted by all Sri Lankan Tamils living in Fiji. Not one of them attended a dinner given in his honour at the University of Pacific on November 19th.

EUROPE & THE DRAVIDIANS

by Paulinus Tambimuttu

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US DIGS DEEPER INTO SRI LANKA CENTCOM TO SHIFT HQ TO TRINCOMALEE

COLOMBO: In the implementation of its military and strategic designs in South Asia, the Pentagon attaches major importance to its positions in Sri Lanka. Washington wants to fill in the gap between the US naval base on Diego Garcia and its numerous military installations in South-East Asia by setting up a major naval base in Trincomalee Bay in the north-eastern part of Sri Lanka.

US Defence Secretary Weinberger used his recent visit to Colombo to pressurise Sri Lanka to increase its involvement in America's military, political and economic plans aimed at penetration into South Asia, undermining the Non-aligned Movement from within this region.

Washington has been silent on the problems discussed by the Pentagon boss and the Sri Lanka leadership. However, informed circles state that Weinberger's visit to Colombo pursued the aim of studying the possibility of moving the headquarters of the Central Command (CENTCOM) to Sri Lanka after the setting up of the US naval base in Trincomalee Bay.

Secret pact

The US Secretary displayed interest in other major issues. Washington's negotiations with Colombo on the construction of Voice of America (VOA) relay station on the territory of Sri Lanka, have for all practical purposes, been completed. Both sides have drafted the text of the agreement which is ready to be signed.

Speculations are current that the signing of this document might have taken place during Weinberger's forced stop-over in Sri Lanka. However, one thing is clear: the question of the construction of the US relay station in the vicinity of Colombo has been

settled, since the Sri Lanka authorities have not voiced any objections, nor issued any refutations on this account.

It has been revealed that at Washington's initiative a secret supplement was attached to the agreement on the construction of the VOA relay station. This supplement provides that in the event of the arising of an *emergency situation*, endangering the interests of the *free world*, the US can use the relay station as a communications centre linking the US naval forces and military bases in the Indian Ocean.

If such situation arises, Colombo will also grant Americans the right, without any control on the part of the Sri Lanka authorities, to bring into the country and install at the radio station all the *necessary additional technical equipment* as well as the required military personnel.

So, besides using the VOA relay station to expand its propaganda effort in South Asia, Washington will, in actual fact, also utilise it as a front for an additional military strong point. Even Washington's NATO allies do not always go for and act so recklessly in courting US 'favours' as the Jayewardene government has done. Turkey, one of Washington's NATO allies, having in mind its national interests, refused the Pentagon permission to set up American military transmitters on its soil.

Dangerous game

It seems Washington's promises to step up considerably financial aid to Colombo have deprived the Sri Lanka leaders of their national pride to an extent that they are helping to promote the aims of US military and political domination in the region at the expense of the national interests of Sri Lanka.

All this provides proof of the continuing alienation of the Jayewardene government from the positions of the Non-aligned Movement. As a result of the stand taken by the Sri Lanka delegation at the Non-aligned summit in Delhi, the demand for the closing down of the US naval base in Diego Garcia was separated from the problem of the turning of the Indian Ocean into a Zone of Peace.

Negative reaction

Washington's negative reaction to the results of the Delhi summit and its attitude to the Non-aligned Movement, as a whole, are well-known facts. Therefore, the stand taken by Colombo suits the US. Conivance with the vicious attacks of the American administration on the Non-aligned Movement, on India's independent policy as the chairperson of this movement, as well as the construction of the Voice of America relay station, and handing over Trincomalee to the US, leads to the further alienation of Sri Lanka from the Non-aligned Movement and possible splitting of this movement.

The US military preparations in the Indian Ocean basin evoke the concern of the nations of the coastal states. The build-up of US naval power in the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, the militarisation of Pakistan, the plans to set up a VOA relay station in Sri Lanka, a military base in Trincomalee and move the CENTCOM headquarters to the island — all go to show that Washington is playing a dangerous military and political game in South Asia, a game that endangers the security and stability of the countries in this region. Washington has allotted Sri Lanka the role of its Trojan Horse.

By kind courtesy of Blitz, 10.12.83.

JUDGES PAY COMPLIMENT TO SATURDAY REVIEW

Although a five-judge Bench of the Sri Lanka Supreme Court disallowed the application in which the publishers of the Jaffna-based weekly sought a reversal of the ban on the paper on grounds of infringement of fundamental rights, Justice R.S. Wanasundera who delivered judgement said . . . 'Making due allowance for the regional interest and approach of the publication, the publishers have tried to be as objective as possible, and have sought to produce a weekly newspaper which appears to be a cut above the average newspaper judged by journalistic standards . . .'

Justice Wanasundera went on to say: 'Some of the material in the *Saturday Review* may not be palatable to the gov-

ernment or to the majority of the people in this country, but that by itself is no reason for imposing a sanction on this paper if the fundamental freedom of free speech has any worthwhile meaning.'

Unfortunately there has also crept into this publication some material that must necessarily attract attention. Mr Nadesan himself admitted that one of the objects followed by the publishers was to highlight the grievances of the Tamil people by laying bare the atrocities and excesses of the police and the armed services. It is apparent that full vein has been given to this subject.

It cannot also be gainsaid that this publication being intimately concerned with the aspirations of the Tamil community and under pressures from public opinion in the

North, has in its general editorial policy, found that it could not help incline towards the radical groups waging a struggle against the state.

It has at times, if not explicitly, eulogised the terrorists and praised the sacrifices they have made.

Whether or not this material would pass muster in normal times need not concern us now. But in the present context, I cannot say that the competent authority was so unreasonable or wrong when he was of the view that . . . this editorial policy was, in the context of the circumstances prevailing in the country at the time the two impugned orders were made, and to date, extremely prejudicial to the security and safety of the country and its citizens'.

SRI LANKA — EXPLODING THE MYTHS (I)

THE TAMILS OF SRI LANKA

Those Sinhala chauvinists, including leading politicians, Buddhist prelates and even 'historians', who strive to depict Sri Lanka as only a 'Sinhala-Buddhist country', have attempted to portray the Tamils as recent immigrants to the island. The historical fact is that they have lived in the country for over 2,500 years, as long as the Sinhalese have or even longer. Some historians have concluded that the Tamils were the original settlers of the island.

Dr Paul E. Peiris, a Sinhalese ethnologist and antiquarian of international repute, concluded: 'Long before the arrival of Vijaya, there were in Lanka five thousand Isvarams of Siva which claimed and received the adoration of all India. These were

Thiruketheeswaram near Mahatittha, Munniswaram dominating Salawatte and the Pearl Fishery, Tandeswaram near Mantota, Thirukoneswaram opposite the great Bay of Koddiiyar and Naguleswaram near Kan-kesanthura.

'Everyone must concede that the chief influence which has been exercised on the Sinhalese Court throughout its history was the Dravidian interests of South India. I am of the opinion that long before the arrival of Vijaya, the country had been fully occupied by Dravidian races.

'I hope the Tamil people will realise that in truth there is buried in their

sands the story of much more fascinating development than they had hitherto dreamt.'

Of late, the false propaganda that the Tamils are recent immigrants to Sri Lanka has been trotted out to deny their just and reasonable national rights, and some innocent and gullible foreigners have fallen for this propaganda. We reproduce, from Chapter III of the HISTORY OF CEYLON, Volume I, published by the University of Ceylon in 1959, the section under the title 'Languages of Ceylon, (b) Tamil' (pages 41 to 45). The Editorial Board of this volume comprised the then Vice-Chancellor Sir Nicholas Attygalle, W.J.F. LaBrooy, S. Natesan, C.W. Nicholas and Dr S. Paranavitana.

Tamil is spoken by a considerable section of the population of Ceylon. It is the language of the Tamils and the Muslims inhabiting the Northern and the Eastern portions of the Island. Muslims living in other parts of the Island also speak the Tamil language. It is spoken in the Up-country districts by the Indian population living there.

Tamil belongs to the Dravidian family of languages which are mainly concentrated in South India, and which include Telugu, Canarese, Malayalam and Tulu. There are islands of languages belonging to this family in portions of Central India and of north-east India, extending up to the Ganges. In distant Baluchistan Brahui, a language which is Dravidian in its essential features, is spoken, though it is mixed up with Persian and some other languages of the neighbourhood. The fact that this language is found in the region of Mohenjodaro and Harappa, where the remains of an ancient civilisation was connected with the ancient Dravidians who are believed to have lived there in remote times. The proximity of Ceylon to South India has also led to the belief held by some that Tamil, or some variant of it, must have been the language of the prehistoric inhabitants of Ceylon.

Tamil is, in the words of Sir George Grierson, the well-known authority on Indian linguistics, 'the oldest, richest and most highly organised of the Dravidian languages, plentiful in vocabulary, and cultivated from a remote period'. Its alphabet is derived from the old Vatteluttu, which is traced by some scholars to the Brahmi script used by Asoka in his inscriptions. According to Professor Langdon, the

Brahmi script itself is traceable to the pictographs found in the seals of the Indus Valley civilisation. Dr G.R. Hunter who has made a deep study of these seals, is inclined to think that these pictographs had a Dravidian origin. Though no finality has been reached with regard to the decipherment of these seals, this view of Dr Hunter acquires some significance in the light of the references made in the *Silappadikaram*, a Tamil work of the second century AD, to pictographs used by merchants in sealing their merchandise. It is also worth mentioning in this connection that the Tamil word for writing, *elududal*, means also the drawing of pictures.

The earliest Tamil writing which has survived is found in some of the caves of South India, which must have been occupied by Buddhist monks about the third century BC. It is interesting to note that an inscription found in one of these caves mentions a *kutumbika* (householder) from *Ilam* (Ceylon).

Tamil has a long history in Ceylon. The *Mahavamsa* relates that Vijaya married a Pandya princess from Madhura, and that she was accompanied by a hundred maidens and a thousand families of eighteen guilds who settled down in Ceylon. Coming to historical times, we find that two Tamils, Sena and Guttaka, ruled at Anuradhapura in the latter half of the third century BC for a period of about twenty years. The famous Tamil king, Elara, reigned in Ceylon during the next century for a long period covering over forty years. By this time Tamil soldiers had already found their way to Ceylon and Tamil merchants also had begun to engage in trade of different kinds. An inscription of the second century BC, found

in Anuradhapura, mentions a corporation of Tamil merchants, of which the captain of a ship (*navika*) was the head. A Tamil poet from Ceylon is said to have adorned the Tamil Sangam at Madhura; he may perhaps have lived in the first century BC, as he appears to be one of the earlier poets of the Sangam age. It is well known that Jaffna has been a centre of Tamil learning for several centuries. The Arya-cakravartis of Jaffna, who rose to power in the fourteenth century, were great patrons of Tamil literature.

Revival of Tamil learning

During the nineteenth century, Jaffna produced some distinguished scholars who took a leading part in the revival of Tamil learning in South India.

The antiquity of Tamil in Ceylon is borne out by the fact that some words of the Sangam period are still in common use among the peasantry of Jaffna, though they have fallen into disuse in South India, the original home of the Tamil language; such words as *aitu* and *atar* are cases in point. Moreover, some usages found in old Tamil which have completely disappeared from popular speech in South India are still current in Jaffna. The medial demonstrative *u*, which is exemplified in words like *utu* and *uwan*, and the interrogative termination *-e*, occurring in words such as *vantare*, are now unknown in South India, except amongst scholars well versed in Tamil literature. An endearing expression used in addressing a female child as *mahane* (son), which is mentioned in the *Tolkappiyam*, the grammar of the Sangam age, is met with in ordinary usage among the people of Jaffna.

