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Found Guilty

The Sri Lanka Government today finds itself condemned and convicted by the International Commission of Jurists on charges of a very serious and grave kind. Gross violations of civil and political rights, breach of obligations under the International Covenant on human rights, arbitrary arrests and detentions incommunicado, illegal assaults and violence against detainees, undermining the rule of law and repression against the Tamil minority are some of many charges upon which the International Commission of Jurists have found the present authorities in Sri Lanka guilty.

The United National Party was elected to power by the people of Sri Lanka in July 1977 on a platform of democracy and removal of restrictions placed on the fundamental rights of the people by the previous government. Today it finds itself as a member of the same notorious league of despised regimes of Chile, Argentina, El Salvador et al.

No longer can the President of Sri Lanka accuse anyone of "talking through their hats", for that is what he did recently when a number of UK Members of Parliament sent telegrams and petitions against the discrimination of the minorities and repression by the security forces of the state.

No longer can the government delude itself by slandering those who give publicity to the true situation in Sri Lanka as a bunch of malcontents indulging in a malicious and merciless maligning campaign against the motherland.

No longer can the Government afford to indulge in the luxury of ostentatious indifference to the criticism levelled against its record on human and democratic rights and the treatment of the country's national minority.

The International Commission of Jurists, a reputed and respected body of international jurists and legal luminaries, has given its verdict. The government, which is caught up in the maelstrom of an economic crisis mostly of its own creation, will dismiss or disregard this verdict at its own peril, for it is depending for its day to day survival on foreign aid.

SRI LANKAN GOVT.

CONDEMNED BY ICJ

Violation of Sri Lanka's obligations under the International Covenant on civil and political rights, arbitrary arrests and prolonged detentions incommunicado, violence and illegal assaults upon detainees, actions to undermine respect for the rule of law and the growing repression by police and army in areas where Tamils predominantly live are among some of the many matters in respect of which the Government of Sri Lanka stand condemned by the highest body of jurists in the world, the International Commission of Jurists based in Geneva.

The International Commission of Jurists is believed to have been deeply concerned about the disturbing developments concerning human rights in Sri Lanka for a long time, but the immediate reason for the Commission to initiate an investigation was the complaints received in regard to the detention incommunicado of several Tamil youths for prolonged periods and their illtreatment while in detention.

Professor Virginia Leary of New York State University was commissioned by the ICJ to carry out an investigation into the complaints and the causes for the ethnic conflict between the two major communities in Sri Lanka, comprising 72 per cent Sinhala speaking and 21 per cent Tamil speaking people of a total population of nearly 15

million. Professor Leary would appear to have carried out a thorough and comprehensive investigation, the result of which is an 88 page report issued by the International Commission of Jurists.

The ICJ report equates the Sri Lanka Anti-Terrorism Act enacted by the present government with the South African Terrorism Act and finds that this piece of legislation violates Sri Lanka's obligations under the International Covenant on civil and political rights. The report says that this Act provides for unlimited periods of administrative detention, and such detention does in fact frequently occur in the course of which the detainees are subjected to violent and illegal assaults. The Act is neither justified nor effective to prevent the existing degree of violence.

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X'MAS & NEW YEAR MESSAGE

I am deeply grieved by the tragic events of recent months which have brought so much suffering and such irreparable losses as the destruction of the Jaffna (Sri Lanka) Library. At this Season when we remember that God gave us the gift of His own Son to take our sin upon Himself and to reconcile us to Him and to one another, it is my earnest prayer that a new spirit of forgiveness and understanding may prevail among all the people of Sri Lanka and that the year 1982 may go down in history as the year when strife was replaced by mutual respect and understanding.

*Bishop Leslie Newbiggin
Commissary of the Church
of South India in Gt. Britain*

POINT OF VIEW

Principle Or Pragmatism?

BY A.R. ASIRWATHAM

Professor Wilson in his article 'Options for the Tamil-Speaking People of Sri Lanka' (Tamil Times, November 1981) has achieved a rare distinction. He has deftly displayed the attributes of a Constitutional theorist inter-mixed with the characteristics of a politician - the latter being the capacity for tight-rope walking!

Hence throughout the whole article runs a thread of defence of the 'status quo' for the Tamils in Sri Lanka pinning the hopes of a nation in travail on the success of the District Development Councils.

Recent history, however, should belie his hopes. It cannot be said that the Tamils did not strive, for their part, to maintain and continue the unity of the country as a single entity. When the Soulbury proposals were accepted by the then State Council all the Tamil members of that Council (except G.G. Ponnambalam who was away in the U.K. at that time) voted for them. Only three members voted against - the two Indian members and Mr. W. Dahanayake.

In the ensuing General Elections of 1947 all those Tamil members who voted for the acceptance of the Soulbury Constitution - except Mr. V. Nalliah - were defeated including Mr. J.G. Rajakulendran in far away Bandarawela. G.G. Ponnambalam's All-Ceylon Tamil Congress swept the board in the Jaffna Peninsula and at Trincomalee. Yet, soon thereafter Ponnambalam offered 'responsive co-operation' and joined D.S. Senanayake's Cabinet.

Although this 'responsive co-operation' was indicative of the desire of the Tamils to sustain the unity of the country, such a desire was totally absent in the minds of the Sinhalese politicians. That

was why, in spite of Section 29 of the Soulbury Constitution, steps were taken legislatively and administratively to segregate the Tamils from the national political cake.

This resulted in the emergence of the Federal Party which held sway progressively in the Tamil speaking areas from 1956 onwards.

Even so, the Federal Party at various times offered co-operation to maximise the prospects of a rational solution with various governments - first to S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike through the B-C Pact in 1958; then to Srimavo Bandaranaike causing the second General Election in 1960 and finally to Dudley Senanayake in 1965 with Tiruchelvam in the Cabinet. On every such occasion the Tamils were outwitted and out manoeuvred.

A very pertinent constitutional question arises from the pattern of voting by the Tamils since 1947. They have consistently registered a protest against the manner in which they were being governed. How have the Sinhalese politicians responded to this democratic expression of view? By progressively escalating repression! In these circumstances does democracy mean anything for the Tamils?

So it was that the Tamils were driven (make no mistake about it, much against their natural inclination) to seek the only available course short of abject surrender - self-determination.

It was a logical decision; an inescapable decision in the circumstances and a democratic decision in favour of a democratic right. Implicit in that decision is also a question of a basic principle of human rights.

Self-determination, of course, is a drastic remedy and fraught with seemingly insuperable difficulties. Desperate situations call for desperate remedies and for this situation blame should be placed fairly and squarely at the feet of the short-sighted Sinhalese politicians. It is a tragedy that over the last four decades the Sinhalese people have not produced a single statesman with foresight and prespicacity and political courage. Hence the demand for self-determination was forced upon the Tamils.

Faced with the rising tide of the demand for separation coupled with the emergence of terrorism, which is a natural consequence, J.R. Jayewardene offers District Development Councils. (I am not an ardent advocate of terrorism but it would be irrational to condemn it for the sake of condemning it. Rather I would condemn the cause that gave rise to the emergence of terrorism.)

How genuine is this offer of District Development Councils? Political memories are notoriously short. It was Jayewardene who first introduced the 'Sinhala Only' resolution in the State Council in 1943; it was he who engineered the abandonment of the B-C Pact which provided for District Councils. The District Development Councils are a mild variation of the original District Councils proposed under the B-C Pact and now offered by the very man who then scuttled it.

Prof. Wilson rightly cites Montesquieu that it is not the letter of the law but the spirit of the law that matters. He could have usefully cited Alexander Pope as well, 'For forms of government let fools contend; what is administered best is best'.

Employing these two criteria,

what is the degree of credibility that could be attached to the District Development Councils? If Prof. Wilson's article is carefully read and if one could acquire a basic knowledge of the provisions of the District Development Councils Law it is not difficult to find the germ of self-destruction embedded if not enshrined in the statute itself.

Says Dr. Wilson, "The District Minister is the counterpart of the President; the Chairman of the D.D.C. is the equivalent of the Prime Minister....." What he has not told us is about the virtual power of total veto that resides on the District Minister and the wide area over which this power overhangs. By implication Dr. Wilson would appear to concede the inherent danger when he says, "DDCs can establish economic relationships with foreign countries with the permission of the central government," Will the central government or the District Minister approve of, say, the development of the Kankesanthurai harbour with aid from Soviet Union or China?

