

Tamil TIMES

85p

Volume VI No.10

ISSN 0266-4488

August 1987



Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayawardene signing the historic agreement.

Why so pale and wan, fond negotiators?

A Sri Lankan sailor struck Rajiv Gandhi with the butt of his rifle as the Indian Prime Minister was reviewing a guard of honour.

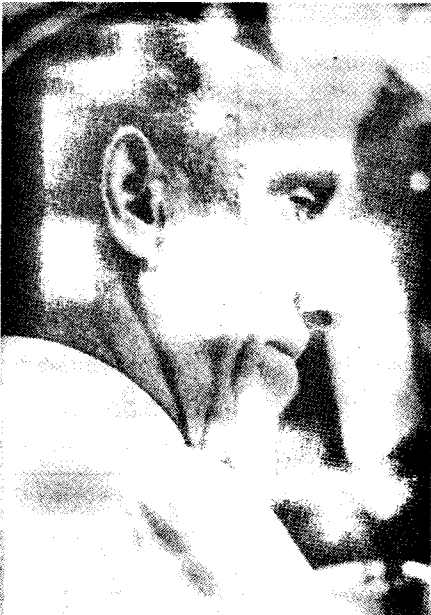


Where is the Minister of 'National Security'?

Colombo's Chronicle of Crisis

NO SOONER HAD the word got out that an Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord was near completion than trouble began brewing in the island state during the weekend of July 25-26. The first of the opposition demonstrations took place on July 27 in Amparai district of the Eastern province, where some 3,500 Sinhalese demonstrated before police managed to control the agitators.

Angry protests erupted in Colombo itself the next day, leading to a 24-hour curfew in the capital. Opposition leader and former prime minister Mrs. Bandaranaike led a sit-down protest in central Colombo and Buddhist Sinhalese monks led some 5,000 people in demonstrations. At least three buildings, including a government ministry and a building housing state-owned newspaper offices, were set on fire and scores of buses, trucks and cars were



JAYAWARDENE: the compromiser.

gutted. Police opened fire after the crowd began throwing stones at them and went on a rampage. At least 19 people were killed and some 120 injured.

The authorities bent on ensuring that the peace accord would be signed as planned on July 29, extended the curfew to cover the whole country. On the morning of July 29, some 10,000 people, including Buddhist monks in saffron robes, gathered on the capital's southern outskirts to march on to the city centre in defiance of the curfew. The crowd broke through police barbed-wire barricades and faced baton charges and tear gas for nearly two hours, before police fired at them, injuring at least five people. Just about that time the air-craft carrying Rajiv Gandhi was landing at the Colombo airport. Gandhi and his party were whisked to the city centre by helicopter amid heavy security.

Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa and Agriculture Minister Gamini Jayasuriya - who have opposed the peace pact - were absent from the welcoming ceremony. National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali remained behind in the Joint Operations Command to oversee the law-and-order situation.

Meanwhile, another crowd of about 1,000 was seen marching from the city to the north headed for the airport. A third group of 500 students were marching from a university campus in the northern suburb of Colombo towards the city centre but were dispersed by police tear gas.

Even as black flags went up in the capital - those who could not find black flags picked up dustbins to show their anger - to protest against the signing of the peace accord, demonstrations and violence were reported from other towns. Demonstrators burned four buses in Kandy, the city that houses Sri Lanka's holiest Buddhist shrine. Violence also erupted in Galle and Matara in the south.

Gandhi's journey to Colombo was preceded by hectic last-minute consultations between Indian officials and the leaders of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the largest of the separatist groups. Four other rebel groups supported the agreement, but the LTTE persisted in continuing its opposition.

On the night of July 28, V. Prabhakaran, the head of the LTTE, met Gandhi for 90 minutes and Gandhi is known to have given him some assurances which were not made public. Indian officials said that as a result of the meeting, Prabhakaran felt that the Sri Lankan Tamil interests would be protected. On his part, Prabhakaran issued a statement after the meeting in New Delhi that the LTTE was now satisfied that Gandhi understood its fears and aspirations. However, the LTTE statement did not go as far as endorsing the pact.

By courtesy of Far Eastern Economic Review, 6 August 1987



GANDHI: the underwriter.

