

TAMIL TIMES

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40PENCE

CAMPAIGN AGAINST EXTRADITION OF TAMIL YOUTH

The campaign against the extradition of some Lankan Tamil youth arrested in Tamil Nadu, alleged to be members of the Liberation Tigers, has received widespread support, both in India and Sri Lanka.

Despite the strenuous efforts made by the Lankan government who sent the top brass of the police, including its IGP, Mr. Rudra Rajasingam, to Madras it is learnt that there is no immediate prospect of the arrested youth being extradited. The Tamil Nadu IGP, Mr K. Mohandas, is reported to have said: "We are only interested in the law and order aspect and are not concerned with extradition or the reward money". The reference to 'reward money' is the offer of the Lankan government of Rs. 2 million to the Tamil Nadu police for effecting the arrest of the leaders of the rival factions of the Liberation Tigers, Uma Maheswaran and Prabhakaran.

No sooner the arrests of these came to be known, the Sri Lankan government contacted the Indian authorities, both at central and provincial level, with a view to extraditing them. However they underestimated the gathering opposition to the extradition move. In South India and Sri Lanka, several organisations protested against the handing over of these youth to the Lankan authorities on the ground that they fell into the category of political prisoners, and also because of the certainty of their being tortu-

red by the Lankan police. One lawyer representing the youth said, "If they are extradited, they would be mercilessly tortured and then killed. There will be nothing left of them."

India has no extradition treaty with Sri Lanka and

TAMIL NADU PARTIES OPPOSE EXTRADITION

Twenty political parties of Tamil Nadu, including the ruling AIADMK, in a letter to Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi have urged the government to reject the Lankan government's plea for extradition of the seven arrested Tamil youth and to grant political asylum to them and other Tamils 'who have sought refuge in India to escape the wrath of Sri Lankan police and army'.

The following is the full text of the letter dated 1.6.82 sent to Mrs. Gandhi signed by the twenty parties:

"Hon. Madam Prime Minister,

We the undersigned leaders of all political parties in Tamil Nadu appeal to you to intervene in a matter of great urgency, concern and shock to the people of Tamil Nadu.

India has been maintaining friendly relationship with Sri Lanka for a long time. We wish that the relationship between the two countries should be further developed and strengthened.

But Tamilians living in Sri Lanka are under constant attack due to racial discrimination and from time to time subjected to violence and

there is no reason why the Indian government should enthusiastically support the Sri Lankan government's request for extradition of the arrested Tamil youth, thereby risking undue unpopularity in Tamil Nadu. An all-Party Conference of political parties in Tamil Nadu has unanimously passed a resolution urging the Central government not to accede to the request for extradition. There have been public meetings, demonstra-

oppression. You are quite aware that this matter is causing great concern to the people of Tamil Nadu.

Tamilians in Sri Lanka had to struggle hard to establish their civil rights. Sri Lanka army continue their hunt against Tamil youths. Due to persecution and harassment the Tamil youths had to cross over to India to escape from army and police atrocities.

Following some unfortunate incidents in Madras police had to arrest a few of them.

Taking advantage of this situation, an attempt is being made by Sri Lanka police to extradite them to Sri Lanka. In the circumstances the political parties in Tamil Nadu

tions, poster campaigns, and petitions to Mrs Indira Gandhi, all on behalf of the arrested seven Tamil youths, who have become known as "The Madras Seven".

Tamil Times also understands that, within Lanka itself, a mass of evidence is being gathered to show to the Indian authorities the extent of torture and inhuman treatment to which Tamil youth already in custody have been subjected.

beg to submit our appeal to you, as follows:

1. Under no circumstances should these youths be extradited to Sri Lanka. If at all they have committed any offence in this land they can be charged in this country under the law of this land.

2. We request the Government of India to grant political asylum to all Sri Lankan Tamils who have sought refuge in India to escape the wrath of Sri Lankan police and army.

We once again appeal to you to intervene in this matter on humanitarian considerations early and save the innocent youths from the torture and harassment of the Sri Lanka army and the police."

EXTRADITION OPPOSED

WITHIN SRI LANKA

Several groups, including political parties, trade unions and civil rights organisations have expressed opposition to the extradition of the Tamil youth arrested in South India.

In a lengthy statement expressing opposition to extradition, T.N. Perera, a Polit Bureau member of the Revolutionary Marxist Party, states:

"With the reported arrest of a number of Sri Lankans by

the Tamilnadu Police, the question of human and political rights of persons said to be in the movement for the creation of a separate state of EELAM has taken a new turn.

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SINHALA BALA MANDALAYA LAUNCHES CAMPAIGN TO SET UP “A SINHALA-BUDDHIST RAJ”

“This Country [Sri Lanka] which has a population of 75 per cent Sinhalese has still failed to bring about a Sinhala-Buddhist Raj. To establish Sinhala-Buddhist State is our immediate objective”, said Mr. Sri Perera, QC, President of the Young Men's Buddhist (YMBA) Association, at a recent meeting held under the auspices of the re-activated Sinhala Bala Mandalaya (SBM).

The SBM is led by well-known Buddhist personalities and powerful Buddhist priests. It has launched a country-wide campaign under the slogan, “SAVE BUDDHISM AND THE SINHALA RACE.”

The exhibitionist religiosity and the extreme racist overtones that characterised the SBM's motorcade to the city of Anuradhapura, carrying aloft the Sinhala Warrior King Dutugemunu, who had trounced and killed the Tamil King, Elara, in the days of yore, and the large meetings it conducted in various parts of the country arousing the base emotions of the Sinhala-Buddhist population, have

inevitably created an atmosphere of tension, fear and insecurity among the Tamil speaking people of the country.

Although the Tamils have been subjected to frequent racial violence, the scale and intensity of the present campaign by the SBM is such that the Tamils fear that a racial bloodbath is inevitable and imminent. The Tamils would seem to be resigned to suffer another bout of racial violence, this time incited and instigated by those who don yellow robes and are expected to preach the message of peace, harmony, compassion and tolerance. Their message of violence and intolerance receives wide pub-

licity in the media which has the effect of rousing racial hatred against the Tamil people.

The purveyors of this racial intolerance and religious bigotry do not seem to recognise the reality that Sri Lanka's population is multi-racial and multi-religious. The country is

By R. GANESHAN

not inhabited by Sinhala-Buddhists only. Over 30 per cent of the population are non-Sinhala-Buddhists. There are Sinhala speaking Christians, Sinhala speaking Muslims, Tamil speaking Hindus, Tamil speaking Muslims, Tamil speaking Christians and English speaking Christian Burghers inhabiting the country. But the racist rabble and the religious fanatics go about the country campaigning for the setting-up of a monolithic theocratic state in which all others, except the Sinhala-Buddhists, will be subject people.

The substantial majority of Buddhist priests in the country go about attending to their daily religious duties as prescribed for them in the scriptures. Unfortunately some of them, who are will-heeled and well-known in the country for their power, position and influence, and not for any contribution to the development of Buddhist thought or practice, have entered the political arena time and time again, under the pretext of protecting Buddhism and saving Sinhala, with disastrous consequences.

CYNICAL ABUSE

Both the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) have been guilty of the cynical use of the extremist sections of the Buddhist clergy for their political advantage, for the yellow robe still has magical properties for the purpose of vote-grabbing.

The SLFP of the late Mr. (Contd. on page 3)

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DISCOVER FOR YOURSELF WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER

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S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike made use of the Buddhist clergy in 1956 in its campaign of 'Sinhala Only'. The UNP used the same clergy in its campaign against the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam Pact in 1958. Both these campaigns resulted in racial pogroms against the Tamil speaking people. The evil of the political use, or rather the abuse of the Buddhist clergy, concretely manifested itself when, to the horror of the entire nation, two of the highly placed Buddhist priests who took part in these campaigns were charged with the brutal

THEN ...

1. You are Prime Minister not only of the Buddhists, but of all countrymen.
2. You must hold the scales evenly among Buddhists, Hindus, Christians and Muslims.
3. Religion and Language should be treated equally.
4. You should do everything to correct the situation that had hitherto prevailed.

*Maha Nayake of the Asgiriya Chapter to the Prime Minister,
Hon. J.R. Jayawardene.
August 1977.*

... AND NOW

"A Sinhala Bala Vegaya has become vitally necessary in this country. The Sinhalese people do not get any benefit whichever government comes to power. Therefore all Sinhala Organizations must join hands to work out a common programme to save the Sinhala race -" Asgiriya Maha Nayake Thero, at a recent meeting of the SBM at Kandy.

