THE PATHFINDER

Journal of

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by

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PATHFINDER

Volume 1

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PAST NOTES

THE BIRTH AND DEMISE OF THE ORIGINAL PATHFINDER

BY

K. THURAISINGAM AMN

Members of the Society periodically find amongst their mail a bulky white envelope which contains the Pathfinder. The Society makes an endeavour to disseminate information to the members on the affairs and activities of the Koperasi Jaffnese Berhad. Prior to the Pathfinder the Society disseminated news and information through the JCS newsletter. The Pathfinder which the members receive now is infact a revival of the Original Pathfinder which came out in the year 1937.

Members would recollect that the present Pathfinder was launched on 27.11.1993 by one of our Society's grand old man and an ardent supporter Mr. N. Thamotharam Pillay. The launch was the culminating event during a dinner cum cultural show organised by the JCS Brickfields District. The first copy of the Pathfinder was 'bought' by Yang Berbahagia Dato' Seri N.T. Rajah who paid RM2021.00 for the copy of that issue.

Perhaps we should look back to our forefathers efforts and the events that lead to the birth of the original Pathfinder and its subsequent demise.

It was April 13th 1937 Hindu New Year's day saw the first issue of the Pathfinder.

In the early 1930's the Society appointed various special committees to deal with specific issues and one such special committee was Propaganda Committee.

The Propaganda Committee recommended to the Management Committee the issue of a bulletin for the realisation of the Society's aims and objects. The appreciation and concurrence of the Management to the recommendation of the Propaganda Committee was evident as reflected in the Annual Report of the Society of 1936 the context of the relevant passage is reproduced below:-

'The absence of some medium through which the members and others could be educated to appreciate the possibilities of cooperative efforts, to understand the ultimate benefit that would accrue by the practice of thrift and economy, to broaden their outlook in life from a cooperative point of view and create cooperative consciousness had been engaging the attention of the Society for sometime. The Committee was of taking the necessary steps to publish a magazine.'

The Society was hoping that the members would take advantage of the facilities.

During the year 1937 a total of 21 issues were published. There was no doubt that the magazine had created a new consciousness in the minds of the members of the Society in particular and the Jaffnese Community in general. The popularity of the magazine was evident in the increase in membership in the following year.

The Annual Report states:-

'It is not incorrect to say that more members are joining as a result of the propaganda work done by the Pathfinder.'

Mr. N. Thamby Thurai the then President was the editor since the inception but resigned his office of editorship at the end of 1938. Mr. V. Kandiah who was then attached to the Federal Treasury, Kuala Lumpur succeeded him as from January 1939. He continued to be the editor till June 1939 and on his departure on leave to Ceylon, the editorship devolved upon the President Mr. R.N. Thamby Thurai. The President found that he was unable to devote the time required to carry out the work of the Pathfinder he thefefore requested that another editor should be found to replace him and the matter was included in the agenda of the Annual General Meeting held at the end of the year as follows:-

'To consider the feasibility or otherwise of continuing the "Pathfinder" Journal.'

The follow up report as reflected in the Annual Report with text as follows indicated the demise of the Original 'PATHFINDER'.

'The committee regrets that the journal had to be discontinued because an Honorary Editor who could conveniently find the time for the purpose was not available.'

Obviously, no one was willing to take up that onerous task which Mr. R.N. Thamby Thurai and Mr. V. Kandiah took it upon themselves and carried on for 2 years. The pioneers of the 'PATHFINDER'.

Perhaps the present members should heed to the plea and the call, made by the then Committee of Management as a 'last will and testament' in their 1940 Annual Report which reports as follows with a sad note:-

'The cessation of the 'Pathfinder' which served as a contact and help to find together members of the Society has produced a gap difficult to bridge otherwise than by resuscitation of its publication. It is urged that members give this matter serious consideration and make arrangement to have the publication revived.'

The pioneer's aspirations is now being filled. Let us hope that we keep the Pathfinder going. In order to keep it going the members should do their fair share by contributing articles and other forms of contribution that would benefit the general membership.

'Long Live the Pathfinder'.