

# EROS

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## LETTER FROM EELAM. WHAT FUTURE FOR TAMILS. ORGANISE OR PERISH.

Things in Sri Lanka are coming to a head. What was once a peaceful country is now crisis ridden. We are in fact fast becoming to a big crisis. In Eelam, the Sri Lankan state sponsored terrorism against Tamils is rampant. The Sri Lankan armed machinery is tightening the screws and driving its racist policies and oppression of Eelavar beyond the limits of peoples' endurance. Retaliatory measures, indiscriminate acts of reprisal against the innocent Eelavar, and government sponsored terror and acts of tyranny are driving people into resistance. But, as unorganised and without proper leadership with a clear understanding of the perspective of our struggle, the people are being driven into inactivity. Planned badly or not at all military actions without a clear strategic objective on the part of the militant youths do not help the people either. The Sri Lankan government stops at nothing. It takes every measure and steps to close every avenue and channel to find any meaningful negotiated settlement, and adamantly insisting on a military solution to the problem.

### Sri Lanka's Dilemma

In spite of massive and ever-growing state machine of domination and oppression, the Sri Lankan government finds it difficult to 'finish off' the armed resistance of the militant youths. While the actions on the part of the militant youths show negative and even harmful features, they, however have positive sides too. Present situation in Eelam clearly demonstrates that the Sri Lankan government cannot have a quick and snap military victory. This is not to mean that the Tamil speaking people have a military victory over the chauvinist government. But, it is an indication of the political victory, in the face of a massive foreign backed Sri Lankan propaganda machinery, for the Tamils in their struggle to be recognised as a nation and for that matter, as an oppressed nation. With more than Rs.1,000,000 per day to maintain the armed forces in the north and east of the Island and with more than 50 per cent of its foreign borrowing spent on military overhauling,

the Sri Lankan regime is engaged in a desperate attempt to contain the revolutionary advancement of Eelavar. They copy every dirty trick from the Israeli's 'handbook on the state of terrorism' to rouse the unorganised and unarmed people into taking indiscriminate actions which hold no prospect of the overthrow of the state of oppression but only the prospects of wide-scale blood-letting, or to force the Tamils to evacuate the strategically located traditional home-lands.

The Tamil plantation workers were disenfranchised in 1948, thus stripping them of their political and other basic human rights as enshrined in the International Human Rights Convention, and making them political refugees in their own homeland. This human right violation against the Tamil plantation workers had the desired effect of removing the Tamils from any effective and meaningful political decision making process. Demographic manipulations were further effected through land settlement, industrial and administrative colonisation of North and East, and by the creation of strategic hamlets. In fact, the Sri Lankan regime has been, over the years engineering a whole-sale population transfer to create and consolidate "security zones" where, so far as possible, Tamils would be pushed north, India, or elsewhere to make way for the armed gangs of Sinhalese chauvinists. It must be noted here that every racial riot except the state sponsored July '83 riot were started from the above mentioned "security zones". Today, Tamils of Sri Lanka live in Bantustan type areas with ever growing fear of mass eviction, pass laws, economic strangulation, and army atrocities.

The strategy employed by Sri Lankan government is not something unique to Sri Lanka. Our situation has its similarities with Palestine where the Israeli's who adopted the same strategy employed by the White settlers in America and perfected it to suit their condition, have used it effectively by violence means to deprive the Palestinians of their homeland. Like the South Africans

under the regime of apartheid, Eelavar too suffer in the hands of the racist Sri Lankan regime. As in the case of South Lebanon where Israelis are forcefully evacuating and depopulating the areas where they want to create a "security zone", in Eelam too, the Sri Lankan authority is actively engaged in bringing about a forced demographic change. The very forces that oppress the people of Palestine, South Africa, and Lebanon are actively helping the Sri Lankan government to deprive Eelavar of their homeland.

### Need for Correct Strategy

Viewed from an historic and practical point of view revolutionary forces all over the world, who fight against Imperialism, Zionism and racism will no doubt unite to fight against Sri Lankan chauvinism too. History will demonstrate, as it has done many times the world over that no force on earth could defeat the heroic and patriotic struggles of the determined and courageous people. Glorious revolution in Vietnam, the heroic struggle in China, and victories for the forces of progress and liberation in many parts of the world clearly demonstrate this. But, the same victory is possible only when correct strategy and tactics appropriate to the conditions of the people, the land, and history are adopted, and only when the revolutionary masses are mobilized against the forces of oppression and tyranny. The lessons we draw from the failures of the revolutionary struggle in Greece, Malasia, Indonesia, Phillipines, and in many countries in Latin America demonstrate that armed actions by a group of people, however much they may be successful in their military operations, cannot achieve their strategic objective, as some of our leaders would have us believe.

### Sri Lanka's Strategy

Faced with the prospects of hunger, persecution, tyranny, and unable to resist the massive retaliation of the Sri Lankan armed machinery, people do what they know best. They flee the country as refugees. This process is reiterated by the senseless in-fighting between some Liberation Organisations. Recent exodus from Mannar is a clear demonstration of the present state of affairs.

Over a period of a few weeks since 5 February, more than 14,000 Eelavar crossed the narrow Palk strait to safety in India. This has swelled the number of Eelam

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## NOVEL TORTURES AND NEW TECHNIQUES OF INTERROGATIONS IN THE HORROR CHAMBERS OF SRI LANKA

Torture and other methods of duress are employed by agents of the State to demoralise freedom fighters and undermine liberation movements. The barbaric nature of these techniques have been well documented in the reports of Amnesty International and other bodies. These reports and other available information make it clear that over the last few years, Sri Lanka has reached the level of other worst culprit States. The arrival in Sri Lanka of agents from Israeli Mossad and other similar nefarious organisations, lend support to these accusations.

In general, torture and other interrogations are used by the State machinery to assess the strength and other details about popular movements, not to the liking of the State, in order to destroy them. However, in Sri Lanka it has not been possible for the State to achieve that objective. The information gathered by the various methods is used by the State security forces to essentially strengthen themselves and improve their tactics and operations. The constantly refined information gathering techniques of the Sri Lankan state security forces are described here.

Eelam youngsters are taken in for intense questioning in three different ways: (1) random arrests (2) arrest of sympathisers (3) arrest of freedom fighters.

### Random arrests

Following any incident the state security forces make widespread arrests in the surrounding area. These arrests are made not immediately but only two or three days after the incident. The area selected for the random arrests not only include the site of the incident but also adjoining "sensitive spots". In Jaffna district the so called sensitive spots, marked on the maps in the military camps with red ink, are the main bus stand, the five road junction, Manipay, Vadducoddai, Chunnakam, Kankesanturai, Atchuveli, Neiveli, Urumpirai, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Pesalai, Trincomalee bus stand, Thambalagamam, Muttur, Batticaloa market, Chenkalladi, Akkarapattu and Nuwera Eliya are the other "sensitive spots".

Two or three days after an incident the random arrest operation is put into effect. In the area selected, army vehicles arrive at main roads and junctions; army men with rifles at the ready jump out, hit by-standers with rifle butts and drag all young persons into the trucks. The ones taken into custody are not allowed to communicate with one another. Once brought to the detention centre, the arrested youths are kept apart and questioned individually. At some stage or other the following question are asked: What was discussed in that crowd? Which militant groups do you know? Which group do you admire most? Who are the important persons in that group? Where were you at the time of the attack? How many were involved in the attack? Did anyone known to you take part in the attack? During this questioning the youth may be beaten occasionally with truncheons and rifle butts but no severe torture takes place at this stage.

The principle behind this type of operation is that it takes a few days for details of any incident to percolate through to the "man in the street", so that information that could be obtained through random arrests in sensitive areas will be extensive only a few days after any incident.

Once the basic information is obtained most of the youths are released and the second stage of the operation is set afoot.

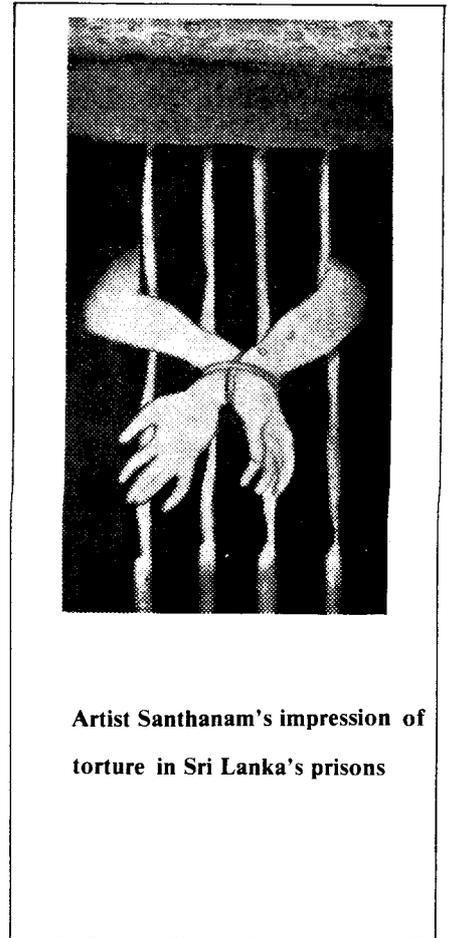
### Arrest of sympathisers

With adequate protection for itself, the armed forces go to the residences of the supporters, usually at midnight. The selected houses are surrounded; the house and compound are searched. All letters, leaflets, pamphlets, books and other printed matter are taken away. The senior officers usually act respectfully in this stage of operation. Apologies are offered for the inconvenience caused; with explanations that they are only performing their duty. It is explained that any person taken away is being taken away only for questioning and will be released soon.

Again the arrested persons are kept separate. Questioning begins with initial pleasantries and general inquiries. Interspersed among these inoquous questions will be questions regarding militant movements. The questioner tries to develop a friendly relationship by showing sympathy to the arrested person's views. The aim at this stage is to assess the personality of the youth.

Through the questions in an attempt is made to assess whether the youth is a politically knowledgeable person; whether he understands the trend of the questions; how does he answer the questions? Are the answers spontaneous or pre-prepared? and whether he has any family responsibilities. The first stage of the questioning ends then.

The second stage of questioning starts with threats. Even if the youth had told all he knew, he is accused of withholding details. From now the interrogator's true image comes through. The youth is beaten with truncheons and sand filled tubes. He is beaten on the head while water is poured



Artist Santhanam's impression of  
torture in Sri Lanka's prisons

over the head. He is shown other youths being severely tortured. When the youth is exhausted, the inquisitor once again presents a friendly and sympathetic attitude.

If the youth is assessed as politically educated, the questioner will debate with him on political matters. The questioner will freely use Marxism terminology and create the impression that he was well versed in Marxian ideology. Thus an attempt will be made to confuse the arrested youth. Such "brain washing" is one method.

If the arrested person has family responsibilities, offers of money and other facilities to the family will be made in an attempt to soften the resistance. If these tactics do not work straight away, along with repeated questioning, the youth is also tortured.

He is hit in the chest and stomach with boots till he faints. When he regains consciousness he is burnt with lighted cigarettes. Sharp nails are pierced into nail beds. At later questioning times, when the wounds are septic, sticks are poked into the wounds.

After obtaining whatever information it is possible to obtain by these methods, friendship techniques are once again used and an estimate is made as to whether it is possible to recruit the person to become an informer or act as a double agent. If it is felt that the person could be used in one of these ways, he is released.

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# Role of a revolutionary & of an expatriate

*"We should pay close attention to the well-being of the masses, from the problems of land and labour to those of fuel, rice ... All such problems concerning the well-being of the masses should be placed on our agenda. We should discuss them, adopt and carry out decisions and check up on the results. We should help the masses to realise that we represent their interests, that our lives are intimately bound up with theirs. We should help to proceed from these things to an understanding of the higher tasks which we have put forward, the tasks of the revolutionary war, so that they will support the revolution and spread it throughout the country, respond to our political appeals and fight to the end for victory in the revolution."*

— Mao Tsetung

When there is confusion, human tragedies and wanton destruction of livelihood of the people, especially those in unity with the land they live in, while those took up arms in the name of the people, worse still calling themselves revolutionaries, but operate like private armies, expecting or ignoring the plight of the people, whose actions not only alienate the people but also assist the deterioration of the conditions of Eelam struggle and the erosion of national consciousness, one must accept the need to quote heroic revolutionary leaders who guided their people to victory.