HOW IS THAT FOR A MESSAGE OF PEACE & LOVE

"We have now with us a militant force consisting of 18,000 Buddhist monks. There is no one to come forward to battle by enlisting this formidable warrior force. There is not a single Sinhalese leader who is prepared to say 'I will go to battle and come back in triumph'. The battle can take place any time. When it happens this bikkhu regiment will step in. As far as we are concerned living or dying in battle is the same. Even if we die there are no wives or children to shed tears for us. Whether I die in Kandy today or die in Kotte tomorrow it is all the same. There are thousands of bikkhus who are prepared to join the battle to save this country. I am appealing to newspapers like the "Davasa", "Rivi Rasa" to support us in this struggle." - Ven. Sobitha Nayake Thero.

murder of the then Prime Minister, Mr Bandaranaike. One was hanged and other sentenced to life imprisonment. One would have assumed that this tragic experience would have made the lay politicians learn some valuable lessons. But they haven't.

It is a sad reflection of the times that the much respected yellow robe has become a convenient garb for smugglers and criminals who jump bail. It was not long ago that a Buddhist monk (always half-shaven and a well-known globe-trotter according to MIGARA of Weekend news paper) was nabbed by the Sri Lanka customs when he attempted to smuggle in goods - of all things one would least expect him to smuggle sarees - which he did. Only the other day, mother alleged criminal wanted in the UK for jumping bail and facing a charge of smuggling narcotics stealthily slipped into the country under the guise of a Buddhist monk -

wearing yellow robes and a shaven head.

While the Noble Lord Buddha propounded the eight-fold middle path and enjoined his followers to preach the message of peace, some Buddhist priests bring total disrepute to Buddhism and the yellow robes they wear by preaching the message of a

street thug. One priest, by the name of Ven. Sobitha Nayake Thero, is reported to have said at a recent meeting of the Sinhala Bala Mandalya, "We have now with us a militant force consisting of 18,000 Buddhist monks. There is no one to come forward to battle by enlisting this formidable warrior force... The battle can take place any time. When it happens, this bikkhu regiment will step in. As far as we are concerned, living or dying in battle is the same. Even if we die, there are no wives or children to shed tears for us. Whether I die in Kandy today or die in Kotte tomorrow, it is all the same. There are thousands of bikkhus who are prepared to join the battle". How is that for a message of peace?

"And the Doctrine of Hate"

"The pursuit of the doctrine of hate is not good for anyone. Hate may or may not injure the person against whom it is directed, but it does definitely injure the person who hates. The Buddhists who get worked up over real or imaginary wrong doings of others are injuring themselves first. They are also creating an oppressive atmosphere which is not conducive to any spiritual growth. A person with even a little sensitiveness can feel this oppressive atmosphere in Sri Lanka today.

If Buddhism is love and compassion, who in this world can touch it, let alone destroy it? But if Buddhism is merely an empty shell devoid of the essence of love, the earlier it disappears the better it is for the world."

-Dr. E.W. Adikaram

people in news



Manik Sandrasagara, who jumped bail from UK, where he is facing a charge of smuggling narcotics stealthily slipped into Sri Lanka under the guise of a Buddhist monk - with shaven head and wearing yellow robes. It is reported that Britain will formally apply for his extradition from Sri Lanka.

UMA MAHESWRAN SENTENCED- TO 15 YEARS

Uma Maheswaran, believed to be one of the leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Sri Lanka was sentenced to a term of 15 years rigorous imprisonment along with Sellapah Nagarasa for the attempted murder of the late C. Canagaratnam, the former MP for Pottuvil and District Minister for Batticaloa by shooting him on 27.1.78. A third accused, N. Vamadevan was acquitted. The trial took place in the absence of Uma Maheswaran. The High Court Judge, Tudor Alwis, who conducted the trial stated that the motive for the attempted murder was that the late Canagaratnam, although elected to parliament under the TULF ticket, later joined the United National Party and became a District Minister.

POLITICAL NOTEBOOK

BY SHANTHI

HOUNDING OF MRS. B.

While the infighting within the SLFP(S) continues with unabated bitterness, particularly on the question Anura Bandaranaike's return to the fold and his restoration in the party, and the business tycoon, Upali Wijeyawardena, and his news papers, the "Island" and the "Divaina", doing everything possible to re-establish Anura at the top, the ruling United National Party is determined to continue hounding Mrs. Srimala Bandaranaike and if possible to destroy her politically.

Despite the arbitrary and undemocratic manner in which the UNP government deprived her civic of her rights and thus eliminating her chances of contesting at the next elections, Mrs. B. has been able to gather widespread support for the SLFP among the Sinhala people. In addition, the main beneficiary of the religio-racist campaign conducted by the Sinhala Bala Mandalaya to 'Save Buddhism and the Sinhala Race' has

been the SLFP.

R.P. Wijesiri, MP, now belonging to the Maitripala faction of the SLFP, has become the hatchet-man for the government in its campaign of mudraking and mudslinging against its political opponents, especially Mrs. Bandaranaike. Recently he made allegations in parliament that six bags, presumably containing money, had been delivered, again presumably by a foreign power, at the Rosmead Place residence of Mrs B sometime last year. Mr. Wijesiri did not furnish any supporting evidence for his allegation. However, the government, with the entire opposition voting against, rushed a resolution through parliament appointing a Select Committee to probe into the allegations.

The undue speed with which the government moved and the manner in which it reacted to the allegations in appointing a Select Committee demonstrates clearly that the whole scenario was premeditated. If the government thought that

the allegations were so serious and wanted really to unravel the truth behind the allegations, why wasn't the Criminal Investigations Department of the Police called upon to

investigate? Why a Select Committee of MPs? The whole thing smacks of abuse of power - a charge upon which Mrs. B was herself stripped of her civic rights!

TAMIL PARTIES TO BOYCOTT ELECTIONS

The TULF Members of Parliament have become prisoners to their parliamentary life and, as a result, the 'Tamil Cause' has suffered, is a view that has gained currency among the radical sections of the Tamil speaking people of Sri Lanka. This rather critical view has become more and more strident with the apparently never-ending 'amity' talks that the leadership of the TULF are currently engaged in with the UNP government.

Recently seven political groups and student associations met to discuss the proposal that all Tamil political parties should boycott the next parliamentary elections due to be held in 1983, and in the meantime to commence a campaign to urge the TULF MPs to boycott parliament. Leading this campaign is the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front

(TELF) led by Dr. S.A. Tharmalingam. These groups are critical of the TULF's failure to adopt a more militant line with a view to fulfilling the mandate given to it the last elections in 1977 to set up a separate state of Eelam.

However, the Tamil Suyadchi Kazhakam led by the former MP for Kayts, Mr. V. Navaratnam, which also participated at the meeting of the seven groups, did not seem to be attracted to the view of boycott as it believed that, "it was meaningless to boycott the elections and parliament since it was the only forum available for the Tamil people to make their voice heard."

Some anti-TULF groups also have expressed the fear that, if all other Tamil groups boycotted the elections, the TULF would walk away with all the parliamentary seats.

VIMALARASA RELEASED

A few hours before he was due to sit his final examination, A. Vimalarasa, an undergraduate of the Jaffna University, was arrested in April 1981. Since then he had been kept in detention at the Panagoda Military base without trial. He was not charged with any offence. Nor was he produced before any court. He was held in detention for over 400 days.

Now he has been released together with several other Tamil youths who also had been similarly detained.

The release of Vimalarasa and others was forced out of the government by a campaign of demonstrations and hunger-strikes organised by the students of the University of Jaffna and assisted by their colleagues in the other campuses. Vimalarasa's mother joined in the hunger-strike.

The strong-arm tactics of the police and the army in their attempt to frighten the university students to abandon their struggle proved futile. They carried on with their campaign and demonstrations in defiance of the police ban. The people of Jaffna gave the students their whole hearted support.

The campaign for the release of Vimalarasa and his eventual release marks a new phase in the development of the relationship of forces in the country, particularly in the Northern Province. The emerging student movement in the North is a new factor that the established political parties have to reckon with. The students have demonstrated that there is another method of conducting a struggle besides crawling before the

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We have seen how, over the years, the development of a full-throated Sinhalese nationalism, marked by Sinhalese political, economic and social self-assertion, has produced its antithesis in the form of Tamil nationalism. Both were inevitable developments, after centuries of foreign domination. *The difference is that while the Sinhalese are now free, the Tamils feel they are not. They have a new master-the Sinhalese!*

Notwithstanding the impressive list of fundamental rights enshrined in the Constitution, that "all persons are equal before the law and are entitled to the equal protection of the law", that "no citizen shall be discriminated against on grounds of race, religion, language," and so on, it is a fact that large segments of the Tamil community do feel that they are being treated as "second class citizens", a subject people in effect.