Tamil Nadu contribution

IN JANUARY 1986, President Jayawardene - who was in an expansive mood at his residence during a long interview I did with him for THE HINDU - asked about Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran and his lieutenant S. Ramachandran, and their specific roles in India's "good offices" role in helping find a political solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

Among other things, he wanted to know what 'Panruti' stood for, since he sometimes found it affixed in the Indian press to S. Ramachandran's name. My answers to the President's questions are less important than the fact that he asked questions which related to the political details and nuances of India's policy exercise.

On July 29, 1987, Jayawardene had the opportunity to meet Tamil Nadu's Food Minister S. Ramachandran in Colombo.

MGR's key lieutenant on the Sri Lankan Tamil question - who played a strenuously patient and key role in narrowing the gap between the Government of India's approach and the stand of LTTE leader Prabhakaran on the eve of the signing of the agreement and also in the period immediately following this - was a member of the official delegation which accompanied Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to Colombo. And the Sri Lankan President quickly acknowledged the significance of his being there.

"You are the key man," he is reported to have told S. Ramachandran. He introduced the Tamil Nadu Minister to his wife, saying: "He is junior Ramachandran and this is his first visit". He told 'Panruti' Ramachandran: "You must make many more visits to Sri Lanka. Please don't make this your last visit."

N.R.

Courtesy of 'Frontline', 8-21 August, 1987

TAMIL REFUGEES END FAST

In a statement handed over to the Home Office on August 10, by Mr. Martin Barber, Director of the British Refugee Council, all 51 asylum seekers declare,

"We have come to Britain to seek asylum and to stay with our relatives living in this country during the troubles in Sri Lanka. Since our arrival we have been detained and forcibly separated from our families. Many of us have been detained for more than eight months. Now we are kept on a ship floating in Harwich Harbour. This treatment has cost us unimaginable suffering and distress. We have protested against this inhuman treatment by undertaking a fast which we began on August 1. This action has successfully brought our plight to the attention of the British public. We have received innumerable messages of support for which we give thanks."

PRABHAKARAN INTERVIEWED BEFORE AND AFTER THE ACCORD

OBJECTIONS

Q. What was your initial objection to the accord? Will you be endorsing this agreement?

A. This agreement was totally unacceptable to us. It is called an Indo-Sri Lankan friendship agreement, but it deals with the Tamil ethnic question. And it was drafted without consulting the Tamil representatives. So, we had rejected it.

Q. Has your attitude to the agreement changed after meeting Rajiv?

A. Last night, we had a one and a half hour long discussion with the prime minister and we have reconsidered our objections to the accord because Mr. Gandhi took serious note of our reservations.

Q. What were the specific reservations that you raised and what was Mr. Gandhi's response?

A. We raised the point about the referendum. But Mr. Gandhi pointed out that there were several clauses with regard to the referendum as for instance that it can be delayed at the discretion of the President and that the displaced Tamil refugees will have to be rehabilitated first. So all this will take time and he told us not to take it too seriously as India would handle it. As to our main objection about disarming, Mr. Gandhi understood our problems and practical difficulties - it took us 12 years to build this organisation and it just can't be dismantled in 72 hours. He appreciated the fact that the procedural elements and time factor posed serious problems. Basically we have laid down two suggestions for our disarming - one that the Sri Lankan army withdraws their camps in the north and east and second that a working arrangement is made on ground that would ensure the safety and security of the Tamils. Unless the working arrangement is established the question of disarming doesn't arise. We pointed out to Rajiv Gandhi that we are the protective force for the Tamils and if this protective force is removed then the Tamils are vulnerable to an indisciplined army. Mr. Gandhi said he'd raise our suggestions with Mr. Jayawardene. I've also said that I must go back to Jaffna for consultations with my area commanders and assure them and the Tamil people about the accord paving the way for a political solution.

Q. So if an Indian peace-keeping force is sent in, the LTTE ceases to be a military organisation. It would be the end of the Tamil armed struggle.

A. The disarming cannot take place immediately. There are so many things that need to be done first. We will take decisions about our future strategy later.

Q. So your position is not fundamentally different from the other groups.

A. We can't be compared. The other groups have no problems about disarming because the LTTE has disarmed them. I think the difference is that India has realised that without the LTTE the accord won't work - that's why they took the decision to consult us albeit at the eleventh hour. See, earlier Indian officials came, read out an agreement asking us to sign it. That was unacceptable. The door to consultations had been closed but Mr. Gandhi opened it and took a serious note of our reservations. That has brought about the fundamental change in our attitude to the accord in the last 24 hours. Our

ultimate objective is to ensure security and freedom of our people.