## Expatriates' perspective of Eelam struggle

Naturally our bourgeoisie assume Tamil language as the unifying force and secretly welcome the Sri Lankan brutal military repression as the blessing in disguise, which they hope will initiate a spontaneous uprising of our people to win a liberation. This picture postcard view of the birth of 'Tamil Eelam' is to be accomplished by the 'boys' with mere courage as the virtue, while their efforts are scandalously described as sacrifices for simple references in the history books and the repercussions of those efforts are put down crudely as casualties. They don't consider these 'boys' anything more than emotional soldiers and never give credit or importance for the ideological or philosophical positions. The concept of 'people' among these romantic musketeers is not much different from their perception of women. That is people are a burden at hard times, but a breeding womb for more 'boys'.

Their pervasive sense of emotions have led them to blind alleys of moral deprivation and left them with just two questions: (1) What is the damage to the enemy? (2) How to have an influence on the struggle and feel important? Since support for some of the 'boys' has an inherent perseverance to

safeguard vested interests, queries or constructive criticisms of them are tantamount to sacrilege in their eyes. People in Eelam have become such abstract concepts in their obsessive minds, those who question their senses or direction or order of priorities or the amount of damage to those people themselves, are scorned with abuses, dismissed as theorising time-wasters or sincerity questioned. Such is the awareness and their care for the people of Eelam; thus, many only contribute, but never or occasionally participate.

Expatriates who participate, understand the need to be aware of the evolution of the Eelam struggle, the differences and commonness between various organisations and most of all feel the pain, sufferings and simple aspirations of the ordinary people of Eelam, therefore act and contribute accordingly. Thus, they would have an overall concept of the struggle and would have realised their responsibilities and will work towards them.

Many who simply contribute do not have a commitment neither have the emotional attachment nor want to understand the various sections of Eelavar and represent the alleged silent majority whose philosophy of politics is well said for by their motto 'we are not interested in your politics'. We should be aware and not taken back, because to say that one is not keen on politics is itself a form of politics, further their contributions do influence the character of the struggle and perhaps beyond, specially when those arbitrators and intermediaries, approved by them come into play.

Since the Black July of 1983 thousands of Eelavar have perished — a direct consequence of the 'military offensive' by the Sinhala armed forces and many thousands are made refugees results of the exclusion zones, security zones, collective punishments, terror campaigns by armed Sinhala settlers and activities by some Tamil Militants.

## Effect of 'Hit and Run' tactics

'Military operations' by these militants, who boringly, but disastrously, persist in characterising the Eelam Struggle as an exhibition of vain courage and Tamil machoism rather than a well-formulated strategy with the real aim of liberating our unfortunate people from the yoke of Sinhala chauvinistic oppression, let alone make a social revolution, neither prevent the slaughter continuing nor promote confidence among the population to stem the flow of refugees. Instead, they seem to accept the deaths as part of some mathematical formulae for liberation and see a ridiculous parallel between our refugees and those of Bangladesh prior to its liberation. We should note Sri Lanka is not Pakistan, Eelam is not Bangladesh and India does not stand still. Furthermore, any Eelam area without its people is another Sinhala armed settlement, village of Paesalai is a clear example to that. The story is now become all too familiar.

## What happened in Paesalai

After murdering four innocent Sinhalese in

Adampan, Mannar — who have been living there for a long time — some Tamil Militants waited for the in-rushing armed forces along the road which they had neatly mined already. When an ambulance, carrying another of their Sinhala victims — a woman — they brought it to a halt with mines and killed the wretched woman off with machettes. Meanwhile, the army went into three neighbouring villages and massacred 378 innocent Tamils, but, alas, failed to turn up through the avenues of minefields as our heroes anticipated.

People of Paesalai had clear perceptions of these morons — they had already paid a price for their previous visit, when they robbed the local co-op bank. That time the army simply told the people to chip in, and reimburse the co-op kitty and once that is done asked them to swear that they would not be aiding Tamil terrorists in the future — which they refused to do since it would be like signing a suicide note. When this same armed militants ventured again into their village, people with the support of some revolutionary youths tried to make them leave, but to no avail. People of Paesalai realised the disaster which would follow a bunch of irresponsible militants like that, thus, decided to leave their homes in thousands for the safety of India.

The indictments in Mannar district implore answers for questions.

**\* moral standing of the liberation fighters or perhaps even some of the liberation organisations themselves and the implications of it.**

**\*\* the relevance of the consequences of some militant actions.**

**\*\*\* the capacity of a liberation organisation or a group of liberation organisations to mount a military campaign which would not only prevent hundreds and hundreds of civilian deaths, but also reverse the trend and enflame the national consciousness of Eelavar.**

Killing of innocent Sinhalese in revenge itself is morally unacceptable and to know that some of the liberation organisations employ such murders as part of their tactics in specific military operations not only expose their evil mentality, but also an exposition of the quality of life in the proposed 'Tamil Eelam' if these kind of people were in power.

Since these events, further 'militant' actions have been taken by similar groups of 'liberation' fighters in Mannar. The killing of three Islamic Tamils, identified as informers rightly or wrongly, but in their selection of the site for execution — Mosque — definitely wrongly, combined with other factors such as the Sri Lankan government, waiting and creating opportunities to drive wedges between different sections of Eelavar, has created tensions between Islamic Tamils and a section of other Tamils in the Eastern province. Meanwhile, Paesalai has become the next proposed Sinhala settlement according to Mr. L. Athulamudali. So, the relevance of the consequences of some of the actions should be explored more carefully be all liberation organisations.

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We shall deal with these questions in greater detail in the future.

### Eelam Refugees

Raising questions which concern the people, and proposing solutions are important functions of a revolutionary, even though the fruits of such good advice seems to be like Veda in donkey's ears. However, this should neither stop that process nor just stop with that proposals. As revolutionaries we should vigorously follow them and further pick-up the pieces left behind by the chaos as well. Thus, refugees and their well-being and perhaps their return to their homes should be our concern.

There are refugees of all kinds, at best living without much hope of a future, but struggling to make ends meet and at worst suffering from all sorts of hardship and terror.

#### (i) In India

According to the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, since the Anti-Tamil pogrom of 1983 alone 100,000 have crossed the turbulent sea in small boats and many now live in the refugee camps in India in sub-human conditions. On their arrival they are taken into big camps such as the one in Mandapam, which was once used by our British colonial masters as the transit point for the transfer of slave labour to their tea and rubber estates in Ceylon. Once the administrative formalities are finished, they are split into small parties and dispersed to various small make-shift camps all over Tamil Nadu. Inadequate sanitary facilities consequently appalling hygienic condition are painfully evident, while transparent saries provide the only form of privacy, serving as partition walls between families — many among them have more than ten members — within these large buildings, from which they are forbidden to leave for various reasons. Indian Central and the Tamil Nadu State governments are endeavouring to care for these unfortunate, needy people, yet it is impossible for them to provide even the basic facilities or protect completely, the Asia's new boat people from their own brand of exploiters and corrupt officials. Several women have been lured into prostitution by organised Indian gangs with false promises of jobs in Bombay or elsewhere, and the money designated for each refugee family does not reach them in full amount either.

The rich and the well-off who came to India, in all sense and purpose have plans and hopes unlike those in the camps. Many of them have invested their money in businesses and other have settled-down comfortably in leased or purchased houses with money sent from Europe or West Asia. They send their children for higher education for which full payment of the tuition-fee is required. Very few of them seem to have suffered directly from the military repression, physically or mentally or materially and usually are apathetic and insensitive to the Eelam struggle itself, compared to those in the camps, but only too willing to use the situation to their advantage.

#### (ii) In Eelam

However, those who are in camps in India, though they have to be contented with intolerable conditions that exist, still are in an enviable position to the eyes and ears of those in the refugee camps within the borders of Eelam. They neither receive Sri Lankan government help, nor enjoy the sense of security one feels among our Tamil brethren of Tamil Nadu. They rely exclusively on the self-help groups such as their local citizen committees for food, shelter, clothing, etc. while the Sinhala armed forces are evermore prepared to brutalise them to subside their anger and frustrations. Recently in Urani, a village in the North, 75 youths aged between 10-25 from a refugee camp, were forcefully bundled into a building and were blown to pieces, with mines by the Sinhala armed forces.

The number of internal refugee camps are on the increase at an alarming rate, a process the Sinhala chauvinist government intent to escalate, to contain the Tamil resistance — which they plan to achieve by eventually allowing the refugees to return to bandustan style settlements situated between strategically located new armed Sinhala colonies. Which is also a process inadvertently aided by the calamitous rationale of some of the freedom fighters.

More than 100,000 ordinary people from Mullaithivu, Trincomalee areas are in such camps and a similar number in the Northern Peninsula, now made into virtual spectator-hostages by the vicious cycle of violence without objective aims. In addition another 30,000, mostly of the fishing communities, forcefully evicted from their home after the creation of exclusion zones by the Sri Lankan government, are in refugee camps in the North prevented from their normal life. In the Eastern province further 100,000 are made homeless after the clashes between the Islamic Tamils and another section of the Tamils, instigated and enflamed by the Sri Lankan armed forces specially trained in new tactics by the Mossads and SAS. More than 150,000 have asked for either refugee status or political asylum in Europe and West Asia.

#### (iii) The first to arrive in India

In reality refugee problems did not start just now, but, in fact as early as 1964 with the Srimavo-Shastri pact, which condemned more than 500,000 Eelavar Tamil plantations workers as aliens to Ceylon and ensured the continuation of their misery in the camps in India. Most of them were resettled not in Tamil Nadu, but in other states such as Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. These people are still fighting the gigantic bureaucracy of India and the mammoth siege corruption which has grown out of the system and customs to gain bear minimum pay and living conditions, from their new alien masters and landlords. Sadly, this situation will continue until the real solution — Eelam — is a reality and the paths are cleared for their return home.

#### Expectations of Eelavar from expatriates

So, as Eelam expatriates do we stand idle and close our eyes to the misery and hard-

ship our brethren endure or take active steps to prevent further tragedies and to alleviate some of their difficulties? Are we simply going to contribute or really participate in the struggle of our people? Do we forget our moral responsibilities towards our kins and our beloved motherland, thereby of the Eelam struggle itself? Do we forfeit our moral duty of caring for our people and thus, the direction of the struggle to a few individual wheeler-dealers, who step in and out of our historic struggle like an English aristocrat armed with wellington boots, stepping into a muddy field, using the sacrifices of the cream of our people as though the blood they spill is like water from a tap — of which they assume to take control — while never paying heed to the philosophies and stand-points for which the blood is spilt? NO.

Every pound 'splashed-out' to a liberation organisation, directly or indirectly, finds it way in spilling blood. Therefore, nobody could wash away their moral responsibilities with the contribution they make. They should be prepared to face or question the consequences in relation to the objective aims as well.

*Sacrifices are not only made by those who pledge their lives to the Eelam struggle but, also, by those innocent civilians who had no choice on that matter. Eelavar, wherever shall they live has the right to participate in the struggle even ones ownself isn't spilling blood, simply because the Eelam struggle is not about those who are fighting but, of the people — whose well-being is everyone's responsibility. After all it is the ordinary people who are in the refugee camps and it is on their lives the Sinhala armed forces drench their blood thirst. It is them who are running on the roads and streets of Eelam in total panic, open to attacks from all sides even from the heavens, but hardly the 'boys'. It is their bodies that are burnt in thousands in the heaps of tyres brought from Sri Lanka. Therefore, no one can present some abstract concepts of 'Tamil Eelam' and 'freedom' without the people prominently figuring in them, and no one can pretend that all the blood spilt in the massacres as uncalled contribution from the people themselves for some kind of messianic notions. If we want these concepts to become reality or at least hope, people should figure in the struggle much more and should have a greater say in the whole situation. Therefore, no one could deny an active role in the struggle, while no one would dare dismiss the great sacrifices our youth are making.*

It would be rather naive to believe that our expatriate bourgeoisie would sign-away their influences on our struggle, when they are aware of the importance of their financial contribution to each Liberation Organisation, even though many try to present their part as supportive roles. They have conveniently and comfortably filled the vacuum between ideology and practice in each and every Liberation Organisation depending on the vacuum itself, perpetually endeavouring to keep them apart. Some even try to surpass the realm of rationale

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and even simple morality, by drawing-up schemes to destroy or in their words 'to bump-off' small Liberation Organisations with the money they collected for the refugees and other reasons.