PHYSICAL SECURITY

What is worse, they find that there is now no guarantee of physical security even in the heartland of the traditional Tamil territory, let alone in other parts of the island.

I believe that a lasting

SINHALESE ARE FREE, BUT TAMILS HAVE NEW MASTERS

solution to the problems of Sri Lanka's largest minority community could only be found, first, by the recognition by the Sinhalese of the legitimacy of Tamil nationalism and, secondly, by the provision of avenues for its full expression. Unfortunately settlement in

what has been described by some critics as the "Cyril Mathew syndrome." It was tried out in Jaffna in June 1981 and elsewhere in the island in August that same year.

But, as the late MP for Kopay, Mr. S. Kathiravelpi-

By Gamini Navaratne

the past had failed mainly owing to Sinhalese intransigence.

'CYRIL MATHEW SYNDROME'

It is this intransigence, reflected in the intensification of Sinhalese nationalism, that has made Tamil nationalism take more extreme forms, in terms of both objects (secession) and methods (violence).

Can this vicious circle of Sinhalese nationalism (or communalism?) feeding Tamil nationalism (or communalism?) and vice versa, be ever broken without entailing genocide or sundering Sri Lanka?

Some Sinhalese leaders appear to believe that force is "the only solution." This is

llai, once warned, "A confrontation between the two nations can defeat the very security, and therefore the existence and identity of the Sinhalese nation, particularly as foreign intervention in such a confrontation will become inevitable." We have seen how liberation movements in full cry elsewhere in the world have attracted various foreign powers.

If force has to be ruled out in this day and age, the only remaining peaceful option is a rapid and real devolution of state power.

This was what was proposed when the establishment of district development councils was discussed originally. But Sinhalese nationalism stood in the way, just as it did when Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike proposed the establishment of regional councils and Mr Dudley Senanayake planned to set up district councils.

In this regard, it must not be forgotten that in the vanguard of the Sinhalese opposition to the Bandaranaike - Chelvanayakam pact was no less than Mr. J.R. Jayewardene.

The Sinhalese fear continues to be that any degree of regional autonomy would eventually lead to a situation when the Tamils of North Sri Lanka would link up with South India to pose a threat to them, as in the ancient past.

This fear may be a lurid exaggeration of the possibilities of the modern day but it is there. It is, in fact, the biggest stumbling block to Sinhalese-Tamil accord.

Fresh evidence of this is

provided by the emergence of a new organisation to "defend the rights" of the major community, the Sinhala Bala Mandalaya, which staged a show of strength in Anuradhapura last week.

This ominous development has come about even as President Jayewardene's Government, after protracted negotiations with the Tamil United Liberation Front, planned to delegate more powers to the DDCs, which now are no more than appendages of a central administration directed from Colombo, and the TULF is prepared to accept it as a half-way arrangement to separation.

Equally ominous, in the North a new and radical movement is emerging in consequence of the growing disillusionment of many Tamils, especially of the younger generation, with the present leadership which is regarded by them as being "too moderate". The recent student demonstration in Jaffna is eloquent evidence of the new manifestation.

I believe it is in the self-interest of the Sinhalese themselves, even at this late stage, to agree to a more equitable sharing of state power, which is at the crux of the Sri Lanka communal problem.

To quote Mr. Kathiravelupillai again, ".....The last hundred years of British rule saw the unconscious creation of a myth by the English educated Sinhalese and Tamils who entered the political arena that there was one country, one nation and one people, though multiracial, but struggling for freedom from British rule. The British left this country in 1948 but the shackles and the myth remain. Full freedom, independence and the mutually unrestricted exercise of sovereignty for both the Sinhalese and the Tamils now depends on the restoration and reconstitution of the Sinhalese and Tamil now depends on the restoration and reconstitution of the

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TAMIL

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MAIL ORDERS WELCOME

"The sovereignties of the inhabitants of the island namely people of Kandy, Kotte and Jaffna revived to the respective people", observes Balasubramaniam (Tamil Times, March 1982) himself reviving Tiruchelvam's argument before the bench at the Trial-at-Bar. This was perhaps a good defence strategy at the trial in question. However, it is a very dangerous and self-defeating line to take in defending the rights of the Tamils against oppression by the Colombo government. It is a pity that many who speak for the Tamils of Sri Lanka do so in the manner of pleading before a Royal Commission or a Colonial Secretary in Whitehall. The British are gone and are not likely to return in order to redeem the Tamils. In any case, Balasubramaniam's statement contains a number of historial inaccuracies and a series of specious arguments.

The conception of sovereignty that Tiruchelvam and his latter day followers use is, to say the least, controversial. The Kingdoms of the period to which reference is made did

LANKAN TAMILS AND THEIR SOVEREIGNTY

not operate on the basis of anything remotely resembling "sovereignty of the people". Far from this being the case, the Kingdom were almost personal properties of the royal families in question, and were run in alliance with the economic, social and religious elite of the country. Indeed

exercised jurisdiction "in the northern and eastern parts of the Island from the limits of Puttalam and Mannar to the river Koomane or Koombukkan". This may well have been true in the nineteenth century and even earlier, but the historial fact is that the eastern parts of the island

By Artha Gnani

the lower classes were oppressed so totally and ruthlessly that contemporary oppressions may seem rather benign. To speak then of the sovereignty of the Tamil people "reverting" to the people in general is nonsense. In fact such sovereignty was conferred on them, if at all, by the imposition of universal adult franchise and the emergence of representative institutions. Balasubramaniam quotes the Cleghorn Minutes as stating in 1855 that the Kingdom of Jaffna Patnam and its courts

were under the suzerainty of the King of Kandy more frequently than not. In any case, it was disputed territory and settled by force of arms. That is to say, *whoever won the last war*, could claim it as part of his own Kingdom. In fact there is no evidence of the King of Jaffna even having sent his troops and ministers to govern the territories outside the peninsula. Far from this being true, even the territory outside the Jaffna peninsula inhabited by Tamil speaking people was administered independently by chieftans called Vanniyars in many cases. It is a moot point whether all of them acknowledged the suzerainty of the King of Jaffna. Some of them often came to terms with the King of Kotte.

To base the claims for the restoration of the rights of the Tamil people on such a tenuous interpretation of events that happened four hundred years or so ago, is to ignore the changes that have occurred since then. Many leaders and commentators on national and international questions have been known to ignore certain aspects of the relevant history, but to ignore the developments, *tour court*, of such a large segment of time, is, I am sure, rather original. Nevertheless, during these four hundred years enormous changes have occurred. Even if one ignores the emergence of an entirely new economic order both nationally and internationally and the

attendant changes in the production and social relations and the expectations that people in Jaffna have from life, one cannot ignore the redistribution of the Tamil population that has occurred. When so many people left their "sovereign territory" and settled elsewhere, did they take their "sovereignty" with them? Or on the other hand, did they abdicate it? If they did the latter, can they reclaim it? If they do not want to reclaim it, and if the successor states to the Kingdom of Kotte and Kandy refuse to accept them, what will be their status?

Furthermore, does it mean, as it undoubtedly should, following the logic of the argument, that the descendants of people who migrated to Sri Lanka after the British consolidation in 1815 are not entitled to the same rights as the descendants of people who were there before? The defence of the rights of the Tamils that is based on the dubious notion of "sovereignty of the people" derived from the sixteenth century will inevitably lead to the betrayal of the hill country Tamils, of Colombo Tamils and other Tamils distributed throughout the island. The successive Colombo governments since 1952 have tried to harass and humiliate the hill-country Tamils, but even if it did finally give citizenship to a certain portion of them. The sovereignty argument would undermine their status more completely than any Sinhala chauvinist could.

WHAT ABOUT THE MUSLIMS?

And where would the argument of a historical "sovereignty of the Tamil people", place the Tamil-speaking Muslims? One of the useful concepts to emerge into the political discourse of the island since the Sinhala only act of 1956 was the notion of the "Tamil-speaking people". It was broad in its sweep, including as it does Muslims, hill-country Tamils, Colombo's merchant Tamils and others who migrated since the

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dissolution of the Jaffna Kingdom and yet know on other land than Sri Lanka. In addition, it created an altogether new structure of interests that was innocent of the taint of racism and religious bigotry: all who were adversely affected by the Sinhala Only Act. Such a position, however lukewarm the support of some sections within it, was nevertheless a politically sound and morally strong one for the leadership of the Tamil struggle to take. Such a position also made it clear that the struggle was not to restore the privileges that the Jaffna Tamils were losing rapidly in a changing society, but was a quest for justice and equality as a general principle: Every human being is entitled to be treated equally by his/her government and its minions. This is the basis of the modern state and is enshrined in the declarations of the UN in many of its instruments. However, the argument based on sovereignty will establish a whole new basis for such a consideration: those who can prove their ancestral connections to the "Kingdom of Jaffna patam". I wonder what is in store for those who do not meet the requirements?