Q. It was being said in Indian official circles that the LTTE had unofficially agreed to the accord but that, as you have taken a stand on Eelam, you were registering a token protest.

A. I am a man of principles. I also have the trust and faith of my people. If anyone had said that we had unofficially agreed to this accord, it's a lie.

Q. Don't you think this accord signals the end of the Tamil resistance.

A. The objective of the accord is to put an end to Tamil resistance. We can't say at this point when the objective will be achieved. We will have to wait and see.

Q. What will be LTTE's role now?

A. It's for the people to decide.

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THE OBJECTIONABLE CLAUSES

Q. What exactly are the issue that you find objectionable in the accord?

A. It is being said that three of the four cardinal principles which we enunciated at Thimpu have been met. It is not so. Take the question of homeland. Certain sentences have been introduced in the agreement which have far-reaching implications. For example, the Northern and Eastern provinces have been defined as the area of "historical habitation of Tamil-speaking people. . . who have at all times hitherto lived in this territory with the other ethnic groups". In one stroke, the agreement justifies the illegal Sinhala colonisation in the east for the last four decades. How can we agree to this? Secondly, we are not recognised as a nation of people. Tamils are described as one of the ethnic groups. It ignores the fact that we constitute a separate nationality.

Thirdly, the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces is temporary, conditional and interim. The President has the power to decide on the referendum. Four of the five members of the committee monitoring the referendum will be appointed by the President and the fifth is from the Eastern province. There are no Tamils at all. And the outcome of the referendum is based on a simple and not two-thirds majority. Due to the aggressive colonisation, Sinhalese and Muslims together form 60 per cent of the population.

But the most crucial point on which we are rejecting this agreement is the point about giving up our arms. This is tantamount to

surrender and not return of arms under a mutual agreement. There are 200 army camps in the North and East - What happens to our people if we surrender our arms? Once we are disarmed, the Tamil armed resistance will be brought to an end. It is only because of our armed struggle that the Tamils have been saved from total annihilation. We are the only deterrent force - if this deterrent force is removed, our people become defenceless.

NEW DELHI'S POSITION

Q. If you had all these objections, why did you agree to come to Delhi?

A. If we had been shown this agreement in Jaffna, we wouldn't have come to India at all. It is only when we came here that we found that India and Sri Lanka had already come to an agreement, which I am now supposed to

endorse. It was a calculated plan to persuade me to come so as to give the impression that I am a party to it.

Q. But didn't Puri brief you on this agreement when he met you in Jaffna?

A. He told us that Jayawardene had come up with a 'wonderful package' and that he had agreed to merge the North with East, that Tamil would be an official language and that they had agreed to the question of homeland - he didn't use that word. He said that land settlement and law and order would be with the provincial council. Puri also said "the December 19 proposals should be thrown into the dustbin". He made it amply clear that he was talking about an altogether new set of proposals. And I was asked to come to Delhi to meet Rajiv to pave way for a solution. It was shortly before we boarded the helicopter that Puri referred to some agreement that I must sign. I stopped and told him that if I have to sign an agreement to give up Eelam then don't take me to India. Puri assured us that "we won't pressure you. It is up to you to decide what you want".

Q. But India has made it clear that it will not support Eelam.

A. See, until a satisfactory agreement has been worked out, we will have Eelam as a fundamental principle. We have now been told that once we endorse this agreement there won't be any more talks regarding the actual powers devolved to the administrative unit. Puri said that the powers to be devolved have already been

continued opposite



EROS LEADER, *Balakumar* on the Accord

THE HINDU: *What is the position of EROS on the laying down of arms?*

Mr. Balakumar: "First of all, I must say we rather welcome the Indian peace-keeping force. We have already instructed our cadres to help the peace-keeping force to maintain peace in our areas. We can assure you that our cadres will not hamper the efforts of the Indian peace-keeping force. We don't have objections to handing over our weapons to the Indian peace-keeping force. But we would like the Government of India to understand some of our difficulties and problems."

Q: *What are the difficulties?*

A: "It is not a very easy task to convince our cadres to hand over the weapons immediately. The main reason is that for over 10 years we have used these weapons. It is a psychological bondage and it gives a kind of security to our cadres and people. That is why I said it is very difficult to convince our cadres to hand over weapons without creating a conducive climate."