#### Specific actions expected from expatriates

Playing an active role does not just mean asking questions but, also fulfilling their responsibilities as well. That means participating in all the demonstrations, pickets, etc, etc to promote our struggle and also to publicise the tragic conditions of our brethren in the homelands. Eelam Solidarity Campaign (ESC) as the only collective body which can achieve both, with wider support from our community here. We must remember, Eelam struggle is not just about rights but about our belongings. Therefore, expatriate organisations, big or small, whether their activities are centred around Eelam struggle or human rights violations, should work within the ESC to create it as the broad forum for the Tamils in this country and as the sharp edges of a sword for our campaigns.

The flow of refugees and the wholesale slaughter of our people amid all the Sri Lankan governments disinformation campaign should be its utmost concern. We, through ESC must campaign for the recognition of our refugees by the United Nation Refugee Organisations and for funds for their survival from its relief agencies. We must also direct our efforts, so that pressure is put upon the Sri Lankan government to persuade them to permit international relief agencies such as the Red Cross or Christian Aid, inside the occupied zones to bring the much needed help for our impoverished people. But, ESC should not become an isolated body, only interested in the regional politics and problems. It should actively support and show solidarity with other campaign groups representing different people's struggle for emancipation in other parts of the world, thus, interweaving ours with theirs to give Eelam struggle a truly international perspective.

Expatriate community cannot rely on the forthcoming help from the outside organisations. Hence, almost all their registered charities have come together under the name HUMANE in order to provide what they could materially, ie, medical supply, clothes, books, etc, and also funds for the refugee camps. It is important that we encouraged such collective approach to a specific problem, which points the way for greater co-ordination in other aspect of Eelam struggle also.

As expatriates, we are in a privileged position, not just blessed with safety and security but, also with the circumstances for having a clear and calm head. If we want to have a constructive not an instructive influence on our struggle, if we were to prevent arbitrators flown from Britain and North America perverting the struggle or fixing

pivotal points on it or preserve it from treacherous activities by individuals such as the one already mentioned, which is sectarian and dangerous, if Eelam is to become a reality not just a rainbow before thunderstorm — an exhibition of trivial power and machoism, we must play an active role. We must pursue a policy of learning, to understand the commonness and the differences between various Liberation Organisations fighting for our homeland. We must constantly seek explanations for the actions, stand-points and the ethics of our struggle within ourselves and form the militant participants of it. That is, we must politicize within as a community to bind ourselves together properly and proportionately and not under abstract concepts which wither away with time.

**We are Eelavar**

**Our language is Tamil**

**Our land is Eelam.**

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refugees in India alone to 100,000 or more. This creates special problems to the Indian Government by straining the already overstretched administrative and financial machinery. What had happened in Mannar was that the Sri Lankan armed forces warned the villagers to leave or else to face the consequences. With the recent massacres of innocent Tamils fresh in mind and forced in to a cul-de-sac by the untimely, unorganised, unplanned, unco-ordinated and indiscriminate acts of violence by the militant organisations who concentrate only on the military aspects of the struggle without proper politico-military strategy, people from the village Pesalai fled the country. Pesalai 'effect' has set in under the combined throttle of economic strangulation and military domination. Pesalai and the villages like it would have, given the time and proper organisation developed into 'balls of fire' that would have with clear vision and proper leadership and direction engulfed the whole of Eelam to create revolutionary fervour and upheaval, today remain empty and a meaningless barren of land. There is a clear indication in the government controlled press and in the State Assembly that these areas would be sealed off. Utterances of Athulathmudali, the National Security minister in the recent past is clear enough evidence that these areas would indeed be sealed off for Tamils and would be settled with armed Sinhalese chauvinist to counter 'terrorism'.

There is no doubt that the racist regime has on its priority list to evacuate many villages and to depopulate several other of youths in strategic areas in order to create 'settlement and security zones'. This is quite in line with their strategy to solve the so called 'minority' problem through forced demographic changes in favour of the

Sinhalesein the Tamil traditional homelands. While the forms and methods of achieving this have changed over the years, the kernel of the strategy has remained the same.

The rich experiences and lessons of the successes and failures of revolutionary struggles the world over are clear enough; that without mass participation of the people, without the acts of revolutionary protest and resistance by the masses against every act of tyranny and oppression by the government, without the masses becoming more and more steeled in the process of revolution through their participation in the process of building and forging an effective alliance of liberation forces, without building effective and indispensable organisations, without achieving ever greater clarity and purpose and direction, without a clear and correct strategy and tactics no struggle can emerge victorious.

What it means is this — as Lenin wrote "The causes of any revolution lie fundamentally in the material conditions of the life of society, in the conflict between the productive forces and the production relations. This conflict finds its expression in a clash between large masses of people, classes, which rise to the struggle under the influence of objective causes that do not depend on the will of separate individuals, groups, or even parties. The Organisations organises the actions of the masses, direct the masses, but does not attempt to make revolution 'for them', with its own forces". He adds further, that an organisation "seeks and finds possibilities for active work among the masses, for an active political struggle, even under the most unfavourable conditions . . . bringing very much closer the hour of decisive battle, and prepares for this battle not only itself, but also the broadest possible sections of the working people."

#### Lesson from Victorious Revolutions

Thus, we can draw two fundamental lessons from the masters of Revolution — Lenin, Ho Chi Minh, Mao, Castro and many others. Firstly, we must organise a well disciplined and centralised political leadership that would accelerate and accentuate the revolutionary process. In other words, they would prepare the masses and be in a position to attune to the nuances of the developing situation and be in readiness to bring the prepared forces forward at the critical time. Secondly, it must be understood that the armed struggle can only be effective and successful when used under the direction of the revolutionary vanguard, but, if employed haphazardly it could be disastrous. It must also be noted in conclusion that any struggle is about politics. Just

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because the armed struggle has become the fundamental form of struggle in our present condition, the role of politics is subordinated to military actions. On the contrary, it is all the more important that politics should reign supreme. In Vietnam if it was the question of military might, the war would have been won by the Americans with all of their advanced technology and weaponry. Oppressed people world over, in their struggle for a just course, have only one powerful weapon; that is the people themselves and their revolutionary strength. It is the duty of the revolutionary organisation to organise the masses to release and harness their purposeful revolutionary strength, to give guiding principles and forms of organisation appropriate to our conditions, and to give appropriate form to armed struggle which will help to organise, consolidate and reinforce the process of organising against oppression and domination.

#### What is the situation in Eelam today?

Are we preparing the masses for that hour of decisive battle? or, are we just waiting for that to come through some mysterious happening as a result of our military actions here and there? In other words, are we hoping that military activities would be the only way to organise the people? Are we or are we not led into believing that we would be 'liberated' by the 'boys' or by one of the major foreign powers, by the major liberation organisations?

Do or do not our military actions help to organise the masses and consolidate them?

We must take stock.

In the current phase of our revolutionary struggle for liberation, we suffer from two fundamental setbacks in our thinking. Firstly, it is that the so called 'big' organisations and their expatriate supporters are infatuated with the idea of 'Guerrillism' — meaning the dogmatic application of guerrilla warfare as the only form of armed struggle that would organise the people, and so much influenced by 'riflemania' — i.e. the idea of 'we can do anything with rifles' attitude. Secondly, in Eelam, due to lack of organisation and owing to our weakness, different groups have taken up arms and adapted guerrilla tactics under the pressure and disorganising tactics of the Sri Lankan regime. In most of the cases these groups pay no attention to the need for organising the masses and set themselves above everything, as the 'masters' of liberation and believe that they, they alone, could settle the Eelam question with their 'own forces' without mass participation. This is not to mean that these groups completely discount the participation of the masses. In their publications they vehemently argue for this. But the question is how to go about organising the people. "Only on the basis of strong political organisations could semi-armed organisations be set up firmly, guerrilla groups and guerrilla units organised which have close connection with the revolutionary masses, eventually to further their

activities and development", wrote Vo Nguyen Giap — the veteran Revolutionary. In Eelam, it is thought by many liberation organisations that it is not the "strong political organisations" that form the basis for guerrilla warfare, but rather the guerrilla tactics — to be precise, the annihilation of the enemy — is the only way to organise the people hoping that people would somehow spontaneously raise to the situation of the last decisive battle. The lessons we learn from bitter experiences prove in Eelam too, as had been demonstrated in many other countries, the fallacy of this misconception. Some of the other organisations who criticise the 'hit and run tactics', also fail to see the need for organising the masses. They believe in raising an army afar and invading Eelam at an opportune moment when the peaceful accumulation of forces would have somehow brought the masses to the revolutionary peak. Like the hit and run tactics, this type of strategy too, has its flaws. We will deal with this in great detail elsewhere in this article. In taking stock of the present situation, it would suffice to say that in every military action of the so called 'big' organisations their disrespect for and mistrust of the revolutionary strength of the masses are articulated. And, complete underestimation of the political work, subjectivism and impatience, failure to see anything other than the military aspects of the struggle are the order of the day.

#### Course of present crises in Eelam

Subjectivism and impatience are the typical products of petty-bourgeois thinking. In north and east of Eelam, the majority of workers have one foot in the land, and where the class differentiations are not yet clearly defined to effectively develop the proletariat a class 'for itself'. The bourgeois is weak and few in numbers. Thus, it is not the bourgeois but the petty-bourgeois who play the major role in the liberation struggle. The working class, though organised and active, do not play an important role in the struggle at the moment. The petty-bourgeois of the north and east in whose hand, because of the historically uneven development of the political struggle, the leadership of the many liberation movements lie, have failed so far to integrate and organise the most important section of Eelavar — the plantation workers. While the important role of the petty-bourgeois cannot be denied, they do not, however, form the vanguard of the struggle, because, as Stalin said they either become proletariat or bourgeois in the process.

The underlying cause of the present crisis in Eelam struggle is precisely this subjectivism and impatience which are characteristic of petty-bourgeois thinking and the 'vanguardism' they promote. In a country where the bourgeois democracy has failed to further the struggle because of its inter-contradictions and communalism, at this juncture of our struggle the need for a working class, peasant alliance leadership with the revolutionised petty-bourgeois playing a major role has become all the more evident.

#### Organise or perish

The present crisis in Eelam is something that no one can ignore. We must learn from our mistakes and learn to turn the failures into successes. But, how?

It is either we organise or perish. This is what the future holds for the Tamil Speaking People in Ceylon.

Organising needs patience and a cool-headed approach. This necessitates knowing how, as Vo Nguyen Giap put it "to give to the struggle the forms appropriate to the political situation at each stage; to maintain correct relation between the forms of political struggle and those of armed struggle in each period." This is to do with carefully estimating the subjective conditions and comparing the revolutionary forces with the counter-revolutionary forces. This is also to do with carefully setting out guiding principles based on sound revolutionary theory for the work to be carried out and for forms of organisations at each stage and level. In essence, we must work for a deep and wide political movement among the revolutionary masses, if our revolution for national liberation is to triumph.

EROS always emphasised that politics should reign supreme. This is not to mean that we would pay no attention or ignore armed struggle; on the contrary, our struggle cannot be victorious without the appropriate form of armed struggle interlacing every activity as an organising and consolidating agent. To put it in a different way, we know that in our condition the "political power comes out of the barrel of a gun" and we also know as Mao said, that "politics must always command the gun" because every bullet that is fired takes a political line. And, every political mistake is immediately translated into "the language of blood and death". We say this and stand by it firmly because our revolution, as any other, is all about the people and their politics, therefore it must involve all the people. This is possible only through the political mobilization of the people. How? We will deal with this in our next issue.

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of Lebanon. In the latter objective it failed. Encouraged by Israel's advance into Lebanon, the South Africans have invaded Angola anew and are not holding on to their positions in south Angola, just as Israel is maintaining her positions in south Lebanon. In Lebanon Israel applied the strategy that Gen. Haig, through 1982, was advocating in relation to Central America — 'going to the source'. It was in these terms that Richard Allen, US National Security Adviser, defended Israel's forays into Lebanon: 'Reaching to the source is generally recognized as hot pursuit of a sort, and therefore justified'. Claiming Nicaragua to be the 'source' of the Salvadorean insurgency, the United States, starting December 1981, has been practising the same approach in Central America.

to be continued

# Israel's role in the Third World (part 2) Israel's Method

By Jan Nederveen Pieterse

'Demonstrations in the first months of 1982 resulted in more Arab casualties than had fallen in all previous 15 years of occupation.' At the time, settler vigilantes became more actively involved in doing the 'dirty work' of the occupation, displaying greater brutality than the IDF in forcing the Palestinians into submission or departure.

