

praises the girl. They are then all jubilant at this discovery. In the situation in Jaffna I would say that where there has been encouragement to stay in one's place, rather than run (and the experiences of panic and of running in July helped to prepare this change of heart), provided by a few religious and social leaders, there has developed a sense of community and mutual helpfulness that one had not noticed previously. It has been inspiring to see this come to pass. Yet the organization is still among us, even though we west of Jaffna have been completely cut off from both the LTTE state as well as the Army occupation. The boys and the girls of the LTTE staying behind are as determined as ever to fight for their separate Tamil Eelam and have frequently accused those staying behind as traitors.

Justice Chatterji, a character in Vikram Seth's delightful epic-size novel of Indian society and politics and education in 1951-52, △ Sutable Boy, reflects, while perusing the All India Reporter: Calcutta 1947 and 1948.

In microcosm those two pages reflected the passage of an empire and the birth of two countries from the idea—tragic and ignorant—that people of different religions could not live peaceably together in one.⁷

In Jaffna, we are still left with the opening question, or statement—What Remains. And it may as well be a question rather than a statement. For we don't know what remains, yet. And we ask ourselves now what indeed does remain of the aspirations of the Tamil people, to live with their own language, without harrassment, military, economic or otherwise, with their own Tamil Hindu culture (or their Tamil Christian culture), with their own Tamil speaking law enforcement, their own administration, their own hopes and ambitions for their children and their homeland? This is the question that remains unanswered.

NOTES

1. P. 42 (Granta Books, Viting: London, 1994)
2. P. 118 (Ibid)
3. In Weimarer Beitrage, Heft 3/1991, p. 437
4. Ibid., p. 438
5. P. 29. (Summit Books, New York; 1988)
6. Der Dreissigjahrige Krieg, Vol. II 591ff. (Frankfurt/Main, 1947; first published 1914)
7. P. 469. (Viking/Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 1993)

INDIAN ELECTIONS AND SRI LANKA

The results of the Indian elections are just being announced and it seems clear that the Bharatiya Janata Party has emerged as the largest party in the Lok Sabha. They have not been able to obtain an overall majority and whether they could form the government is still uncertain. Nevertheless, their policies are likely to receive greater recognition now; their attitude to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka is therefore of interest.

In their election manifesto, in the section dealing with foreign policy, they have declared:

The BJP greatly regrets the continuing bloodshed in Sri Lanka, particularly as India all throughout its history has had warm fraternal ties with all sections of the population in that country. The BJP is confident that within a united Sri Lanka it should be possible to fulfil the aspirations of the Tamil people.

This indicates support for a political solution that will meet with the rights of the Tamil people to regional autonomy.

The BJP proposals for dealing with the problem of the Tamil refugees still remaining in South India are also of interest:

1. House them in refugee camps and monitor their movements

2. Prevent their association with local organisations or opening local chapters of Sri Lankan organizations

3. Screen the antecedents of the Tamil refugees and disallow asylum to those who have or had links with Tamil terrorists

4. Maintain a register of all such refugees

5. Repatriate Tamil refugees as soon as the situation is conducive for their safe-being.

These proposals would indicate a desire to insulate politics in India and in Tamilnadu from events in Sri Lanka.

We also learn from N.Ram, the editor of Frontline, who was in Colombo last week that the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka and the role, of the LTTE received no mention at all in the election campaign in Tamilnadu.

Sinhala nationalists who are always apprehensive of Tamilnadu infiltration into Sri Lankan politics might now rest assured that the ethnic problem is ours to solve or to die with.