Ratification needed: "Anyhow, I must clear one thing. We are not crazy after arms. We did not take to arms just for the sake of arms. Arms do not mean power to us. We did not aim at power by using the arms. To speak the truth, we use arms as tools to achieve our political goal. Actually, our position is that the Sri Lankan Parliament should ratify the Rajiv Gandhi-Jayawardene accord: We need a time span to convince our cadres and give them some kind of confidence that the Sri Lankan Parliament has ratified the accord. But anyhow, the Indian peace-keeping force has moved in and we are discussing (the situation) with our cadres. We hope we can come to a solution."

Q: *Are you happy or unhappy with the accord?*

PRABHAKARAN ON THE ACCORD

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discussed by TULF's Natwar Singh and Chidambaram in June 1986. In fact, against that provincial council bill I had written a letter to MGR expressing my objection to it. Now, if in this agreement further problems crop up it will be discussed by India and Sri Lanka and not the Tamils.

Q. *Why do you think Jayawardene conceded the major Tamil demands?*

A. *India's pressure on Sri Lanka was mounting, as evidenced by the air-dropping mission. At the same time, with this agreement that seeks to disarm us, Sri Lanka could achieve two goals - consolidate the newly captured areas in Vadamarachi and put an end to the Tamil armed resistance. This agreement is favourable to Sri Lanka, not us.*

Q. *Can you survive without India's or MGR's support.*

A. *The question doesn't arise. As per this accord, the Sri Lankan Army has to remain within the barracks. If they come out, India has to intervene - they have to fight the Sri Lankan Army, not us.*

Q. *What do you think will happen now?*

A. *I don't think the accord will bring lasting peace.*

By courtesy of INDIA TODAY.
August 15, 1987

A: "We do not welcome the accord or feel fully happy over it. But we are not opposing it. But through this accord, foreign forces and the stooges of American imperialism such as (Israel's) Mossad - which is humanity's number one enemy and has killed many Palestinian fighters - are shown the exit. American designs in the Indian Ocean are also blocked. We welcome the accord on implementing the plans."

Plantation workers ignored: "The reasons why we do not welcome it are: EROS was founded in 1975 on the fundamental plank of protecting the plantation Tamils. They form part and parcel of the Tamil nationality. So, we feel that any solution or accord to solve the Tamil ethnic problem should include a solution to the Tamil plantation workers also. But unfortunately the accord is not like that. None of the problems of the plantation Tamils has either been put forward or solved."

"So we have already expressed our views to the Government of India that we have to continue our struggle in political forms if the Sri Lankan Government allows us. If the Sri Lankan Government does not allow us, we have to resort to other forms of struggle."

Sinhala colonisation: "The second reason is the referendum in the East. We are not worried about the referendum. We are more worried about the Sinhalese colonisation that has taken place in the last four decades. When the December 19, 1986 proposals were mooted, there was a clause to delink the Amparai electorate (from the Eastern province). But now, they are linking these two (Northern and Eastern) provinces."

"Our fear is that for the sake of the

referendum, they can use the Sinhalese majority in these areas to vote against the merger. When the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam pact was agreed upon in 1957, they agreed to stop all colonisation from 1957. Unfortunately, the pact was abrogated. Amparai district was carved out in the East in 1963. In 1970, Amparai electorate and Seruwila electorate (in Trincomalee) were carved out. "We fear that the Sinhalese state-aided colonisation is going to be legalised through this referendum. So, we appeal to the Government of India to look into this matter. It can take a cut-off year, say 1957. **In the referendum, these people who came in after 1957, should not vote.**"

Peace-keeping force welcome: These are the apprehensions and reservations we have in our mind. Anyhow, this is an agreement between two Governments. We feel India is our friend in the longer perspective. We don't believe that the problem will be totally solved through this agreement. So we will try to cooperate with the Government of India and we will not obstruct India's peace initiatives. Anyway, we must thank the Government of India for sending the peace-keeping force to our areas. It will, at least, stop the suffering of the people who have suffered for so many years at the hands of the Sri Lankan security forces."

Q: *There are reports that there is tension in the plantation areas at Talawekele...*

A: These incidents justify our stand. The Sinhalese chauvinists look at the plantation Tamils as part of the Tamil-speaking people. So the Sinhalese chauvinists will give big trouble to the plantation Tamils' problem and commit atrocities. That is why we say that without solving the plantation Tamils' problem you cannot have a permanent solution on the island. We cannot allow the plantation Tamils to suffer or get killed for the peace and well-being of the Tamils in the North and East. This problem will continue and EROS will struggle.