LEGITIMACY BY CONQUEST

Balasubramaniam observes "In other words Ceylon is an Island with two states viz, Tamil Eelam and Sri Lanka. The Tamils of Ceylon are therefore entitled to decide to remain as a separate state (having been conquered only by the Portuguese, Dutch, and British and their sovereignty having revived)." This is a very strange statement. It seems to mean that conquest is a legitimate and, even, in to day's world, an acceptable way to acquire sovereignty over a people. Hence the only thing the Colombo government has to do in order to gain legitimacy for their policy of oppression is to conquer Jaffna! In so far as the argument has been made that the presence of the army in

AREJOINDER ON SOVEREIGNTY By R.T. Paran

Artha Gnani concludes that the rights of a people are based on present and continuous membership in a community of citizens, acknowledged and effected by law. "If and when such a membership does not guarantee an equality in law and treatment, one must seek to change the law by whatever means at hand".

If one is entitled to use whatever means at hand, how then can the development of an argument, that the sovereignty of the lands in the North and East of Sri Lanka which are predominantly populated by Tamils lies with the people living there, be considered unacceptable?

If one must seek to change the law by whatever means, it is then axiomatic that those who attempt to change it must not be discouraged. But it would appear that A.G. is attempting to do just that. Having made the accusation that "many who speak for the Tamils of Sri Lanka do so in the manner of pleading before a Royal Commission or the Colonial Secretary in Whitehall", A.G. goes ahead to do just the same.

If legal arguments are ineffe-

ctive and "the British are gone and are not likely to return in order to redeem the Tamils", why then does A.G. spend all the effort and energy to disprove the argument about sovereignty lying with the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Either the phrase of A.G., "change the law by whatever means", does not include verbal discussions, debates, arguments and negotiations or he does not mean what he says at all.

In the last sentence he states "there is no other alternative". To what is there no alternative? Is there a suggestion that there is no alternative to a negotiated settlement with the Sinhalese? If so he has not developed any argument to prove this point. It is stated as if it is a very well known and accepted universal truth. Furthermore it would appear that he had already decided on the conclusion and then strung together all the words in front just to arrive back at the same conclusion. Is the purpose of the whole venture to disenchant and demoralise the Sri Lankan Tamils? To argue that it is not wise or advantageous to seek to establish a sovereign

independent state, is one thing; but for a son of the same community to say that the community has no right to seek a state is an entirely different 'ball game'.

The sovereignty argument is only one string among many on the bow. It may be that when the bow is tensioned this string might break. But it certainly does not need someone on the pulling side of the bow to sever it beforehand.

Cold, legalistic and intellectual debating points may be appropriate in an academic atmosphere, but they have to be reassessed for their emotional impact before dissemination to the general public; especially when the topic is one of great relevance to a whole community and more or less deals with the life or death of that community. The public at large does not receive these debating points in the detached atmosphere of an academic lecture theatre. The interested parties are emotionally tensed and charged. If A.G.'s intention is not to deflate the morale of his people, let him keep his thesis for academic seminars, in calmer times.

Jaffna means precisely that, sovereignty too must have reverted to the Colombo government!

The entire argument propounded by this school of thought is without merit either in political and historical terms or in terms of common sense. Everyone should know that legal briefs are presented to a tribunal that is able to *adjudicate and enforce* its decisions with the help of the executive. To whom, I wonder, are the lawyers appealing in this case? It is this habit of approaching the problems of the Tamils which has led to the present impasse. Far from it being a simple legalistic problem, the situation confronting the Tamils is a serious socio-economic and political problem in which the history of the last

few hundred years since the Portuguese, Dutch or British conquest too plays an important part. It is time to abandon these exercises and get on with the reality in hand.

SPECTRE OF "ZIONISM"

Facing the reality of the electoral, economic and military power of the government in Colombo, one must restore the rights of all the people, not merely those who lost their sovereignty in the sixteenth century. To speak otherwise is to invoke the spectre of "Zionism": the inalienable *historial* right of a people to a territory. Indeed it is possible to argue that the struggle in Sri-Lanka is between two forms of the "Zionistic" argument: Sinhalese/Buddhist "Zionism" and Tamil "Zionism". And unless both sides abandon these arguments, and establish

a modern multi-religious, multi-linguistic nation state (with adequate safeguards, including regionalization of the administration), in which citizenship, with its implication of unqualified equality, is the basis of membership, there will be nothing but continued violence and disruption in the island. Indeed one can state a sociological law here: to invoke one "Zionism" is to invite the parallel invocation of a counter "Zionism"; to invoke Sinhala chauvinism is to invite the parallel invocation of Tamil chauvinism and once begun, the chain is almost impossible to break. However, as the initiators of chauvinistic politics, indeed as the first of the "separatists", the Sinhalese have no other alternative but to work towards the establishment of a

(Contd. on page 10)

SRI LANKA

SINHALA NATION

SEEING THE PICTURE UPSIDE-DOWN

Well-meaning friends of this paper living in the South, have been trying to persuade us to give the SATURDAY REVIEW a more "national" orientation. Since anything well meant has not only to be accepted with good grace but also examined in all honesty, let us test this advice against a logical frame.

The beginning of wisdom as someone said is to call things by their right names. What does "national" mean? "National" means pertaining to a nation, and a nation means a body of people marked off by common descent, language, culture, or historical tradition. In Sri Lanka today, we certainly have one country and one State. But do we have only one nation? To talk of one Sri Lankan nation at this stage of our history is nothing less than a piece of duplicity, whether conscious or unconscious. It would be like opening the stable door to allow the horse to bolt and then closing it again so that everyone can pretend that the quadruped is safe inside. The horse in fact fled long ago. In 1956.

1956 marked the beginning of Sinhala nationalism, and Sinhala nationalism has come to stay. There is nothing wrong about it; not only that, it was historically inevitable. What was wrong about it, was the anti-Tamil animosity that preceded it and then came in its wake. Anti-Tamil mob violence began on the very day the Sinhala Only Act was passed, when a small group of Tamil M.P.s led by the late venerated leader S.J.V. Chelvanayakam sat in silent protest at the Galle Face Green and was stoned and attacked by a mob. That day also marked the genesis of Police indiscipline with the Police being told by the powers that were, not to interfere with the proceedings. In short, mob violence against Tamils and Police approval of it were both given the seal of official

sanction!

ABSORPTION?

The very bedrock of Sinhala nationalism was founded on Aryan descent, the Sinhala language, Sinhala culture, Buddhism and the historical tradition of Sinhala possession of this country, each one of which effectively excluded the Tamils from the mainstream of Sri Lankan life. This naturally left the Sinhala leaders in a state of dilemma. What could they possibly do with the Tamils? Push them into the sea? Naturally they had to be absorbed into the Sinhala mainstream. But how? Peacefully, if like Marlowe's Shepherdess who boasted "Nobody can rape me, no Sir, because I am most willing", the Tamils had said: "We are most willing to be absorbed".

But over the past twenty six years they had made it loud and clear that they are NOT willing to be absorbed. So there the Sinhala rulers' peaceful option ends. The other option is violent absorption; and it is this process that we have been seeing over the past several years. But unfortunately for the Sinhala people, their politicians and mass media have inverted the picture. They are seeing the same picture, but seeing it upside down. All what they see is Tamil obduracy, Tamil communalism and Tamil Tigers!

There is a third option open to the rulers: accept Tamil nationalism. It was as inevitable as Sinhala nationalism, and equally valid, and it has come to stay.

As we said earlier, the beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right names. If anything Sinhala is national and anything Tamil is communal, then we are only clinging to a Myth. The SATURDAY REVIEW can speak up for two nations. The entire mass media in the South speak up for only one. That is our difference.