Rabbi Meir Kahane and the Kach party, Gush Emunim and TNT may be dismissed in Israel as a 'lunatic fringe', by contrast to the rationality and moderation of the Israeli mainstream; yet they echo the same themes that are upheld by the mainstream, and differ only in that they advocate more drastic variations on them. In a poll of September 1981 only 19 percent opposed continued colonization of the West Bank. Kahane, in 'They Must Go', meaning Arabs, is voicing but more loud and shrill the same demographic problem that has been the continuous preoccupation of Israeli administrations: 'Should we allow demography, geography and democracy to push Israel closer to the abyss?' Kahane is advocating overtly what at least a part of Israeli power structure has been practising covertly. As recently came out in trial, the bombing attacks on three Arab mayors in 1980 involved Israeli Army officers in the West Bank military government as well as leading rabbis in the settler movement connected to the Tehiya Party. 'It is quite safe to assume', according to Adam Keller, 'that until mid 1983 a clear government policy of benevolent non-interference with the terrorists was followed'. Prior to the trial, Prime Minister Shamir warned: 'don't touch our messiahs who are creating historical facts for generations to come.'

An environment where the demographic obsession looms so large, founded on the conception of Israel as a Jewish State, constantly replayed as Likud's favourite melody, an environment where sectarianism is promoted as state religion, is an environment that nourishes extremism. The theme of race ('demography') is being replayed so as to avoid dealing with questions of class, in particular the slumbering issue of the discrimination of the Sephardim (Oriental Jews). The Sephardim are being used as a pawn in the game, put to sleep with a cult of Jewishness as a substitute for justice, and lured into thinking that they should obtain the justice that the Ashkenazim would not give them at the expense of the Palestinians. Thus they are tempted into the West Bank settlements as it is there that they are offered the better housing that is not available to them in Israel. In opting for the 'strategy of tension' Likud is the more extremist party,

but in fact it is following in the footsteps of Labour who led the way through the deliberate creation of a siege mentality in Israeli society. As Moshe Dayan said about the 'reprisal actions' of the fifties: 'They ... help us maintain a high tension among our population and in the army'. The Likud has been reaping the fruits of the 'high tension' sowed by Labour.

After this brief review of Israel's methods in her domestic environment, we may be in a better position to assess Israel's contribution overseas and look at the situation of some of the recipients of Israel's security assistance in light of the Israeli experience.

The struggle in Guatemala is rooted in a familiar problem — they wanted the land but not the people. The land, to grow coffee and cotton, not the people, because they are Indians. The majority Indian population has been experiencing loss of land continually through 450 years. Landless, at least they add to the cheap labour pool. When several years ago groups of Indians migrated to the jungles of the North, once oil and nickel and other minerals were found they began to be dislocated from there also, and then not even their cheap labour was in demand anymore. Thus, Guatemala had a demographic problem. Again we encounter a configuration of policies similar as in Israel, involving land, domination and exploitation, population policy, and terror. The military, as part of the oligarchy, looms large in all these spheres, as a landowner in its own right, through military governments, and through methods of population control which involve terror as a strategy, include the wholesale slaughter of entire villages. Following the presidential elections that established the power of General Lucas Garcia in 1978, terror was unleashed, notably with the massacre of Panzos of May 29. At the time, between 1977 and 1981 (the Carter years), Israel was the sole arms supplier to Guatemala. The presence of Israeli advisers, along with Argentinians, was reported in 1981, at the time of the Garcia government's July offensive. Months later, in Israel, General Benditto Garcia, Lucas' brother, chief of staff of the Guatemalan Army, attributed the government's military success to Israel's assistance. He explained: 'We appreciate Israel; we see the Israeli as the best soldier in the world today, and we look to him as a model and an example to us'. A sturdy compliment, considering that the Guatemalan army itself has displayed considerable skill in dealing with Guatemala's 'demographic problem': the number of persons, mainly Indians, assassinated or 'disappeared' is estimated at 60,000 over the past fifteen years, and the number of refugees from Guatemala at 150,000 in Mexico alone, not counting the tens of thousands of refugees inside Guatemala and in Honduras. Since 1981 the emphasis is on 'civic action' as the means to 'pacify the country'; as a *New York Times* report notes:

'Schools and health clinics are built under 'civic action' programs. Unfortunately, large numbers of peasants are often kill-

ed to deny the guerrillas their support.'

A recent development, in conjunction with the 'model villages', is the creation of 'civilian patrols' of villagers coerced into participating in local vigilante groups, a feature that is reminiscent of the West Bank.

Another country with a 'demographic problem' is South Africa. The congruence between apartheid and Zionism has been conspicuous enough to attract the attention of the UN General Assembly (1975). Both South African and Israel have turned questions of land and 'demography' (to abide by the Israeli euphemism) into national obsessions, and devised elaborate systems of repression and discrimination around it. Both view themselves as 'outposts of western civilization', both are wont to claim biblical justification and enjoy the support of organized religion domestically (though not unanimously), both are national security states with a broad emphasis on counter-insurgency and methods of psychological warfare. The parallels extend to the finer print as well, as with South Africa's pass laws and Israel's (stamped with a 'B') and requirements for travel passes in the occupied territories. South Africa's homeland policy exhibits a similar architecture of domination combined with racial arithmetic as applied by Israel; Transkei, for example, is characterized by 'physical fragmentation of territory, combined with ethnic dispersal'. The extensive military, political and economic cooperation between the countries has been frequently reported on; of interest at this point are the parallels between their policies vis a vis their surrounding frontline resp. confrontation states.

Reciprocating South African assistance in the October 1973 was (South Africa sent a squadron of Mirages), Israel sent two dozen officers as experts on 'anti-terrorist' tactics to South Africa in 1974. In 1975 Israeli officers took part in drawing up south African plans for invading Angola. The invasion of Angola in 1975 conformed to the strategy of the 'pre-emptive strike' — attacking guerilla forces in their forays into Zambia and Mozambique. But the South African invasion was not just aimed against SWAPO bases but in fact at Luanda, in order to install UNITA in the centre of power; in this objective it failed due to Cuban intervention. South Africa's efforts to make Angola pay a high price for its support of SWAPO and to remove the ANC from neighbouring countries, are similar to Israel's efforts to drive the PLO out to Lebanon. As South Africa sponsors the MNR in Mozambique and, jointly with the CIA, UNITA in Angola, so Israel maintains a presence in Lebanon through the 'Army of South Lebanon' of Major-Gen. Antoine Lahd (the successor of Maj. Haddad); moreover, since 1976, Israel has been supplying the Falangists with arms. When Israel went into Lebanon in June 1982 it was also with a dual objective, to destroy the institutional bases of the PLO and to push through to Beirut to see, with US backing, to the 'Falangisation'

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The concept of declaring Indian ocean as a nuclear free zone, during the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference in 1971, assuming further dimension as the creation of a Peace Zone in the Indian ocean area at the U.N. General Assembly the following year, has unfortunately been prevented from being given shape and content by the powers that have already converted the region as a theatre of naval superiority. The looming dangers from the sea lords of the super powers have made the hard won independence of the littoral states in and around the Indian ocean, a near farce.

Not content with the presence of American bases in Diego Garcia and permanent presence of fleets of USSR, Britain and France in the region, member countries of the non-aligned movement, ditching the very foundation of the movement, have invited the sources of threat to help them ward off imaginary enemies. These trends have further heightened the tension in the region and every action by the countries, especially India, to safeguard her territorial integrity and sovereignty is being looked upon with suspicion. The recent action of New Delhi to shift the air wing of its defence forces in the South, to Trivandrum in Kerala, these sceptics view as having a direct link with Sri Lanka's decision to grant refuelling facilities to U.S. naval vessels in the strategic port of Trincomalee and the manifestly close tie it is establishing with that country. Though India had adequately been reinforcing her southern forces in view of the Diego Garcia base, the defence infrastructure has been further strengthened to meet any eventuality that may arise due to the new Lanka-U.S. axis that has been created.

The complete indifference shown by the United States to the call by the Asian nations, especially the Indian ocean states to keep the ocean free of their fleets, further underscored the scant respect that the bigger powers have for the voice and opinion of the smaller developing nations of the third world. In further accentuating the situation, countries like Sri Lanka which once spear-headed the Indian ocean Peace Zone campaign have now not only lost their own voices but have become the voices of Washington. Even in foreign policy, they appear to have jettisoned their non-aligned stance and donned the mantle thrust upon them by the White House and Capital Hill.

When destabilisation of the region is taking place in this manner, the pivotal role of Indian ocean becomes all the important and pronounced than ever before. Countries which are seeking bases here seem to believe in the hoary theory that he who holds the Indian ocean hold the states in the ocean. Thus a new storm is being created in the area.

The Indian ocean, being a third of the size of the globe, occupying almost the combined area of Asia and Africa as the main connecting sea-way between the Pacific and the Atlantic linking Europe with East Africa, South and Southeast Asia, Far East, Australia and Oceania, has been the target of the hungry eyes of the big powers. It is also relevant to note that Indian ocean provides a unique sea route to the Soviet Union, in that is the only sea way that is open to her

# Clouds over India

throughout the year for marine communications between its Western and Eastern regions perennially. Of course the rich mineral deposits and abounding marine foods are not to be under estimated in any analysis of a struggle for a foothold by alien nations in the Indian ocean, nor its oil rich coasts to be ignored.

From the time sails appeared on the horizons of the seas of the Indian ocean, it has been a crucial sea route linking the occident and the orient. Almost a fourth of the entire cargo carried by sea going vessels and two thirds of oil are either shipped or unloaded in ports that dot the Indian ocean. Tens of thousands of ships pass through these ports annually carrying and discharging their cargo, from the 36 states whose combined population makes up one third of the total global population. These nations, bulk of them, belonging to the third world provide 90 per cent of the world's requirement of rubber, tea, tin and jute and in addition possess rich deposits of oil, gold, silver, diamond, uranium, copper, manganese, cobalt, tungsten, sulphur, coal and many other rare minerals.

Little wonder, it is therefore, that the great powers want bases in the Indian ocean as spring boards for their greater destabilisation process of the nations of the third world which have intensified their struggle for greater political and economic independence and to ensure that the nations which have been responsible for all their miseries for the past five hundred years, kept their meddling fingers off these states. But the so-called great powers not to be put off by such 'trivia' as resolutions and decisions of littoral states of this region, continue their violation of the territorial rights of these nations with impunity. Now to aid them, in addition to their known lackeys who have kept out of the non-alignment movement, we also see new faces in that of the leaders of countries, such as that of the President of Sri Lanka, Mr. J.R. Jayewardene, who suffer illusions of bogey of aggression by his neighbour.

It is rather unfortunate that leaders and countries in this region should be so insular in their thinking that in their antipathy towards their neighbours they forget the past history of their countries, where inviting foreigners to settle internecine feuds between warring kings had ultimately resulted in the foreigners establishing their sway over the whole land and making the people serfs and subjects. Now to ward off the problem of Tamil militants, the Sri Lankan leader has sought U.S. help and obtained it. As at all times like that the first casualty was truth and India has been accused of expansionist designs.

The reason why the forces that would wish to see India as a weak naval nation are indulging in this programme of false propaganda is not far to seek. Emerging as the leader of the free nations of the third world

of the Afro-Asian region and setting the pace for the liberation of all the colonial countries in both these continents and even further east and west, India has had to ensure that she did not remain vulnerable in seas as on land. It was indeed fortunate that free Bharat had a man of vision and deep far sight in its first Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. Speaking of the importance of the sea on India's destiny he said "By and large, I think it can be said that even in the past and remote ages, it was the seafaring nations that prospered both from the point of view of power and the point of view of wealth, because of trade and commerce. I do not say that landlocked nations have not been powerful, they have been certainly powerful, for periods at a time, but on the whole, the importance of sea power has been a dominant feature of history".

This fear lurking in the minds of the imperial powers is one of the main causes for their insistence on presence in the Indian ocean. They seem to be afraid that as Nehru summed up, India might prosper both by way of power and wealth. So the charges of hegemony against Delhi, as an excuse for their presence, as if to help other littoral nations in the region.

It is pertinent here to trace the role of Indian navy in its defence since Independence. In 1947, when the Pakistanis invaded Kashmir, the navy was not committed to action; similarly during the 1965 Sino-Indian hostilities, Indian navy did not play any significant role.

