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It is wonderful to see our compatriots back home, enjoying real peace after such a long wait. The question one has to raise is how long the sunshine will last? We have seen reports of celebrations and anniversaries held one after the other, but no one apparently is worried about the underlying causes that can easily erupt into unforeseen disturbances and even unprecedented vio-

One man at least appears to have read the writing on the wall, and given his advice as to what and how things have to be handled with a view to ensure lasting peace for the country and the nation. He is no ordinary writer or a prophet of doom, but to my reckoning, one of the best intellectuals Sri Lanka possesses at the moment. He ought to be serving the country in a major way, although it does not seem to be happening.

He is an engineer-turned sociologist Dr. Susantha Gunatilaka, who started his working career as a new graduate in electrical engineering in the Cevlon Cement Corporation. He made his mark as a man with vision and foresight when he took on the Kankesan Cement Factory's plant suppliers Humbolts, of Germany When it's kiln was destroyed by a fire. Humbolts were adamant that it would take a minimum of six months to do the repairs and bring it back to working condition, young Susantha with another young engineer, Shanmuganathan, completed the job in less than two months.

Having later served as Works Manager at its Cement Plant in Galle, he set his mind on Sociology and graduated in that subject from the University of Peradeniya, and

became a Sociologist. He worked for the Peoples Bank for a while as Economist before leaving for U.K. to earn his doctorate in his new subject. Respected author and social commentator, he makes his views known on important national issues now and then.

him is rather limited not having followed his movements closely. However, I do take his articles seriously when I come across them occasionally.

I refer to an article he had contributed recently to the Sunday edition of the Sinhala news-



careful planning and meticulous execution b individuals fully committed and religiously devoted to the cause. This I say with all the seriousness because good many of the persons putting themselves forward for this type of work merely consider them to be just another job to get a feather added to their cap. This is something far more different and in a way, thankless a job than one would imagine. What one would achieve at the end of the day is some inner satisfaction of having accomplished a noble mission of lasting good neighborliness and camaraderie among people one can truly say 'his own.' In other words, whoever sets his or her mind on such activity must be prepared to undertake it for purely altruistic purposes and with no reward in mind.

I strongly feel there are still some individuals in the land of Sri Lanka who are ready to put their shoulder to the wheel with utmost com-



mitment. That again makes it inevitable for politicians to sit back and leave the stage for these dedicated few to operate in their own way. Then again politicians have to play a role because they are the permanent actors on the political stage, a kind of a 'necessary evil' in the social context we live in.

USHERINB IN REAL PEACE

After a long war?

I give the above details of his life and work, as far as I know, because many reading his newspaper articles may take them to be another of those newspaper boys writing on a popular topic. To be fair to him I must confess my knowledge about

paper 'Divaina' on the subject of eradicating terrorism. Unlike most Sri Lanka leaders, he does not seem to be comfortable with the current situation of apparent peace and tranquility in the country. He seems to consider the underlying causes to be lying dormant and have to be tacked in a more systematic basis according to a well - executed plan.

I was surprised myself when reading his analysis of the experience of Germany after the defeat of Nazism. He describes how Germany started banning books on Nazism and publishing a whole series of books in order to educate its youth on the dangers of Hitler's doctrine, which had won the hearts of German youth over the years. Reading through his article one cannot fail to see the danger signals he detects in the current situation in Sri Lanka. According to him the Tamil youth is indoctriated by the Eealam doctrine to an extent most of us do not even suspect. That is not going to evaporate all of a sudden as some of us wish.

Whether Susantha Gunatillka's warnings are true or not, one has to take a fresh look at the whole situation. One must think of seriously coming to grips with reality on the ground. One must think of what is taking place under the apparent calm with all the development activities undertaken by the government.

One lesson was taught to the ruling party at the last local government elections by the voters of the North. Someone had pointed out that the defeat the UNP and JVP suffered in the South was experienced by the government in the North. If the government thinks of congratulating itself on their wonderful performance in the North, it ought to think again, and see the real situation which is not good reading at all.

While thanking Dr. Gunatillaka for his analysis and diagnosis, I do not think the gravity of the problem calls for the confrontational approach or the punitive action that he recommends. Pretty serious though the problem is, its solution needs much more patience, fore-bearance and a lot of hard work with

Why I took this long preamble to introduce the subject is because it has to be germinated in the minds of at least a few leading politicians of the land, for they can easily upset the apple-cart. Let them sit back and try to understand the gravity of what is planned to be implemented. First and foremost, they would have to admit their utter failure so far in this area of national life and social harmony. What I mean is that far from Dr. Gunatiliaka's diagnosis, the failure has been in winning the hearts and minds of the people of the North in naticular.

I am pretty certain some politicians would take me to task for spreading unfounded fear and doubt in the mind of the masses. They would also accuse me of throwing a spanner into the works of the government. I plead with them to hear me out and then only pass judgment. For the issue has been clouded by false hopes and miscalculations for too long.

First things first, has anyone seriously though of the impact all the celebrations and erection of memorials in the North to commemorate the army's victory and its fallen soldiers? Do they pause to realize the feelings of people of the North watching these activities and enjoyment by the army and politicians? Does any of these men and women at celebrations remember how they felt when the so-called terrorists of the South, 'the JVP boys,' going round collecting our IDs and how we waited with photo copies made of them to hand over the originals with no fuss? Remember how we still felt for them with a certain fear in our minds? Remember the fact all these people watching our celebrations are also human beings like us and could still be feeling for their 'boys' who died in the war however unfair it was? Will not they feel sorry for them in spite of the suffering they caused?

I am not asking for the celebrations to be stopped or memorials to be abandoned. Cannot the government devise a better way to achieve the same result? After the Second World War ended, the then new leader of Turkey, thought of a plan to enable the two former protagonists to jointly celebrate the end

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