The Tamils of Jaffna have retained some of the characteristics of old Tamil. The Tamil spoken by them is, to a great extent, free from the admixture of Sanskrit words, and even in regard to these words, they are used in conformity with some rules of Tamil phonology laid down in the *Tolkappiyam*, according to which, for instance, the consonant *r* should not be used at the beginning of a word, unless it is preceded by an appropriate vowel. This rule is scrupulously observed even today by the illiterate villagers of Jaffna. Sanskrit words such as *ruci* and *raktam*, for instance, are pronounced by them as *urusi* and *irattam*. In the Law of *Tesavalamai*, which obtains in Jaffna, pure Tamil words like *mutusam* and *tetiya tettam* are used, instead of the Sanskrit terms used for these legal concepts by the Tamils of South India. It must be said that, as a result of the isolation of the Ceylon Tamils from South India for a long period, the Tamil spoken by them presents some distinctive features of which they are proud, especially as the Tamils of South India use, in their colloquial speech, more words of Sanskrit origin and also Hindustani words, disregarding Tamil phonology in their pronunciation of such words.

The influence which Tamil has had on the Sinhalese language in certain directions is noteworthy. Apart from the fact that

Tamil has flourished in the Island for several centuries, we have to remember that its influence must have been considerable during the Cola occupation of the Island in the eleventh century. The author of the old commentary of the *Sidatsangara*, the only extant ancient grammar of the Sinhala language, says that the interpretation of one of its rules has to be made by the application of a method recognised in the *Virasoliyam*, a treatise on Tamil grammar which is ascribed to the eleventh century. We find that the study of Tamil formed a feature of Pirivena education from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. Sri Rahula of Totagamuwa (fifteenth century) was an acknowledged master of the Tamil language. It is mentioned in a late Sinhalese work referring to the Dambadeni period that a Sinhalese king included Tamil in the course of studies followed by him. Tamil influence was strong in the court of Parakramabahu VI (1412-1468), and later in the court of the last four kings of Kandy. There have been instances of Tamil authors who were patronised by Sinhalese kings. *Sarajotimalai*, a Tamil work on astrology, was composed under the patronage of Parakramabahu VI. In Sinhalese works on astrology and medicine, Tamil influence is most clearly discernible.

The influence of Tamil on the vocabulary of Sinhalese has been dealt with above.

Titles such as 'Ilankakon', 'Tennakon' and 'Perumal', as well as official designations such as 'Mudaliyar' and 'Aracci', are pure Tamil words. An interesting list of Tamil words found in the Sinhalese language is given by Mudaliyar A.M. Gunasekara. Further research in this direction will be useful from a linguistic point of view.

Tamil inscriptions have been found in different parts of Ceylon, though only a few of them have been published. Some Tamil inscriptions of the period ranging from the eighth to the eleventh centuries have been discovered at Anuradhapura and other places in the North-Central Province.

The majority of the records left by Sinhalese rulers between the death of Vijayabahu I (1110) and the accession of Parakramabahu I (1153) are in Tamil. A Tamil inscription of Parakramabahu I is found at Nainativu. An instance of a Tamil inscription of the fourteenth century found side by side with Sinhalese inscriptions of the same date is at Lamkatilakavihara in the Kandy District. This shows that the later Sinhalese kings made use of Tamil also, in addition to Sinhalese, in respect of their inscriptions in some places. It is hoped that all the Tamil inscriptions collected by the Department of Archaeology will be published. A careful study of these inscriptions is bound to be fruitful from the historical point of view.

CZECH PROFESSOR ON THE TAMIL CONTRIBUTION TO WORLD'S CIVILISATION

(Dr Kamil Zvelebil who makes this appeal is Professor of Dravidology in Charles University, Czechoslovakia. He is well qualified in Sanskrit, Tamil and European languages including Russian, French and German. He has translated several classical and modern Tamil works into Czech.)

There is no doubt that the culture of the Tamils belongs to the great and immortal treasures of the world's civilisation. From my own experience, however, I can say that, even those who claim to have a wide outlook and deep education, both Indians and Europeans, are not aware of this fact. And it is the task of the Tamils themselves, and of those sympathetic 'mlecchas' who try to interpret Tamil culture, to acquaint the world's cultural public with the most important contributions of Tamil culture to the world's civilisation. As far as literary works are concerned, it is necessary before all to make them accessible to a wide public of readers by means of artistic translations into the world's great languages; with regard to works of arts and architecture, it is necessary to make them a common treasure of the world with the help of publications giving detailed and perfect reproductions. This may be achieved through

UNESCO as well as through the works of individual scholars and local institutions; this should also be one of the main tasks of the Academy of Tamil Culture.

The following works of art and literature are among the remarkable contributions of the Tamil creative genius to the world's cultural treasure and should be familiar to the whole world and admired and be loved by all in the same way as the poems of Homer, the dramas of Shakespeare, the pictures of Rembrandt, the cathedrals of France and the sculptures of Greece.

1. The ancient Tamil lyrical poetry compiled in The Eight Anthologies; this poetry is so unique and vigorous, full of such vivid realism and written so masterfully that it can be compared probably only with some of the pieces of ancient Greek lyrical poetry.

2. The Kural; one of the great books of the world, one of those singular emanations of human heart and spirit which preach positive love and forgiveness and peace.

3. The epic poem Cilappatikaram; which by its tragic story of human love, by its 'baroque splendour' and by the charm and magic of its lyrical parts belongs to the epic masterpieces of the world.

4. THE SCHOOL OF BHAKTI, both Vaishnava and Saiva, which is one of those

most sincere and passionate efforts of the man to grasp the Absolute; and its supreme literary expression in the works of Manikkavasagar, Gnanasambandar, Nammalavar and Andal.

5. THE PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM OF SAIVA SIDDHANTA, a system which may be ranked among the most perfect and cleverest systems of human thought.

6. THE SOUTH INDIAN BRONZES OF THE CHOLA PERIOD, those splendid and amazing sculptures belonging to the best creations of humanity.

7. THE DRAVIDIAN TEMPLE-ARCHITECTURE, of which the chief representatives are perhaps the temples of Tanjore, Chidambaram and Madurai.

These seven different forms of contribution, without which the world would be definitely less rich and less happy, should engage the immediate attention of all who are interested in Tamil culture; they should all dedicate their time and efforts to make known (and well and intimately known) to the whole world these heights of the Tamil creative genius.

Kamil Zvelebil
Charles University
Prague

ONE GOVERNMENT,

'BEHIND ALL THIS IS THE FOREIGN HAND: KGB, TO BE PRECISE

Anandatissa de Alwis, Minister of State, in interview with Pritish Nandy

☐ *How are your rehabilitation efforts going on?*

Ah, you are David Selbourne's friend.

☐ *Yes, I am, if by that you mean David writes for our magazine. I know he is persona non grata here.*

Of course he will be. He is forever lying. It is people like him who have further damaged this already critical situation.

☐ *But how did this critical situation arise?*

It was inevitable. The terrorists were fermenting trouble over the years. There were countless acts of violence and crime. Policemen on duty were being shot down in broad daylight, and we could do nothing about it at all.

Finally, in July, when these 13 soldiers were killed in ambush, the people could take it no longer. They rose in sheer anger and went berserk. We tried our very best to bring it under control as soon as we could.

☐ *But, by then, vast damage had been caused to Tamil lives and property?*

That is true. But what could we do? This was part of an international conspiracy to destabilise us. We know who are behind it all. I have even told the nation this.

This is not the first time they have tried this. You know what happened in the past. These people are jealous of the success of our experiments with a free economy. That is why they are trying their best to set us in flames. Behind all this is the foreign hand: the KGB, to be precise. I am not afraid of saying this openly.

☐ *What do you think of India's response?*

India is our friend. She has behaved with great restraint and I have nothing but admiration for Mrs Gandhi herself. Your country could have tried to take advantage of our difficulties. But it didn't. You behaved with great dignity.

☐ *How are you planning to meet the danger of the foreign hand that you speak of?*

We are not scared. Their motives have been exposed. All the Marxist elements in the country have been outlawed. Their support base is only marginal. The people in this country are firmly behind us — the Sinhalese and the Tamils. What can a handful of foreign agents do?

☐ *Is the army back in the barracks now?*

They were brought back to the barracks immediately after the tragic incidents of July.

☐ *Not really immediately? If it was immediately, the damage would have been much less.*

It was not possible to do it immediately because things happened so fast that they caught us unaware. By the time we swung into action it was a bit late, I admit. The arsonists had lists in their hands and they went from house to house wreaking savage violence on the Tamils. It was a planned strategy to embarrass us.

☐ *How are you going to fight this politically?*

By taking firm and courageous action. We will not allow ourselves to be bullied by anyone, whoever it may be.

The 'Illustrated Weekly of India' (December 18, 1983) published a special report on Sri Lanka by Pritish Nandy under the heading 'Where are the Fountains of Paradise?' This report included interviews with three Ministers in the Cabinet of President Jayewardene. Mr Anandatissa de Alwis, Minister of State, accuses the foreign hand of the KGB for the

'BEHIND ALL THIS IS THE DIRTY HAND OF INDIA. WE ALL KNOW THIS'

☐ *Where do you think lie the roots of this violence, this ethnic confrontation?*

I hate all you journalists. You are liars and dishonest people. I would not even have deigned to speak to you if the Ministry of State had not insisted. There is nothing that I hate more than journalists, particularly Indian ones. You are always lying.

☐ *Why have you had such a raw deal from the Indian press? Your colleagues in the Cabinet don't feel so strongly about it.*

Because I have the courage to speak for my people. The Sinhalese will not be held to ransom by a bunch of ordinary criminals and terrorists. We are the majority community on this island and yet we live in constant fear of being attacked by this small band of insurgents who think they can rule us by fear and intimidation. It is time we stood up for our own rights.

☐ *What are these rights you speak of? As the majority community on this island, you have all the rights that are possible.*

What rights do we have? These people have guns in their hands and they are constantly shooting down our boys. Look at the number of police stations that have been closed down in Jaffna because no one wants to be on duty there. Who wants to risk his life? Will you risk your life in such a dangerous situation?

Law and order have been subverted. These people are trying to break up our

BUT THREE VOICES!

violence and damage in July 1983 and says that India has behaved with great restraint and dignity, while Mr Cyril Mathew, the Minister of Industries, sees 'the dirty hand of India' behind all the troubles. However, Mr S. Thondaman, Minister of Rural Industrial Development, puts the blame on 'important people' who 'are part of this government'.

Cyril Mathew, Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs, is angry with India for providing shelter to the insurgents

country, destroy our heritage, force us to yield our most valuable assets. How can we allow them to do this? How can you in India support such acts of terrorism? How do you offer these people shelter and guns?

☐ *So you think that India is being unfair? That we are playing a negative role?*

Behind all this is the dirty hand of India. We all know this. We have the evidence. If you did not give protection and shelter to these terrorists, our problems would have been over a long time back. For we know how to handle them.

☐ *What have you done?*

They are only a handful of people and I don't think that they have the kind of support base they are claiming.

☐ *Who backs these terrorists?*

I don't know. India, I would imagine. Otherwise, why does the Tamil Nadu government refuse to hand over these murderers to us even when we have water-tight cases against them? Is this fair? Is this in accordance with international practice? Is this how you should behave with your neighbours?