However, its role was not equally passive in 1971 when the Indo-Pakistani hostilities broke out. When the Pakistani airforce planes strafed Indian airfields, Indian navy swung into action. Using a large number of obsolete men of war and equally old submarines, missile boats and patrol vessels, it attacked the port of Karachi. Missile boats meant to defend harbours had been ingeniously converted by the Indian navy as attack craft and caused heavy damage to Pakistani naval vessels, causing not only losses but demoralisation among the forces. This was followed by another attack which added paralysis to the demoralised population of Pakistan that their navy was only a show piece not capable of any action to ward off the dangers posed by aged navy vessels of the Indian Navy.

On the east coast, Pakistani submarine Ghazi, which had the longest range had been deployed to sink the Indian troop carrier "Vikrant". But by careful manoeuvre, it was Ghazi who reached the floors off Vizakapatnam, followed by aircraft from Vikrant bombing Khulna, Chala, Mongla, Chittagong and other ports sinking a large number of vessels standing by for the evacuation of Pakistani troops from Bangladesh.

The total blockade of the Pakistani ports in the East which prevented any movement to and from East Pakistan resulted in the ab-

# Indian Ocean

By E. Ratnasabapathy

solite surrender of 97,000 of Pakistani troops to the Indian armed forces.

These exploits of the Indian navy, in spite of its infancy remain fresh in the minds of the foes of India and her adversaries who would like to visualise her only as a country of filth and squalor, of abject poverty and appalling conditions; where nearly the entire population lives below the poverty line and that she has no time for industrialisation or development leave alone, defend her frontiers. India's growing importance has shattered their illusion of their own individual hegemonic designs in the region. These nations which have for far too long made Indian ocean an arena for their games and exercises, had expected the littoral states of the region, who by and large stripped of their stamina and confidence to stand on their own, to crawl on their bellies before the super powers for favours. But this illusion was rudely shattered by the emerging nations of the third world which valued their independence far more important than their development by once again walking into the web of the imperial powers.

The route of the U.S. in Vietnam, the developments in Afghanistan and Iran, ouster of Polpot puppet regime in Kampuchea, the growth of national liberation movements in African continent, putting out of gear of the US backed SEATO and OENTO blocks and similar manifestations were clear indications that the days of the imperialist in the Indian ocean region were over. However, it would be naive for one, more so in the case of a political analyst to believe that the forces which have for centuries exploited the waters, land and their resources would so easily walk away from the area. They continue to ferment tension in the region and make it a hotbed of confrontation by orchestrating enmity between neighbours. Unfortunately for them, some of the nations like India, with statesmen at the helm of affairs have seen to it, that the designs of these powers did not succeed. Nevertheless even though the confrontation between nations are not marked as in other regions, it cannot be denied that they do exist either below the surface, or are inching their way up. For example, it is no secret that Pakistan which is being armed to the teeth by the United States, even beyond its needs and what is worse its capacity is being groomed as a dangerous rival to India. Notwithstanding the F16s and other sophisticated military hardware that Washington is so generously airlifting to Pakistan, it is also acquiring nuclear potential from another of its allies — Peking.

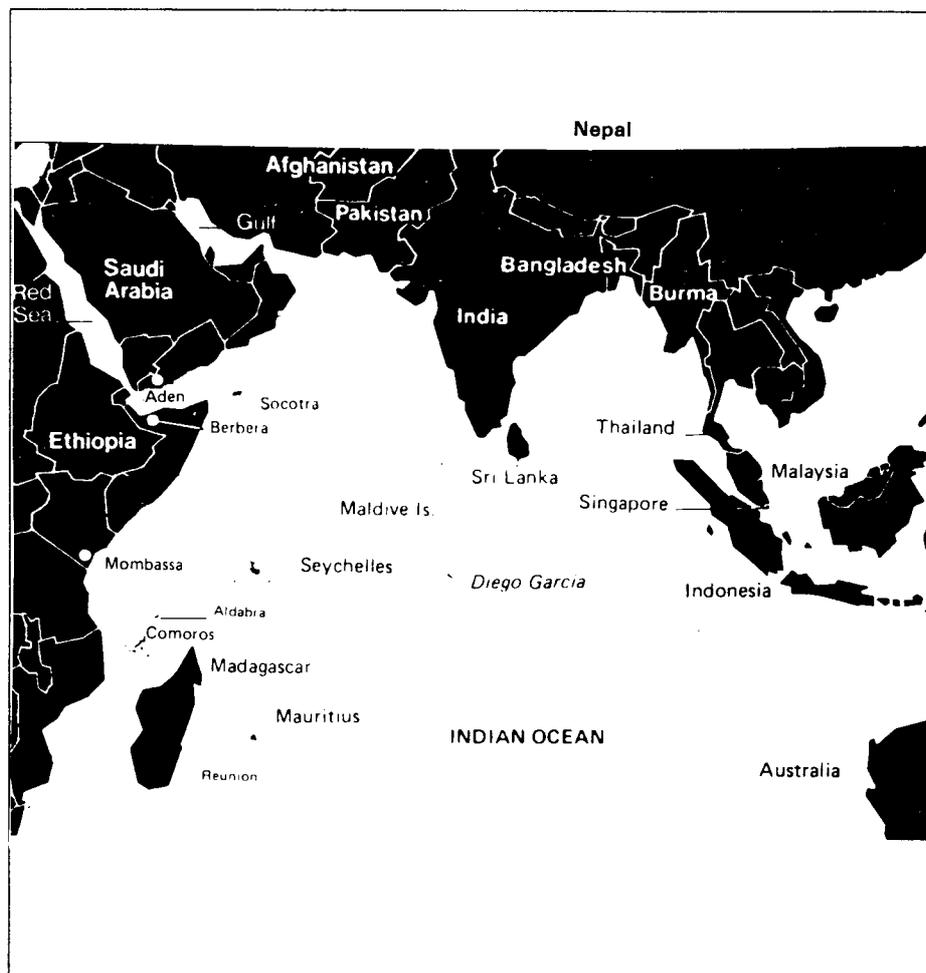
Bangladesh on the East, Nepal on the Northeast are all flash points, the gen for which is being supplied by the powers who want to retain their suzerainty over the Indian ocean. Adding to the membership of this Anti India Club in Colombo, which has now sought and obtained military and technical assistance from Washington. Not

only that it get military intelligence and advisors from Israel and hardware from South Africa. The little champion of human rights, which has spared no words to condemn Israel for its occupation of Palestinian territories and atrocities against the Arabs, and the apartheid policy of the Pretoria regime is now defending itself by saying that as a free country it has the right to get help from any source it likes to fight the Tamil militants without a thought for her neighbours. Perhaps she could, as Colombo had demonstrated in recent months, refusing to pay heed to the saner counsel

foreign policy enunciated by all nations in the region, without exception that they want to pursue a path of non-alignment and want the big powers to leave them alone. To make this a reality, the links of the non-alignment movement have been further strengthened and increasingly they have begun to establish closer relations with socialist countries.

For many centuries, the western colonial powers, viz England, France, Portugal, Holland and Italy and to some extent Belgium held sway over the Indian ocean and its coastal areas. The United States began to make its presence felt since the beginning of the last century.

The resurgence of national liberation movements of the fettered people, in Asia, particularly after the second world war affected a considerable change in the context of the area. The colonial powers which had taken such deep roots that at one time it was



emanating from Delhi and other friendly capitals. But the question is what would it cost other nations — her invitations to powers which the other nations are trying to keep out of the Indian ocean peace zone. A moot point, which need deeper understanding to both the Sri Lankan and the regional problems, vis a vis the Peace Zone proposals.

Nonetheless, by and large, the consensus among the nations in the region is that it should be kept free of alien sails. The economic policy adopted by many nations in the Afro-Asian region goes to show that they are determined to end their dependence on western aid or markets; similarly the

believed that they will never be thrown out of these areas, were bundled out one after another from their overseas 'possessions'. In their places emerged young, energetic, ebullient independent states, taking their place among their quondam masters as equals in the comity of nations. The declaration of Djibouti as independent state on June 27th, 1978 marked the last vestige of colonialism in the Indian ocean and flags of foreign powers had been hauled down from the masts for the last time.

But this did not spell finis to the presence of imperialists in the Indian ocean zone.

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# News Review

EELAM/SRI LANKA

The atrocities of the Sri Lankan armed forces in the Northern and Eastern part of Sri Lanka is on the increase. Every day innocent Tamils are being harrassed, killed, their properties destroyed and made refugees in their homeland. Recently, the Armed Forces, the most undisciplined in the World according to the Time magazine went on killing sprees in the North and East of the island. Following the attacks on army convoys in Karavetti, Thikkam and various other places the armed forces have increased their retaliation against the innocent Tamils. In one village alone seventy youths between the ages of 16 and 25 were packed in a community centre and burnt alive. Similar attacks on innocent Tamil Speaking People had also been reported.

Following the attack on Karainagr Naval Base in which both the militant youths and the navy suffered high casualty, more than 2500 houses were reduced to ashes in Karainagar, 50 innocent Tamils killed, and more than 20,000 people made refugees by the actions of the armed forces.

The pressure put by the militant youths on the armed forces has acquired a new dimension. The attacks on army camps, naval bases, and the ambushes on army convoys are becoming more daring and the individual military operations are more successful than ever before. While this so, the retaliatory measures by the army, and the collective punishment'' the army imposes on innocent Tamils are also on the increase. Within three weeks more than 300 people were shot dead by the army. This is causing concern amongst the Tamil Speaking People. People are being alienated and made pure spectators by the modus operandi of military actions by some of the major Liberation Organisations and the "collective punishment" that follows them. Many wonder if the present strategy adopted by these Organisations is correct.

Commenting on the present situation, the spokesman for Eelam Revolutionary Organisers says "We do not believe in 'hit and run' tactics as the only way to mobilise the people. In fact, instead of mobilising and organising the people it has demobilised them. This is the bitter experience that we draw from the state of our revolutionary struggle for Liberation. We, too, believe that means justify the end. But the end should be the people and not the institutions or organisations or military operations. Our aim should therefore be to carry out military actions which should act as agents to mobilise people, disperse the enemy, not allowing the enemy to concentrate its forces in one area. Our objective must be to create self-defence centres, fortified villages, no-go areas, and self-sufficient economy — in essence to create alternative power centres. This needs time, effort and organising. In the meantime our military strategy should be to cause striking blow to the economy of

the enemy and to bring about a psychological set back to armed forces. In essence our political and military tactics should be subversion and sabotage. Considering the developing changes in Eelam and Sri Lanka, we believe there is an urgent need for a coordinated military activity between all the Liberation Organisations. We believe in this firmly and are working towards its fulfilment. Our activities are in accordance with our strategy as it would be clear from our recent SPRING CAMPAIGN."

## Second explosion in Colombo within a month

A bomb exploded near the Sri Lanka army headquarters in Colombo on Monday night 30th of April, shattering window panes of several buildings in the vicinity including a luxury hotel. The bomb blast damaged the accounts and legal department at army headquarters. It should be noted that this area has been designated as high security zone. The explosion was heard 7 miles away. A new building in the neighbourhood had two gaping holes on its walls. This bomb blast came within 48 hours of National Security Minister Lalith Atulathmudali's statement in parliament that EROS was planning to explode bombs in the capital.

This was the second explosion in the city in April. On April 10, a bomb exploded in a railway station near the international airport on the eve of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's visit. The bomb blasts occurred in spite of the tight security, according to government officials.

## Army attack on Eelam Revolutionary Organisers' camp thwarted

It is reliably understood from the spokesman for Eelam Revolutionary Organisers that a commando attack on their camp at Koduvamadu, Maddakalappu was successfully repelled. Commando unit of a strength of 45, led by S.I. Veeratunga in two military trucks descended on the camp on April 3, 1985. The first truck was blown to bits by the mines placed strategically with the safety of the camp in mind. The second was ambushed by the revolutionaries and Mr. Veeratunga was arrested. Together with the three informers who led the security forces to that attack, 36 commandos were killed, without any casualties to the revolutionaries. A number of weapons of the types S AK47 and M16 and enough ammunition were captured. It should be noted that this was the first time a camp of this nature was successfully defended without any casualties to the civilians or any Tamil militants. This is because it was not a planned attack but an 'opportunity ambush' in self-defence and the location of this confrontation was in forest not a village or town.

## ... Operations to relieve tensions in the Eastern Province

While government instigated violence between Islamic and Hindu Tamils was raging in the Eastern Province, Eelam Revolutionaries were actively engaging themselves in defusing the situation.

