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RIGHTEOUSNESS EXALTETH A NATION BUT SIN IS A REPROACH TO ANY PEOPLE

UNDELIVERED ISSUES

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The Manager,
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Principal's Travelogue

(Continued from our last issue)

2. UCBWM—New York and Washington D.C.

We left for New York the same evening and spent the next day (11th) at the UCBWM offices at 475 Riverside Drive as guests of the UCBWM and its executives Eric Gass, Connie Thurber and Beverly Thomas the new executive secretary. The morning was spent with executives and directors dealing with political concerns and human rights issues chaired by Gary Gamer. In the afternoon the UCBWM staff entertained the team at a reception where greetings were exchanged. The executive staff of the South Asia section entertained us at dinner at the Yale Club in New York City through the good offices of Beverly a former student of Yale Divinity School. I spent one afternoon later in my visit in the Yale University campus at New Haven to breathe the atmosphere of learning at Yale and Harvard and to nibble at its prestigious and impressive clubs, academic, cultural and social life was also a very gratifying experience to those of us in the field of education. I preserve therefore, very indelible memories of the Oxbridge of New England in the very same way I do that of Oxford and Cambridge of England. It is an impetus for life and work at Jaffna College—a college which has inherited some of that flavour through generations of Americans who served it from New England. Some of us felt that it was a Jaffna College Club in New England! I have mooted the idea to some of our alumni in the New England and New York areas. The Club in some form could be the headquarters of the alumni associations that are taking shape in USA and Canada.

The next day (12th) Gary Gamer and his assistant took the three of us to Washington D.C. to meet with the expert committees and executives of the Amnesty International, the House of Representatives, the State Department and the Senate. It took the whole day and we kept all our appointments to schedule so carefully and efficiently arranged by Gary Gamer and it was one of the most exacting days I ever faced in my life. The men and women in these departments were well informed of our ethnic and political problems and therefore, it was a formidable task to exchange views on matters of foreign policy, human rights and connected issues. They were certainly interested in meeting people who came fresh from the arena of conflict and we were

Evangeline Bicknell's Visit to Russia

Dr. John Bicknell and his wife Evangeline celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary this past year. Many of the Diocese will remember her fine singing; she has also written a book on the art of singing. And this November she accompanied a small-town singing group, the Surry Opera Company of Surry, Maine to Russia where they performed the Russian opera "Boris Godunov" in the Russian language! They presented the opera in the capital of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Georgia Tbilisi and later in Leningrad. The reporter to the New York Times said that "the Russians who heard their own opera sung to them in their own language—albeit with an American accent—clearly were impressed by the group's homespun musical gesture of good will." She also quoted an amateur Russian musician as saying "It's hard to believe that they went to the trouble of learning the language for us. And they brought so much to it. It was wonderful seeing those young people with those shining eyes."

The singers themselves have such democratic professions as luncheonette owner, mussel fisherman, small sawmill owner and hospital receptionist. The founder of the company, Walter Norwick is a 60 year old pianist who wanted to take his group

given a patient and courteous hearing. We owe all concerned our gratitude.

While these visits were being made by shuttle air service, we resided in the Columbia University Campus in one of its new guest and student hotels. To me it was again a rare privilege to be back in the very campus and surroundings where I lived, studied and worshipped as a student twenty five years ago. I took the opportunity to visit President Donald Sarriver of Union Theological Seminary and to roam round the old haunts at Morningside Heights—Riverside Church Centre, Junard School of Music, Teachers' College and the sprawling campus of Columbia University—it was again an exhilarating and nostalgic journey down memory lane. I was sorry to see the tennis courts on which I played twenty-five years ago on the campus now occupied by a very tall building!

It was only three days since we arrived in USA and so much was possible by travel and meetings in so short a time—a feat possible only in this fast moving country U.S.A. and the city of New York!

(to be continued)

to the Soviet Union as "a grass-roots mission for mutual understanding." Most the singers paid their own way—1200 U.S. dollars—while relatives and citizens of the small town couldn't afford it.