You must read the Sansuni Commission report. I will send you a copy of it. It proves without any shadow of doubt that these terrorists are nothing more than ordinary criminals

☐ *Do you see the danger of an Indian military intervention in the offing?*

What can we do even if you did intervene? You are much bigger than us, much stronger. On our side, the only thing we have is truth. That will perhaps see us through.

'BEHIND ALL THIS ARE OUR OWN PEOPLE. THE RACIST ELEMENTS'

S. Thondaman, Minister of Rural Industrial Development, points his finger at his own political colleagues

☐ *Who do you think is responsible for fanning these communal passions?*

We all know who these people are. I am not naming them right now because I don't want to embarrass the President, who is a good man and an honest man. He is trying his best to heal the situation. That is why I am keeping quiet.

☐ *But is any action being taken against these people?*

How can any action be taken against them? They are important people. They are part of this government, just as I am. Behind all this are our own people. The racist elements. We all know them.

☐ *But unless you take some action against these people, or isolate them, the problems will recur. Won't they?*

We have to take long-term measures. The Indian Tamils have suffered for too long. They are the real minority in Sri Lanka, and yet no one speaks of them and their needs. Now that things are bad, very bad, they are listening to me. But it is too late.

☐ *What is to be done now?*

Only India can help us to tide over this crisis. Wherever I went in India, I found people were very concerned about Sri Lanka and our ethnic troubles. Mrs Gandhi is our hope. India is our hope. You can help us survive without being dismembered.

☐ *You don't believe that Eelam is inevitable? The only way out, under the circumstances?*

No, no. Sri Lanka must solve its problems without being dismembered. I

don't rule out anything, not even a separate Tamil state, but this is not the time to talk of it.

☐ *But where does India come in? The talks must obviously be within Sri Lanka, between the different communities, the different political groups.*

India has the most important role to play. She alone can force us on to the negotiating table.

I have been travelling extensively in India and everyone is keen that we should come to some kind of understanding, so that the interests of the Tamils are protected. Unless this is done, we will have to take our own decisions.

☐ *You mean, go to the streets? Like the others?*

Yes, yes.

☐ *How do you hope to do this politically?*

You ask tricky questions. There is no question of hoping. I have to do this politically. And India alone can help me. That is why I have been asked by the President to go back to India with him, when he goes for CHOGM.

☐ *Do you have any hopes of success?*

Of course, there are answers. We will have to find them. All of us together, with your help.

☐ *Don't your colleagues disapprove of your links with the Tamil extremists?*

How can they? There are extremists on both sides. I stay in touch with one kind of extremists. They stay in touch with another kind. The important thing is to bring everyone back to the negotiating table. That alone will resolve our problems.

S.D. BANDARANAIKE CLIMBS THE ANTI-TAMIL BANDWAGON THONDAMAN HITS BACK

Mr S. Thondaman, President of the Ceylon Workers Congress and Minister in the Jayewardene Cabinet, has become more and more forthcoming and pugnacious in his speeches and comments since the violent events of July 1983. On November 18, he launched a frontal attack on Mr S.D. Bandaranaike, MP for Gampaha, who of late has climbed on to the anti-Tamil bandwagon along with Cyril Mathew and company. Besides attempting to make a marriage between the United National Party and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party in a 'grand alliance of the Sinhalese patriotic forces', he has become one of the most vociferous anti-Tamil jingoists in Sri Lanka.

Mr S.D. Bandaranaike, in his speech made in the Sri Lankan Parliament on November 15, said that (a) far from the Tamils being discriminated against in Sinhala areas, it can be proved that they are in the majority in quite a few wards in the Colombo city itself; and (b) on the contrary in several Northern and Eastern districts, Sinhala people are clearly discriminated against.

To prove his point, Mr SDB produced statistics from the voters' register relating to 10 Municipal wards in Colombo city showing that a substantial number of non-Sinhalese Tamils lived in those wards. He also produced population statistics for the Jaffna, Vavuniya, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa districts in an attempt to show that only a small percentage of Sinhalese lived in those districts.

Cosmopolitan city

But what Mr SDB did not say was as to why he picked up only 10 wards in Colombo city. Colombo has always been a cosmopolitan city attracting people from all parts of the country. It being the nerve centre of all political, economic, commercial and administrative activity in Sri Lanka, it is not unusual that people of all ethnic groups and classes should gravitate towards it, as is the case with the other capitals of the world, like London, New York, Paris or Delhi. If Mr SDB did not want to be diabolically mischievous in the presentation of statistics and if he intended to make a fair comparison of ethnic concentration, then he should have produced the population composition of, say, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Polonnaruwa, Kegalle, Kurunegala, Ambalangoda and other districts. That would have been a comparison of like with like. Not that Mr SDB was so dense as not to know that. But he was being deliberately misleading, mischievous and malevolent.

However, Mr SDB was not allowed to get away with his racist diatribe. On November

19, Mr Thondaman replied to him in a hard-hitting parliamentary performance. The following are extracts of his speech and exchanges as reported in the *Ceylon Daily News* and the *Virakesari*:

Mr S. Thondaman (Minister of Rural Industrial Development) said he wished to reply to certain questions raised by the Member for Gampaha on Tuesday when he was not in the House.

He said the Member for Gampaha should remember that even the SLFP government wanted to give the Tamils a homeland, but persons like the Member for Gampaha had worked against it.

The Member for Gampaha had also organised a campaign of violence at that time and for that he was hailed as the 'Hero of Imbulgoda'. That Member may now be feeling very happy now because others were following him in the campaign of violence. Persons who had organised violence recently had now briefed the Member for Gampaha.

Mr Lakshman Jayakoddy (SLFP-Attanagalle): Who are the people responsible for the recent violence?

Mr Thondaman: Please ask the Member for Gampaha about that.

Mr S.D. Bandaranaike: You can answer that.

Mr Thondaman: I am not going to speak in the way you wish.

Mr S.D. Bandaranaike: You are not telling the truth.

Mr Thondaman: I am not like the Member for Gampaha. Anything I speak or do, I do so openly.

Mr S.D. Bandaranaike: You are a leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front.

Mr Thondaman: Yes. I was a leader of the TULF. But I did not support separation of the country.

Mr S.D. Bandaranaike: You have been planted in this House by Tamil Nadu and the separatists from the North.

Mr Thondaman said he would reply in the way he pleased. After he had made his reply the Member for Gampaha could ask any questions he wished to ask again.

The Member for Gampaha was angry that some other people were taking credit for the violence in July. He was now trying to get the credit for himself. The Member had made the statement that the Sinhala people were being discriminated against by the Tamils. If the Member seriously believed that successive governments had committed that injustice against Sinhala people, he should have resigned his seat.

The Member had spoken about concentrations of Tamil people in places like Kotahena and Mutwal. The Member had said that in his ignorance. He lacked a sense

of proportion. He should know that people went to places where they found conditions favourable for them. There were small Tamil communities in the places the Member had mentioned. If the Member had gone to New York or Los Angeles, he would have seen the China Towns there.

Mr S.D. Bandaranaike said he wished to know whether the Minister knew why there were only very small Sinhala communities in the north and the east. That was not, because those areas had not been developed and the Sinhala people did not like to go there.

Mr Thondaman: Develop the northern and eastern provinces like Colombo and see. Even Sinhalese will go and live there. Under present conditions, only people who work hard can live there, because there are little facilities.

Mr Dinesh Gunawardene: Sinhalese are also hard-working people. But they have no place there.

Mr Thondaman: Move all government offices there and see. Sinhalese people will move there.

Mr Thondaman: There are many Sri Lankans in England, but there aren't many British living in Sri Lanka! People will go only to places where there are attractions and facilities. Can you tell as to how many Tamils are living in the Hambantota district? The Gandhiyam organisation has functioned for several years. You made charges against it with a view to destroying it. Now you are making accusations against the Ceylon Workers' Congress.

Mr Dinesh Gunawardene: In the last ten years they had not been allowed to go there — not because they were not prepared to work hard. There have been instances where they have been chased out. The CWC has been making representations on behalf of those Tamils. The Minister has been advocating that non-nationals should be given land.

Mr Thondaman: Under the Constitution of the country, there is no category called 'stateless' persons. Article 42 of the Constitution is clear on this point. Anyone who said that 'stateless' persons must be discriminated against was acting against the constitution. It is an offence to take the oath of allegiance to the constitution and then act contrary to the provisions of it. The constitution should not be considered a passport to enter parliament. If you accept the constitution, then you should be completely loyal to it.

Mr Thondaman: The Tamil MPs who were in this House did not attend Parliament because they did not agree with the amendment of the Constitution. They have acted according to their conscience. They are a step ahead of you.

Mr Gunewardene said the Minister had been conducting discussions with separatists and terrorists.

Mr Thondaman said that he had been seeking corroboration from others — to make those people accept the constitutional provisions of this country.

Mr Bandaranaike said the Minister had been planted in the House by those people.

Mr Thondaman said that he had never allowed himself to be anybody's plant. He had worked with both the SLFP and the UNP. He did not want anything for himself but he worked for a cause.

Mr Thondaman then spoke of the figures of Tamil and Sinhala people and people of other communities referred to by the Member for Gampaha in his speech on Tuesday, and said those figures were all wrong. He was wrong on the proportions of persons in various fields of employment from the different communities.

He said that dependable figures were those published in the *Lanka Guardian* (a reference to the figures contained in the report prepared by the Committee for Rational Development). He read the article and said that the details in it would show

which ethnic group is discriminated against. Eighty-five per cent of those employed in the public sector are Sinhalese. Tamils constitute only 11 per cent. During the last three years, on an average, 75 per cent of admissions to universities were from the Sinhalese.

Mr Thondaman said that it would be disaster for the people if they had to follow the Member for Marahagama. He preferred to get his statistics from independent people like the Member for Gampaha.

He said he was not asking for special privileges for any Tamils. He was interested only in the people of this country, people who had been born in this country and people whose parents and grandparents were born in this country.

Mr Thondaman said that he wanted the people to understand why he had taken the oath under the constitution. They must be honest and act according to their conscience. He believed that whether they were Sinhalese or Tamils, they should be able to live like brothers in this country.

Mr Bandaranaike: You have been speaking for the separatists, not for the people of this country.

Mr Thondaman: I am not indebted to any political party. I am wedded to a cause.

He said he had lived for 70 years now. 'Few people have lived up to this age, and I do not work for a selfish cause. I am not afraid to die,' Mr Thondaman said.

He had not benefitted, or become richer, by becoming a public man. If, at all, his wealth had decreased gradually from the time he became a public man.

The recent unfortunate violence had tarnished the image of his country abroad. That unfortunate state of affairs had been brought about by frustrated politicians.

Mr Bandaranaike asked whether the people Mr Thondaman represented were prepared to take the anti-separatist oath.

Mr Thondaman: It is alleged that the plantation workers had not taken the anti-separatist oath. Give them monthly salaries and see what happens.

Mr Bandaranaike: Are you laying conditions for taking the oath?

Mr Thondaman: If you give them government employment, they will be compelled to take the oath. You reject them and expect only their oath of loyalty!

UNP, CYRIL MATHEW & NATIONAL UNITY

The United National Party has lived up to its reputation that it is neither 'United' nor 'National' despite the fact that it passed a resolution, full of pious platitudes, 'to carry out an effective campaign to actively promote and foster communal harmony' at its 29th Annual Conference held on December 10.