In stressing the possible flexibility and manoeuvrability Prof. Wilson is naively exhorting the Tamils to generate a degree of confidence in the exercise. The Tamils displayed such confidence on more than four occasions since 1947 and what did their confidence lead the Tamils to?

Though self-determination is a logical sequence to the events of the last thirty five years, Dr Wilson is perhaps right to consider the practicalities of it. Pragmatically speaking, I do concede that self-determination poses greater problems to the Tamils themselves than it would pose to the Sinhalese. Complexities are massive; possible loss of life, property and wealth are enormous. Shirk to face these problems head-on, the result would be slavery. It is this factor which makes a section of the Tamils to oppose self-determination.

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RACE

USHA PRASHAR, Director of the Runnymede Trust, says certain conclusions in the Scarman Report are 'grossly misleading' and must be corrected before they become 'official wisdom.'

DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM ARE STILL REALITIES

Lord Scarman's report of an inquiry into 'The Brixton Disorders' was eagerly awaited. It was anticipated that it would be a powerful document which would create an impact comparable to that of the disturbances. It was hoped that his analysis and recommendations both on policing and on 'the underlying causes' would provide some penetrating insight, a basis for a new beginning and hope.

The report, written with judicial restraint, falls short in a number of respects both on the issues of policing and social policy. I shall, however, confine myself to the part of the report which deals with social policy and social conditions.

Understandably, Lord Scarman treads carefully and is very prudent in the way he deals with the issues involved. Given the time he had and the complexity of the task before him, it would have been unrealistic to expect profound analysis of the social and economic context within which the disturbances took place.

Rightly, on the basis of the evidence before him, he firmly concludes that racial disadvantage is a fact of current British life and urgent action is needed. But his conclusions that 'It would be unfair to criticise Governments for lack of effort' and that 'institutional racism does not exist in Britain are grossly misleading. They need to be refuted emphatically before they become part of official wisdom.

On the question of Government effort, he states that funding has been made available on a substantial scale and cites the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Commission for Racial Equality as clear evidence of the will and the commitment of Parliament and Government to the cause of racial equality. The truth of the matter is that the Government efforts have been lamentable. At worst, effort has been lacking; at best, it has been feeble. The resources which have been

directed to alleviate acute disadvantages have been pitiful.

The reluctance of the present Government to reform Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1966 is inexcusable. Government's input as a major partner in partnership schemes has lacked focus and conviction. Government has ignored its own responsibilities as an employer

In June this year, under the pretext of taking measures to prevent increasing crime, an intensive and aggressive campaign called Swamp '81 was mounted by the police in Brixton [where a substantial section of black population of UK live], in the course of which thousands of black people, particularly the youth, were indiscriminately stopped, searched, questioned and arrested. This led to widespread riots by youths in Brixton, and later in other cities, resulting in pitched street battles between the police and the youth. Lord Scarman, a respected and distinguished Law Lord was appointed by the Home Secretary to inquire into the causes of the riots and make appropriate recommendations.

and as a contractor. It has failed to recognise the seriousness of the findings of the Tavistock report on race relations policy in the Civil Service. It has not given the Commission for Racial Equality full backing - the Home Office even opposed the commission's investigation into the immigration service.

On institutional racism Lord Scarman's conclusion is worrying. He quite emphatically dismisses the allegation, that 'institutional racism' exists. He argues that 'if an institutionally racist society means that it is a society which knowingly, as a matter of policy, discriminates against black people, then I reject the allegation.'

His argument fails to take cognisance of the fact that Britain does knowingly, as a matter of policy, discriminate against black people in immigration and that recent Nationality legislation gives legal expression to racism.

Racial disadvantage has as its starting point the system of immigration control. The immigration laws define blacks as a problem, a problem which should be contained by controlling numbers. If the official view of the black community is a

negative one, then it is fallacious to conclude that institutionalised racism does not exist and is not a major contributory factor to racial disadvantage.

Even on policing Lord Scarman dismisses the allegation of racism and says that 'criticism lies elsewhere - in errors of judgment, in a lack of imagination and flexibility, not in deliberate bias or prejudice.' It may well be so.

But the organisations (police and others) where such decisions and judgments are made are predominantly white. Black people are absent from key decision making processes. Prejudices and attitudes of those in power, therefore,

become an integral part of the problem. Whether this happens deliberately or otherwise, the effect is the same. It is this context which determines the position of black communities in society. This fundamental point is missed in the report.

Despite any reservations about Lord Scarman's conclusions on Government effort and institutionalised racism, his forceful comment that the attack on racial disadvantage must be more direct and that a policy of positive discrimination may be inevitable, if this is to happen, is an important one.

I believe the term 'positive discrimination' is unfortunate and misleading. It is a pity that in his final analysis Lord Scarman uses the term in this way. Elsewhere in the report he is quite clear what he means and uses the term 'positive action.'

He says: 'Given the special problems of the ethnic minorities, exposed in evidence, justice requires that special programmes should be adopted in areas of acute deprivation. Certainly special programmes for ethnic minority groups

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FOREIGN DOCTORS IN SRI LANKA

While hundreds of well qualified Sri Lankan doctors are leaving the country because of inadequate remuneration for their services, foreign doctors, mainly from Philippines, Burma and India have been admitted into the country at very high salaries, almost five to six times the salary paid to indigenous doctors, to serve in the country's hospitals.

Approximately 300 foreign doctors are presently serving in the country under the UN Volunteer Scheme now in operation. In terms of the contract with the Burmese government, no Burmese doctor could be on contract with Sri Lanka for more than two years. New batches of Burmese doctors have to be brought in to fill vacancies arising from the expiration of previous contracts.

The peripheral units throughout the country are served mostly by these foreign doctors. It is understood that their total lack of facility in either Sinhala or Tamil language has caused a problem of communication between the doctors on the one hand and the patients.

APPOINTMENT LETTERS IN SINHALA ONLY

The Government of Sri Lanka claims that the Tamil Language enjoys the position of a national language under the Constitution and as a language of administration in the predominantly Tamil speaking areas of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The fraudulent nature of this claim in actual practice is demonstrated by the fact that six Tamils who were appointed as Co-operative Inspectors in the Jaffna District have received their appointment letters in Sinhala language only.

LOANS AND FURTHER LOANS FROM OPEC

The OPEC Fund has agreed to give a loan of 11 million US dollars for the Mahaveli Power Transmission Project in Sri Lanka. The loan is expected to be interest free except for a 0.75 per cent service charge payable over 20 years.

Since 1977, the OPEC Fund for International Development has granted to Sri Lanka 3.15 million US dollars for the Bowatenne Power Project, 6 million US dollars for a Rural Electrification Project, 5 million US dollars for the

Integrated Tea Development Project and 9 million US dollars as balance of payments support making a total of 23.15 million dollars.

CONFERENCE ON HINDUISM

The First International Conference on Hinduism to be held in Colombo, Sri Lanka is scheduled for January 22, 1982. It will be a five day Conference which will be inaugurated by the Sri Lanka President, Mr. J.R. Jayawardene.

The Action Committee in charge of organising the Conference is headed by Mr. Lakshmana Iyer, a former Director of Education attached to the Sri Lanka Minister of Education.

CURRENCY SWINDLE

A group of youths who were leaving Sri Lanka to take up employment in Singapore were found to be allegedly in possession of passports containing false currency endorsements to the effect that they had been issued with 1000 dollars, but they were in fact not taking any foreign currency with them. The questioning of the youths concerned by the CID led to the arrest of the man who arranged for the group's travel.

HUNDREDS CHARGED FOR POSSESSION OF FALSE PASSPORTS

Over a hundred cases have been filed by the Sri Lanka Police during the past few weeks against persons who were alleged to have been in possession of false passports. Investigations are continuing against another 300 suspected persons. These investigations are being jointly undertaken by the CID and immigration officials.