After the performance in Tbilisi, the correspondent writes, some members of the audience followed the singers back to the hotel, with the two groups serenading each other along the way. Besides being an advocate of nuclear disarmament the director studied Zen Buddhism in Japan for sixteen years.

Evangeline Bicknell was impressed by the people and their hunger for peace. And in Leningrad she was able to see another Russian opera, "Eugene Onegin," a ballet; and some of the world famous paintings at the Hermitage. From her trip with her friends of the Surry Opera Company we can see that not all Americans are Star-War-struck! Congratulations to her and the singers on their good will mission, and to Evangeline and John on their Golden Wedding Anniversary!

—Robert Porter

An Appreciation

Mrs. C. Thuraijasingam

Mrs C. Thuraijasingam wife of the late Mr Thuraijasingam former Irrigation Engineer, mother of Belle Selvarajah, Chandra Sethurajan, Ranee Kadirgamer, Malai Duraisamy, Mahendran, Satha and Robin passed away in Colombo after a short illness. The funeral took place on the 20th Dec '86 at her son's place at 10, E Block Anderson Flats, Naranenpita, Colombo 5. Her eldest daughter Belle and husband and Dr Chandra Sethurajan from U.K. of her immediate family were present at the funeral besides her two sons in Colombo, the other children being abroad in U.K. and Australia.

Mrs Thuraijasingam born of Christian parents from Karainagar was steeped in the Christian faith and was a living witness during her life of nearly 75 years. She had her entire education at Uduvil Girls' College and proved to be a very loyal Old Girl.

She was a person of indomitable courage and will-power a pleasant companion and friend and sponsored all causes of social service. Chandra her daughter, who served Inuvil Hospital for several years, now a doctor in U.K. followed closely on her lines involving herself in many activities chief of which was helping the disabled. She has brought fame not only to her parents and family but also to Sri Lanka by her publications editing Bishop Lakshman Wickrema.

Wanted

A resident project officer to supervise a building programme for a Christian Educational Programme at Paranthan.

Salary negotiable. Meet the Principal, Jaffna College as early as possible.

A. KADIRGAMAR,
Principal,
Jaffna College,
Vaddukoddai.

singhe's last Pastoral address before his untimely death in Oct '83 on the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka and more so by bringing out the book "Light in the Darkness" a study on assisting the disabled, consisting of a collection of articles written by eminent men which publication has drawn the eyes of the West as well.

No one would guess Mrs. Thuraijasingam had a handicapped son at Pirithipura Home. It was no doubt an ache in her heart but having put her care on the Lord, she trusted Him for everything concerning him. She did not best for him by looking him up whenever chance arose and sending eats he would like.

Though physically handicapped herself by severe diabetes, she took the trouble to be present at every function, service party or wedding with a smiling face. Being a pleasant conversationalist she infused cheer into everyone.

She was also concerned about the sick, old and young and needy. She would cheer up homes by sending local eats like Murukku Thodu and Kolukaddai which she herself made, not minding the inconvenience to herself.

She was always neatly dressed, never failed to appreciate kind deeds done to her. She promptly wrote to thank each one in spite of her failing eyesight. Even in her weakening health she would help herself to the utmost, instead of bothering others.

Her trip to Colombo during these hazardous and difficult days was achieved through her faith, her courage and will power. Though that was a success, she succumbed to a heart attack soon after. She recovered and was looking forward to going through an eye operation. That was not to be. After a short illness, she just slipped into the hands of her Lord whom she had loved and trusted for everything.

Her children have lost a dear and exemplary mother, her relatives and friends a compassionate adviser and loving personality. It was admirable to see her abiding and resting in the will of God to guide and lead her.

She has left behind her children and families, her sisters and a host of relatives and friends to mourn her loss.

May the Lord give her eternal peace in His presence.

Ruby Appadurai.

