

## EULOGY FOR P S DULEEPKUMAR

It is a privilege for me to speak on this sad occasion, on behalf of the many relatives and friends of Duleep, in which we commemorate and celebrate his many – splendored life of over 83 years.

I do so, with great sadness as a friend and colleague of Duleep of over 70 years. We grew up together and shared our lives in the place we called our home – Gurutalawa, - a place which is also home to so many of you gathered here this evening to honour him. We not only lived those most important years – growing up together as brothers – in that unforgettable setting for a school, but also had our first paid jobs as amateur teachers, at Gurutalawa under those legends Dr Hayman and Father Foster.

For many years thereafter, until age intervened, Duleep took a deep, personal and unrivalled interest in all the manifold aspects of the life of the school. For many of us, whom the School had nurtured, the interest was real, but only spasmodic. For Duleep, like in anything else he did, it was complete, constant and totally committed.

He saw Gurutalawa as the crucible in which the uncreated conscience of our spirits was forged.

In the early forties, we were its Chariots of Fire, training for the Big Race of Life. We were the Pioneers in a new land of endless opportunity.

Duleep had a deep love of learning. Every day was a new adventure filled with new information and knowledge to be absorbed – whether it was intellectual, artistic or physical. In many ways he was the real authentic Renaissance man among us.

He took this passion for learning, to the young men whom he had the privilege to guide as a teacher. The moving tribute that Chandran Rutnam paid him in “To Sir with Love” reflects the powerful impact Duleep made on the spirit and minds of the young wards in his charge.

He carried this same spirit of curiosity and learning into his professional life as a high official in the Inland Revenue and in later life as a much sought after Tax Consultant. Much of his service was rendered gratis- at no charge.

Many wondered why he never married unlike many of his friends. In his usual manner, and he had a wonderful sense of humour – he would say he was married to so many things like the School and Work that he had no time for a wife. But the real reason was that he wanted to look after his mother who had done so much for him. He literally gave his life to look after her. And it was wonderful to see the bond between them, and his twin brother Shanti (20 mins) ahead at birth and most of the time, as long as he Shanti lived.

They were inseparable and matched each other. One was just as good as the other.

His last years were painful, mentally more than physically as he took on himself the sad plight of what was happening of his people – the Tamil people – in the North and East.

He had great faith in Anglican Christianity and practiced it devotedly but never flaunted it. He read widely, was a wonderful speaker and wrote like an angel.

We celebrate his life but mourn his passing, as a warm and compassionate friend. He was a loyal Thomian – staunch and true; a worthy Sri Lankan and as a living legend of our times.

In many ways his passing marks the end of an era. We shall not see the like of him again.

May he rest in peace.

Bradman Weerakoon  
20th June 2014