It is reported that in several instances, the persons holding false passports had not been charged and were freed because investigations had revealed that unsuspecting villagers and innocent women seeking jobs in the Middle East had fallen victims to touts who haunt the premises of the Department of Emigration in Colombo and offer 'passports' at a price.

Although the police discovered a 'factory' involved in the production of

false passports in Colombo recently, it is said that false passports are still available at a price estimated to, be several thousands of rupees.

Emergency Extended For Fourth Month

The state of emergency declared in Sri Lanka on August 17 following the widespread violence directed against the Tamil minority was extended for the fourth successive month by the Sri Lanka Parliament on November 17, 1981.

While the United National Party (UNP) MPs voted for the resolution extending the emergency, 5 MPs belonging to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and the sole Communist Party MP voted against it. The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) MPs abstained.

The Leader of the Opposition, Mr. A Amirthalingam, MP said that the TULF found itself in a dilemma on the question of the extension of the emergency. The TULF appreciated the concern of the government to maintain law and order for it was its primary responsibility to protect the lives and property of the people from lawless elements from whichever side they might come. But a government armed with emergency powers was dangerous and doubly so for opposition political parties whose freedoms were curbed under conditions of emergency. Moreover an extended emergency was dangerous for minorities such as the Tamils because the security services tended to abuse the additional powers and commit excesses.

INCREASE IN MINOR CROPS EXPORT

According to the Agricultural Development and Research Ministry of Sri Lanka, the export of minor agricultural crops increased by 76.9 per cent in the first 6 months of this year compared with the corresponding period for 1980.

During the first six months of 1980, the export of minor agricultural produce accounted for Rs. 342.3 million, but during the first six months of this year, the country's export income amounted to Rs. 605 million. Substantial rise in the export of gingelly, ground nuts, pepper and black gram played a major part in the increase of the total exports.

Wealth and Welfare

Godfrey Gunatilleke, Director of Sri Lanka's Marga Institute for Development Studies and one of the Third World's most respected academics, reviews his nation's past achievements, present policies and future prospects for abolishing absolute poverty.

Meeting basic needs - currently the most fashionable of slogans - has been the cornerstone of government policy in Sri Lanka for more than three decades. Initiated under colonial rule and intensified since Independence, the policies of free health, free education and subsidised food were designed not only to satisfy immediate human needs, but also to create the future 'human capital' - a literate, healthy, well-fed population - which would fuel economic growth and eventually lift the nation out of poverty.

By any historical standards, the increases in human well-being brought about by these policies are remarkable. Public health services have brought the infant mortality rate down from 141 in 1946 to 37 today. Free education has seen the proportion of children starting school rise from under half to almost all, resulting in an adult literacy rate which is one of the highest in Asia. Meanwhile, subsidised food has, for most of that 30 year period, kept the price of basics - like rice, dhal, dried fish and tinned milk - relatively stable and within reach of most of the people.

Underlying these measurable changes was a growing acceptance of a benevolent and paternal role for the State. In contrast to the experience of many Third World Nations, the old and the new seemed to be compatible in Sri Lanka, with the concept of the modern welfare state blending smoothly into a Buddhist culture which emphasised 'dhana' (giving and sharing) and 'metta' (compassion). Together, these two undercurrents seemed to have produced a political elite responsive to the need for some degree of equality.

But social change at this scale and speed was, perhaps, bound to encounter turbulence. And by the early 60s it was already clear that something was going wrong. Economic productivity was failing to match social progress and the resulting tensions between expectations aroused and opportunities available eventually exploded in the insurrection of 1971.

Free education, the rapid growth of government activity and a burgeoning

bureaucracy had created a generation of young people with their sights fixed firmly on the rewards and securities of a government job. But neither a growing government nor a flagging economy could absorb a rising generation whose attitudes, skills and expectations were out of step with real job opportunities. Unemployment rocketed to over 20% and to even higher levels among the 15 to 24 year olds.

There was also another way in which Sri Lanka fell victim to its own achievements. The death rate had begun its dramatic fall in 1946 whilst the subsequent fall in the birth rate did not get under way until the early 60s. And in the time-lag between these two trends, rapid population increase strained the range of welfare services and ensured that increases in quantity left little room for improvements in quality. Government expenditure per head on social services, for example, more than doubled in the 50s but remained virtually static in the 60s.

At the same time, the country has been confronted by a stubborn hard-core of poverty-related problems which refused to bow under the weight of government spending. The infant mortality rate, which has been dramatically lowered from over 150 to 52 by 1961, had refused to go below 45 even by 1975. In the 1 to 4 year old group also, the death rate remained high and nutritional levels remained low. Six per cent of Sri Lanka's pre-school children were estimated to be acutely malnourished in 1976 - and almost one third of all pre-school children were in some degree suffering from an inadequate diet.

When such problems were susceptible to direct interventions like immunization campaigns and school meals, the government, it seemed, was capable of getting results. But where the solution depended upon action at the deeper and less accessible level of poverty and powerlessness, the problems remained.

Decentralised action by people and communities could perhaps have made more headway against the remaining 'hard-core' problems, but the delivery of development from the top down had also

tended to create a dependence among its recipients and reduce the capacity of the poor to participate in the process of improving their own circumstances.

Sustained economic growth leading to more jobs and higher incomes might also have maintained the momentum of social progress. But the economy refused to co-operate in this plan. The terms of trade began to drift steadily against Sri Lanka and export earnings could not meet import demands. Unemployment continued to increase.

The tensions arising from all these forces were suppressed but not resolved after the insurrection of 1971. And as the 70s wore on economic problems intensified with the tripling of oil and food prices in the international marketplace on which Sri Lanka had become increasingly dependent. To make matters worse, a serious drought began to strangle domestic food production and between 1973 and 1975 the infant mortality rate actually began to creep up again as the crisis touched the most vulnerable group of all.

This combination of pressures was enough to force out of office the broad coalition of the left, headed by Mrs Sirima Bandaranaike, and in 1977 the present UNP government of J.R. Jayawardene came to power with a mandate to open up the economy, liberate market forces and substitute incentive for dependency.

Without further ado, the government effectively devalued the rupee by 50%, relaxed exchange controls to open the gates to more imports and abolished many of the subsidies which had been protecting the consumer from the full force of international price changes. The target was an increase in economic growth to 5.7% and a reduction in unemployment from 24% (the 1973 figure) to 7.2% by 1985. Meanwhile only those households with a monthly income below 300 Rupees would be entitled to food subsidies (see box).

Internationally these measures were widely regarded as a swing away from 'the welfare state which Sri Lanka can no longer afford'. But, in fact, the main pillars of the welfare system - free health and education see copy remained unshaken. Indeed, free education was made more of a reality by the government's decision to

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WEALTH AND WELFARE

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provide text books free. Other welfare programmes - for example, the free supply of nutritional supplements to pregnant and lactating women and to malnourished children - were stepped up to a point where there are now 500,000 beneficiaries.

Since 1977 the economy has shown some signs of improvement. Economic growth ran at a healthy 6.8% a year in the 1978-80 period - raising per capita incomes by 15% over the three years, even when inflation is taken into account.

But inflation, now running at over 20%, does not often treat rich and poor alike. Usually it means that the former have to cut back on luxuries whilst the latter cut back on necessities.

To some extent this may have happened. But the remittances of thousands of Sri Lankans working in the Middle East, the jobs being created by the massive Mahaweli Project and the rising incomes in agriculture, fisheries and the small industries of the informal sector have all helped to deaden the impact of inflation on large numbers of the poor.

At the same time, the wages of 500,000 government workers - mostly the middle and lower middle classes - have been virtually frozen. From the beginnings of 1977 to the end of 1980, private sector wages have risen by over 500% whilst public sector pay has fallen by 2% in real terms.

Reversing a trend, wage rises in white collar jobs generally have risen more slowly than for skilled and unskilled manual work. The effect on the attitudes and aspirations of Sri Lanka's young school leavers remains to be seen. In 1980, youth unemployment was still running at around 14%.

Overall, real incomes seem to be rising, even for the poorest half of the population. It would therefore appear that, despite recent changes in economic policy, threats to the welfare state and an overall increase in inequalities, there has been no real decline in people's ability to meet their basic needs.