In spite of his pan-Sinhala concept of 'national unity', it is reported that Mr Mathew had insisted on his claim to remove the resolution because he had been 'slandered and defamed', both within Sri Lanka and abroad, as the person mainly responsible for the July anti-Tamil violation. So far, he has failed to carry out his threat to file a series of defamation actions against those who made the allegations of his complicity.

While President Jayewardene was anxious to salvage whatever he could from the wreckage resulting from the horrors of July and also prepare a favourable climate for the proposed all-party conference, Mr Mathew had no qualms about peddling his pet themes of Sinhala chauvinism. Having moved the resolution, he took several public swipes against the President's stated positions. He proceeded to undermine the intent and content of the resolution he himself had moved with a typical Mathew speech.

He went on to launch a frontal attack on the Tamil United Liberation Front and its leadership and declared that the TULF was not a political party but an ally of terrorism with which there could be no dialogue, thereby attempting to prevent any pos-

sibility of the TULF participating in the proposed all-party conference.

Mr Mathew could not see any other nationalities living in Sri Lanka. He, as is usual with him, distorted Sri Lankan history and declared: '**Sri Lanka history is a Sinhala history and nothing else.**'

Mr Mathew offered himself as the emerging hero to save the Sinhala nation from alleged foreign invasion. Raising the bogey of an Indian invasion, he proclaimed: '**I wish a Tamil Nadu invasion will come during our life-time. Then there could be a hero who would have the strength to unite the Tri Sinhala and fight for the cause of the Sinhalese.**'

Mr Mathew has his own solutions to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka, and that is to liquidate the identity, viability and strength of all other ethnic groups except the Sinhalese. While speaking on the resolution, he proposed the settling of people everywhere according to the population ratio.

In other words, if the Mathew proposals were to be implemented, in course of time, every district of Sri Lanka, including Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa, will have at least 72 per cent Sinhalese settled there. The domination by the Sinhalese of all other ethnic groups will then be complete.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Mr K. W. Devanayagam's recent public exposure of the involvement of the officials of the Ministry of Lands and the Mahaveli Development Authority, both of which are headed by Minister Gamini Dissanayake, in the 'Sinhala invasion' of Vadamunai and

other areas in the Batticaloa district including Kalkudah, the electorate of Mr Devanayagam, had created deep divisions within the ruling party. J.R. Jayewardene, the master manipulator, deliberately selected Mr Devanayagam to second the resolution on 'national harmony'.

Much as he would have preferred not to rock the boat, Mr Devanayagam could not swallow the Mathew medicine without hitting back. He said that the UNP had been formed by 'Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims coming together; it was only when they were in difficulty that they did not think of differences'. He said that 'the future of the country was at stake and going back to history would not solve the current problem'.

Pointing out that no one knows in advance into what community, caste or religion he is born, he bluntly posed the question, '**If Mr Mathew is reborn as a Tamil, what will his position be?**'

Whether the Tamils of Sri Lanka should be allowed to live or be killed would appear to be a matter exclusively and totally dependent upon the momentary likes and dislikes of Sinhala leaders. Responding to the clarion call of Mr Mathew to become a hero to fight for the cause of the Sinhalese, President Jayewardene declared: '**I would like to be a hero and not a traitor. I can ask the armed forces to kill all the Tamils, but I won't do that.**' What happens to the poor Tamils when Mr Jayewardene one day changes his mind? Or for that matter, what fate will befall the Tamils if Mr Mathew takes over upon Jayewardene's demise? He need not even change his mind!

THE JULY ANTI-TAMIL VIOLENCE

— Bishop Lakshman

I was not present in the island when the violence erupted at the end of July 1983. But I have been present and witnessed similar violence in 1958 and 1977. I also experienced the other period of violence in April 1971 when there was an armed insurrection by Sinhala youth. But during July 1983 and afterwards, I was able to follow closely the events that took place from abroad. A friend had collected all the news and comments in the English press from July and August, and gave the documents for me to read. Since I returned, a local friend gave me a similar file of documents from the Sri Lankan press from early July to the end of August. I was able to visit the damaged areas, talk with various people and also meet people in the Jaffna Peninsula. Our own Tamil Church-Members within this Diocese had their stories to tell. In short, the comments I will make on the situation we face are based on much reflection. They also express twenty-five years of experience in seeking to find a solution to our ethnic conflict. I am among those who have tried hard and failed. But I know and trust in God, who is ever creative in bringing good out of evil.

Basic perspectives

I am against the arson, loot, murder and insurrection associated with armed groups of indigenous Tamils. I do not support the demand for a separate state. I do not condone the biased programme of certain expatriate Tamils in various parts of the world. I do not respect those Tamils who ask for a negotiated settlement of their grievances and at the same time support these armed groups. But I do feel a deep sympathy for those indigenous Tamils who are faced with a real dilemma. They have a strong sense of resentment and also grievances which they want remedied.

Likewise, I am against the arson, loot and murder of innocent people and torture by the security forces in Jaffna, Trincomalee, Vavuniya and elsewhere. These are unjustified acts of revenge for the activities of the armed groups who they cannot eliminate. I do not support the demand for the domination of the Tamils by the Sinhalese majority. Nor do I condone the biased propaganda to be found in the national daily papers. I do not respect those Sinhalese who want a negotiated settlement of mutual grievances, and at the same time want domination of the Tamils by the Sinhalese majority. But I do feel much sympathy for those Sinhalese who are faced with a real dilemma. They genuinely want mutual grievances remedied by negotiation. But they are against the domination of Tamils by the Sinhala majority, and against the unjustified activities of the

security forces, though they may appreciate the genuine problems raised by those from whom they differ. Since they fear the revenge of thugs with political patronage and know that they are not likely to receive protection from the police, they remain silent. It is too risky to speak out in public.

My deepest sympathy is for the Tamils whose ancestors arrived during the period of British rule. And it is especially so for the estate labour who have contributed so much to our income from exports. They have been innocent victims who have faced arson, loot and death in 1977, 1981 and 1983, as a result of a conflict in which they have no part. Even in 1976, some of them within the region covered by our Diocese faced eviction, arson, loot and starvation owing to the activities of the thugs with political patronage. They have suffered and been humiliated because they have been defenceless. I feel deeply ashamed for the pain and the loss they have undergone. It is a moral injustice that cries out to heaven.

There is one last aspect to my basic perspective. It is my rejection of those who twist the facts of history to create myths. By myths I mean those theories which misinterpret facts, false notions. It is such myths that harden prejudice and rouse violence, whether among armed mobs or armed guerrillas. Sinhalese and Tamils have to erase from their minds false notions about themselves and their island history, by allowing facts to control theories. That is why I am against those who make and spread such false notions. False rumour has cost many lives. But is false notions about each other that have made these false rumours effective.

What happened at the end of July 1983

There are theories and there are facts. Theories vary. Some say that the originators were left-wing groups aided by foreign powers. Others say that the originators were thugs and private hirelings of powerful politicians connected with the government. Still others say that both these groups were involved for different motives. This is not the place to discuss these rival theories.

The facts, however, cannot be denied. Thousands of Tamils, old and young, and even little children, were assaulted, robbed, killed, bereaved and made refugees. They saw their homes, possessions, vehicles, shops and factories plundered, burnt or destroyed. These people were humiliated, made to live in fear and rendered helpless.

Business premises run by Tamils or Indians were selected and burnt. The homes and possessions of Tamils in the professions and government services were also

With the death of Lakshman Wickremasinghe, the Bishop of Kurunegala, Sri Lanka, on October 23, 1983, the people of Sri Lanka have lost an indefatigable champion of civil liberties and democratic rights. As a leading figure in civil rights organisations, the late Bishop continued a ceaseless struggle against human rights violations, no matter which political party was in power.

Although he was no supporter of the claim for a 'separate state' for the Tamils of Sri Lanka, the late Bishop did not fail to recognise and articulate the grievances of the Tamil people. In his Christmas message in December 1977, he said: 'After August 1977 (violence), the Tamils feel insecure and alienated. They want security of life and property guaranteed to them against mob violence and communal prejudice; they want to be treated like equals in public life as of right, in the face of discrimination.'

selected and destroyed. On two occasions, Tamils were selected and killed in Welikade prison. Such selectiveness indicated a prepared plan of action. It is not that poor Tamils were also not killed or made refugees. They were. It is simply that in their case, the mobs did not reveal a method in their madness. But there was more. A large number of people lost their employment as a result of destruction, and these included not only Tamils but Sinhalese and others. Even some Kovils, Churches and Vicarages were not spared.

As a result of all this, economic development and foreign exchange suffered an immense loss. Public services were disrupted. Our image abroad was damaged.

The people responsible for all this violence and destruction and suffering were mostly Sinhalese. The fact that Jaela, Wattala, Kotahena, Kelaniya and Galkissawellawatte areas were places where mob rule was evident, points to some Christians being involved. Those Sinhalese may also have been part of the dominant Sinhala mobs. Young people including students were also part of certain mobs on the rampage. And, according to available evidence, the police and armed forces were seen in different places to be either inactive spectators or active supporters of these mobs who attacked the lives and properties of Tamils.

The main issue — was all this justified or not in the circumstances?

There are those who say that this massive Sinhala retaliation of Tamils in the southern parts of Sri Lanka was justified. They

LENCE IS A MORAL CRIME

Wickremasinghe

His last pastoral letter, written after the worst anti-Tamil violence of July 1983, was typical of the frankness and objectivity with which he approached inter-ethnic problems in Sri Lanka. At a time when those in authority were attempting to cover up the sheer barbarity of the violence unleashed upon the Tamils, Bishop Wickremasinghe, with his characteristic honesty, said: 'The arguments that have been stated so far, point to one basic moral fact. It is that the massive retaliation mainly by Sinhalese against Tamils in July 1983, cannot be justified on moral grounds. We must admit and acknowledge our shame . . . We must be ashamed because what took place was a moral crime. We are ashamed as Sinhalese for the moral crime other Sinhalese committed.'

Reproduced below are extracts from Bishop Wickremasinghe's last pastoral letter.

say that the killing of at least 83 persons, including the 13 soldiers on 23rd July, the attacks on police stations, damage by bombs to an aircraft, a passenger train and government institutions, bank robberies, and acts of arson on public property in the north, were such crimes as to deserve the revenge executed by the Sinhalese. They add that Tamils in the south of Sri Lanka did not for the most part condemn these acts by armed groups. But those who say this forget three facts. First, the retaliation for these actions was being taken by the police and armed forces in Jaffna district, Trincomalee and Vavuniya through the killing of many more than 83 persons, damage to private property, arson, looting, assault on civilians, destroying of public property such as the Jaffna Public Library in 1981, and the torture of detainees in police stations and army camps. Secondly, indigenous Tamils who lived in the south of the island had already faced arson, looting and death and became refugees in 1977. Thirdly, the Tamils who faced such retaliation in 1977, 1981 and 1983 included Tamils of Indian origin, who had no part in the attacks made by armed groups in the north.

In view of these facts, to say that the retaliation in July was justified is to advocate tribal vengeance. In fact, the verse in the Old Testament which says 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth', was a reminder that the Jews should not engage in tribal vengeance. A tribe should not destroy the whole of another tribe for the crimes of its members. Jesus in the New Testament pointed out that this ancient Jewish law was

a moral standard that was no longer justified. This shows that those who say that the massive Sinhala retaliation on Tamils living in the south was justified have a lower standard of morality than the ancient Jews. Their conscience is distorted. We must rise above such tribal morality.