(வலதும்)

EDITORIAL

Persistent, Serious Problems

The Holocaust in Batticaloa

The 39th death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on 30-1-87 saw the Jaffna Peninsula in the grip of a whole day *hartal*, organised by the Co-ordinating Committee of the Jaffna District Citizens Committees. Schools, government offices, markets, and business establishments were closed. Churches and Temples were kept open.

The *hartal* was observed as a non-violent protest against the state violence unleashed on the unarmed civilians of *Kokkadicholai* and adjacent villages in the Paddiruppu electorate (E. P.) on 28-1-87 and the following days, by the Special Task Force of the government security forces.

The reprisal on the innocent civilians in which some 150 lost their lives was a sequel, according to news reports, to the death of 13 commandos at *Povaitou*, (some ten miles away from Batticaloa) when their armoured personal carrier was blown off in a mine ambush, while they (the commandos) were on their way by land to join a massive force already awaiting them at *Kokkadicholai* for a search-and-destroy operation of 'terrorists' believed to have a 'quarry' in the area.

The tale has poignant but familiar overtones in the three and a half year conflict, when a search-and-destroy-operation of "terrorists" in suspected areas ends ultimately with a mass massacre of men, women and children even in villages contiguous to the suspected 'hide-outs'. The last such tale of tragical proportions was in the fields of *Thangavelauthapuram* in the Batticaloa District.

A lagoon separates the village around *Kokkadicholai* from the mainland making the area of attack a veritable gladiatorial arena. An estimated 20,000 villagers fled into the thick jungles to escape the wrath of the 'gladiators', while in the fields and side-walks of the abandoned villages at *Paduvankarai* charred corpses and partly burnt bodies were reported to have been dumped unceremoniously.

The politbureau of the TULF from Madras is reported to have sent an urgent telegram to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to intervene and stop the pogrom which has become a regular feature of military operations in the Batticaloa District, a predominantly Tamil speaking area. The telegram has also, we learn, referred to the deployment of foreign mercenaries in the military operations at *Kokkadicholai*.

Security Move in the North

In the meanwhile, grabbing the front page headlines of the *Sunday Observer* of 1-2-87, is the news that the anti-terrorist operation in the East is completed and that plans are afoot for "security-move in the North". For this operation, troops were being moved from all parts of the island said the news report. This same news item did however include a line, that the Indian High Commissioner J. N. Dixit was summoned to Delhi on Friday (30-1-87) "for urgent talks and to review the situation in Sri Lanka". But the DN of 29-1-87 reported under the heading "December 19 base for Madras Talks next week", that political circles said that High Commissioner J. N. Dixit is leaving for India for discussions but when contacted he had said that it was a private visit and he was going on a holiday. The Peace Process in Sri Lanka has always been overridden by a feeling of uncertainty at every turn.

Civil Security

While a military posture in the country is now more pronounced than at any time before, the newly constituted Ministry of Civil Security is reported to be active forging "a master-plan" for action ensuring for the people food fuel and medical supplies in the country in the event of the crisis situation coming to a head. District Councils with MPs as chairmen will direct the civil security operations during such potentially explosive moments.

How the Jaffna Peninsula will come into the orbit of this scheme of civil administration is not, as yet, clear. There are no MPs in Jaffna. The Sixth Amendment to the Constitution has taken care of that. As to fuel, the embargo imposed on 2-1-87 continues. The picture with regard to food supply is not that bright. Lorries are trickling in, into the peninsula. As on 29-1-87, some 150 lorries transporting food and other necessities were awaiting clearance at the Elephant Pass barrier. Some 250 lorries were awaiting clearance to go South to bring food supplies. Jaffna presents the picture of an increasingly insecure, perilous, fragile place in a constant state of risk from many directions.

According to a Reuter correspondent he saw 80 lorries at the Elephant Pass barrier with coconut, sugar, tin foods, vegetables and buckets awaiting clearance to proceed to Jaffna. It would be an obdurate problem for the government to reconcile civil administration with a military posture in the Jaffna District.