(By courtesy of the Hindu (IE) August 8, 1987)

HIGH GRADE INPUT

How was the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement negotiated and clinched?

Many of the ideas, and certainly the guiding principles for a settlement, were available from the previous "good offices" endeavours of India.

But there was one very major point of departure and this had to be cleared politically at the very top - by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. This was a departure from the role of "good offices" which had attempted to bring the two parties to the ethnic dispute together, narrow the understanding and communication gap, and to make them negotiate a peaceful, political settlement. This "good offices" role held for most of the period since 1983.

The change of India's role - from promoter to party to the settlement with a direct involvement in guaranteeing and underwriting its structure and framework and in cooperating in its implementation - cannot possibly be over-estimated in a qualitative sense. It made all the difference to what appeared intractable. This reflected a major political decision taken by the Prime Minister, that became

a Cabinet decision and very quickly, state-policy.

By all accounts and by every test of performance, the professional Foreign Office input into the exercise was high-grade during this sensitive period. High Commissioner J. N. Dixit played a leading role in building on the sound basis identified, in tying up the details, in getting over or round obstacles, and in getting the agreement in place, ready to sign, by July 29.

Foreign Secretary K. P. S. Menon and his colleagues, working closely with the Prime Minister's office, provided solid encouragement and support to Dixit's endeavours and also the important element of professional coordination.

This bold but close-to-the-ground professional input, which has hardly been reported in the media in any substantive sense, forms a real contrast to the high-flying, compromising and eventually very negative role played by Romesh Bhandari when he was Foreign Secretary and even thereafter, in shaping India's policy towards the Tamil question in Sri Lanka.

N.R.

Courtesy of 'Frontline', 8-21 August, 1987

COUNTING THE COST OF PEACE

Gains and Losses (from our Madras Correspondent)

GAINS

1. The Tamil people now have an opportunity of resuming their peaceful occupations – farming, cultivating, fishing, trading, and employment, if any.
2. Tamil youth can attend schools and universities.
3. The Tamils can, if they so desire, re-enter the political process.
4. Tamil is now an official language.
5. The Northern and Eastern provinces have been recognised by two heads of state (the Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka) as the traditional territories of the Tamil-speaking peoples.
6. The Northern and Eastern provinces are now merged as one single unit, though a referendum in the Eastern province at the end of one year will determine whether the Eastern province wishes to withdraw from the merger.
7. Tamil lives are safe and secure with the presence of the Indian Army, not only in the two Tamil provinces but also in the seven Sinhala provinces.
8. The hated Home Guard responsible for the wanton murders, rapes of Tamil people and brutalities will be disbanded.
9. Pakistan's nefarious role is

cancelled out. The Keeni Meeni Services responsible for state terror against the Tamils will be asked to leave. Israeli military advisers will probably be given similar orders. Thus our traditional enemies have been put to flight.

LOSSES

1. Our separate sovereign state of Tamil Eelam will have to go into cold storage for a while.
2. It has not been made clear that the Sixth Amendment which deprived the Tamils of their representatives in Parliament will be withdrawn.
3. The barbaric security forces will be put into barracks; so will the Special Task Force led by Ravi Jayawardene. But their hated presence will continue when the best thing would have been to have these death squads withdrawn from the Tamil areas.
4. The Prevention of Terrorism Act still remains on the statute book and can be brought into operation again by ruthless Sinhala dictators.
5. No specific arrangement was made for the inspection of the Nazi-style Boosa-Belsen camp.
6. The boys and girls in Boosa-Belsen have not been guaranteed an amnesty and safe passage to their homes.
7. The huge and enormous problem of

discrimination and gross mistreatment of Tamils in recruitment to the public sector and the universities remains unresolved; it is discrimination on these two matters that triggered the civil war.

8. The devolution of powers to provincial councils and their constitution remain the gravest problem. Without a proper demarcation of powers where the Colombo Government will not be permitted to interfere with, modify or veto provincial legislation, the councils will not be viable; these matters will have to be clarified and negotiated upon.

9. More importantly, the Tamil people will need to be assured that an independent judiciary will examine questions of constitutional significance that affect the Tamil people. Provision needs to be made for the Chief Minister of the Tamil homeland and his Board of Ministers to have the right to submit names to the President for appointment to the Supreme Court. At least one-third of the judges should be from the Tamil and Muslim communities. When constitutional issues are judged, a percentage of Supreme Court judges must be from among the Tamil and Muslim judges.