Since Mossad and SAS trained intelligence security forces were found to be in the forefront of this deep-seated conspiracy, to divide the Tamil speaking people, the Eelam Revolutionary Organisers have directed their campaigns in dislodging the fears and tensions created in that region. Apart from bringing the local Hindu and Islamic leaders together to discuss and to expose the government intentions, they have also carried out military operations in order to create conditions for such a process. The ambush on a police commando unit at Koamari, Ampharai — a Sinhala enclave created by the government through armed colonisation programmes, aimed at isolating the Tamil people — was one such operation.

This ambush happened on April 25, 1985, in the forests which surround Koamari, on the highway to Akkaripatthu — around which armed Sinhala colonisers are firmly entrenched. Police commandos lost 26 in their ranks and the revolutionaries returned their bases without casualties and with captured weapons and ammunition.

## Against the tourist industry in the east coast

In a carefully thought-out military operation Eelam Revolutionary Organisers managed to put a certain end to the tourist industry in Trincomale — once a British naval base, of which facilities are now used by the USA.

Trincomale is being developed since 1945, as the bastion of Sinhala colonisation into Tamil areas, to bring about the necessary demographic change to this strategically located place, in order to cut-off the Northern Tamils from those in the East. Armed Sinhala settlers, paid informers and the stranglehold of the armed forces have been hindering any political work by the Tamils. Tourism is part of that Sinhala chauvinist strategy, catered for by the hotels and businesses built on the lands confiscated from the Tamils. Most of the tourists come from Australia, USA and Europe searching for coves and atolls for exotic sports such as scuba-diving, surfing, etc; but the beach resorts have become popular among the normal tourists as well.

The military operation though targetted at the tourist industry, it was also designed to deliver a psychological blow to the repressive forces and further, as a tonic to the Tamil people who have been harrassed and terrorised. The attack was carried out at Kuchivelli, on May 9, in which 4 police com-

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mandos were killed and more than 10 injured. Later, the explosion caused by the revolutionaries caused extensive damage to the properties near by and created a crater big enough to bury a whole truck.

### Eelam revolutionaries disrupt massive Sinhala colonisation programme

The rational and constructive strategy of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisers, employing sabotage of the Sri Lankan economy as the primary military tactics, while organising the masses and creating a revolutionary rear, though promised much with the Oberoi bombing, while receiving set-back in an attempt to blow up the oil refinery at Sapugaskande, is now clearly emerging successfully in pointing the correct path to follow to all freedom fighters to forward the Eelam struggle. The attacks on the tourist industry in Tricomale and the Zachary-Dillingham irrigation projects have rendered the frequency for their strategy, to present itself as the correct form of approach, when all the conditions of our struggle are considered.

Zachary-Dillingham project is a section of the Mahaweli Development Scheme, to colonise Eelam areas with 200,000 Sinhala settlers — many of them would no doubt be armed — and located between Polonnaruwa and Manampitiya. It received its name from the US consortium Zachary-Dillingham, which undertook the project, with the approval of its government, even though US officials knew of the Sri Lanka's real intentions and the conflict of Eelavar with that inherent chauvinistic design.

In a two-pronged attack on May 19, against the field camp of the construction team, which was made up of 49 Americans, their 51 dependants and 22 others of European origin, no casualty was caused to the team itself, but, to the security force, of whom several died. The foreigners were 'persuaded' to leave the area and are now said to be in the consortium's guarded base camp, located 10 miles south-east of Polonnaruwa. The project and all machines were destroyed soon afterwards.

For logistical purposes a security post near A11 road at Manampitiya was attacked by another unit of the revolutionaries, who overran the post and held it until it was necessary, during, 6 security forces died and 8 seriously injured. Revolutionaries also captured and secured the nearby rail bridge across the Mahaweli River. All participated in the attack returned to their bases safely. On the following day 11 more soldiers died and several were injured, while pursuing the revolutionaries into Eelam.

The continuation of the project now depends on the Sri Lankan government's determination to pursue its policy of bringing demographic changes to that area and also of the willingness of the consortium to participate in that conspiracy, perhaps while

endangering the safety of its individual members.

### West German built propaganda machinery blasted

The importance of the media in a Ceylonese life and the governmental control over it, is well understood by all, especially by Eelavar, since the powerful disinformation campaign waged against their struggle for justice and peace has an unprecedented adverse consequence. The majority of the newspapers are either owned by the government or its UNP supporters and the oppositions' papers either closed down or silenced through various means, while the news itself is entirely censored by the government. The radio and TV networks are also owned by the state, thus, the whole of the media becomes a monstrous tool for its propaganda purposes. This situation is further aided by the western governments, especially by West Germany which built the Deutchwelle radio station in Trincomale, for it, which has spent several million Deutchmarks. The propaganda activities are further heightened and internationalised by the Sri Lankan government's agreement with the USA in allowing the Voice of America to build yet another radio station in the same vicinity, to bring yankee imperialism with its coca-cola civilisation to the nations in the Indian Ocean and to destabilise the region.

Preventing such imperialistic designs and countering the Sri Lankan government's vicious disinformation campaign and severing its organs — whoever have created and maintained them — are responsibilities of Eelam revolutionaries who are also true internationalists. Thus, the destruction of this West German sponsored propaganda machinery should have been well anticipated by many. In an attack on the radio station on 6 June 1985, Eelam Revolutionary Organisers completely destroyed the tower and the buildings and took away transmitting equipments worth thousands of pounds. All those participating in the operation returned to their bases safely.

### Kaluthurai alcohol refinery burnt to the ground

Eelam Revolutionary Organisers further increased their activities against the Sri Lankan economy and have dealt a severe blow to it, by causing fire with incendiary devices to the alcohol distilling factory complexes at Kaluthurai near Colombo. The factory produces millions of bottles of alcohol, widely known in Sri Lanka as Arack, for export as well as internal markets.

The fire started by the devices on 7 June 1985, completely gutted the main factory premises causing damage worth 3 million pounds or more according to the officials. It is the major attack on a Sri Lankan economic installation and a successful one, resulting in a major fire in a region near the capital.

### An operation to cut-off an armed Sinhala enclave

At this present stage of our peoples' struggle many have attached a label — revolutionary — a terminology they have taken it for granted, just because they carry a gun and prepared to die, but, without a proper understanding of the conditions of our struggle, a rational theory, philosophy and well thought-out strategy.

There are those with new-found Tamil machoism set about in ejecting the Sinhala occupying army, without a care for the consequences to the people and the adversities, constrains on the conditions of the struggle itself, as though it is a matter of courage and will to 'liberate' an empty land, with armed 'boys', casting the people aside; there are those who prepare an army of thousands like our old Tamil kings of Sholas and Pandiyas, waiting for an opportune moment to do the same 'job', while talking vociferously about mass, peoples struggle; and there are those who say everything everyone else says, hoping to be 'popular' by any means, hitting the same target again and again without any relation to what they copy from others around them. But, there are also those who believe in what they say and do, staying steadfast to the principles, philosophies and strategies, not wavering to pressures for greater, exaggerated publicity for their correct actions, thus, believing in the truths and the ultimate qualities of the people themselves, therefore, creating revolutionary villages, alternative power centres, etc., while mobilising them into various fronts and further trying to prevent the total erosion of the conditions of our struggle and care for the people — the victims of chaos and defend the gains with reoluteness.

That is, when Eelam is fast becoming a nation of empty lands, its people driven out to all corners of the world and to refugee camps, one who could fortunately think should question oneself: "Is the Palestinian tragedy going to be repeated to our people in Eelam?"

However, as revolutionaries we should carry-on with our correct activities, defending our land and people from further aggression of the Sinhala chauvinists, according to the strategies we have put forward. Eelam Revolutionary Organisers carried out an attack on the security forces on 26 May 1985, in a Sinhala colonised area near the village of Kiran, situated between Muthur and Batticola, killing 37 of the Sinhala armed forces. Several weapons and enough ammunition were also captured, before the revolutionaries returned safely to their bases.



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### Sinhala Women Support Mothers of North

SAS trained Sri Lankan commandos are not only active in the North in the name of quelling 'terrorism', but also in the South. They are actively involved in 'fighting' the genuine dissent and opposition among the peace loving and progressive minded Sinhala people. Against the growing repressive measures of the authoritative Sri Lankan state workers, peasants, students, and women are protesting vehemently. The University students and Women's Organisations launched a Day of protest on 5th and 8th March respectively. The Student Day of Protest was so successful that it even attracted the eyes of the officeldom. Dayan Jayatilaka makes the following comments in Lanka Guardian, on these events: "The widespread nature of agitation, especially in the provincial towns and the extent of participation by school children could be glimpsed even in the censored press, as could the State's responses."

On International Women's Day, he writes, "There were two mobilizations on that day both of which were violently dispersed by the police indicating the hypersensitivity of the State to any kind of dissent and also the growing significance of the Women's movement as a socio-political

force." Members of the Women's Day Committee who organised the protest, requested police permission to have a procession from De Mel Park to New Town Hall and have a meeting there, on March 8. They were refused permission. In defiance of police orders, about 800 women arrived at De Mel Park to find a heavy contingent of police already there. They were ordered to disperse. In groups, they marched towards the Town Hall shouting slogans. They were tear gassed and baton charged by the police.

In a letter to President, the Women's Organisations have said, "The women of Sri Lanka who endeavoured (on Women's Day) to join the millions of women all over the world received only abuse, foul language, canings, tear gas, threats and brutal obstruction." "Not only as women but as citizens of this country, we strongly condemn the snatching away of our democratic rights and freedom of expression and our right of passage without obstruction on public highways," the letter said.

These 800 or so courageous women representing the Sinhala working women took up on that Day not only the women's question in general but also the question of women in Eelam and their repression as women and as members of an oppressed nation. "Of fundamental importance", Dayan Jayatilaka writes, "is the linkage

between the National Question and the women's question that was made on March 8th. The main thematic slogan of the mobilisation was 'For Just and Fair peace without Repression'. And the grievance voiced by the Mothers' Front of Jaffna were taken up by the Sinhala Women. This was also reflected in the literature that was in circulation.

The Women's Day Committee issued a policy statement in which they demanded that the government immediately stop creating new colonies in Eelam. Among the many slogans on dowry system, maternity leave, cost of living, chanted, there were slogans calling for "Mothers of South to join hand with Mothers of North", and for the immediate halt to the sacrifice of Sinhala "Husbands, fathers, brothers and sons under the cover of National Question."

There is growing awareness among the Sinhala working people, students and women's movement, of the problems of the Tamil Speaking People as an oppressed nation. Like true Internationalists, they voiced their opposition against the military domination and oppression of Eelavar. The violent actions by the government against the Women's mobilisation, and student protests epitomizes the State's paranoia to squash any form of opposition to its policy of oppression.

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Though colonies have disappeared, new dangers not envisaged during the times of colonies are now looming large in the region. They have assumed not only unprecedented proportions, but of a character so invidious in nature that it tends to create a permanent climate of confusion, chaos and confrontation among the countries in the region. It is evident by the calculated moves of the United States, to further strengthen and spread its political and economic expansion among countries in the Indian ocean.

The most blatant form of economic expansion, and we may even call it economic halter that they impose on the countries is the export of American capital. In the recent past American capital has exceeded 12 billion dollars in the Indian ocean area.

Having failed in their political subjugation these super powers are now turning to economic subjugation of the third world nations, especially those in the Asian region with the accent on littoral states. Their economic involvement has become pronounced subsequent to the blowing of the maritime superiority myth of such powers as US and UK. The shameful defeat that US was forced to suffer during the Bangladesh War when, her mighty seventh fleet was held at bay by the maverick Indian Navy was a pointer of greater debacles that they have had to face.

Another of the obsolete, if obnoxious theories that have been blown sky high by the newly independent Nations in the Indian Ocean is the Vacuum Theory, where US very sincerely believed that it will be called upon to fill the hiatus created by the exit of Britain, France and other colonial powers from the Afro-Asian nations. Contrary to Washington thinking and anticipation, US had to retreat even from Vietnam licking the wounds of defeat at the hands of the heroic Ho Chi Minh troops.

Nevertheless, for reasons which were explained earlier, widening the strategical geographical sea lines, the rich deposits of minerals abundance of a variety of crops, oil etc., Indian Ocean countries remain a big draw for big powers. The fact that Britain has installed U.S. in the Island of Diego Garcia belonging to Mauritius as if it were some heirloom has further hightened the controversy over the presence of American Naval vessels in the waters of the Indian ocean.