Saturday Review, a weekly English journal published in Sri Lanka, in its issue of May 15, 1982, editorially commented on the subject of 'SINHALA NATIONALISM' and urged the recognition of the developing phenomenon of 'TAMIL NATIONALISM'. The well-known Sri Lankan journalist and Jt. Secretary of the Movement for Inter Racial Justice and Equality, Reggie Siriwardena, entered into an argument with the Editor of Saturday Review putting forward the view that what masqueraded today under the guise of 'Sinhala Nationalism' was the ideology of semi-fascist groups which he characterised as unqualified 'Sinhala Racism'. Kettheeswaran Loganathan entered the arena with his contribution that the pre-requisite for a comprehension of the National Question in Sri Lanka was the total and absolute recognition of 'Tamil Nationalism' as a historical reality, and noted the degeneration of 'Sinhala Nationalism', once a progressive force in the context of anti-colonial struggles, into national chauvinism.

Tamil Times is pleased to reproduce this exchange of views with the kind courtesy of Saturday Review.

"RACISM, NOT NATIONALISM"

In your editorial of May 15, written in answer to those friends of your paper in the South who have urged you to give it a more 'national' orientation, you write:

'1956 marked the beginning of Sinhala nationalism and Sinhala nationalism has come to stay. There is nothing wrong about it; not only that, it was historically inevitable. What was wrong about it was the anti-Tamil animosity that preceded it and then came in its wake.'

Leaving aside the historical inaccuracy contained in the first sentence (for 1956 marked not the 'beginning of Sinhala nationalism' but the capture of state power by social forces espousing this ideology), I wish to show that your position here is both inconsistent and unsound.

You concede not only the historical inevitability but also the legitimacy of what you call 'Sinhala nationalism' (some of us have a different name for it, but more of that later). Your objection, then, is not to 'Sinhala nationalism' but to the 'anti-Tamil animosity' that accompanied it. Yet in the following paragraph you write:

'The very bedrock of Sinhala nationalism was founded on Aryan descent, the Sinhala language, Sinhala culture, Buddhism and the historical tradition of Sinhala possession of this country, each one of which effectively excluded the Tamils from the mainstream of Sri Lankan life'. (My emphasis).

BEDROCK OF SINHALA NATIONALISM

Let me clarify what precisely is the meaning of the elements you identify as constituting 'the bedrock of Sinhala nationalism'. 'Aryan descent' - that is, the myth of the 'Aryan race' and of Sinhala descent from it (a myth that, not fortuitous, has its origins in the doctrines of those 19th-century German racist theorists who prepared the way for Nazism). 'The Sinhala language and Sinhala culture' - that is, this language and culture used as part of an ideological construction which defines them in distinction from and opposition to Tamil and South Indian cultures. 'Buddhism' - that is, not the teachings of Gautama the Buddha but a politicised creed which makes religion the

NATIONALISM OR RACISM?

vehicle of racial domination as well as an institutionalised structure which is manipulated by the State. 'The historical tradition of Sinhala possession of this country' - that is, the assertion of the right of the Sinhala people to possession of the whole of Sri Lankan territory, buttressed by the Mahavamsa myth of the consignment of the island by the Buddha to the protection of its guardian deity, and by the claim (with whatever shuffling of historical evidence) that the entire island was a Sinhala kingdom at the beginnings of its history.

RACIST IDEOLOGY

In short, the elements you correctly identify as 'the bedrock of Sinhala nationalism' can be seen, when fully spelt out, as nothing other than the elements of a racist ideology (and that is why 'Sinhala racism' would be a more accurate term than your euphemism of 'Sinhala nationalism'). There seems to be some vague comprehension of this fact on your part when you say that each of these elements 'effectively excluded the Tamils from the mainstream of Sri Lankan life'. How then can you accept the legitimacy of 'Sinhala nationalism', complaining only against its 'anti-Tamil animosity', when, by your own demonstration, the very 'bedrock' of this 'nationalism' involves the exclusion of the Tamils from the mainstream of Sri Lankan life? You cannot have one without the other. This is the fatal intellectual and political contradiction in which you have placed yourself.

It is painful to those of us in the South who, with limited means and strength at our disposal, spend a good part of our time trying to combat Sinhala racism and to demolish the myths and fantasies on which its ideology is based, to see you conceding its rightness and even its permanence. For you hold not only that 'there is nothing wrong about it' but

that 'it has come to stay'. You are, in other words, endorsing the legitimacy and viability of those very forces who are oppressing (and, whenever possible, slaughtering) you, who are using the myths and slogans of racism to project the idea of a 'unified Sinhala nation' (which necessarily involves identifying the Tamil as the enemy against whom that unity must be forged), and who are striving by this means to submerge the other contradictions of our society and to arrest the struggle against exploitation and oppression in

all its forms. You may believe that in taking this suicidal position you are speaking for the Tamil people. What gives you the right to speak for us and to issue certificates of legitimacy to that racism against which the best elements of the Sinhala people are fighting? What makes you think that, even if you get that separate nationhood you claim, we want to live in a racist society?

Reggie Siriwardene

50/2B, Siripa Road,
Colombo 5.

"SATURDAY REVIEW" EDITOR'S COMMENT

We recognise the fundamental divergence in our respective positions. Mr. Siriwardene virtually asserts that Sinhala nationalism is a non-fact. He sees only Sinhala racism. As for us, we see both:

We are prepared to concede to Mr. Siriwardene one point straightaway (although this is not going to please him either). When we said "1956 marked the beginnings of Sinhala nationalism" we WERE guilty of a historical inaccuracy. We should have said more correctly: "1956 marked the beginnings of the political entrenchment of Sinhala nationalism", because the beginnings of Sinhala nationalism could be traced to the early years of the century. Sinhala resurgence spearheaded by Anagarika Dharmapala left a perceptible and healthy influence on Sinhala thinking, culture and literature.

When Mr. Siriwardene argues: "how can you accept the legitimacy of 'Sinhala Nationalism' complaining only against its anti-Tamil animosity You could not have one without the other", our answer is this: the fundamental elements of this early phase of Sinhala nationalism were the raising of the self-respect of the Sinhalese, and rejection of western and alien influence. No Tamil could possibly have found any objection to this.

FAIT ACCOMPLI

When Ceylon won its independence in 1948, State Power had already passed into the exclusive hands of the Sinhalese, but it was not until 1956 that the arrogation of this power took place as a matter of right. The choice of building up a homogeneous Ceylonese nationhood after independence was entirely in the hands of the Sinhalese people. If instead they had chosen to build it on an exclusive Sinhalese Buddhist foundation, as it happened, it was certainly an unfortunate development but that is something which neither Mr. Siriwardene nor we could have helped. All that can be done is to look at it as a fait accompli.

In seeking to reject Sinhala nationalism outright, Mr. Siriwardene, we are afraid, is only trying to throw away the baby along with the dirty bath water. We do not think the Sinhala cultural upsurge that occurred in the late fifties could have been an authentic by-product of Sinhala racism. Lester James Pieris, maiden achievement in the Sinhala cinema 'Rekawa' (1956) and Saratchandra's "Maname" (1956) both of which remain as watersheds, and the emergence of a sensitive and celebrated critic of the Sinhala arts like Mr. Siriwardene

A DISCUSSION

himself, could not have been all mere coincidences that could be de-linked from the Sinhala nationalism of that time.

A nationalism built on race, language or religion is certainly distasteful, looked at from the classic marxist ideology. But socialism itself, like nationalism, can have two faces like Janus. If Mr. Siriwardene cannot bring himself round to accept the fact of Sinhala nationalism we can not possibly expect him to accept the fact of Tamil nationalism either. The longer the Tamils take to accept the fact of Sinhala nationalism the more vulnerable they become to the theory of assimilation; a theory which Trotsky, a Jew himself, favoured when Jewish separatism first surfaced in the Russian revolutionary movement.

REGGIE'S REJOINDER

31 May 1982.

The Editor,
Saturday Review,
Sir,

While thanking you for the generous space given to my letter in your issue of May 29 and your attention to it in your reply, I hope you will grant me the opportunity to clarify some of the matters at issue between us, since they are questions of great importance to the Tamil people.

I agree that in relation to the colonial period it is possible to speak of 'Sinhala nationalism' since the Sinhalese were then a subject people. However, when you see in the nationalism of the Anagarika Dharmapala era only a 'healthy' movement directed towards raising the self-respect of the Sinhalese and rejection of western influence, you are fundamentally wrong.

The ideology of Anagarika Dharmapala and his associates had, in addition to it: anti-British and anti-western elements, a strong racist component directed against

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(Contd. From P.9)

both Tamils and Muslims. (For the evidence see, e.g., Dr. Kumari Jayawardena's analyses.) This isn't surprising because the class of small Sinhala traders and businessmen who were the Anagarika's base were much more directly in conflict with Tamil and Muslim traders than with British interests, which they were too weak to challenge, except rhetorically. (As Prof. Ralph Pieris has shown, the Anagarika, while making anti-British speeches, wrote letters to the Governor assuring him of his loyalty!)