10. A Commission for the payment of Compensation must be set up. Every Tamil person who has suffered loss of life and property must have his damages assessed. Due restitution should be made from the foreign aid that will become available for reconstruction of the Tamil areas.

Mr. Gandhi Explains the Accord and its Benefits to the Tamils, at Madras Meeting

THE PRIME MINISTER, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, said the recently-concluded Indo-Sri Lankan agreement would bring about the much-needed peace to Sri Lanka, especially in the Tamil areas, and appealed to everyone, both in India and in Sri Lanka, to do whatever he could for the implementation of the accord.

Describing the agreement as "unprecedented in the history of the world, at least in this country", the Prime Minister said it had brought peace and tranquillity, secured justice to the Tamil minority, and provided autonomy approximately like that of an Indian State to the Tamils. "It safeguards the Tamils' identity, their language and their culture", he said, addressing a mammoth public meeting on the Marina here.

The meeting, organised jointly by the Tamil Nadu Congress (I) Committee and the AIA DMK to celebrate the signing of the agreement, was also addressed by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran.

The Prime Minister devoted his entire 55-minute speech to the accord and explained that the agreement represented an immense advance over what had been asked for by the Tamils in "Annexure C" in 1983 and contained major concessions

made by the Sri Lankan Government on the Tamils' demands and for the Tamil sentiments.

"Every reasonable demand had been met and this is the time to stop fighting, stop the violence and stop the conflict; it is time to start building", he declared.

Mr. Gandhi paid a handsome tribute to the people of Tamil Nadu, and particularly to Mr. M. G. Ramachandran without whose help, he said, the agreement would not have been possible.

Cautioning about the forces which were interested in frustrating the agreement, the Prime Minister said the extremists on both sides should not be allowed to become pawns in the hands of these forces. They should not be allowed to break the peace and provoke retaliation.

Problems getting solved

Mr. Gandhi said it was a little over two years ago, on July 15, 1985, speaking on

the same platform, he had stated there could be only a peaceful solution to the problems of Sri Lanka. Now, he was there again today, and was happy to say that the problems in Sri Lanka were getting solved, and peace had come through patient negotiations and complex discussions and, most of all, through persuasion. During the last four years they were all worried and upset at the way things were taking place in Sri Lanka on account of the ethnic conflict. Many innocent people were killed by bomb explosions, aerial bombing, etc. Lakhs were made homeless and 1.5 lakhs of people had come to Tamil Nadu as refugees. "Now we have created a condition for an end of the violence, for an end of the needless suffering and for an end of all discrimination," he said.

"Now the Tamils in Sri Lanka will continue to live as they lived there for hundreds of years as honoured and respected citizens enjoying all political and civic rights on a footing of equality with all other Sri Lankans".

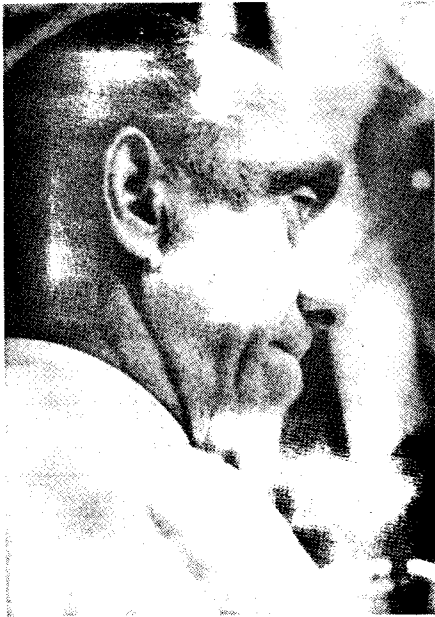
"The Sri Lankan Government has given us several assurances that it will not take advantage of the disarming of the militants. Before I wanted Sri Lanka to sign the agreement I talked with the militants and the more moderate Tamils in

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Colombo's Chronicle of Crisis

NO SOONER HAD the word got out that an Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord was near completion than trouble began brewing in the island state during the weekend of July 25-26. The first of the opposition demonstrations took place on July 27 in Amparai district of the Eastern province, where some 3,500 Sinhalese demonstrated before police managed to control the agitators.