Social indicators tend to confirm this conclusion. Crude death rates have dropped below 7 for the first time (to 6.4 in 1980) and infant mortality has taken another sharp fall from 42 in 1977

to 37 in 1980 - though this may in part be due to the start being made on bringing the tea estate workers within the scope of national welfare services.

Lees optimistically, recent government statements are increasingly hinting at further and deeper cuts in welfare spending. If those hints become hard facts, then the poorest groups will slip back before they have had a chance to increase their own earning capacity and lift themselves out of poverty. Between paternalism and neglect, the opportunity for self-reliant improvement may be lost.

Looking to the future, Sri Lanka's achievements and present progress suggest that the nation can sustain a high rate of economic growth - 5% a year or more - and reach a GDP of approximately 150 billion Rupees by the year 2000, almost trebling the present figure. Although dependent on such international variables as the terms of trade and the levels of aid, as well as on the wisdom of national decision-taking, such a target is by no means impossible.

If, over the same period of time, we assume that the birth rate continues to decline by an annual average of 0.5 per 1000 over the next two decades - and that the crude death rate stabilises at around 6 - then the total population of Sri Lanka by the end of the century will fall just short of 20 million. And by that time the annual absolute number of births would be in decline - easing the pressure on schools and other services

and allowing any increases in resources to be used for improving the quality of education and for attacking any remaining specific problems, such as pre-school nutrition or non-enrolment and high school drop-out rates among the poorest groups.

These two projections, for the growth of the economy and of the population, suggest an annual per capita income of 7750 Rupees (in 1979 prices) by the end of the century. The fate of the poorest quarter of Sri Lanka's population, however, also depends on what happens to equity and income distribution over that same period. If income distribution patterns become any worse than today, then it could take until the year 2000 itself before the poorest groups rise above the poverty line and are able to meet their basic needs.

All of these projections are tentative and exploratory. But it is evident that if economic growth rates drop below 5% a year, then the hard core of poverty in Sri Lanka will persist to the year 2000 and beyond. If, on the other hand, economic growth is sustained and if the incomes of the poorest quarter are made to rise more rapidly than for the richest three-quarters, then absolute poverty could be a thing of the past by the end of the 1980s. In the meantime, effective welfare policies will be needed to sustain the poorest groups.

A sensible development strategy should be able to sustain this balance of objectives. And the next 10 years could and should see a further substantial drop in infant mortality to about 25 per 1000, the elimination of malnutrition, and at least a full 4 years of primary school education for all Sri Lanka's children.

A THOUGHTFUL AND USEFUL

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR PRESENT

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JAFFNA PUBLIC LIBRARY



Front elevation of the Jaffna Public Library before it was burnt.

The wanton destruction of the Jaffna public Library - a magnificent building that contained a collection of 97,000 books and rare manuscripts is perhaps the most shamefully tragic event in the island's history. It is all the more tragic in that it was deliberately done by the custodians of law and order who plunged the city in arson and assault during the first week of June.

Jaffna, it is well known enjoys the reputation of being the intellectual and spiritual centre for the Tamils of Ceylon; thanks to an illustrious line of savants, statesmen and godmen. The names of Srila Sri Arumuga Navalar, Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Fr. Gnanapragasar, Sir Ponnambalam Brothers, Leaders of Tamil Nationalism, G.G. Ponnambalam and Thanthai S.J. V. Chelvanayakam, and last but not least Ven'ble Siva Yoga Swamigal stand out among a huge host of immortals.

The Jaffna Pblc Library on its 50 years of existence attained a stature worthy of this tradition. It is with reverence and gratitude that people remember stalwarts like K.N. Chellappa who mooted the idea effectively, the first Mayor of Jaffna, Sam A. Sabapathy who ventured on the building project with the Council's approval. Fr. T.M.F. Long who sailed the high seas to collect funds, and institutions like the Asia Foundation and the Indian High Commission which contributed substantially to fulfil the project.

While we deplore with the civilised world this barbarous act of cultural assassination, we feel we should not lose time in restoring this symbol of our peerless heritage. We are therefore launching an appeal for funds from friends and well-wishers,



The Library with 95,000 Books reduced to ashes

MAYOR'S APPEAL

and we are confident you are in sympathy with our efforts.

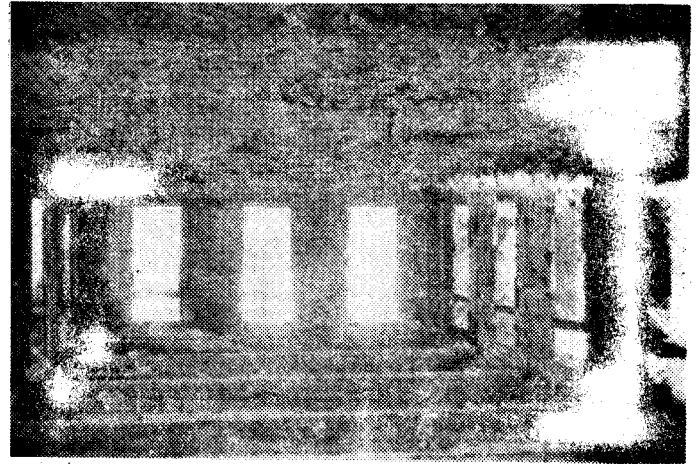
'Adversity sees miracles' in the words of Shakespeare; and we are emboldened to reconstruct a modern library, with better amenities and more spacious accommodation while conforming to the original plan in its essentials.

We expect that you will want to contribute the maximum you could spare for a worthy cause like this that is estimated to cost approximately Fifteen Million rupees.

The Jaffna Public Library Trust Fund Account No. 2893 has been opened in Bank of Ceylon, Jaffna, and we shall be grateful if you can send your contribution direct to the Bank, with advise to us.

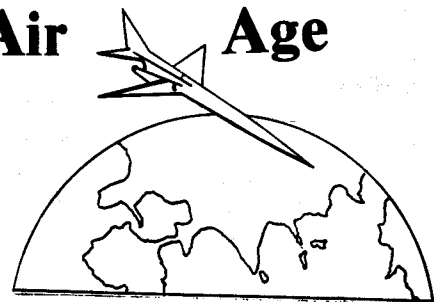
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Yours sincerely,
R. Visuvanathan
Mayor, Jaffna.



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Historical

TAMILS IN SOUTH EAST

The historical geography of the Tamil country, with its wide coastline in the east and in the west, its numerous havens and sheltered inlets, its natural and manufactured products vendible in world markets and its strategic location on the highway of east-west commerce resulted in the development from very early times of a maritime and commercial tradition as an intrinsic part of Tamil society. In the very earliest evidence reflecting the society and civilization of the Tamils - the literature of the Sangam period - the role of trade and of traders loomed large in many of the regions of the Tamil country. There is indication of a flourishing seaborne trade from a number of ports of the Coromandel (a western corruption of Cholamandalam) coast and the Malayalam coast, and of communities engaged in seafaring and commerce.

The evidence of trade with west Asia and the Mediterranean world is clear and unmistakable from the first century B.C. Though not equally positive, evidence of trade eastwards, to the Malay Peninsula, Thailand, Burma and even to China begins to appear from about the first Century A.D. Subsequently this evidence strengthens and by the end of the Sangam period and the period of the twin epics it is clear that Tamil seafarers had opened up a regular commerce with the countries of Southeast Asia.

UNITY UNDER PALLAVS

The sailings to Southeast Asia appear to have mainly departed from the ports of the Coromandel coast. With the unification of the Tamil country under the Pallavas, this eastern coast developed rapidly into major nuclear centres of agricultural and handicraft production. The produce of these areas and the spices of the Malayalam coast seem to have been shipped by these Tamil traders. In return they brought back other aromatic spices to be found in those regions, various goods originating from China and, most importantly, gold and precious stones. The ports of departure extended northwards into the Telugu country, where under the Satavahanas a number of important ports of foreign trade developed.

These ships would generally set sail after October to take advantage of the

Dr. S. ARASARATNAM, a former Senior Lecturer at the University of Ceylon and regarded as eminent historian, is now Professor of History in the University of New England, Australia.

