



Late Mr. Subramaniam Ratnarajah

It is not always that the demise of a person stuns and shocks the multitude of all ranks and of all walks of life as had been in the case of the untimely exit of the zonal Director of Education, Mr. S. Ratnarajah, a veritable human dynamo who like a vedhanti with the commitment of a commissar laboured round the clock to revamp many schools badly shattered by the ethnic turmoil before normalcy was restored.

Mr. Ratnarajah, even bitterest critics would agree, had rendered signal service by all the pupils teachers to all the neglected schools. As the last English Director of Education of Ceylon, Dr. H. W. Howes once said that a director of education is a servant of the

servants of children whose every act and decision must be child centered.

Mr. Ratnarajah had been a living testimony to this grand ideal. Unlike a Jack-in-office more concerned with his power, position, and prestige, he went about his duties cutting across all red-tape with a rare vision blended with rank humility and simplicity. Everyone with a grievance had direct access to him and everyone with a genuine grievance merited his attention and speedy redress.

"In many ways he was an enlightened administrator of a rare vintage whose only guiding principle was to do all the good one could do to all people at all the times one could. A public servant of his caliber who does not work to rule is a rare find in our time and day when one will sweat but for promotion and having that do choke their service up. This was not the case with Mr. Ratnarajah who sweated for duty, not for need. The worth of the man and his nexus with all sectors of the public, the schools, and the community was amply borne by the milling crowd at his funeral, the sincere homage and the touching homilies paid to the man by distinguished persons from all walks of life. These are pointers to his intrinsic worth as a man and a sincere servant of the community.

Himself a product of a Central school of Dr. C. W. W. Kannangara's vision to open portals of learning to all Darlings of Chill Penury. Mr. Ratnarajah, one of the beneficiaries himself was well and truly aware of the needs of poor, remote schools. So much so when the opportunity came his way, he set about working repay his debt to the Nation's poor children- the lame dogs to get over the stile!. As a teacher, Education Officer and finally as a Zonal Director, he was inimitable-Non-pareil by any standard. His loss will be felt for a long time to come." **wrote by veteran English teacher Mr. T. N. Punjaksharam.**