There are others who say that the personal suffering and murder which took place in July may not be justified. But they feel deep down in their hearts that the enforced departure of indigenous Tamils from the professions, government services, universities and schools and of Tamils of Indian origin from retail trade and other occupations in south Sri Lanka was justified. They have questions of conscience about the methods adopted, but not about the final result. Because they feel that the undue advantages which the indigenous Tamils had in relation to their percentage of the population, and which the Tamils of Indian origin had in the internal trade, especially within the Sinhala areas, were not justified, they are not willing to condemn the methods adopted to get rid of them. They had compassion and were helpful in many instances. But they did not feel a sense of moral outrage.

Three questions

I would like these people to reflect on three questions. First, were these undue advantages solely the result of what happened in the colonial period, and to mutual help among themselves at the expense of the Sinhalese? Did not the middle-class Tamil have to move southwards and abroad because Jaffna district did not provide enough avenues for prosperity through economic enterprise, as south Ceylon provided for the emerging Sinhala middle class? Did not the qualities of hard work, thrift and ability help the Tamils to prosper where they came to work and reside? Secondly, who enabled them to remain in the Sinhala areas? Did not successive Sinhala political leaders make use of the skills of the indigenous Tamils to implement their programmes? Did not the traders of Indian origin have easy credit facilities with people in India, which enabled them to provide certain goods speedily and efficiently? Did not Sinhala politicians and officials permit them to remain also because of the presents they took from these traders? Thirdly, can the final result of removing those with undue advantages through methods that are not condemned, be restricted to the Tamils? In Kandyan areas, people from the low country have undue advantages in the professions, government services, universities, leading schools and in trade.

The Muslims have such undue advantages in the trading sector. Are these undue advantages due solely to what happened in the colonial period and to mutual help at the expense of the Kandyans? Did not the qualities of enterprise, hard work and ability enable them to prosper in these areas? Do these undue advantages justify the final result of securing their enforced departure, if the Kandyan Sinhalese were to adopt the same methods as were adopted in July 1983 towards the Tamils? Another question follows. Certain families in our rural areas have such advantages as undue ownership of land, access to the best schools and to the best occupations, which the poorer people in these areas do not have. Are such advantages due solely to what happened in the colonial period and to mutual help at the expense of the poorer people? Did not the qualities of hard work, thrift and ability enable them to prosper as these areas were developed? Do these undue advantages justify the final result of securing their displacement, if the poorer people adopt the methods used towards the Tamils in July 1983? Did not the insurrection led by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna in 1971 have this result in view? So, let those who justify the final result of what happened in July 1983 to the Tamils in south Sri Lanka consider the further implications of their moral standards. To restrict what they justify when it happens to the Tamils, is to hold double standards. This is hypocrisy. To think in this way at all, is really to hold the moral standard that the end justifies the means. None of the great religions we profess upholds this morality.

No moral justification

There are still others who justify the role of several of the police and armed forces, during this massive retaliation in July 1983. Some people say that these security forces did nothing to stop the violent mobs, or encouraged them because they were angry that their own personnel had been killed by armed groups in the north. Such solidarity with those killed or resentment against the killers in the north does not justify what they did or failed to do in the south. The security forces are trained and armed to eliminate armed groups. They are paid to protect the lives and properties of civilians, and to maintain law and order. Their inefficiency in being unable to eliminate armed gangs of Tamils on one part of the island, does not justify their ensuring that revenge is taken on innocent Tamils in the other part of the island. This is not the kind of behaviour that can be justified on moral grounds. Then, other people say that the security forces could not be expected to

harm or kill their own Sinhalese people to save the Tamils. But, in fact, I saw some security forces do so in 1958. I witnessed the army doing so in 1977 though not the police. It is not to provide moral justification. Finally, there are still others who say that there were several instances where the police and armed forces simply could not disperse the mobs. This was because there were too few in some places, not properly concentrated in the right areas, and in some instances they were faced with young students placed in front of the advancing mobs. Or else, some had lost their morale owing to the success of armed groups in the north. We can sympathise with some of the police and armed forces who were faced with such situations. These reasons may be explanations for inefficiency, for which such persons may not be responsible. They do not justify failure to protect the lives and properties of defenceless people. This must not prevent us, however, from expressing our deep gratitude to those in the police and armed forces who did their duty, in spite of risk and division within their own ranks.

Shame and apology

The arguments that have been stated so far, point to one basic moral fact. It is that the massive retaliation mainly by Sinhalese against defenceless Tamils in July 1983, cannot be justified on moral grounds. We must admit this and acknowledge our shame. And we must do so for the right reasons. It is not enough to be ashamed for the reason that inhuman passions enslaved a section of the Sinhalese for a short period. Nor must we be ashamed because our sense of moral outrage will improve our image abroad. **We must be ashamed because what took place was a moral crime. We are ashamed as Sinhalese for the moral crime other Sinhalese committed.**

We must not only acknowledge our shame. We must also make our apology to those Tamils who were unjustified victims of this massive retaliation. An apology must be made for three reasons. First, as Sinhalese we share in the total life of our people. We share in all that is good and great in our Sinhala heritage. These good and great aspects were due to the lives and achievements of only a section of the Sinhala people. But as members of the whole group we claim what one section did as belonging to us all. We share in the joy and the responsibility of their lives and labours. That is why in this Diocese we acknowledge and rejoice in all that is good and great not only in our Sinhala heritage, but also in Sinhala-Buddhism. We have absorbed all this into the life and mission of this Diocese, except that we have our basis in Jesus Christ. In the same way, when a section of the Sinhalese do what is morally wrong or bad, we share in it. As members of the whole group we claim that what one

section did, belongs to us all. We share in the evil they have done. Secondly, it is a mark of moral maturity to acknowledge a moral crime on behalf of those closely knit to us, who do not realise that they have done so. And an apology is made on their behalf. Parents do so on behalf of children. Others do so on behalf of relatives or friends. There is a solidarity of family, of kinship and of friendship, in things both right and wrong. Gandhi used to acknowledge the moral crimes of those who engaged in violence. He fasted in order that they would come to the point of acknowledging the evil they had done and change their ways. Thirdly, there is the example of Jesus in the midst of brutality and suffering. He shared in the guilt of all those who were involved in the moral crime of bringing about his unjust death, because he shared in our humanity, he apologised for all those who did not know the moral evil they were doing. His compassion acknowledged both shame and guilt. He apologised so that he might begin the process of setting right what was wrong in a broken relationship. It was between Jesus and those who had done wrong to him. It was also between God, whose will Jesus had done, and all those who thereby had done wrong against God. In setting right their wrong done to Jesus, they would also set right the wrong they had done to their heavenly Father. As he apologised, he also prayed that all would come to recognise the wrong they had done, duly apologise, and change their ways.

Process of setting right

It is only by such a kind of apology that we shall also recover our proper moral and religious values. Then, we can begin the process of setting right what went wrong in our relationship with the Tamils. A section of the Sinhalese must acknowledge the wrong done to those Tamils who were innocent victims. And they must do so with compassion for their fellow-Sinhalese who did the wrong, and for those who do not want to admit that a wrong was done. Christians will know that in setting right a broken relationship with those Tamils who suffered unjustly, they would be setting right a broken relationship with God, who is the heavenly Father of us all. At the same time, they must pray that those who did them wrong and those who are unable as yet to admit the wrong done by others, will come to a new level of moral insight. The tragedy is that it is becoming harder in 1983 for Sinhala Christians to acknowledge that what has been done is a moral crime, than in 1958. Our moral sense in this matter is getting dull. We must ask that the Holy Spirit may enlighten our consciences.

It may be that this process of setting right the moral wrong that was done by a section of the Sinhalese may evoke a softening of attitudes among a section of the Tamils. To so admit the wrong, to make the apology,

and to change past attitudes may awaken a new moral sense among a section of the Tamils. They may come to acknowledge the moral wrong of condoning violence, especially the seeking of revenge, among their own people. The main point, however, is that the true basis of reconciliation is admission of wrong done and an appeal for forgiveness. When forgiveness is given or a mutual apology is evoked, reconciliation begins to take effect, slowly but surely. Hardened attitudes begin to change.

Political solutions

We know that this is not a matter about which we can do much ourselves. But we also know that if there is no sustained dialogue and negotiations, the situation will get worse. The deadlock at present between the different Sinhala leaders, and between the Sinhala leadership and the Tamil leadership, is disheartening. A consensus among the Sinhala leaders is essential. This consensus must have the support of the leading monks in all the Nikayas. The urgent demands of our national crisis must overcome personal, party and petty interest. We must pray for and support those who are trying to build convergence in the midst of divergence.

Renewed dialogue between the Sinhala and Tamil leadership should not be delayed. The possibility of renewed violence remains in the background like a dark shadow. India's interests as the regional power in our midst cannot be disregarded. The All Party Conference which was promised in the Party Manifesto needs to be implemented now. The issues remain the same in regard to the indigenous Tamils and the Tamils of Indian origin. Various concessions have been made. Now a genuine sharing of power between the majority and the minorities has to emerge. Actual realities have to be faced by all those negotiating. The security of ordinary people, of minorities and of the whole island, has to be assured. What we have to pray about and work for in every way we can, is this:

There must be a real determination to reach a settlement. Otherwise, there will be increasing disorder along with increasing dictatorship.

An independent Commission of Inquiry similar to the one presided over by Mr Sansoni can be of real use. The inquiry will need to consider not merely how and why the recent violence took place. It will need to examine the role of the mass media and of the educational system, in relation to communal attitudes and conflicts. Its sittings should be adequately protected both in Sinhala and Tamil, with the use of English only when desired. The Commission should have the support of all the major political parties. We must pray and work for this as well.

FIJI DEPUTY SPEAKER SAYS:

'Tamil killings must be condemned'

Fiji should take a stand and condemn the killing of Tamils in Sri Lanka, the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives, Mr Vijaya Parmanandam, said on November 22, 1983.

Mr Parmanandam said reports from Sri Lanka indicated that Tamils were victims of genocide by the majority Sinhalese community.

He said the government of President Junius Jayewardene was suspect because it ordered its troops to shoot to kill on sight.

He said many Tamils were in refugee camps and their relatives were frantically trying to get them out.

Mr Parmanandam said Fiji should break its ties with Sri Lanka in view of the genocide which has been condemned by many countries.

He said he 'had a laugh' when he read a statement by a Sri Lankan diplomat who visited Fiji recently.

The diplomat said that there was no genocide and things were calm in Sri Lanka.

Oppressed state

But Mr Parmanandam said reports from Sri Lanka indicated that there was tension and Tamils were still in an oppressed state.

He said Fiji recruited many Sri Lankan people and it was time this policy was examined.

He said no international community could condone what was being done in Sri Lanka.

(By kind courtesy of FIJI SUN, 23.11.83)

ASTMS PROTESTS AGAINST SUPPORT FOR SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT

The North East London Medical Branch (Division 15) of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs, one of the leading trade unions in the United Kingdom, has adopted the following resolution:

i) This DC mindful of members whose relatives are suffering during events in Sri Lanka at this moment, calls upon the NEC to publicly protest, through all possible channels including the TUC and Parliamentary Committee, about the recent undemocratic measures pursued by the UNP Government of Sri Lanka.

Condemn racist attacks

We call on the NEC to condemn the failure of the UNP Government to protect the Tamil minority against racist attacks, and condemn the way that the security forces themselves have been allowed to participate in, and encourage, the anti-Tamil pogroms.

We recognise that in the face of continuing economic decline to desperate levels, President Jayewardene is fostering racial antagonisms to provide a pretext for bolstering his dictatorial powers. We therefore call upon the NEC to condemn the banning of the left and opposition parties as anti-democratic and anti-labour, and designed to suppress effective opposition to the further driving down of living standards.