Angry protests erupted in Colombo itself the next day, leading to a 24-hour curfew in the capital. Opposition leader and former prime minister Mrs. Bandaranaike led a sit-down protest in central Colombo and Buddhist Sinhalese monks led some 5,000 people in demonstrations. At least three buildings, including a government ministry and a building housing state-owned newspaper offices, were set on fire and scores of buses, trucks and cars were



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guttled. Police opened fire after the crowd began throwing stones at them and went on a rampage. At least 19 people were killed and some 120 injured.

The authorities bent on ensuring that the peace accord would be signed as planned on July 29, extended the curfew to cover the whole country. On the morning of July 29, some 10,000 people, including Buddhist monks in saffron robes, gathered on the capital's southern outskirts to march on to the city centre in defiance of the curfew. The crowd broke through police barbed-wire barricades and faced baton charges and tear gas for nearly two hours, before police fired at them, injuring at least five people. Just about that time the air-craft carrying Rajiv Gandhi was landing at the Colombo airport. Gandhi and his party were whisked to the city centre by helicopter amid heavy security.

Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa and Agriculture Minister Gamini Jayasuriya - who have opposed the peace pact - were absent from the welcoming ceremony. National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali remained behind in the Joint Operations Command to oversee the law-and-order situation.

Meanwhile, another crowd of about 1,000 was seen marching from the city to the north headed for the airport. A third group of 500 students were marching from a university campus in the northern suburb of Colombo towards the city centre but were dispersed by police tear gas.

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By courtesy of Far Eastern Economic Review,
6 August 1987



GANDHI: the underwriter.

Tamil Nadu contribution

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On July 29, 1987, Jayawardene had the opportunity to meet Tamil Nadu's Food Minister S. Ramachandran in Colombo.

MGR's key lieutenant on the Sri Lankan Tamil question - who played a strenuously patient and key role in narrowing the gap between the Government of India's approach and the stand of LTTE leader Prabhakaran on the eve of the signing of the agreement and also in the period immediately following this - was a member of the official delegation which accompanied Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to Colombo. And the Sri Lankan President quickly acknowledged the significance of his being there.

"You are the key man," he is reported to have told S. Ramachandran. He introduced the Tamil Nadu Minister to his wife, saying: "He is junior Ramachandran and this is his first visit". He told 'Panruti' Ramachandran: "You must make many more visits to Sri Lanka. Please don't make this your last visit."

N.R.

Courtesy of 'Frontline', 8-21 August, 1987

TAMIL REFUGEES END FAST

In a statement handed over to the Home Office on August 10, by Mr. Martin Barber, Director of the British Refugee Council, all 51 asylum seekers declare,

"We have come to Britain to seek asylum and to stay with our relatives living in this country during the troubles in Sri Lanka. Since our arrival we have been detained and forcibly separated from our families. Many of us have been detained for more than eight months. Now we are kept on a ship floating in Harwich Harbour. This treatment has cost us unimaginable suffering and distress. We have protested against this inhuman treatment by undertaking a fast which we began on August 1. This action has successfully brought our plight to the attention of the British public. We have received innumerable messages of support for which we give thanks."

PRABHAKARAN INTERVIEWED BEFORE AND AFTER THE ACCORD

OBJECTIONS

Q. What was your initial objection to the accord? Will you be endorsing this agreement?

A. This agreement was totally unacceptable to us. It is called an Indo-Sri Lankan friendship agreement, but it deals with the Tamil ethnic question. And it was drafted without consulting the Tamil representatives. So, we had rejected it.

Q. Has your attitude to the agreement changed after meeting Rajiv?

A. Last night, we had a one and a half hour long discussion with the prime minister and we have reconsidered our objections to the accord because Mr. Gandhi took serious note of our reservations.

Q. What were the specific reservations that you raised and what was Mr. Gandhi's response?

A. We raised the point about the referendum. But Mr. Gandhi pointed out that there were several clauses with regard to the referendum as for instance that it can be delayed at the discretion of the President and that the displaced Tamil refugees will have to be rehabilitated first. So all this will take time and he told us not to take it too seriously as India would handle it. As to our main objection about disarming, Mr. Gandhi understood our problems and practical difficulties – it took us 12 years to build this organisation and it just can't be dismantled in 72 hours. He appreciated the fact that the procedural elements and time factor posed serious problems. Basically we have laid down two suggestions for our disarming – one that the Sri Lankan army withdraws their camps in the north and east and second that a working arrangement is made on ground that would ensure the safety and security of the Tamils. Unless the working arrangement is established the question of disarming doesn't arise. We pointed out to Rajiv Gandhi that we are the protective force for the Tamils and if this protective force is removed then the Tamils are vulnerable to an indisciplined army. Mr. Gandhi said he'd raise our suggestions with Mr. Jayawardene. I've also said that I must go back to Jaffna for consultations with my area commanders and assure them and the Tamil people about the accord paving the way for a political solution.