The many parley and conference convened under the aegis of the United Nations to sort out this problem and make Indian ocean a true zone of peace have not been of any avail as the Western nations with hegemonic intention of subjugating the Asian nation either politically or otherwise, do not pay much heed to the voice of the world.

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### Paranoia of the Sri Lankan regime

The Sri Lankan government in its paranoia to quell 'terrorism' view any form of dissent and opposition by the Sinhala working people. In the case of Bank Employees' proposed action of overtime ban in furtherance of their demand for 40 per cent salary increase, the government reacted in its usual manner by declaring the Bank Service an Essential Service.

Following the decision of the CBEU executive Committee to ban overtime, the government decided at a special cabinet meeting it would take strict disciplinary action against those participating in the work to rule. The Prime Minister in his Parliamentary speech said that if Bank employees could not work overtime others would have to be recruited for that purpose. He appealed to MPs to have such people ready so that the banking machinery would not break down. In fact several ministers have gone on record as saying that strikes, overtime ban, and work to rule should be considered as anti-National activities to sabotage against the government at a time when it is engaged in combating 'terrorism' in the Northern Provinces. "In view of the government's invocation of emergency regulation to impose harsh legal impediments" the executive Committee of the CBEU decided to suspend the overtime ban.

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There is no doubt that the government considers every agitation, and every opposition that take place in the Souths being connected with Eelam struggle and thus, anti-patriotic. The true nature of the Sri Lankan dictatorial regime is being unveiled every day by its undemocratic activities. Like Eelavar, Sinhala people are also in danger of being driven into destitution, poverty, misery, and under the rule of general military domination and oppression.

### In Parliament

In parliament on 22nd March, speaking against the 23rd extension of Emergency, Sarath Muttetuwegama said that the people had the right to agitate for their rights. His party, he said would support the move of the Indian Government to help the Sri Lankan government to bring the situation in Sri Lanka back to normal. But, he asked whether the government wished normality to be restored. He said that like begger's score the prolem of 'terrorism' was essential for the very survival of the government.

The government had failed, he said to combat the situation under the normal laws of the land. The government was selling the country to multinationals.

One thousand acres had been allocated to set up a voice of America. When land was allocated to multinationals in that manner and a separate State was demanded by Tamils was there any difference between the two process.

### Sri Lanka's Anti-people "democracy"

It is not democracy as one would perceive in the West that is prevalent in Sri Lanka but a new system of "controlled democracy" in which the President has all the dictatorial powers.. The new Universities Bill is one amongst many that provides a snapshot of this "controlled democracy". It is an act that has all the political implications of dismantling the "Free state education system" in which we have so much pride. This bill has all the signs of consolidation of authoritarianism of the government under the direction of its masters, IMF and World Bank. The bill makes provision to prevent the university's decision to challenge in the court. The minister concerned has the power in this Bill to revoke any decision and he does not have to give any reason for doing so.

Introduction of the private Medical School in 1981 was only the watershed in the process of privatisation of education. Following the introduction of the private Medical School Sri Lankan government introduced a White Paper on Education in 1982. In the face of mounting opposition to the Bill from all quarters, government shelved the proposal. Present proposal is only a different version of its predecessor. All over Sri Lanka students and teachers agitated to lodge their protest and opposition to the

Bill. In this process more than 200 schools were closed down by the government, and many students taken into custody and remanded.

Even under the system of "free state education", ordinary masses, especially from plantation and other deprived areas were not that 'free' to exercise their fundamental right for education. Yet, they were in a way financing the education system. What would happen to these people under the new system of private University Education? Who will run these universities? Will they be run, as in the case of Colombo International School by the 'fast food' business magnates who are interested only in quick profit and do not give a heed to the wishes of the people.

All the government ministers have drawn their inspiration from their master President J.R. Jayawardena. He had said repeatedly that only by wiping out 'terrorism' in the North and East that a solution could be achieved. No other position would ever achieve the climate to settle the present crises in Sri Lanka.

Just who are these terrorists?

Are the freedom fighters who had been forced to take up arms by the colonial and intransigent policies of the racist Sri Lankan government terrorists? Or, the government which is obstinate in opposing any form of political solution and is bent on pursuing the policy of military domination and tyranny against the unarmed innocent Tamil Speaking People terrorists?

Expressing feelings of the those who are genuinely interested in a solution to present problem, McDonald of the BBC World Service said, in his dispatch that the real intention of the government seemed to that it wanted a military solution to the problem.

### Romesh Bhandari visits Sri Lanka

While the rhetoric utterances of the ministers continue, behind the scene diplomatic hustling and bustling are at work. Diplomatic arena is throbbing with new ideas and proposals. United States of America sceptical about the ability of Sri Lanka to contain 'terrorism' and its economic future had been pouring it's Diplomatic core into Delhi and Colombo to put it's point of view on the present crises in Sri Lanka. India has been putting diplomatic pressure on Sri Lanka to bring about a peaceful political settlement. As a regional power it is in the interest if India to find an amicable solution to the problem. Foreign Secretary of India, Mr Romesh Bhandari visited Sri Lanka recently to have high level talks with Sri Lankan officials about the unresolved National Question in Sri Lanka. While the text of his talks has not been published, it is however reliably understood from various sources that Mr Bhandari's talk with J.R. Jayawardena included the problems of refugees, attack on Indian fishermen, and the fate of stateless

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plantation workers. According to G.K. Reddy (The Hindu Saturday, April 6, 1985), the purpose of Mr Bhandari's visit was to help, create the right atmosphere for defusing the tension, since he did not go to Colombo to engage in any substantive discussions on the nature or scope of the proposed settlement.

### "Peace and negotiated settlement in Eelam"

"Peace and negotiated settlement" is the topic that is most touched on by the government ministers in Sri Lanka today. Practically all the ministers have had their fair share of "peace cracking". Prime Minister Premadasa said in the Parliament that if the 'terrorists' lay down their arms at 12 noon today, at 12.05 the army will return to barracks. Then we can talk about anything we want. He said that after some time an important statement had been made by the Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr Allam Khan. Khan said that violence could not solve the Sri Lanka's problem, if that is so Premadasa asked why did India give refuge to 'terrorists'. He extensively quoted from an article in the "South" by Denzil Pieris and then said if 'terrorism' stops at noon the next day he could give assurance that the troops would return to barracks.

Premadasa and on a similar proposal put forward by one of the many "negotiating" teams sent by Sri Lankan government to assess the mood and feeling of the liberation organisations in Eelam, EROS spokesman said that if the government removed the armed forces from the occupied territories of Eelam then there wouldn't be any so called terrorism in Eelam for it is not against the Tamil Speaking People the so called terrorists are fighting but against the Sri Lankan government which is obstinate in terrorising the Tamil Speaking People into subjugation. Remove the armed forces and concede to the just demands, terrorism will stop, he said.

In an interview to Singapore television on 6th March, Sri Lankan Prime Minister Premadasa said that until India returned all the Tamil militants to Sri Lanka no negotiations or conference would take place between Sri Lanka and India to further initiate and progress the no talks or conference regarding the 'ethnic' problems in Sri Lanka, would take place between the two countries. Tamil refugees in South India and the militants should be returned to Sri Lanka, he urged the Indian Government and added that India should accept these as precondition to any further talks on resolving the 'ethnic' problem in Sri Lanka.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali speaking at a meeting commemorating the anniversary of his appointment as minister for national security said that "terrorism would be wiped out soon.

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We had taken all the steps to do so; recent offensive against the terrorists would prove resolute position to wipe out terrorism." Recently when he addressed a 'peace rally' at Ragala, Ahtulathmudali said "The ethnic prolem and the terrorist menace are two different things. While a political solution is necessary for the ethnic problem the terrorist menace should be suppressed by force of arms." He said further that the economic questions of the Tamils should be resolved without delay but, that would be done as soon as the proper climate was created in the country.

However, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi has made India's position clear in an interview to N. Ram of Frontline magazine. In this interview Mr Gandhi said "We have been in touch with Sri Lanka. Not everything that they say or we have said to them about can be told to you at this stage. But, really, we must consider the long term interest of Tamils in Sri Lanka. A situation must not come about where they will have a problem over a 15-year period or 20-year period. That must be kept in mind by everyone... At the same time we have to see that the atrocities that are being committed by the security forces in Sri Lanka — not totally under Government control — must stop. We have to see that an atmosphere is created where the refugees can go back. We have got almost a lakh now, may be 90,000... It is not that we don't want them here, or want to push them out. This would be the guarantee and mood and confidence. So, we must work towards it." On the question of mode of settlement, whether autonomy or federalism, he said, "that is really something the Tamils and the Sri Lankan government should discuss" and "it is not something that we interfere with to any great degree".

### Racist Regime's Real Intensions

It is interesting to note the speech made by Lalith Athulathmudali at Panadurai. He said that several countries were urging Sri Lanka for a political settlement. Sri Lankan government too wanted a political settlement, he said and that it wanted a settlement along the line of 'self-rule'. Indeed, the government wants some kind of a negotiation because of its bad shape economy and its inability to score a quick military victory in Eelam. But, these negotiations government thinks would give them a breathing space to obtain necessary military wherewithal to modernise its armed forces and to establish firmly its policy of forced demographic change in Eelam so that in the event of any successful negotiation, it would have ensured that the Tamil Speaking People achieve nothing.

From this point of view, the government is currently discussing a proposal to divide Trincomalee district into three districts. According to this proposal the Trincomalee

harbour and the adjoining areas will be made one district. The rest of the present Trincomalee district will come under two new districts — Kantalai and Horawapotana. Muthoor and Kinniya will come under Kantalai district. Recently famous (or infamous) Kokilai and Nayaru will come under Horawapotana district. If this proposal is implemented, it would effectively exclude Tamil Speaking People from any meaningful participation in the administration of their traditional homeland. Lanka Guardian has the following to say on this proposal.

Speculative reports in political circles about a fresh demarcation of districts involving the Eastern province have caused anxiety among both Tamil and Muslim members of the UNP that a top Tamil UNP'er summoned a meeting which was attended by nearly a dozen prominent party members, including two front rank personalities.

Demographic change which is the essence of the new settlement motivating force behind the concept of enlarged districts Horawapotana, Padaviya etc. In part, the settlement plan draws inspiration from General Templar's scheme in preindependence Malaya and in part from the highly controversial Israeli project in the West Bank. In both cases, the demographic changes had a 'counter-insurgency' or 'strategic' component. The main objective is to undermine the "Traditional Homelands" and to isolate Jaffna peninsula.

In a not unconnected move, some influential Muslims who have no formal party affiliations have banded together in a new organisation loosely called council of elders. This is a manifestation of two problems that have begun to worry the muslim intelligentsia that the muslim community is not caught in Sinhala Tamil crunch and secondly that the total identification of muslim politics with UNP may be counter productive. The council plans to send a five member delegation to Madras to discuss possible solutions to the ethnic conflict. The delegation has already met the government and opposition leaders. Interestingly it recommends provincial councils as a unit of devolution.

In furtherance of its policy of undermining the traditional homelands of the Tamil Speaking People through demographic changes, the government has another proposal on its table for discussion. This deals with land settlement of Sinhalese in predominantly Tamil areas, on the basis of ethnic proportion in Ceylon. Lalith Athulathmudali had this to say when speaking at the passing-out parade of 356 Home Guards. The settlement of 200,000 persons between Vavuniya and Elephant Pass with four months military training to protect themselves from 'terrorists' could be carried out despite the opposition from certain quarters (meaning Thondaman). They were

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to be sent there, he said not to attack but to engage in agriculture and if anyone attacked them they would retaliate in no uncertain terms (note the resemblance of Israeli policy in occupied Palestine). He further said, "Taking lesson from history we can end terrorism in a non-violent way when we carry out the land settlement as we have planned it."

Lessons of history are different from what Athulathmudali portrays it to be. It is the history of violence, not non-violence. It is the history of forcing the Eelavar to take up arms to fight for their rights, not 'end of terrorism'. It is the history of domination and oppression, not political settlement.