We urge that:

a) a strong letter of protest be sent to the Sri Lankan High Commission without delay;

b) collusion between the Tory Government in Britain and the UNP Government in Sri Lanka in training Sri Lanka security forces be opposed;

c) protest be made at the Tory Government's support for the dictatorial style of President Jayewardene's regime;

d) financial support be given to Tamil refugees and direct access to be granted to the relief agencies but other foreign aid to be stopped until human rights are restored;

e) the recommendations of the 1982 Amnesty International Report on Sri Lanka be implemented;

f) the UNP be pressured to release all trade unionists held in detention;

g) contact be made with the Sri Lankan Joint Trade Union Action Committee and/or appropriate trade union, with offers of support.

THE TAMIL
LIBERATION STRUGGLE
A PHOTOGRAPHIC
EXHIBITION

Portraying:

- The savage and brutal oppression unleashed against the Tamil nation.
- Democratic non-violent protest against the repression of successive Sinhala governments.
- Failure of non-violent protest and the birth of the armed resistance movement.
- Heroic struggle of the Tamil masses and their armed vanguard — Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

On Saturday, January 21st, 1984
From 6.30pm to 10.30pm

Hampstead Town Hall,
Haverstock Hill, NW3
(Opposite Belsize Park tube station)

LONDON TAMIL MANRAM

SRI LANKA
AMBASSADOR
ERNEST COREA
'GRILLED'

'Tamil booklet grills Lanka envoy to US', says the headline in the *Telegraph*, Calcutta, carrying a 13-paragraph review of the booklet *Dear Sri Lanka Ambassador — Your Slip is Showing*, which was released from the printers in Madras on November 18. The review appears in the *Telegraph* of November 21.

Says the paper: 'The Tamil Information Centre (TIC) based in London, has brought out a publication entitled *Dear Sri Lanka Ambassador — Your Slip is Showing* which exposes the "white lies and half truths" about the Sri Lankan Tamil problem as propagated by the Sri Lankan ambassador to the US, Mr Ernest Corea . . . The 24-page booklet systematically demolishes Mr Corea's thesis . . .'

Meanwhile, the booklet had provoked quick reaction in the Sri Lanka government, diplomatic and journalistic circles as well. The *Daily News* in its issue of November 24 carries a despatch from its correspondent in New York, T.M. Deen, which says: 'Sri Lanka's Ambassador in the United States has been accused of propagating "white lies" and "half truths" on the Sinhala-Tamil ethnic conflict. The charges have been made by London-based separatists in a vituperative 24-page booklet released last week . . . Asked to comment, Corea said: "I do not believe either in polemics or propaganda. I will not therefore dignify the polemics and propaganda which splatter the pages of this particular literary curiosity with a reply."'

Writing in a light vein in his column in the *Sunday Island* of November 27, Mervyn de Silva (Kautilya) says: 'Mr S. Sivanayagam, editor of the *Saturday Review* (still "sub-judice") has published in London a tigerish reply to *Beyond Conflict* by ex-Daily News editor, Ambassador Ernest Corea. Sighs a not-so-earnest Information Department counter-guerrilla, psy-war expert: This is getting BEYOND CONTROL!

Returning to make a longer reference to the booklet in his column in the *Island* of December 4, he says the booklet 'savages' His Excellency and his polemical style 'so aggressively that one can only describe the literary exercise as a well-planned terrorist ambush. More later.'

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENT

Brothers in UK seeking a suitable partner for their younger sister, Jaffna Tamil 31 years old, trained teacher. (Strictly confidential) Replies to Box M6, c/o Tamil Times.

CIA SPY RING BUSTED IN INDIA

The game was up for three senior retired defence officers and local businessman with extensive military connections who had formed a spy ring to supply classified information on army and air force bases and IAF aircraft to the CIA through some US embassy officials in New Delhi. All four of them were arrested by Intelligence Bureau and Delhi Police sleuths who had been on their track for some time following a tip-off by an IAF officer.

A top-level spy ring in Delhi used by the Central Intelligence Agency of the United States to gather classified information of strategic importance for the past five years was busted last month when the Intelligence Bureau and the Delhi police arrested three senior retired defence service officers along with a local businessman. The disclosure of the sensational espionage case made by some Delhi newspapers last fortnight was confirmed in Parliament by Defence Minister R. Venkataraman the very next day.

The kingpin of the gang of four, who were believed to have collected over a million rupees for passing on top secret defence papers about IAF aircraft, air and army bases and the type of armaments used by

the air force and the army, was retired Major-General F.D. Larkins. He was nabbed from his house in the posh Vasant Vihar area of Delhi, from where the police seized a number of incriminating documents. He had been posing as a consultant for a European firm while gathering the information the CIA wanted. The Major-General, who started working for the CIA soon after his retirement from the army five years ago, roped in his brother Air Vice-Marshal K.H. Larkins who retired from the air force two years ago.

Liaison work

Lt-Col Jasbir Singh (Retd.) was the third defence officer of the ring whose liaison work was carried on by Jaspal Singh Gill, a well-to-do contractor who had been engaged for defence supplies for quite a few years. Remanded to judicial custody till Dec 22 by Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Kanwal Inder, all of them have been lodged in Tihar Central Jail, from where the last two made an unsuccessful attempt to obtain bail. The Larkins brothers, who made a 10-page statement before the magistrate confessing the crime,

gave details of their operations and the persons in the American embassy to whom they had been supplying information.

HINDU REVIVALIST TREK

The Pasupathy ratha, one of the three chariots traversing India as part of the Ekatmata Yatra completed its 3,000-kilometre journey and reached its destination, Rameswaram, on December 16th. The ratha, carrying an urn of Ganga water and a metal idol of Bharat Mata astride a lion, started from Pasupathy temple in Nepal on October 28th. Multitudes greeted the chariots en route and a huge convoy of bicycles and other vehicles preceded and followed the chariots.

The Pasurathy ratha was dismantled at Mandapam and the idol and vessel containing the holy water were transported by train to Pamban and by truck to Sri Ramanathaswamy temple at Rameswaram. With bhajan singing reaching a crescendo, abhishekam was performed with the holy water.

'NO MORE BARBAROUS ACTS AGAINST SRI LANKA TAMILS' SAYS MRS INDIRA GANDHI

MADRAS, Dec 18 — The Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi, today assured the people of Tamil Nadu, that the Central Government was fully aware of the Tamils' problems in Sri Lanka and was doing its best to help find a solution.

Mrs Gandhi, who referred to the Sri Lanka Tamils' issue while addressing a public meeting on the Marina, said the situation was so delicate that she would not say anything more publicly. 'We have to be careful that no word or act of ours makes the situation more difficult for the Tamils in Sri Lanka,' she added.

The Prime Minister said the people of Tamil Nadu, as also those in Delhi, were deeply concerned over what had happened to the people of Tamil origin in the island. What was more important was not what they had to say about it, but how to act to save the lives of the people there and to create an atmosphere in which 'such barbarous acts' did not recur.

'It is not possible to interfere in the internal affairs of another country. But we offered our good offices because we thought that we could help create an atmosphere which would lessen the hatred and bitterness between the two communities,' she said.

DEMOCRACY SOLDIERED TO SOCIALISM

Democracy cannot exist without socialism, said Mrs Indira Gandhi, introducing a series of resolutions on politics, economics and external affairs to the plenary Session of the Congress (I) Partry at Calcutta. She emphasised that it had to be an Indian kind of socialism and not as perceived by the communist countries or by the Western world. All the other parties of India were criticised but the attack on the parties to the right of 'Indira Congress' was more ferocious. They were denounced for their reactionary social and political outlook and castigated for their communal, casteist and separatist tendencies. The leftist parties were rapped for failing to understand the Indian sentiment and for underestimating the external threat to India. She stressed the need for social transformation by consent. The USA was condemned for invading Grenada and for promoting the arms race.

Tactical move

Her single step to the left is seen essentially as a tactical move to outflank the opposition parties. Her party has always been viewed as a left of centre party but more pragmatic in its approach rather than totally theoretically based. The cynics see this session as a confirmation of the post of

Rajiv Gandhi as a key person in the party and a likely successor to Mrs Gandhi.

The plenary session is also the first of a series of events commemorating the centenary of the founding of the Indian National Congress. An Englishman, A.O. Hume, first conceived the Congress Party. The first national conference was held in Calcutta 100 years ago. With the amalgamation of other bodies and meetings, the inaugural meeting of the Indian National Congress took place in Bombay on December 28, 1885.

INDIAN CAMP ON ANTARCTIC

After two preliminary visits in the last two years, an 83-member Indian team has established India's first permanent scientific station on the frozen continent. The expedition includes two women. A chartered Finnish ice-breaker 'Finn Polaris' took the team on the 24-day journey from India.

In September 1983, India became a consultative member of the Antarctic treaty, which bans nuclear explosions in Antarctica and suspends till 1991 the claims, some of them overlapping, that many countries have on Antarctic territory.

SRI LANKANS START PAYING THROUGH THE NOSE!

The anti-Tamil pogrom of July 81 and the immense damage to the economy of the country are already having an adverse impact on the cost of living. The increase in the turnover tax from 10 to 15 per cent announced in last month's budget has brought about price hikes in a variety of consumer items. Items include: cement (now Rs 93/- per bag as against the pre-budget price of Rs 83/-), chocolates, condensed milk, beer, ice cream, electric fans, fruit cordials, ready-made garments, cookers, domestic appliances, refrigerators, cosmetics, motor cars, washing machines, milk and milk food other than infant milk foods, dried fish, Maldivian fish, cycles, agricultural tools and handloom textiles.

Meanwhile, coconuts have become very, very expensive. For the first time in the history of the country 'half coconuts' are being put out for sale!

CANADA'S FIRST HINDU TEMPLE

A site in Richmond Hill has been chosen for Canada's first Hindu Temple by the Hindu Temple Society of Canada.

Nearly four acres have been acquired on the east side of Bayview Avenue, north of Elgin Mills Road, and Metro's Hindu community has sponsored a \$1.4 million fund-raising campaign to complete the project. There are over 100,000 Hindus in the Metro area, and the temple with the socio-cultural centre planned should attract devotees from all parts of Canada and even the United States.

The temple complex incorporating some of the finest facets of Indian Temple Architecture would enrich the Canadian landscape. It would be an excellent facility for the Hindus of the Metro area, who at present meet for prayers at private homes or travel to the nearest temple in Pittsburgh.

BASEBALL COMES TO SRI LANKA

That American military hardware of various descriptions is pouring into Sri Lanka is a well-known fact in international intelligence circles. It is also known that the Voice of America is to update the relay station in Sri Lanka with modern and powerful equipment, helping to cover a wider area of broadcasts in the area, including the Indian sub-continent. On top of all this, American Peace Corps men are pitching camps all over Sri Lanka, including Jaffna.

It is inevitable therefore that when a large influx of Americans has suddenly descended on Sri Lanka on various missions, the national game of America, BASEBALL, should also become part of the Sri Lankan scene. On Saturday 3rd December, the game was formally introduced into the country at Havelock Park, Colombo, with Festus Perera, Fisheries Minister taking a mighty swipe at a ball pitched by bespectacled Dr Robert E. Smith, President of the International Baseball Association. Festus Perera, speaking of the similarity between baseball and the Sri Lankan game 'Elle', said the Sri Lankans would be able to master the game in no time.