Part II of this article will appear in our January 1 1982 issue.

northeast monsoon in the direction of the Nicobar Islands from where they headed for the relatively protected seas east of Sumatra. There seemed to have been a number of places on the western coast of the Malay peninsula and southern Thailand where these ships landed. These were major places of trade at various times and also served as transit points across the peninsula and the isthmus to the Gulf of Siam and onward to Kambuja, Champa and beyond. A popular area of call for long periods was the Kedah region where sailors made landfall using the Kedah Peak visible far out at sea as a landmark. Others sailed further north towards the narrow Isthmus of Kra where the port of Takua Pa has revealed evidence of Indian settlement. Traders from the Coromandel Coast must also have sailed through the Straits of Malacca to east Sumatran and Javanese ports. To the north there seems every evidence that traders from the Telugu and Tamil coasts sailed to different parts of the Burmese coast from the early years of the Christian era.

The trade seems to have picked up in the period of the Pallava Empire and then carried on an ever-increasing scale, under the Cholas and later the Vijayanagar Empire. This expansion of the trade to Southeast Asia was an aspect of the economic growth and increasing productivity and prosperity resulting from the creation of large political units in the Tamil country. In the sphere of trade, this expansion is seen in the growth of large combinations of merchants operating in corporate organizations centred in large market towns of South India. These trading corporations begin to feature in Southeast Asian trade from the 9th century onwards. It is not surprising that the larger organizations among them have left inscriptional evidence in Malaya, Burma, Sumatra and Java of their presence there in trade settlements. The corporations that are thus definitely known to have traded with Southeast Asia are **Manikramam**, **Nanadesi**, **Viravalanjijyar** and **Thisaiyayirattu-Ainnurruvar**.

MERCHANT SETTLEMENTS

The seasonal nature of the sailing movements and the expanding character of the operations led to the creation of what started off as merchant settlements in these various Southeast Asian centres of trade. Archaeological evidence has unmistakably identified these settlements where Indian traders would have lived, awaiting the change of monsoon, or as agents left behind by the large and powerful corporations to conduct business in the area. We have some idea of the nature of such a settlement in the southern Thai port of Takua Pa from excavated remains and a Tamil inscription of the middle of the 9th century. Here was a settlement of Tamil merchants in the reign of the Pallava king Nandivarman the Third (c.A.D. 844-866). It would appear that the Manikramam had established this settlement, which possessed its own regiment, with its own temple and tank and lived as a self-contained colony. It can be assumed that this would have been the pattern of many Indian trade settlements in Southeast Asia.

CHOLA ASCENDENCY

With the ascendancy of the Cholas in south India, Tamil maritime trade and interest in Southeast Asia picked up considerably. Sailings were now more frequent and regular, and a wider area appears to have been covered. For the first time maritime trade became an instrument of royal policy and Chola navies began to make their power felt in the waters across the Bay of Bengal. During this period, a maritime power with control over trade and trade routes had risen in the Malay/Indonesian archipelago, the Sri Vijayan Empire. There was much contact and intercourse between Tamils and the areas controlled by this empire. These relations soon extended to the political and cultural sphere. Just as Tamil traders from the Coromandel Coast traded in Sri Vijayan ports, Indonesian traders from Sumatra and Java frequented Chola ports, particularly the port of Nagapatnam.

ASIA AND FAR EAST

PART I

Settlements and facilities similar to those held by Indians in Southeast Asia were provided for these Indonesians along the Coromandel Coast.

Southeast Asian trade and the trade through the Straits of Malacca eastwards to China had become so much a part of Chola interest that soon the Cholas began to deploy their navy in these waters. The Cholas desired to keep the trade to Southeast Asia and China free and open for their subjects. The expansion of the Sri Vijayan maritime empire across the Malacca Straits into the major trading ports of the Malay peninsula gave this empire a commanding position over the trade routes of the region. It seems that the empire used this position to its advantage which would have had adverse effects on the traders of the Chola empire who traded in these parts. This seems to have led to a situation of conflict which resulted in a major invasion of the Sri Vijayan empire by the Chola emperor Rajendra I in 1025 A.D. This expedition, which was very successful, is recorded in a contemporary inscription of the reign of Rajendra Chola. The inscription records that the Chola navy attacked a number of Sri Vijayan ports, including the capital city of Sri Vijaya (Palembang) and captured the king Sangrama-Vijayottungavarman. The places mentioned are situated on the Sumatra coast, the Malay coast and in south Thailand. Much booty was taken from these places by the victorious navy. This expedition would have resulted in a temporary subjection of the Sri Vijayan ruler to the Cholas, for how long we are not certain. It would certainly have resulted in opening the Malacca straits to Chola traders who were then expanding their trade eastwards to the Indo-Chinese peninsula and even to the Chinese empire.

CHOLA EXPEDITION

Chola relations with the Sri Vijayan kingdom and interest in these ports continued in the 11th and 12th centuries. In 1068 there was another expedition by the Chola emperor, Virarajendra, this time to Kedah which he claimed to have conquered on behalf of a king who had sought his protection. It seems that the Cholas were taking an active interest in the politics of the region. There is a contemporary Tamil inscription of a

Tamil mercantile corporation in Sumatra, showing that commercial activity and political relations were going hand-in-hand during this period. The contact was not a one-way contact but was bilateral. At this time Indonesian traders were frequenting the Chola ports of Coromandel. The Chola monarchs made grants to a Buddhist temple near Nagapatnam established to serve these Indonesian traders.

Though Chinese products have been known and were available in south India from very early times and Indian exports reached China, it is not known when direct trade between ports of Tamil Nadu and China began. Some would assert, on the basis of references in Chinese annals, that this trade was as early as the first century A.D. Tamil centres of Buddhism were known to Chinese Buddhist scholars and the increase of trade to Southeast Asia seems to have led to greater direct contact. There is evidence of this direct trade from the Sung dynasty onwards. From this period, south India becomes well-known to Chinese annalists who provide descriptions of the country, its people, its trade, ports and trade routes. The port of Nagapatnam seems to have been the port of departure for this China trade as well as the port to which Chinese traders arrived. There are traces of a Chinese settlement in that port. The end of the 10th century saw the rise of the Sung dynasty in China under which the country was unified. The period coincided with the expansion of the Chola empire in South India and, as seen above, the extension of its interests into Southeast Asia. The desire to cultivate the existing trade relations and to build up diplomatic contact seems to have persuaded the Chola Emperor Rajanaja I (referred to in the Chinese annals as King Locha-Locha) to send an envoy to the Sung Emperor in 1012 A.D. The envoy Samudra arrived in the Chinese capital in 1015 A.D. with presents and was received by the Emperor. The History of the Sung Dynasty records in detail the voyage of this envoy 'Soli Samudra', Samudra died on his return journey. Subsequently trade delegations or envoys were sent in 1033 A.D. by Rajendra I and another in 1077 A.D. Direct trade between India and China increased and later Chinese accounts talk of the port of Calicut, which in the 13th century had risen to a major port of overseas trade.

CULTURAL TRANSMISSION

In the wake of trade there developed cultural contact and a process of cultural transmission of elements of Indian culture in many regions of Southeast Asia. This process of cultural transmission originated from a number of regions of India: Tamil Nadu, Bengal, Kalinga and Orissa. It is therefore difficult to separate the contribution of the Tamils to this process. Almost all our authorities on the study of Indian culture in Southeast Asia are agreed, however, that the Tamil country played a major role in the transmission of this culture - whether it be through Sanskrit learning, Buddhist missionary teaching, Hindu architecture and iconography, spread of the written word or other aspects of Indian culture.

One of the major areas of contribution was through the introduction of writing. The script of a number of Southeast Asian languages is based on original south Indian scripts which were first transmitted in these parts. Some of the first inscriptions in the Malay peninsula - such as for example the Buddhist prayer inscribed by a traveller in Bukit Meriam in Kedah - was in a Pallava Grantha script, as were others in Thailand and the Indo-Chinese peninsula.