RACIST CHARACTER

Even in 1956, Sinhala nationalism still had a certain duality: on the one hand, it expressed the aspirations of the rural bourgeoisie and the Sinhala-speaking petty bourgeoisie to break up the monopoly of power by the westernised urban bourgeoisie (that is why it made possible a temporary cultural upsurge); on the other hand, it was anti-Tamil and racist in character because of the rivalry for economic advancement and employment between these classes and their Tamil counterparts. It is in the interests of those classes who assumed leadership of the nationalist movement that one should look for explanation of the fact that, as you put it, the Sinhala people failed to build up 'a homogeneous Ceylonese nationhood' after independence. Let us not forget that in 1956 and immediately after this concept was affirmed in the South only by the working-class movement, whatever the betrayals and crimes of its leadership later.

FASCIST GROUPS

There can be no question today, however, of the interests of oppressed or underprivileged social groups in the South being articulated through Sinhala nationalism; what masquerades under this name is the ideology of semifascist groups, and that is why today I would speak unqualifiedly of Sinhala racism and not of 'Sinhala nationalism.'

As for Tamil nationalism, you are wrong in your conjectures about my position. As long as a people are oppressed. I recognise that their nationalism has a necessary role to play in their emancipation, even though it must ultimately be transcended in the historical process. Not do I believe in 'assimila-

tion', because I recognise both the need and the desirability of linguistic and cultural diversity in a future socialist society of Sri Lanka, in which I firmly believe the Tamil people will find their due place as free, equal and voluntary participants.

Yours faithfully,
Reggie Siriwardena

TAMIL NATIONALISM A HISTORICAL REALITY

Sir,

This is in response to your Editorial of May 15 on the metamorphosis of Sinhala Nationalism into Racism and the reply to Reggie Siriwardena (May 29) on the equation of Sinhala Nationalism with Racism. I only hope that the above exchange will not develop into another hackneyed debate on whether racism is a logical extension of nationalism, determined by objective conditions, or only an unfortunate but a gruesome aberration, caused by the dominance of certain subjective conditions.

The nature of relations between Nationalism and Racism is dialectical and cannot be explained by the mere citing of political anecdotes, as you have done. Neither, could it be explained by an emotional treatment of Sinhala racism by Sinhala liberal humanists like Reggie Siriwardena, who feel a deep sense of guilt, shame and shock at the intensity of the racist onslaught being unleashed against their Tamil "brethren".

All that I wish to state at present is that the pre-requisite for a comprehension of the

National Question in Sri Lanka is the total and absolute recognition of Tamil Nationalism as a historical reality-both inevitable and irreversible - and the de facto existence of a Tamil Nation. Corollary to the above, is the need for a total and absolute recognition of the degeneration of Sinhala Nationalism, once a progressive force in the context of anti-colonial struggles, into national chauvinism and a camouflage for class exploitation within the Sinhala Nation. As to whether Tamil nationalism, now a progressive force, will traverse the same path, is a matter to be determined by the history of class struggles within the Tamil Nation. In any event, such speculations will make little sense to a people at the receiving end of political, economic and cultural genocide. Unless one comes to grips with the above realities, any debate on the National Question is meaningless.

Yours sincerely,
Ketheeswaran Loganathan

(Contd. from page 7)

secular state based on citizenship. It may take long and it may take an enormous amount of hard work and it may cost lives and it may cause shame and embarrassment, to the various governments that will come to power in Colombo, but there really is no alternative to coming to a settlement.

However, there is no hope that this will come to pass in the immediate future. Consider the antics of the present government: they hold talks, negotiate and make promises to the leaders of the Tamil people, thereby legitimising the existence of a separate interest. Surely, the government in Colombo does not need to be told, once again, the grievances of the Tamil people? What is stopping them from legislating measures that would remove the iniquitous and discriminatory laws perpetrated by benighted governments for the last twenty-five years?

To conclude, the rights of a people are not based on ancestral connections and spurious historical arguments, but present and continuous membership, acknowledged and effected by law, in a community of citizens. If and when such a membership does

not guarantee an equality in law and in treatment, then one must seek to change the law

by whatever means are at hand, and however long it takes, and not engage in fanciful reconstructions of history, spurious legalisms and socio-political delusions. One must do this, not because the Sinhalese are to be "trusted", but because there is no other alternative, given the material and practical reality of Sri Lankan society, economy and ecology.

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LONDON DIARY

TROTSKY HAUNTS LABOUR

Many feared the Russian revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, during his lifetime. The Czarist regime put him on trial after the abortive 1905 uprising and exiled him to Siberia. That did not prevent his escape and subsequently joining hands with Lenin in the victorious revolution of 1917. Stalin dreaded Trotsky and exiled him, but he was not satisfied. He put him, in absentia, through the infamous Moscow Trials in 1936 and Trotsky was condemned. He continued to haunt Stalin who suffered many a sleepless night until his assassination in Mexico in 1941.

Ever since, there have been an incredible number of groups and groupscules which have claimed the right of inheritance to Trotsky's Fourth International. There are at least seven such groups in the UK and six in Sri Lanka claiming to be the authentic inheritors of the Trotsky legacy.

But what is of immediate relevance is that Trotsky has begun to haunt the leadership of the Labour Party to such an extent that the Militant Tendency, which openly admits to be Trotskyist, and which had hitherto been allowed to operate within the Labour Party, suddenly faces expulsion following a long and vicious campaign by the right wing assisted by the media.

What is ironic is that Michael Foot, who was not so long ago been the target of attempted witch-hunts on allegations of his left or red leanings, is leading the campaign against the Militant Tendency. Finding that over the last few years, the constituency Labour Parties and the rank and file have begun to assert more and more in determining party policy at Conferences, the right of the Party has made the Militant the scapegoat.

What happens to the Militant Tendency is of some relevance to the Sri Lankan left in that the NSSP (Vasu-Bahu group) has strong ideological and organisational links with this Tendency. Ted Grant, the real leader of the Militant in the background, who recently visited Sri Lanka to attend the NSSP Conference had a strong influence in the growth and development of the NSSP as a party. The Militant Tendency and the NSSP belong to the Workers Committee for International.

SOUTH AFRICAN CONNECTION

If the Tory government bungled in their judgment about the invasion of the Falklands by the Argentinian junta, there was one government which knew about the plans for the invasion six months before it actually occurred, and that was the South African government.

Argentinian Chief of Staff, General Mario Menendes, who was appointed Military Governor of the Islands after its capture, visited South Africa during the latter part of last year. His mission was to find out whether, if Argentina captured the Falklands, South Africa would offer the use of the Simonstown Naval Base to Britain in its effort to recapture the islands.

Although the South African government denied the strong rumours of supplying military equipment to the Argentinian junta during the recent war, the question that has to be asked is why did the South Africans did not alert Britain about the plans for the invasion. The probable reason is that South Africa is a member of SATO (South Atlantic Treaty Organisation). The other members of this unofficial murky outfit established in 1977 include Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay - all military fascist dictatorships who are pledged to aid each other in the event of external military confrontations. It cannot be doubted that, under the terms of this Treaty, South Africa would

have been called upon to respond with military assistance during the recent crisis.

FALLOUT FROM FALKLANDS

The hospital ship, HMS Uganda was specially requisitioned by the British government to join the Falklands task force. The notice issued by Captain Biddick to the ship's Company said that the Uganda would serve as a hospital ship and that "in the very nature of the case, active service cannot be excluded" but there was a snag. The entire complement of Indian crew raised the question whether the Indian government had approved of their going to the Falklands to do battle for the British.

Captain Biddick, who had earlier promised to answer any questions from any member of the crew, did not know the answer. He allowed the crew to leave the ship, but told them in no uncertain terms that they would not find jobs with any Peninsular and Orient vessel in future. Although the Indian crew was warned by the Captain with this threat to their jobs, no

such warning was issued to a number of British crew members who also quit the ship at Gibraltar, though one would assume, that it would have been their moral obligation (if there was any justification for the war) to stay on and fight, if necessary, on behalf of their country!


Stranger still is that those Indian seamen who agreed to go on the Uganda were to receive only £50 a month whereas their British counterparts received £288.

POSTAL VOTE FOR OVERSEAS LANKANS

Draft legislation has been prepared to enable Lankans temporarily abroad to vote by post at general elections.

Prepared on a directive from President J. R. Jayewardene, this legislation is mainly for Lankans working in the Middle East and other countries.