QUOTABLE QUOTES FROM PRESIDENT JAYEWARDENE

Addressing the annual sessions of the ruling United National Party held at the Sugathadasa Indoor Stadium, Colombo, on December 10, President Jayewardene made the following points:

● I would like to be a hero and not a traitor. I can ask the armed forces to kill all the Tamils, but I won't do that.

● The TULF did not represent the entire Tamil population in the country. I have a right to speak on the behalf of the 'Tamil-speaking people', because more of them had voted for the UNP at the last General Election.

● We should keep in mind that the minority Tamils are powerful, one of the most powerful minorities in the world.

● We should also realise that India is a powerful country and we cannot fight with them, but of course if they intend to invade us, we won't give in. Then how can they conquer us?

● The contemporary political scene in Sri Lanka was coloured largely by the tragic events that occurred in July. We have been pictured through the media, throughout the world, in a very bad light. In India and particularly in South India it is difficult for us to recapture the good name we had.

V.O.A. IN SRI LANKA

When the new Voice of America agreement was debated in Parliament on December 5th, it had been initialled but not yet formally signed.

The agreement, now signed, has not yet been made public, although the Ministry of External Affairs has agreed to table a copy in Parliament.

But from what transpired in the debate itself, it is clear that this is no mere renewal of the 1951 agreement, as government spokesmen contended.

Apart from the fact that VOA will be leased a further 1,000 acres and allowed to install the most powerful transmitters in Asia, it is clear that our government has surrendered even the nominal right it had under the 1951 agreement to vet in advance any broadcasts it may not like.

Minister A.C.S. Hameed quoted the relevant clause of the new agreement, which reads:

'The United States Government will use its best endeavours to ensure that the VOA will not make broadcasts detrimental to Sri Lanka's interests. For this purpose, copies of programmes will be preserved for 30 days'.

This makes it clear that it is the US government, and not the government of Sri Lanka, that will in the final run determine what 'Sri Lanka's interests' are. Even here, its only undertaking is to 'use its best endeavours' in this regard. The 30-day retention of scripts is in case Sri Lanka should object to a broadcast it has been made:

Lakshman Jayakoddy made the matters crystal clear when he pointedly asked Minister Hameed: 'Have we got the right to vet the schedule?' To which question, Mr Hameed answered: 'No.'

SHAN ATTACKS SATCHI

Satchi Ponnambalam's recently released book, *Sri Lanka, the National Question and the Tamil Liberation Struggle*, has provoked an angry reaction from Mr N. Shanmugathasan, the veteran communist and Secretary of the Ceylon Communist Party (Maoist). In an article published in the *Ceylon Daily News* deploring the publication of this book, he says:

'It is Tamil communalism gone made — an antithesis of Sinhala communal books. It is counter-productive and serves to defeat the cause that it sets out to espouse.'

Nothing is ever gained in an argument by exaggerating beyond all reason on 'own case' while denigrating one's opponent to absurd limits. This is what Satchi Ponnambalam has done in his rambling 273 pages of wasted print. This is the other side of the attempt by Sinhala chauvinists to revive the story of Duttegemunu and his epic battle for Elara for their own racist ends.

It is true that Tamils have suffered communal violence and the regional autonomy demand has arisen as a result of these events. Why can't we put forward this argument straight without embellishments with myths and fantasies? Satchi Ponnambalam has done a great disservice to the cause of the Tamils by writing this book. The Tamils might well say: 'Save us from our friends.'

FROM THE PRESS

THE AGONY OF SRI LANKA

'Those self-annointed guardians of Sri Lanka's good name who went into paroxysms of indignation in the immediate aftermath of July, have begun howling again this time over the book *The Agony of Sri Lanka* by T.D.S.A. Dissanayaka which *The Island* has been serialising prior to its publication. The thrust of their argument is that at a time when the Government is spending money to rehabilitate Sri Lanka's reputation in the eyes of the world, an account of what really happened with details of the killings and burnings which took place during those dark days would undo all the good work done.

'This naive argument is based on the assumption that if enough money is spent and enough glossy publications are churned out by the Government's propaganda mills, the enormity of what happened in July can be suppressed from the attention of the world. We must say first of all that we do not subscribe to this theory. No one can deny that during the fag end of July a section of the people in this country behaved in the most brutal and perverse way imaginable towards the Tamil community, looting their property, burning their belongings and even killing people. This the whole world knows and there is no point in trying to suppress this reality. What we can do at this juncture is not to try to sweep all this under the carpet, but explain to the world the circumstances under which the happenings of July took place, the historical background to them and the social and political forces which produced this catastrophe.

'... The good name and reputation of a country or the 'image' as it is called in this world dominated by the admen is not a static or sanitised entity which can be preserved from adverse change by hiring enough advertising agencies to prop it up permanently. The image of a country which the rest of the world holds can only be changed by internal conditions within that country which means ultimately the people of that country themselves. If we allow the pillage of the homes of innocent people and their unwarranted killings and allow law and order to take a holiday while all this is let loose we can hardly expect the world to stand up and cheer. Having reaped the whirlwind by our own purblindness we can hardly gripe if the rest of the world calls us names.

'This has to be understood if we are to make a success of the job of rehabilitating our reputation dented by the July events. We would be insulting the intelligence of the rest of the world if we think that they

would be so naive as to fall for any expensive window-dressing or cosmetic job. The world has to be confronted and told intelligently and rationally what really happened and the intermingled factors which led up to this process of events.

'... Now the holocaust of July which has been described as a 'crisis of civilisation' no less by those who have not shied away from the realities has drastically marred the country's image as never before. Naturally, the insular elite of the country who have almost lulled themselves to sleep with the illusion that they are God's own chosen people who can do no wrong are horrified at the turn of events. They have begun blaming everybody under the sun except themselves.'

— THE ISLAND, Editorial, 4.12.83.

MOSLEM REVIVALISM

The signs of a re-activation of Moslem politics which the L.G. noted in its last issue became more strongly evident the re-emergence of Moslem world's 'Three Grand Old Men' — Sir Razik Fareed, Dr Kaleel and Dr Badiuddin Mahmud.

Traditionally, the business of the Sri Lankan Moslems has been business. Politics has been left to the Elders, with each community (Moor or Malay) loyal to its own chosen leader. Party politics disturbed the old pattern somewhat when the SLFP broke a UNP monopoly with the advent of the Islamic Socialist Front.

The educated young Moslem was an exception for educational pursuits never had the attraction of business prospects. Patriarchal politics and a family patronage system dominated the Moslem way of life.

Arab/OPEC power, the Islamic renaissance, the romantic dynamism of the gadfly Gaddafi and the revolutionary upsurge of

the Iranian people and a clergy-led popular movement appeared to change the thinking of some young Moslems but this radicalisation has not resulted in any young Moslem political figure.

Suddenly the explosive ethnic (Sinhala/Tamil) issue has shattered the silence of the cloistered world of Moslem politics. Education, jobs, land and economic interests are all at stake. Once more, the 'Godfathers' bestir themselves. Sir Razik writes letters of protest; Dr Kaleel returns from Saudi Arabia to complain of anti-Moslem propaganda and even Dr Mahmud comes out of the Gampola woods.

Most noteworthy perhaps is the demand made by Mr Jabir Cader, second MP for Colombo Central, in his speech in Parliament last week. Moslems constitute only three per cent of university entrants, Mr Cader said, before arguing that eight to ten per cent of admissions should be on an ethnic basis.

— LANKA GUARDIAN, 15.12.83

FEELING ASHAMED

'I have been working in Saudi Arabia for about five years — but during the last four months I have been on more than 60 occasions asked by Indians, Britishers, Americans, Arabs, etc., whether I am a Tamil or a Sinhalese. Each time I proudly said 'Sinhalese', but in all these encounters I was told 'Then you are the people killing the Tamils'. I now feel ashamed to announce publicly that I am a Sinhalese. Just because of a handful of maniacs must a whole population suffer? It is time we all did something to rebuild our Sri Lanka nation... Let us all start a campaign to call ourselves Sri Lankans and to build our nation...'

D.N. Premasiri of Riyadh in a Letter to the Editor, SUN, December 7, 1983

ROUND TABLE TALKS & DECEPTION

FROM PAGE 3

the meeting. The meeting was then quickly called off on the face-saving plea that the TULF leaders were expected to fly to Colombo the same morning. What amounted to a rude rebuff was discreetly swept under the carpet.

All these show that the world continues to be cheated of the reality. It is like packed spectators watching a Centre Court tennis match at Wimbledon between two players who have been on past form top-seeded, but who stand no chance of ending up in the Finals. The potential champs are elsewhere; and there lies the real action. How unrealistic it is to read in Indian newspapers of the personal safety of Mr Amirthalingam

on his arrival for talks in Colombo, when there are 40,000 Tamils, including those from the plantations settled in the Vavuniya, Pavatukulam areas over the last several years, facing an imminent threat to their safety, given notice to quit their huts and farms, and encircled by armed forces poised to go into action, equipped with armoured cars and recently imported sophisticated weapons! Obviously this is not a matter that will figure in the agenda of the Round Table Conference!

It was a philosopher who said: 'Nothing is ever settled, until it is SETTLED RIGHT.' It also stands to reason that nothing can ever be settled right by the wrong people.

S.P. MYLVAGANAM**'PILLAR OF SRI LANKA BROADCASTING'** By **VERNON COREA, BBC, LONDON**

Mylvaganam, broadcaster extraordinary, has gone back to his Maker. While he was with us, he did what few individuals were privileged to do. When the Commercial Service of Radio Ceylon decided to inaugurate a Tamil Service, Cliff Dodd, founder of Commercial Radio in Asia, entrusted the whole exercise to S.P. Mylvaganam. Singlehanded he gave his God-given talent and his profound wisdom, with uncommon zeal and diligence. He was compiler, scriptwriter, presenter, producer, commentator, editor and programme director, all in one. He went to work with no fanfare and few realised how far his efforts were to go. Step by step, and with characteristic thoroughness, he built up a listenership of millions. His fans made it a regular radio date to tune in not only in Sri Lanka, but in the whole of South India and other parts of the sub-continent, in South-East Asia and wherever the station's short-wave transmission was picked up by those who know and appreciate the Tamil language and heritage. South Indian homes will feel as deep a loss as the families in Sri Lanka. He spoke simply, directly, and with warm sincerity. A born communicator, who turned his own capability into an unrivalled skill and a professional discipline.

Some fellow-workers acknowledged and encouraged him, co-operating with him

and enjoying his unassuming labour. But while he slaved for his fellow men, some thought it fit to go against him and to bring him down. They could not. He towered over them, broadcasting colossus that he was. They did not reach the dust on his feet. In the years to come the committed endeavours made by Mylvaganam for Radio Ceylon will continue to bring blessing. The sustained work done by Mylvaganam to foster and motivate the Tamil film industry is simply monumental. His knowledge of Tamil films, the music, the dialogue and the potential of each movie, was unmatched. The impact of his work continues deep into the heart of the Tamil-speaking world.

Sheer sincerity

He overshadowed the average broadcaster by sheer sincerity of purpose and growing professionalism. There are many who were introduced by him and who learned from him and who have themselves inherited from him the vocation of radio. They will continue to salute the guru.

In his home, the whole family were drawn into his work. They understood and worked with him, and his beloved wife, Senthimany, was his close friend and

ablest colleague. They were a superb team, creative, dedicated, and wholly reliable. Myl slaved willingly for his wife and children with total devotion and care. Everything he did, was, under God, as a responsibility to his wife, their two sons and daughter. He gave them all he had. He nurtured the children with prayerful concern and brought them up to be caring people like their parents. The way their children live and serve anywhere in the world — is the best testimony to the family life of the Mylvaganams.