DRAVIDIAN INFLUENCE

Similarly, evidence from the plastic arts shows a good deal of the influence emanating from Dravidian India. The earliest temple structures excavated in the Kedah region of the Malay peninsula show distinct Pallava influences. Some of these structures and those of Kambuja and Champa have clear affinity to the monolithic temples of Mamallapuram. Some of the sculpture is also seen to be of a clearly Pallava style and these have been found in many sites in the region. This evidence shows the Pallavas as one of the major influences in the transmission of Indian culture in Southeast Asia. The great flowering of culture under the Pallavas in south India appears to have left its mark in Southeast Asia through the merchants and colonists who migrated to various parts of Southeast Asia. The origin myth of one of the earliest Indianized kingdoms of the region, the kingdom of Funan, is very similar to the myth relating to the founding of the Pallava kingdom. South

(Contd. on page 13)

LETTERS

TIMELY ISSUE

We thank you sincerely for the first issue of your Tamil Times sent to us. It has come to us at a time when we most need it. Your publication has given us a full and factual insight into what is happening to Tamils in Sri Lanka. May your publication grow from strength to strength with every issue.

*N. Ariaratnam
Lusaka.*

WHAT ABOUT NON-TAMILS INTERESTED IN TAMIL AFFAIRS?

Many thanks for sending us the Tamil Times and congratulations on the first issue. It is hard hitting on the most urgent issue facing the Tamils at present, an issue which was doubtless not much covered by the press in UK, and barely at all here in Malaysia, where the press is very wary of reporting racial conflict anywhere.

Although it is fair enough that the first issue should deal with the situation in Sri Lanka, I wonder if this is the sole raison d'être for publishing the Tamil Times. The editorial seems to suggest it is, with references to 'our' country. Is it printed solely by and for Sri Lankan Tamils? The editors do indeed say that they hope to publish news of interest to other Sri Lankans. But what about other Tamils, or non-Tamils interested in Tamil affairs? If it is primarily for Sri Lankans, perhaps that should be indicated in the paper's title. Personally I would hope that a paper with the title Tamil Times

would deal with many subjects of interest to Tamils the world over; political, of course, and as the editorial wisely states, not tied to any party; but also social, cultural and literary subjects. How about the discrimination against Harijans in Tamil Nadu for one? They have suffered violence almost as great as Sri Lankan Tamils, and at the hands of other Tamils too. Book reviews, articles on Tamil writers, the theory of Bharathanatyam, the history of Tamil emigration and so on; there is plenty of interest if you can get the writers.

Although it is not easy to see how the crisis in Sri Lanka can be resolved, once the situation settles down the demand for a paper solely reporting that situation will, fall off. I think there is a need, and I hope a market, for a serious paper in English devoted to the broad spectrum of Tamil life and culture. It would certainly be of interest to non-Tamils like myself who are interested in Tamil affairs. I have recorded my thoughts in case you want to pass them as one reader's reaction to the first number. I wish you success and enclose my subscription.

*John Palim
Malaysia.*

TAMIL TIMES AS CENTRAL NEWS MEDIA

Congratulations for venturing into a much needed news medium for Tamils living all over the World! If only you could co-ordinate the efforts of the various Tamil organisations functioning in most western countries and make the Tamil Times the central news medium for all Tamils living abroad you could claim to have achieved a lot.

Ensure a systematic way of dealing with all your subscribers by sending the paper regularly, informing in advance when the subscriptions are due and acknowledging all correspondence. This, I am compelled to mention, as one of the earlier magazines which originated in the UK appeared and disappeared and we were all very disappointed.

In my own way I am already giving much publicity to others about your paper and you may expect many subscribers very soon. You may also expect news, views and articles from this end.

*R. Ganesharatnam, M.I. Struct. E.,
Ibadan,
Nigeria.*

A TIMELY ARRIVAL

I was delighted to see the publication of the Tamil Times for several reasons; its format, its quality, the purpose and the need it is fulfilling. At a recent all-day Tamil symposium conducted in New York focusing on Tamil problems as one of the prime and urgent necessities, we were discussing the need for a high quality international magazine for Tamils. In fact, a few of us decided to undertake the responsibility to start publishing one. The timely arrival of Tamil Times has not only made such an effort unnecessary but also fulfils the existing need.

I have already distributed the magazine to several people and have made several phone calls urging people to subscribe.

*S.E. Moorthy, M.D.
California
U.S.A.*

LONDON TAMIL SCHOOLS

LONDON THIRUVALLUVAR TAMIL SCHOOL

Classes are held on Saturdays 10.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. at Plashet Girls School, Plashet Grove, London E.6. Particulars from:

S. Devadas (01-552 8124)
91 Wakefield St., London E.6.

**** **** ****

WEST LONDON TAMIL SCHOOL

Classes are held on Saturdays 10 a.m. to 12 noon at Stanhope School, Mansell Road, Greenford, Middlesex. Instruc-

tions in Tamil Language, Carnatic Music, Bharata Natyam and Veena are provided. Particulars from:

S. Ganeson (01-845 7900)
59 Summit Road, Northolt,
Middlesex.

WIMBLEDON SCHOOL

Classes are held on Saturdays, 2-6 p.m. at the Wimbledon Community Centre, St. George's Road, S.W.19. Instructions in Tamil language, Carnatic Music, Bharata Natyam and Mirudangam are provided. Particulars may be obtained from:

S. Thiruchelvam (01-542 5140)
69 Toynbee Road, London S.W.20.

**** **** ****

SRI LANKAN LAWYER

HONOURED

Dr. C.F. Amerasinghe, M.A., LL.B.Ph.D., LL.D.(Cantab), LL.M. (Harvard), Ph.D.(Ceylon) has been conferred an exceptional honour by being elected to the Institute of International Law, the most respected and select body of international lawyers.

He is the first Sri Lankan to be so selected and was elected on the first occasion on which his name was proposed. The election represents a mark of recognition of his outstanding contribution to international law.

TAMIL ISSUE BEFORE AUSTRALIAN SENATE

Australian Senator Kilgariff recently presented a petition to the country's Senate urging the Federal Government of Australia to raise the problem of human rights of the Tamils of Sri Lanka.

The following is the full text of the petition:-

The Clerk - A petition has been lodged for presentation as follows:

HUMAN RIGHTS IN SRI LANKA

To the Honourable the President and Members of the Senate in Parliament assembled. The petition of the undersigned respectfully showeth:

When Imperial Britain left the shores of Ceylon, she introduced the Soulbury Constitution in 1948 which handed over parliamentary power almost exclusively to the majority Sinhalese community. The Sinhalese leadership interpreted and implemented its political power by such acts as:

1. Disenfranchising nearly one million Tamils in 1948.
2. Declaring Sinhalese as the ONLY official language of the country in 1956, Thus disadvantaging the Tamil speaking population in employment, education and administrative matters.
3. Demanding Tamil children be educated in Sinhalese for employment in government sector.
4. Government sponsored colonisation of traditional Tamil districts, with the eventual objective of depriving Tamil representation of those areas in the legislative assembly. This has happened in areas where colonisation has taken place in the Eastern Province.
5. Discrimination against the development of Tamil areas by channelling the foreign assistance schemes almost entirely to develop Sinhalese districts. A study of the developmental projects utilising Australian aid would be revealing.
6. A more important aspect of such discriminatory policies was the well planned and government encouraged attempts at the physical elimination of the Tamil people by acts of terrorism, plunder, rape and murder at regular intervals. Communal riots occurred in 1956; 1958; 1961; 1966; 1972; 1977; 1981.

During May and June 1981 the government security forces unleashed violence in the Tamil district of Jaffna, killing innocent people, set ablaze shops, homes and public library with historic Tamil documents, Tamil bookshops, newspaper offices and printery, presumably in an attempt to destroy Tamil identity and culture.

Your petitioners most humbly pray that the Scenate, in Parliament assembled, should:

Urge the Federal Government of Australia to raise the problem of human rights of the Tamils of Sri Lanka as a matter for consideration at the forthcoming conference of the Commonwealth Heads of Government.

And your petitioners in duty bound will every pray.

by Senator Kilgariff.
Petition received.

MP AND HIS 'BRIBERY MANSION'

Dr. A.M. Jalaldeen, the United National Party (UNP) Member of Parliament for Pottuvil, Sri Lanka is facing several allegations of bribery and corruption before a Presidential Commission. The inquiry into these allegations commenced recently before a Commission comprising three Supreme Court Judges.