The real intention of the government is clear. It is not peace they want. It is not negotiated political settlement they want. It is not even an understanding that they want to forge with Eelavar. Rather, they want to 'finish off' Eelavar as a nation. They want complete subjugation of Eelavar. To achieve this, plans have already been laid down. It is the settlement of more than 200,000 armed persons between Vavuniya and Elephant Pass, no doubt, along the line of Israeli policy in Palestine. In Mannar, it is the mass evacuation of Eelavar and settlement Sinhala chauvinists. In the Eastern Province, it is the fresh demarcation of districts.

In the light of what has been going on in Mannar and in Jaffna, one can see that the government has already set into motion the implementation of its plans.

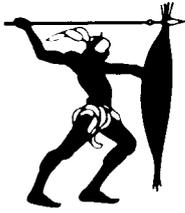
### In the name of Law & Order

Sri Lankan government has been rejecting calls by the Indian government and the Tamil Militants for the removal of the Sinhala armed forces from Tamil areas, in order to create an atmosphere for 'peace talks' to solve the crisis in the Island. It justifies its position, citing 'terrorism' in the land and blaming the Militants for the civilian deaths thus, presenting the situation as a Law & Order problem. However, while the British government claims that the Eastern Province is safe for the Tamils, massacres continue and the culprits always have been the 'security' forces. On June 4, 45 Tamils were slaughtered by them near Trincomalee, after they had ordered non-Tamils off a bus travelling towards Verpankulam.



## NEWS REVIEW

### Mass dismissals and deportations of Blacks in South Africa



More than 17,500 black gold mine workers of the National Union of Mineworkers of South Africa were dismissed from their jobs and many had been already 'deported' to their 'homelands'. 14,400 of them were employed by Anglo-American corporation, the world biggest mining company and the rest worked for another called Goldfields.

After a series of protests, strikes and deaths which marked the workers' strong resistance, the companies have agreed to take 14,000 of the sacked miners back, provided they passed a screening test — to weed out dissident elements, in reality union activists — which was the intention of the companies all along, thus, the dismissal of the workers was a long drawn-out plan.

Gold mine industry is the backbone of the South African white economy, providing 40-50% of its foreign exchange. Like the Tamil plantation workers of Ceylon, who provide the slave labour, in earning 60% of the Sri Lankan foreign exchange, black people of South Africa give their blood and sweat to their white masters and provide the illegal state's kitty the millions, which in turn is used for its repression within, occupation of Namibia and aggression against the frontline states.

The industry employs more than 400,000 blacks, who are considered to be migrant workers from black 'homelands' — patches of barren lands dotted near the borders of South Africa — and live in single sex hostels in mine compounds, where 25 or more are coerced to live in tin huts of 12' x 12'. They earn between 35-15 pounds while a lowest paid white gets a minimum of £140. More than 80% of the whites are employed by the machinery which administers the apartheid system.

800 miners die every year and 28,000 suffer serious injury such as silicosis and tuberculosis (TB). A commission reporting to the racist parliament in the recent past has predicted continuous rise in deaths due to occupational diseases.

Anglo-American corporation is notorious for its treatment of its black labour. Last year 74 died in their Western Deep mine where coal is extracted. When answering questions on miners' safety, its chief safety engineer said "production is more important than safety". It should be noted, all 7 largest mining companies in South Africa are owned by US and British imperialism.

Of course subjugation of black workers would not be possible without the help of the armed forces, which during the strikes between 1973-76 killed 178 miners. The number since then is undisclosed, except for a few here and there.

### Eruption of the people of South Africa

The mass agitation of the black people of South Africa has reached a feverous state, that even the might of the white racist armed forces cannot put down. The white minority state has progressively lost its ability to find 'sophisticated' solutions to their problems in order to preserve white supremacy forever, but to rely on the usual crude methods of torture and slaughter. Daily, they have been killing these defenceless people in dozens everywhere, yet the beautiful people of South Africa seem to have achieved a level of awareness, thanks to the African National Congress and the South African Communist Party, they are willingly sacrificing their lives with dignity, to the bullets fired on by the pathetic whites' guns, which has proven too embarrassing for some whites elsewhere.

So, not surprisingly, even some republican senators and congressmen of the good old US of A have jumped onto the bandwagon, by calling for sanctions against South Africa. Such process has also been initiated in some European countries and as a result a few companies and institutions have decided not to trade with or invest in South Africa.

Though Britain is one of the most important trading partners of the whites in South Africa, only the Greater London Council (GLC) was enraged by the events in that country, that they are selling off their assets worth about 100 million pounds.

### Namibia

South Africa's white racist government has proposed a new plan — a sinister scheme — for an interim government in Namibia which it occupies. It would be in effect yet another puppet regime to safeguard its hegemony in that region. The proposal exclude the participation of the progressive and patriotic forces of South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO) and rejects the UN resolution 435, involving UN supervised election and would retain ultimate executive authority and control of Namibian politics for South Africa.

South Africa demands the withdrawal of Cubans from neighbouring Angola, its territory that still occupies, as a precondition for the independence of Namibia. This is an argument well received in the capitals of the so called contact group countries of the western world. We should remember it was South Africa's white troops which were 600 miles inside Angola during its independence

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struggle with the blessing of these countries and the active participation of Israel, to prevent the MPLA, the ruling workers' party in Angola, coming to power before Cuban fighters started to arrive there to fulfil their international duty, preserve the dignity and the independence of the people of Angola.

We should also note the richness of Namibia, for its minerals such as uranium, on which many of the western countries depend for their nuclear programmes.

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It is therefore become necessary for the littoral nations of the Indian Ocean in particular and all countries of the area in general to make their voices heard loud and clear. For far too long have the colonialists and so-called superpowers imposed their will on us, exploiting our resources and rendering our countries bare; for far too long have they used our lands and waters in the arena for their wars, in which millions of our people have been killed.

We owe a sacred duty not only by the generation that is growing but generations unborn in our region to present to their a peaceful and climate and future; an era when the fear of nuclear annihilation or missile will be furthest from the thought. This will not be possible, so long as giant battleships cruise along our shores, their cannons booming our skies and their submarine destroying our marine culture. It is true that we in this region decide our destinies ourselves and not leave it to those living thousands of miles away.

For these reasons, the Indian ocean assumes an importance as never before since the dawn of history. This region must be free of the battle of great ships of those nations whose intention are far from honourable. Every aspect of the problem only adds to the significance of the same.

And in that respect, there should, analysts believe — focus on the role of Eelam, the newly emerging nation in the Indian ocean in the context of the stances adopted by the Sri Lankan Government in inviting U.S., in defiance of NAM principles and the fears expressed by India over the security of the region. Though Eelam is not a reality yet, in that it has not taken its place among the community of nations, or that its protagonists, have not sought to establish a Government in exile, it is emerging and it is only a matter of time before it seeks its place among the littoral nations of Indian ocean, will as much claim as any other. Therefore needs must it need be included in any analysis of the region, for it will not be less vulnerable than any other nation placed in similar circumstances.

## EDITORIAL

### Negotiation — on what terms?

Speculations about the resumption of "peace" talks between the Sri Lankan government and the Tamil speaking people — Eelavar — occupy the front pages of the government controlled Sri Lankan press. Indian press too, following the recent visit of Romesh Bhandari as a part of the four Nation tour since his appointment, to Sri Lanka and the subsequent heated debate in the Indian parliament on the present crisis in Sri Lanka, boldly declared that the negotiation was imminent. It has been said that Sri Lanka would talk to the militants provided they give up their armed resistance. In spite of massive military means put forward by Sri Lanka, it cannot prevail over Eelam militarily. In fact, its military fait accompli is far from achieving political acceptance; it is causing devastation for its economy. Sri Lanka spends more than 1,000,000 Rs per day in maintaining its armed forces in the North and East. More than fifty per cent of its foreign borrowing is spent on oiling the military machine. Sri Lanka's foreign bankers — IMF and World Bank — have already lodged their grave concern over its inability to contain "ethnic problems" and its failure to curb spending and about the falling tea prices — an industry manned by Eelavar, who live under the most primitive conditions without any political or fundamental rights. Next round of talk with foreign financiers to obtain loans and much needed foreign aid will be soon on the agenda. Finance minister Roni De Mel will soon be touring the Western capitals with his begging bowl. There is no more All Party Conference or one like it to sway the opinion of the international community in favour of Sri Lanka. Its attempt to achieve a quick and snap military victory in Eelam has not materialised. Under these circumstances Sri Lanka wants some kind of negotiation in the pipeline so that it could use this for the purpose of strengthening its position as it had done with the All Party Conference.

What this talk would be all about? Is Sri Lankan racist regime genuinely committed for a peaceful negotiated settlement? These are some of the questions serious-minded Eelam Revolutionaries are asking.

If the track record of the successive Sri Lankan government is anything to go by, then to believe in the proposed

talk would only be a deception. The history of forty years of struggle of Eelavar is full of negotiations, agreements, broken promises, betrayals and deceit. Recent All Party Conference was one such negotiation frustrated, delayed and finally abandoned by the Sri Lankan regime when it had achieved its purpose of overhauling and re-equipping the armed machinery with which it is committing one of the most atrocious and inhuman acts of violence against the innocent Eelavar ever recorded in history. Eelavar are sceptical of any such talks that only be concerned with concessions and cosmetic changes in the administrative structure without really undertaking a genuine effort to solve the fundamental cause of the present problem. No talk can be successful unless it is aimed at resolving the fundamental questions that are at work.

While the Western World characterise it as a refugee problem, the Sri Lankan regime considers it to be an internal terrorist problem which it wants to wipe out. To Eelavar, it is the problem of unresolved national question; Sri Lankan government is obstinate in liquidating Eelam as a nation to establish its will over Eelavar and Eelavar are resolute and determined even at a price of large sacrifices, to affirm their will to secure their destiny.

The terrorism that the Sri Lankan regime ascribe to the armed struggle of Eelavar was forced upon them by the colonial and intransigent policies of Sri Lankan chauvinist regime, that were obstinate in opposing any form of meaningful political solution that would have brought about a lasting peace and progress in the Island of Serendip. Prior to 1977, Eelavar never opted for a statehood of their own. They always wanted to live in a united Ceylon, not as subservients or second class citizens but as equal partners with the same rights as enjoyed by their Sinhalese brothers. Every government in power was ignorant of the genuine demand for equal rights. Armed with the strategy of "demographic manipulation" Sri Lankan chauvinist governments were bent on achieving a "final solution" by depriving Eelavar of their traditional homeland.

Faced with the prospect of total subjugation and oppression and of being vanquished as a nation, Eelavar opted for a statehood of their own and took up arms to fight for their just course of National Liberation. They are resolute and determined to establish their right to self-determination.

Eelavar are peace loving people. In their revolutionary struggle for libera-

tion, they are leaving the door open for a peaceful negotiated settlement. They are not obstinate to believe that a war with Sri Lanka could achieve a political solution. They are firmly convinced that there should be a political negotiated settlement, and they look forward to that day. But, they will not be coerced into accepting a solution by force of arm.

Expressing the feeling and the mood of Eelavar, EROS declares that Eelam is not negotiable. What does it mean?

It means that Eelam is a nation and that it's people — Eelavar — have the right to self-determination. It means the political right to decide their own future, even to the extent of secession. This constitutes the political demarcation of our struggle. This political demarcation cannot be negotiated.

For a lasting solution to the current problems, any peace proposal must seriously take into consideration that Eelam is a nation and that Eelavar have the right to self-determination. Sri Lanka must concede to this irrefutable fact.

In practical terms, it means that (a) all Eelavar have the right to live as citizens of Sri Lanka without any conditions. The fundamental right of the plantation Tamils who form the backbone of Eelam Nation were robbed of their basic rights in 1948, must be restored; (b) Sri Lanka stops forthwith its policy of undermining Eelavar of their traditional homeland.

Then the dialogue between Sri Lankan government and Eelavar could begin in earnest to remove all obstacles for a negotiated settlement on condition that it be approved by Eelavar, in an agreed form of referendum.

This is the only way forward towards a lasting peace and progress in the island. This is the only way to ensure peace with dignity and honour, and without repression.

Until now, Sri Lanka has been blocking the way to a political settlement. Even now, while paying lip service for negotiated settlement it is bent on a military solution. If the government steps up its pressure to undermine the concept of Eelam by bringing about the necessary demographic change by force of arms so that Eelavar will be isolated in pockets of settlement, and will have no choice but to step up their resistance.

If the military solution is difficult to achieve, even impossible, then they will have no other solution but to collaborate with the revolutionaries in Sri Lanka to overthrow the common enemy — the Sri Lankan regime.

The choice is Sri Lanka's.