The procedure recommended is almost on the same lines as existing legislation for postal voting. The only difference is that the certifying officer will be the Sri Lankan envoy accredited to the country in which the voter is residing.



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Contd. from page 5
Sinhalese and Tamil states
Pancha Sila or co-existence is
thus the only solution to the
problem of the two nations in
Sri Lanka.Wise Sinhalese
leadership should understand
the problem in its full
magnitude."

TAMIL BUDDHISTS

The discovery of remnants of
Buddhist monuments in the
North has given rise to the
belief among some Sinhalese
that their civilisation prevailed
for a considerable period in
that part of the country as
well. Those who cling to this
belief seem to discount the po-
ssibility at one time there were
many Tamils who professed
Buddhism.

The following excerpts from
a lecture by historian James T.
Rutnam should provide food
for thought for such people:
"....We are all heirs to the
national legacy of Sri Lanka.
We find Buddhist monuments
in Jaffna; we also find Hindu
shrines and temples through-
out the island. Nilakanta
Sastri has described in an
article on 'Buddhism in South
India' that 'from the dawn of
history up to the 14th century
AD, or even later, Buddhism

held a considerable place in
South India and left its marks
in the monuments and litera-
tures of the land.' Jaffna is
only about twenty miles from
the subcontinent. We have
necessarily to draw the right
conclusion from this uncha-
llengeable fact.

BUDDHIST TAMIL EPIC

"The great commentator of
the Buddhist scriptures, Bu-
ddhagosa, was a South Indian.
So were Buddhadatta, Dham-
mapala, Sangamitra, Bodhi
Dharma, Ilam Bodhiyar and
Seethali Sattanar. The greatest
Buddhist epic 'Manimekalai'
was written in Tamil by a
Tamil in the 2nd century AD.
Even Kaccayana, the author
of the first Pali grammar,
came from South India, which
over a millenium continued to
be a centre of Pali Buddhism
..."

Mr Rutnam notes that Sir
Charles Elliot, while acknow-
ledging that Buddhism came
to the country under the
auspices of Asoka, wrote that
"Sinhalese Buddhism has pro-
bably a close connection with
South India than the legends
suggest and Conjeevaram was
long a Pali centre which kept
up intercourse with both
Ceylon and Burma."

ripped and other places suggest
a South Indian culture in
ancient Sri Lanka but there is
no archaeological evidence at
all to suggest a North Indian
colonisation."

Mr. Rutnam concludes, "It
is therefore not surprising that
we have Buddhist monuments
in Jaffna - so close to the
south-east coast of India. The
megalithic burials in Pampa-

SAI BABA TO VISIT SRI LANKA

Sathya Sri Sai Baba is to pay
a visit to Sri Lanka shortly.
President J.R. Jayawardene
has announced that he will be
welcomed on his arrival as a
state guest.

Sai Baba and his entourage

will be provided with accom-
modation at the MPs Hostel,
the Sravasti, since his group is
too large to be accommodated
at the Acland House, where
state guests are normally
provided with facilities.

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Contd from page 1

The people of this country as well as the people of India have now come face to face, for the first time, with the question of defending the human and political rights of persons persecuted for political activities, including their right of not being subject to extradition.

"The local press has continuously published reports of the moves on the part of the Sri Lanka government to get these persons in custody in India extradited.

"If these Sri Lankans in custody are handed over by the Indian government to the Sri Lanka government it will mean, apart from being an infringement of the generally recognised right that the persons persecuted for political activities are not subject to extradition, that the extraordinary and reactionary laws such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act passed by the Sri Lanka government will operate against them. They are also liable to be detained, tortured and kept without trial

and without the possibility of anybody meeting them - not even their lawyers.

"Although we do not agree with the politics of those in the so-called Tiger Movement, we are of the view that the treatment meted out to them and contemplated against them by the government should be denounced by all sections of the people of this country. The concentrated attacks on the basic rights of those said to be in the "Tiger" Movement, after having aroused feelings of hatred against them among the people by large-scale propaganda through the mass media is reminiscent of the beginning of the massacre of thousands of young people by the government through the use of armed forces and the police in 1971 and the complete denial of human, political and democratic rights for the entire population of this country in that year and thereafter. Therefore, it becomes a matter of great concern to the entire masses of the people of this country

from North to South and West to East, irrespective of any differences whatsoever...."

TREAT THEM AS POLITICAL PRISONERS-NSSP

Dr. Wickremabahu, the General Secretary of the Nava Sama Samaja Party (NSSP), in a statement issued on 28.5.82 stated:

"The NSSP condemns the attempt of the Sri Lankan government to obtain the extradition of the Tamil Youth leaders, Uma Maheswaran and Prabhakaran arrested in India. We call upon all

workers' organisations and all others who stand for democratic rights to unite to agitate for these youth to be treated as political prisoners.

"Though we think that the methodology of struggle involving terrorism adopted by some of these youth is inappropriate and may prove futile, we firmly stand for their democratic political rights. The entire responsibility for the development of the phenomenon of terrorism lies with the successive governments of Sri Lanka, which have continued to oppress and terrorise the Tamil speaking people".

TEACHERS UNION SAYS:

"DON'T HAND OVER"

The Ceylon Teachers Union has sent the following letter to the High Commissioner for India in Sri Lanka:

"The Central Committee of the Ceylon Teachers Union which has a membership of 47,000, met on 5th June 1982 and adopted the following resolution:

"We are informed that the

Tamil Nadu Police have arrested several Sri Lankan Tamil youths including Uma Maheswaran and Prabhakaran. Though we do not agree with these youth politically, we appeal to the Indian government not to hand over these youths to the Sri Lanka government".

(Contd on page 15)



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"STATELESS TAMILS OF SRI LANKA"

Petition To Mrs. Gandhi

The following is the text of a petition submitted by the Academy of Science for Tamils in Ceylon [London] to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, during her recent visit to the United Kingdom, on the plight of the stateless Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka:

"It is not our intention to burden you with the task of going through the enormous research and its findings on the subject of 'stateless Tamils' in Sri Lanka.

Madam, you are well aware of this problem at your doorstep and a solution to this problem, we believe, should be one of your top priorities in the programme to enhance Indo-Sri Lankan relations; particularly, in the context of the Srimavo-Shastri pact of 1964 which lapsed on 30th October, 1981, thus, leaving yet another 820,000 stateless Tamils in Sri Lanka whose future will very much depend on the stand taken by the Indian Government for a negotiated settlement.

The recent visit to Sri Lanka by the Indian President accompanied by Mr Eric Gonsalves, is ample testimony that a working programme is on the agenda. Thus, in negotiating a solution to this problem with Sri Lankan Government, we

urge you to consider the human fact and historical background that these 820,000 stateless Tamils are not of Indian origin. They are Ceylonese by birth and children of the fifth generation. It is true that chauvinists argue that they are of Indian origin because their fore-fathers are from India. This is denied in sociological studies by Indo-Sri Lankan scholars. A recent book on this subject and a booklet on plantation workers, by National Union of Workers of Sri Lanka, are enclosed for study by your advisers.

In this context, Madam, we wish to draw your kind attention to the observations made by the father of your nation Mahatma Gandhi and your late father Sri Jawaharlal Nehru on the plantation workers in Ceylon.

When Mahatma Gandhi visited Ceylon in 1927 he told the Indians:

"I would ask you to live as sugar lives in milk. Even as a

cup of milk, which is filled up to the brim, does not overflow when sugar is added to it but sugar accommodates itself in the milk and enriches its taste, even so I would like you to live in this island, so as not to become interlopers and so as to enrich the life of the people amongst whom you are living."

Emphasising the human aspects of the issue, Prime Minister Nehru speaking before the Lok Sabha in 1958 said:

"The problem is, in the main, that of the Ceylon Government, because these people, according to our showing, are not Indian nationals whether registered or not, we feel that the issue has dragged on for so long. The Ceylon Government have their difficulties, but they should realize our position just as we are prepared to consider their difficulties. It is obvious that we cannot ask a large number of people who have been born in Ceylon and have lived there to walk across to India or accept them as our nationals."

Despite the three Indo-Ceylon agreements reached by Ceylon and Nehru administration between 1954 and 1962, it was for sociological reasons and human considerations that your late father did not conclude any concrete pacts with the Ceylon Government. Therefore, we urge you to give due consideration to his observation in pursuing your policy on the question of stateless Tamils in Sri Lanka. We suggest and strongly urge you not to renew the pact but to negotiate with the Sri Lankan Government to grant Sri Lankan citizenship to the 820,000 stateless Tamils, 'who are battered and bullied' because, 'while Sri Lanka is obsessed with its

communal composition India is concerned with the maintenance of good neighbourly relations'.