Witnesses including very close relations of Dr. Jalaldeen gave evidence before the Commission in respect of several instances of bribery and acts of serious financial misdemeanour on the part of the MP. The brother-in-law of the MP told the Commission that the MP's newly built house was described by the people as 'Bribery Mansion'. Among other matters, witnesses who gave evidence before the Commission testified to the following:

* * Out of the donation of Rs. 700,000 from Saudi Arabia for the restoration of the Addalaichenai Mosque, the MP requested and was given a Rs. 10,000 worth refrigerator which was taken in a procession with about 100 people participating, to the MP's new house.

* * The MP did not have much income before his election as MP. He did not have a house to live in at the time of election in 1977. But in 1979 after becoming MP, he bought a land worth Rs. 42,000, demolished the old house on it and built a new one approximately worth Rs. 300,000.

* * The invitation for the housewarming party of the MP's new house was all

arranged and spent for by 'supporters'. 'Presents' like refrigerators, clocks, furniture sets, musical equipment and other household items worth over Rs. 100,000 were given to the MP by the people. Subsequently people started to call the MP's new house as 'Bribery Mansion'.

* * The MP did not have any income other than his parliamentary salary. But he bought a car for Rs. 65,000 in 1979. The MP bought a tractor for his father-in-law for Rs. 125,000; a lorry for his brother-in-law for Rs. 165,000; he bought four plots of land worth Rs. 100,000; he did renovations to his house in Colombo for Rs. 50,000 and invested a further sum of Rs. 50,000 in a business.

* * The MP solicited a sum of Rs. 10,000 from his own younger brother to help in obtaining a promotion in his job at the Sri Lanka Tobacco Industries Corporation.

* * The MP's wife distributed 'Job Bank' forms at a price of Rs. 300 to Rs. 1000 per form.

* * The MP was given Rs. 30,000 for obtaining 30 allotments of land for sugar plantations, but the person who gave the money failed to get those allotments.

* * The MP abused his power to victimise those who petitioned against him by getting them arrested on false charges or dismissed from their employment.

The inquiry is proceeding.

NEXT WORLD SANSKRIT CONFERENCE IN U.S.

The sixth World Sanskrit Conference will be held in Philadelphia, USA in October 1982. This was announced by the newly elected President of the International Association of Sanskrit Studies, Professor R.N. Dandekar.

Professor Dandekar told newsmen that the Fifth World Sanskrit Conference held in October this year at Varanasi, India had created an awareness among the Indian and foreign delegates that Sanskrit language was a living force for communication and exchange of ideas in various parts of the world community. He said that there were lively deliberations on various subjects in sessional meetings where about 500 papers were read on literature, rhetoric, religion and technical sciences.

Prof. Jean Fillozat (France), Prof. Jan Gonda (Netherlands) and Prof. Paul Thieme (GDR) were among the eight eminent scholars who were awarded the degree of Doctor of Letters (Honoris Causa) at a special convocation of the Banaras Hindu University.

Nehru Award For Husband And Wife

New Delhi, Nov.13.

The 1981 Jawaharlal Nehru Award for international Understanding has been given jointly to the Swedish Nobel laureate, Prof. Gunnar Myrdal, specialising in third world economic problems, and his well-known sociologist and writer wife Alva Myrdal.

Announcing the award here today, the Vice-President, Mr. M. Hidayatullah, chairman of the seven-member jury, said it was unanimously decided to give the award to the couple jointly because it would have been difficult to choose between the two.

He said Prof. Myrdal, author of the famous book "The Asian Drama", and Mrs Alva Myrdal, a former Ambassador to India, formed a team "quite apart from being husband and wife and their work supplements that of each other".

The award carries a cash prize Rs. 1 lakh and a citation and is usually presented at a special ceremony in New Delhi on November 14, Nehru's birthday.

The Vice-President said the award would be conferred on them some time

next year, at a date to be decided in consultation with Prof. Myrdal and his wife.

Soon after Nehru's death in 1964, the Union Government instituted this prestigious award to be given annually for outstanding contribution to the promotion of international understanding, goodwill and friendship among the people of the world.

The award is administered by the India Council for Cultural Relations.

(The Hindu)

TAMIL NADU LEADING IN FREE LEGAL AID

From K.V. Narain
Tokyo, Nov 12.

Mr. P.H. Pandyan, Deputy Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Assembly, told the first conference of Asian Lawyers on Wednesday that the Tamil Nadu Government was leading in the matter of rendering free legal aid to the public.

The conference is being held in the city of Kochi on the southern island of Shikoku on the theme of administration of justice and human rights.

It is being attended by lawyers from 13 Asian countries including India.

In addition to Mr Pandyan, India is represented by two other delegates.

Mr. Pandyan presented his paper on free legal aid to the public in Tamil Nadu on the opening day.

(Hindu)

INDIAN INVESTMENT IN SRI LANKA

Several Indian companies are likely to set up joint ventures in Sri Lanka for manufacturing paper, sugar, rubber and aluminium items and packaging materials.

The Daily Economic Times published in India quoting Mr. Harban Singh, Chairman of the Indian investment Centre, who had just returned from Colombo after attending a week-long seminar on 'Investment Promotion for Sri Lanka' reported that the Sri Lankan Government was especially keen to have Indian investment and expertise for setting up sugar plants and tanneries.

LANKA'S BOMBAY OFFICE ATTACKED

A group of men protesting against the ill-treatment of Tamils of Indian origin in Sri Lanka attacked the Sri Lanka Trade Commissioner's Office in Bombay on November 13. The group claiming to be members of an organisation called "Azad Hind Sena" meaning 'Army of Free India' is reported to have burst into the office and smashed a window before staff and police intervened to prevent further damage.

Attempts by the group to disconnect the telephone lines of the office and set fire to the building and the official car would appear to have been thwarted by the timely intervention of the police.

The Sri Lankan government is reported to have expressed serious concern over the incident to the Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka.

It is understood that the 'Azad Hind Sena' mounted this attack as a protest against the violence unleashed in August this year against the Tamils of Indian origin living in Sri Lanka.

SRI LANKAN WOMAN MURDERED IN UK

Twenty-nine year old Mrs. Mallika Dheersekera from Matugama, Sri Lanka was found dead with head injuries recently at the City of Leeds High School where she worked. The body was found in a small basement store room in the school by the police who commenced searching when Mrs. Dheersekera was reported missing.

A 17 year old English youth had been produced and charged before the Leeds Magistrates Court with the murder of Mrs. Dheersekera. Police reports indicate that the motive for murder was sexual.

Mr. D. Dheersekera, the deceased's husband, an economist working in the Central Bank of Sri Lanka came to Britain with his wife some 12 months ago to do a master's Degree in Transport Economics at the University of Leeds. At the time of the tragedy, Mrs. Dheersekera was doing a part-time job at the school where her battered body was found.

NOBODY CAN REMOVE ME- Says Mrs. B.

"My civic rights have been stripped in order to remove me from politics. I will retire from politics after the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) regains power. Till then nobody can remove me from politics." declared Mrs. Srimala Bandaranaike, the former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and the leader of the SLFP (Srimala faction).

Mrs. Bandaranaike described the differences between herself and Mr. Anura Bandaranaike (her son) as a 'family affair' and not a political matter.

"Anura is my son, and I am his mother. The mother and son matter is a family problem. I do not want to make it a political question and drag it into the political scene" said Mrs. Bandaranaike. She said that Mr. Maitripala Senanayake, MP (former Deputy Leader of the SLFP

and presently leading a breakaway faction) would never be re-admitted to the party and that he was not fit even to be an ordinary member of the party.

"Maitripala Senanayake is trying to get rid of me and Anura by making Anura a puppet. I do not know why Anura does not realise this", lamented Mrs. B.

Mrs. Bandaranaike claimed that the present President, Mr. J.R. Jayawardene, when he came to power in July 1977, offered her and Mr. Maitripala Senanayake two cabinet ministries, but she flatly refused because she did not want to betray the SLFP. If she had agreed to accept the Ministry, her civic rights would not have been removed. Because she did not accept the Ministry and remained a force in the opposition, the government had victimised her by removing her civic rights.