Peace Meets Acrimony

But no one in the country flatly counts out PEACE. The Ramakrishna Hall, Wellawatte was a venue of a Peace Festival

Tribute

1st Death Anniversary of Dr. Mrs. Pakkiam Retnanandam

To a person of her many gifts her record of academic and athletic achievements, her dedicated ministry of healing and her meaningful and many-faceted activities the enforced inactivity of her last years would have been galling but for her fortitude, born of a firm and sure faith. At a purely human level she would we are sure have had the satisfaction of having put her God-given talents to good use and of having done everything in her power to relieve human suffering without having been infected by the itch for personal gain. One would not be wrong if one thought that the calm and the fortitude she displayed during these last years and the example she set to those who were caught up in the rush and the fretfulness of contemporary life were but a continuation of her ministry.

We have been brought up in the belief that death is not the end, but merely the gateway to a better and more glorious life. But even those of

The Week

Kokkadicholai Killings

In the search operations at Kokkadicholai in the Batticaloa District more than 200 Tamil civilians have been killed. Most of them were males between the ages of 14 and 40.

The Catholic Bishop of Trincomalee and Batticaloa who visited Jaffna this week said that the East is in the verge of a big famine as 4000 bread winners have been killed and 300 youths are languishing in detention camps.

Video: Uthayan 1-2-87.

us who steadfastly cling on to such a belief are but human, and cannot but continue to feel the pain and loneliness of bereavement for many many years afterwards. Time is certainly a great healer, but the memory of the 'touch of the vanished hand and the sound of the voice that is still' will linger and recur time and again. What we can do from here is what we have done for her so far, namely to uphold her in our prayers.

G. A. Ganamuttu.

recently organised by the White Flag Society, the Sarvodaya Movement and the Wellawatte Hindu Sangam. The Ramakrishna Hall was appropriate for the PEACE Festival as it is a Hall open for all people irrespective of racial or religious affinities. Minister Athulathmudali participated at the Festival and in his speech is reported to have wished for the day when the all people in Sri Lanka will say "we fear no one".

In this context a news report in the *Balanadu* of 1-2-87 has given us the jitters. A Medical consultant from Jaffna attached to the Teaching Hospital who applied for a room at the Ramakrishna Apartments in Wellawatte to lodge for a few days while on duty in Colombo, was told by the Incumbent that the rooms were now 'out of bounds' for people coming from Jaffna. Whatever complexion PEACE assumes in Sri Lanka the real problem now appears to be whether and compromise solution, however cleverly crafted, can bridge Sri Lanka's yawning psychological divide.

The Forseeable Future

The battles and killing exploding over the hinterlands in the *Paduvankarai* area in Batticaloa and the *Valvettithurai* areas in Jaffna do appear to have much more grim overtones than merely bloody encounters in an ethnic conflict or only attempts to flush out "terrorists" from their quarries.

The Sri Lankan government has, we note asked the Indian negotiators to put back the Peace course on its track. But the whole portfolio pre-conditions raised by the TULF and the LTTE—the release of the 3000 detainees, the withdrawal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the Sixth Amendment to the constitution and the lifting of the fuel embargo—again underscore the creeping uncertainty inherent in the Peace talks.

"The way out of trouble is never as simple as the way in" said H. W. Howe, a Kansas journalist. If there is one indelible image which the *hartal* in Batticaloa to protest against the economic embargo on the Jaffna residents and the reciprocal gesture of the *hartal* in Jaffna, to demonstrate against army atrocities in *Kokkadicholai* has projected to the outside world, it is the clear perception which the Tamil speaking people in Sri Lanka for the security and identity of a racial minority put in the midst of a racial majority.

For the foreseeable future, the military picture appears positive as forecast by *Hindu* two years ago and reported in the DN of 13-2-85:—

"The Sri Lankan President and his colleagues would like to utilise India's good offices only for restraining the Tamil 'Tigers' and not for evolving any formula. The Indian approach is to keep on prodding the Sri Lankan government to come forward with some new ideas which will meet the substance of the Tamil demands.

There is little hope of the impasse ending in the near future since the Sri Lankan government is playing for time to consolidate its military grip...."

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