As you are well aware, the Island's peace had been disturbed by recurrent violence which first appeared in 1958, 10 years after Independence, when hundreds of persons, particularly Tamils, were killed and thousands of Tamil refugees were relocated from Sinhalese to Tamil areas. The next major outbreak of violence occurred in 1977'.

'In August 1981, the third major outbreak of communal violence took place after tension for five months between ethnic groups...'

In the third outbreak of violence, an Indian journalist stresses the fact, 'one new element was the concentration of violence against the Indian estate Tamils and this in a way internationalised the conflict'. He adds further, 'In the view of ICJ, physical security of the minority Tamils must be ensured and there should be no recurrence of communal violence so frequently directed against the Tamils if peace is to return to the island'.

Thus, for permanent peace and communal harmony in the island, a solution to the problem of stateless Tamils necessarily implies a solution to the problems of the Tamil community in the Island whose interests and bonds are inextricably integrated. You will no doubt appreciate the importance of 'peace' in the Island for good-neighbourly relations and for the continued maintenance of 'Peace Zone' Indian ocean.

We, therefore, urge you, once again, to stress and impress upon the Sri Lankan Government to grant Sri Lankan citizenship to the stateless Tamils and to ratify the "Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination".

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(Contd from page 13)

The letter has been signed by the Union's General Secretary, Mr. H.N.G. Fernando.

TELF AGAINST EXTRADITION

The Tamil Eelam Liberation Front (TELF) led by Dr. S.A. Tharmalingam, in a letter to Mrs. Indira Gandhi and the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, M.G. Ramachandran, has requested 'not to extradite Tamil youths taken into custody by the Madras Police..

The letter adds: 'Many Tamil Eelam youths have been in custody for several years without ever being brought to trial. Some of them have been done to death after arrest and are said to be missing by the authorities here.

"The police authorities here are known to have brutally beaten up and tortured the arrested Tamil youths and have proceeded to record, under duress, statements by them confessing to crimes they are alleged to have committed. Such extracted confessions have been made admissible in evidence against them in a Court of Law."

BOOK REVIEW

SAIVITE HINDUISM

Mr. K. Gnanasoorian, M.Sc. of the London Saiva Siddhanta Centre, has produced yet another masterpiece titled **SAIVITE HINDUISM - A Primer for Beginners**", to meet the needs of the Saivite children living in the west.

A work of this nature has been a crying need for the new Saivite generation springing up in England, America, Canada, Australia and in the African Countries. The children of Saivite Hindus, who have temporarily or permanently settled down in these countries, receive their education in English and consequently they have no access to the fundamentals of their religious truths, most of which are found in Tamil books. Mr. Gnanasoorian's attempt to reach these children through this beautiful book is indeed commendable and praiseworthy.

The book is dedicated to no less a luminary than the Guru Maha Sannithanam of the

Kauai Aadhenam, U.S.A., Sri Sivaya Subramuniya Swami, and it has been released at the Benares Hindu University by Sri-La-Sri Kasivai Muthukumaraswamy Thambiran Swamigal, Head of Sri Kasi Mutt, Thiruppanandal, on the occasion of the Annual Conference of the Saiva Siddhanta Maha Samajam. Madras. These make the book all the more

auspicious and valuable.

The book is reasonably priced at US \$ 5.00 or £2.00 and should prove very useful and handy to all children in the West and elsewhere who lack a knowledge of Tamil. Copies are available at the London Saiva Centre, 72 King Edward, Road, London E.17. United Kingdom.

"RESTORE CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS"

The Sri Lanka Workers Association of UK has called upon the government of Sri Lanka to restore without delay the citizenship and voting rights to the plantation workers of Indian origin.

The Executive Committee of the SLWA recently adopted the following resolution:

"Recognising that the plantation workers of Indian origin are a part and parcel of the working people of Sri Lanka, the SLWA condemns the Srma - Shastri Pact under which the plantation workers are continuing to be forcibly repatriated.

"We call for an immediate end to any further repatriation

and call upon the government to, without any further delay restore the citizenship and voting rights of the plantation workers, which had been arbitrarily and unjustifiably denied to them since 1948.

Mr. Ranjit Mendis, the Secretary of the SLWA said that their Association has resolved to commence an international campaign on the question of denial of basic human and democratic rights to the plantation workers in Sri Lanka.

Contd. from page 4
government for concessions on the one hand, and taking pot-shots at policemen on the other.

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TAMIL TIMES

THE CURSE OF COLONISATION

One of the problems that has always agitated the minds of Tamil speaking people of Sri Lanka has been the large-scale state-aided colonisation of their traditional homelands in the Northern and Eastern Provinces by those belonging to the majority Sinhala community.

The Tamils of Lanka suffer many disadvantages owing to their minority status in the national context. But they have historically constituted a substantial majority for several centuries in the Northern and Eastern provinces. However, this position has been undermined over the years by scheming politicians, both of the United National Party and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party by the implementation of a deliberate policy of discriminatory land distribution. This policy has had the effect of transferring hundreds of thousands of people belonging to the Sinhala majority community into Tamil areas. Already, substantial areas in the Eastern Province which were once predominantly inhabited by Tamil speaking people - Muslims and Tamils - have been transformed into Sinhala majority areas, or in the process of being transformed as such.

The curse of this policy has now begun to adversely affect even the heartland of traditional Tamil areas. The census statistics of 1981 have brought this problem into sharper relief. For instance, these statistics reveal a remarkable change in the ethnic composition of the Eastern tamil city of Trincomalee:

	1953	1981	%Increase
Sinhalese:	15,296	86,341	564.46
Tamils	37,517	93,510	249.24
Moors	27,748	74,403	268.13

The danger facing the Tamil speaking people is self evident, if this policy of state-aided colonisation continues. They face the inexorable prospect of losing their identity as a community inhabiting a reasonably defined area which had been their traditional homeland. This danger has already been highlighted by the International Commission of Jurists in their recent report on the 'Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka'. The Commission recommended that the government must revise their policy on colonisation.

In pure electoral terms, what does this development lead to? Particularly in the context of the proportional voting system, that was introduced recently, the Trincomalee District, which had hitherto returned, or was capable of returning only Tamil speaking MPs - either Muslim or Tamil - will in future return a mixture of Tamil and Sinhala MPs. This will be the case in other traditional Tamil areas too where there had been a large influx of Sinhala people under the state-aided colonisation schemes. What does this mean in practical terms? The electoral system which is already weighted against the country's minorities, in that the 70 per cent

IN BRIEF

★ Mr. Cyril Gardiner, Chairman of Galle Face Hotel Colombo has donated Rs. 100,000 to the Sri Lanka Medical Library.

★ The European Economic Community (EEC) has conceded Sri Lanka a better garments export quota under the third Multi-Fibre agreement entered into recently.

★ Large number of Lankans are now seeking admission to Italy for domestic service there and between 4,000 to 5,000 visa applications await processing at the Italian Embassy in Colombo. About 500 to 600 Lankans have already been admitted to Italy in the last six months.

★ About 50 drug traffickers who were operating a ganja smuggling racket between Lanka, UK and Australia are now serving prison terms, R. Sunderalingam, DIG (Crimes) announced recently. Among those in foreign jails are

Lankan businessmen and playboys of the Colombo jet set!

★ The Lankan government made a grant of Rs. 1.5 million to assist the recently held Conference of World Buddhist Leaders and Scholars at Colombo.

★ "BADDEGAMA", the Sinhala film based on Leonard Woolf's novel, Village in the Jungle, has been bought by Channel Four, the British Television network. This is the first Sinhala film bought for nation-wide telecasting by a British TV company.

★ The Philatelic Bureau of Lanka issued a stamp on May 24 in commemoration of the 124th Birth Anniversary of Lord Baden Powell, the Founder of the Scout Movement.

★ A Rs. 507.5 million project to upgrade technical education is to be launched in 1983 with aid from the Asian Development Bank, Swedish International Development Authority and the United Nations Development Programme.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE TAMIL TIMES WILL CARRY SPECIAL FEATURES INCLUDING ARTICLES, SPEECHES AND COMMENTS CONCERNING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WORLD EELAM TAMIL CONVENTION HELD IN NEW YORK.

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Sinhala-Buddhist population presently enjoy nearly 85 percent representation in Parliament, will be undermined by a further reduction in the political representation of the minority Tamils and Muslims.

Any political party which claims to defend the interests of the Tamil speaking people ought to give the highest priority to ensure that they are not reduced to the position of a minority even in their traditional homelands.

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