These Tamil hymns were then committed to writing in the Thai language and continued to be used in that form for centuries. They are especially used at the consecration ceremony of a ruler. Other Tamil religious texts used in popular festivals were the Thiruvempavai of the Saivites and Thiruppavai of the Vaishnavites. Scholars who have made comparative studies of the Ramayana stories current in India and various parts of Southeast Asia are of the opinion that the Tamil version, Kampa Ramayanam, was known in Thailand, Malaya and Java. Its version of the various incidents in this epic have been incorporated into the local language accounts in these cultures.

TAMILS.....

(Contd. from page 9)

Indian influences have also been noted in the cultures of Javanese kingdoms, in respect of the script, the architecture, sculpture and the visual arts. In Sumatra there is in addition the adaptation of Tamil terminology such as Chola, Pallava, Pandya and Malayalam.

Evidence of the introduction of specifically Tamil ritual and the use of Tamil literature comes from Thailand where traces of this remain to the present day. Tamil brahmins who became royal priests (Rajaguru) to Thai kings appear to have introduced the use of Thevaram and Thiruvacakam in religious ritual.

DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM.....

(Contd. from page 3)

should only be instituted where the need for them is clearly made out. But need must be the criteria, and no other. The principle has already been recognised by Parliament (Sections 35, 37, 88 of the 1976 Race Relations Act) and must be made effective.'

Essentially, what Lord Scarman is talking about is achieving equality of opportunity through a combination of non-discrimination and active intervention based on need, as permitted by the legislation already on the statute books.

Active intervention within the framework of the 1976 legislation means diagnosis of need and allocation of appropriate resources. Such action is permitted only under precise circumstances. For example, when racial groups are under-represented in an occupation or skill-level, specified employment bodies can actively encourage members of that racial group to apply for the jobs in question or to undertake appropriate training.

Under similar conditions, specified employment bodies can provide special training for members of under-represented racial groups. The point of such training is to raise the trainees to a point where they can compete more effectively in the open market.

So Lord Scarman is not saying that blacks should be given privileges which the other members of society do not enjoy. He is saying that the present imbalance must be redressed through positive action. Effective initiatives to deal with the problems of deprivation and disadvantage must of necessity attend both to the scale of resources required and to the equitable allocation of the resources. The Government must, therefore, as a matter of urgency think of mechanisms for correcting the maldistribution of resources and, where necessary, inject more resources.

Positive action is about justice and not privileges. Unless we grasp this, we shall continue to muddle through as we have done in the past.

(Courtesy of the Observer)

Tamil Times

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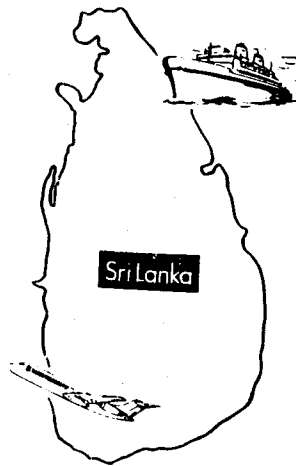
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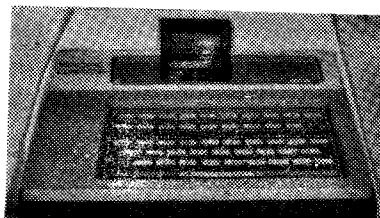
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INDIA AND NEIGHBOURS

G.K. Reddy (The Hindu, International Edition, 1981 Nov 28) states that strains in Indo-Pakistan relations are spurring India to make a renewed effort to establish better understanding with the other countries of the subcontinent. The focal point of this effort is going to be Bangladesh. At the same time relations with Nepal and Bhutan are also to be strengthened. It is noted that King Birendra and Prime Minister Mr S.B. Thappa of Nepal advocate closer relations with India without prejudice to links with China. Bhutan is about to have talks with China on border demarcation and Indian Government is expected to be conscious of Bhutan's sensitivities in this context.

TIES WITH SRI LANKA

G.K. Reddy continues that as a logical follow-up of this policy of better understanding with the sub-continental States, India also proposes to take suitable steps to diversify and deepen its relations with Sri Lanka to provide a politico-economic base for this bilateral cooperation. The Indian government continues to keep up a proper distinction between its approach to the problems of settlers of Indian origin in the island and its more fundamental desire for mutually beneficial relations with Sri Lanka in both the political and economic spheres. The postponed visit of the Indian President Mr Sanjiva Reddy to Sri Lanka will probably take place early next year as a manifestation of India's goodwill.

INDIAN SATELLITE

An earth observation satellite named Bhaskara II was launched by an Intercosmos rocket from the Soviet cosmodrome in Volgograd on 20th November 1981. This is the third Indian space satellite to be launched from a Soviet cosmodrome; satellite Aryabhata was launched in April 1975 and satellite Bhaskara I was launched in 1979.

Bhaskara II is an improved version and will provide data on forestry, hydrology and land bodies. The satellite also carries experimental packages of indigenously developed solar cells and thermal paints. According to Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Bhaskara II will mark the end of the experimental era and herald the transition to operational remote sensing satellites.

CONDEMNED BY ICJ

(Contd. from page 1)

The report further refers to the growing repression by the police and army personnel in areas predominantly inhabited by the Island's Tamil speaking minority community and comments that the measures taken by the government violate international norms. The report, in this context, refers to the senseless violence unleashed and wanton destruction caused by the security forces against the Tamils in the Northern part of the country in June this year in the course of which the Jaffna Public Library with 95,000 books was burned down, and also to the generalised violence against all the Tamils living throughout the country in August this year.

The report further points out that certain actions taken by the government has had the effect of undermining respect for the rule of law in Sri Lanka. Acts of violence by the security forces, the stripping of Mrs. S. Bandaranaike, the former Prime Minister, of her civic and political rights, the extra-ordinary vote in parliament of no-confidence in the Tamil Opposition Leader and the various arbitrary arrests and detentions under the Terrorism Act are cited as instances of governmental

actions which have helped to undermine the respect for the rule of law.

The report suggests that the prime concern of the government should be the physical security of the Tamils and points out that clear directives should be issued to police and army officers that assaults and torture of detainees and others are unacceptable and that those responsible for such practices should be prosecuted and punished.

Referring to the natural and long-held apprehension of the Tamil speaking people that planned state aided colonisation by Sinhalese of traditional Tamil areas is designed to render them into a minority in their own areas, the ICJ report recommends that the government should give urgent attention to Tamil concern over state-sponsored colonisation by Sinhalese in Tamil areas. Welcoming the recent introduction of the District Development Council system of decentralisation, the ICJ report recommends an increase in the powers of such Councils.

The ICJ report finally warns that the Sinhala - Tamil tension in Sri Lanka threatens to escalate into major violence and negate all development efforts.

The editors and the publishers of the Tamil Times wish their readers and well wishers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

PRINCIPLE AND PRAGMATISM

(Contd. from page 5);

This opposition is predictably along class lines. Politics in the non-socialist world is the repository of class conflict. Those who oppose the demand for a separate state are the English educated middle class 'elite'. But this middle class (of which perhaps I am myself a part) is not and should not fancy themselves as representing or representative of the Tamil speaking nation as a whole. They are only a part but a numerically insignificant though economically stronger part. The bulk of the Tamil nation which is predominantly peasant class is still in the Tamil speaking areas - unlike the few expatriates - and it is their voice that should count. The doubts about the economic viability of a separate state though important should not frighten us over-much. If Israel could be Israel out of desert sands, Eelam could be Eelam and still be a small granary of the East. Further more there are several sovereign states which are smaller

in area, population and natural resources and they survive.

There is another important factor which Dr. Wilson has completely ignored. What of the next generation - the fate of our children and our children's children? Their future will have to be secured by us. By seeking "a breather and time for reflection" we are merely seeking to pass on the problem to our future generations. If we cannot fight today our children will have less chance to fight tomorrow. Are the Tamils prepared to sacrifice the future generations at the altar of transient prosperity of today - and only of today?

"When we build let it be such as our descendants will thank us for.

When we place stone on stone, let us remember that a time will come when our children will say, 'See, this our forefathers did for us.'

There is a lot of visionary realism in the above words of Madame Chiang Kai Shek.