He was a faithful friend. Under pressure and with some people trying to humiliate him, he went straight to the Divine for help, guidance and providence. For me, as a Christian, my fundamental principle is what Jesus Christ has told me — Love your God with all your heart, and the next commandment, Mylvaganam sought to obey from the foundation of his own inherited belief. His faith in God was constant and profound. He lived his life as a husband, father, colleague, friend and servant of the people as a purposeful response to God. We have talked these things over in a great many sharings of spiritual experience. And so with a humbled, thankful spirit, I commend Mylvaganam to the One who gave him to me as a brother — Safe in Your Hands O God, our Father. Amen.

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LETTERS

Autonomy for Sri Lankan Tamils

Sir, — While not depreciating the efforts of India to help bring about a settlement of the Sri Lanka problem, the prospects of a genuine settlement appear to be obscure. The alternative proposal of the Sri Lanka Government for Regional Councils does not go anywhere near to full autonomy which the TULF leaders seem inclined to consider as next best to a separate *Eelam* after obtaining the Tamil people's mandate. The Sri Lankan proposal is a hotch-potch which no political scientist or practical statesman would admire or approve.

A tidy solution

The obvious and a tidy solution would be a *Union of States* which would keep Sri Lanka united, which all wish. The Constitution will be a loose federalism and if more strength breathed into it, it would quite satisfy all aspirations. In India the Central Government's unwillingness to give more powers to the states is the cause for divisive forces at work. Sri Lanka should profit by the Indian experiment.

In Sri Lanka the problem is easier as there are only two political entities, viz., *Sinhala* and *Eelam*. Each state can have plenary powers in all matters, citizenship, migration, separate army, police, services, etc.

For the integrity of the Island, no state

shall have powers to enter into any military alliance or pacts with a foreign power. In the event of any threat of external aggression, the President of Sri Lanka shall have powers to send the Union troops to protect the country. There shall be a joint Defence Council presided over by the President and comprising the Heads of State of the two states and their service chiefs. But no troops shall be sent except with the knowledge and concurrence of the Heads of State who shall take the mandate of their respective legislatures. In the event of any internal dangers, the President can send the Federal troops to the state concerned on request. No State should give a base to a foreign power without the consent of the President who shall act on the advice of the Joint Defence Council on such matters. The states shall have freedom for public borrowings, public debt, etc., but they shall be with the knowledge of the Federal Reserve Bank. In all other aspects the states shall have unfettered freedom. In a country where the political majority is always the Sinhala, the Tamils will have no real autonomy without the above freedoms.

There remains the problems of minorities in each of the states. There is nothing wrong in Sinhala remaining in the Tamil areas. They are not likely to foment trouble. Especially there is nothing wrong in Tamils of Indian origin in the southern Sinhala state. They have not been there for over two generations as squatters but they were doing productive work to raise the economic prosperity of the Island. They were not there on suffrage. They have a right to full citizenship.

Tamil Neighbourhood Gathering

Date: Saturday 28th January, 1984.
Venue: St Mary, The Virgin, Paris Church Hall, Kenton Road, junction of St. Leonards Ave, Kenton, Middx. **Time:** 6.00-9.00p.m. This is the fourth gathering that is being held in London, and the first in Harrow.

This is not a political group and does not subscribe to any particular political philosophy.

Please come and join us with your whole family, including children. There will be guest speakers and refreshments.

These proposals will ensure the consolidation of Sri Lankan nationalism dreamt of by statesmen like Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and others over a century ago and now threatened to be shattered.

N. Murugesu Mudaliar,
Madras

A CALL FOR UNITY

Sir,

I write this letter after reading the thought-provoking article by Mr S.A. David in the November issue of the *Tamil Times*. Many who read his contribution would no doubt have been deeply touched by his sincerity and candour especially when they read the concluding part of his article, which is sub-titled 'I dedicate myself'.

In addressing his entreaties to all men of good will and particularly to the Tamils abroad to conscientiously dedicate themselves to the task of liberating the Tamils in Sri Lanka from annihilation through the brutal savagery of the Sinhalese racist thugs, who are aided by the Sri Lankan government and assisted by the armed forces in that country, he has also referred to the military preparations that are now under way there and has stressed point-blank without mincing words that it is the capitalist countries that are backing the Sri Lankan government.

In this respect, is there anything that we Tamils here in the UK who have formed various committees, fronts, associations, organisations, and centres can do? All these formations have the same objective after all, which is Tamil liberation from Sinhala imperialism. Then, why cannot there be UNITY among these formations to extend into a broad political structure and utilise all their resources, potential and expertise to function organisationally, and to actively propagandise and lobby on an international level about the insecurity of the Tamils in Sri Lanka? Is it not true that such a strategy, in the context of a multi-dimensional thrust is necessary under the present circumstances if the required objective is to be achieved.

R.S.G.

'FIFTH COLUMN IN THE HIGH COMMISSION' LONDON UNP PROTESTS

The appointment of Mr Douglas Wickremaratne, the President of the racist Sinhala Association in the UK, as a Liaison Officer of the Sri Lankan High Commission in London has not only created a sense of antagonism amongst the High Commission staff, but also has outraged the UK branch of the United National Party.

Although Mr Wickremaratne and his Sinhala Association have carried on a persistent campaign against the High Commissioner and his staff, his appointment is said to have been effected on orders from Colombo. It also would appear to have had the blessing of the Deputy High Commissioner, Mr D.P.R. Rajapakse. The appointment does not come as a surprise to those who know how the Office of the High Commission and its facilities were used, following the July violence in Sri Lanka, for propaganda purposes by the Sinhala Association.

The UNP London Branch has reacted with outrage to the appointment of Mr Wickremaratne. Mr Azahim Mohammed,

the UNP Branch President, is reported to have sent a telegram to President Jayewardene and to all members of the Cabinet protesting against the appointment and demanding its termination.

The extremist and racist views of Mr Wickremaratne and his Association are so offensive that only a few Sinhala fanatics have chosen to join his Association. The Committee of the United Sri Lankans in the UK has compared the Sinhala Association with the fascist National Front and characterised it as the 'apostle of tribalism'.

The appointment of Mr Wickremaratne as Liaison Officer of the High Commission is all the more intriguing considering the malevolent attack made against the High Commissioner, who is a Tamil, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Hameed, who is a Muslim, in the Sinhala Association's recent news sheet. Reacting to this attack, the UNP London Branch accused the Sinhala Association of planning to install a 'fifth column' in the High Commission to further its own ends.

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JAYEWARDENE'S 14-POINT PROPOSALS

The Sri Lanka President, Mr J.R. Jayewardene, has suggested the following 14 points for consideration by the all-party conference on the Tamils' issue from January 10.

- The giving up of the idea of a separate state.
- The merger of the district development councils within a province after the acceptance by the council members, and a referendum in the district. This proposal would be applicable to the whole country.
- Regions that have regional councils to establish a convention that the leader of the party which commands the majority in a regional council would be formally appointed by the President as the Chief Minister of the region. He will work with a committee of the council members constituted by him.
- The President and Parliament to continue to have overall responsibility for all subjects not transferred to the region and generally for all other matters relating to the maintenance of the sovereignty, integrity, unity, security, progress and development of the republic as a whole.
- The list of subjects to be allocated to the regions to be worked out in detail. The regional councils to be empowered to enact laws and exercise executive powers in relation thereto. The council to have the power to levy taxes, cess or fees and to raise loans and also to receive grants and allocations from the central government.
- The recognition of the administration of the Trincomalee port as a central government function.
- High Courts to function in each region while the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka will exercise separate and constitutional jurisdiction.
- The constitution of a regional service of those serving in the region and those who will be seconded to the region.
- Regional public service commissions to be created for recruitment and disciplinary action.
- The public services of Sri Lanka and the armed services to reflect the national ethnic composition.
- The police services for internal security to reflect ethnic composition of the regions.
- A national policy on land settlement to be worked out.
- The constitution and other laws dealing with the official language, Sinhala, and the national language, Tamil, to be accepted and implemented as well as similar laws dealing with the national flag and national anthem.
- United opposition to the use of terrorism to attain political objectives.

VARSIY STUDENTS FAST UNTO DEATH MASS 'HARTAL' IN SUPPORT

Several hundred Tamil university students displaced from the universities in South Sri Lanka as a result of racial violence began a fast on January 2 against the government's persistent refusal to permit them to pursue their studies in universities in the northern and eastern provinces of the country, where the chances of being subjected to racial violence are less likely.

Of them, seven undergraduates are continuing their fast unto death. The fast of the students has created intense feeling of sympathy among the Tamil people.

A mass hartal (a total shut-down and strikes) was observed on 13 and 14th Janu-

ary in the Tamil areas. The response to the call for the hartal is reported to be total. All schools, shops, factories, agricultural enterprises and government offices remained closed. The transport services came to a grinding halt.

A university student said that the fast will continue until their requests are met by the government. Other undergraduates will join the fast in batches.

It will be remembered that, even before the July anti-Tamil violence Tamil undergraduates from the Peradeniya University and the Colombo faculties were subjected to violence and chased away.

WHAT CHANCES?

FROM PAGE 1

the TULF would find it difficult to accept anything less.

Giving up the claim for a separate state of Tamil Eelam would be regarded by the militant Tamil liberation groups as a betrayal.

On the other hand, hardliners within the government led by Mr Cyril Mathew and certain sections of the Buddhist clergy are building up the tempo against any 'surrender'. It is reported that several Sinhala-Buddhist organisations are ganging up, determined to stop or stall any political settlement and the pressure from the 'Buddhist militants' is mounting daily, giving rise to the question whether history will repeat itself, as in the case of the Bandaranaike Chelvanayagam Pact signed in 1957. That pact was unceremoniously and unilaterally abrogated by the then Prime Minister, Mr S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, after a demonstration led by the Eksath Bikkhu Peramuna (United Buddhist Monks Front).

Over a thousand monks purportedly representing the different 'Chapters' of the Buddhist clergy assembled at a temple in Colombo on January 7 to 'discuss the current situation' presided over by the country's highest ranking Buddhist prelate, the Head of the Malwatte Chapter in Kandy.

Whether the recently formed 'Sangha Sabha' comprising the various Buddhist Nikayas under the leadership of the Asgriya

Chapter will bring some discipline and order among the members of the Buddhist clergy and isolate the racist bigots in its ranks, like Elle Gunawansa Thero or whether it will play the role of the Eksath Bikkhu Peramuna of 1957 is yet to be seen. If past record is a relevant consideration to go by, then the latter is more probable.

If the views of priests like Elle Gunawansa are an indicator to the views of the Buddhist clergy, one can say goodbye to any settlement, and prepare to face the bloodbath for which such men are mobilising.

Elle Gunawansa Thero was recently in London addressing closed door meetings convened by the Sinhala Association. If the speeches he made at these meetings are an indicator to the speeches he makes daily in Sri Lanka, there is every probability, even the certainty, that the Tamils are in for their total physical liquidation not in the distant future. The venom and viciousness of his speeches were only matched by his ingenious capacity for distorting and fabricating facts and history to depict that the Sinhala-Buddhist people today face 'total annihilation'. A Sinhalese lady who attended one of his meetings said she was so sickened by his speech that she doubted whether he was in fact a Buddhist priest or someone else who had been put up by the Sinhala Association in yellow robes to give a certain degree of authenticity to the wild claims he was making.

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