Q. So if an Indian peace-keeping force is sent in, the LTTE ceases to be a military organisation. It would be the end of the Tamil armed struggle.

A. The disarming cannot take place immediately. There are so many things that need to be done first. We will take decisions about our future strategy later.

Q. So your position is not fundamentally different from the other groups.

A. We can't be compared. The other groups have no problems about disarming because the LTTE has disarmed them. I think the difference is that India has realised that without the LTTE the accord won't work – that's why they took the decision to consult us albeit at the eleventh hour. See, earlier Indian officials came, read out an agreement asking us to sign it. That was unacceptable. The door to consultations had been closed but Mr. Gandhi opened it and took a serious note of our reservations. That has brought about the fundamental change in our attitude to the accord in the last 24 hours. Our

ultimate objective is to ensure security and freedom of our people.

Q. It was being said in Indian official circles that the LTTE had unofficially agreed to the accord but that, as you have taken a stand on Eelam, you were registering a token protest.

A. I am a man of principles. I also have the trust and faith of my people. If anyone had said that we had unofficially agreed to this accord, it's a lie.

Q. Don't you think this accord signals the end of the Tamil resistance.

A. The objective of the accord is to put an end to Tamil resistance. We can't say at this point when the objective will be achieved. We will have to wait and see.

Q. What will be LTTE's role now?

A. It's for the people to decide.

**WE CHANGED
our stand after
Rajiv Gandhi
took serious
note of our
objections to
the proposed
referendum
and grounds
for our
disarming.**



**WE WILL not
lay down arms
till an
arrangement
for the Tamils'
safety is
worked out
and the army
camps in the
north and east
dismantled.**

THE OBJECTIONABLE CLAUSES

Q. What exactly are the issue that you find objectionable in the accord?

A. It is being said that three of the four cardinal principles which we enunciated at Thimpu have been met. It is not so. Take the question of homeland. Certain sentences have been introduced in the agreement which have far-reaching implications. For example, the Northern and Eastern provinces have been defined as the area of "historical habitation of Tamil-speaking people... who have at all times hitherto lived in this territory with the other ethnic groups". In one stroke, the agreement justifies the illegal Sinhala colonisation in the east for the last four decades. How can we agree to this? Secondly, we are not recognised as a nation of people. Tamils are described as one of the ethnic groups. It ignores the fact that we constitute a separate nationality.

Thirdly, the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces is temporary, conditional and interim. The President has the power to decide on the referendum. Four of the five members of the committee monitoring the referendum will be appointed by the President and the fifth is from the Eastern province. There are no Tamils at all. And the outcome of the referendum is based on a simple and not two-thirds majority. Due to the aggressive colonisation, Sinhalese and Muslims together form 60 per cent of the population.

But the most crucial point on which we are rejecting this agreement is the point about giving up our arms. This is tantamount to

surrender and not return of arms under a mutual agreement. There are 200 army camps in the North and East – What happens to our people if we surrender our arms? Once we are disarmed, the Tamil armed resistance will be brought to an end. It is only because of our armed struggle that the Tamils have been saved from total annihilation. We are the only deterrent force – if this deterrent force is removed, our people become defenceless.

NEW DELHI'S POSITION

Q. If you had all these objections, why did you agree to come to Delhi?

A. If we had been shown this agreement in Jaffna, we wouldn't have come to India at all. It is only when we came here that we found that India and Sri Lanka had already come to an agreement, which I am now supposed to

endorse. It was a calculated plan to persuade me to come so as to give the impression that I am a party to it.

Q. But didn't Puri brief you on this agreement when he met you in Jaffna?

A. He told us that Jayawardene had come up with a 'wonderful package' and that he had agreed to merge the North with East, that Tamil would be an official language and that they had agreed to the question of homeland – he didn't use that word. He said that land settlement and law and order would be with the provincial council. Puri also said "the December 19 proposals should be thrown into the dustbin". He made it amply clear that he was talking about an altogether new set of proposals. And I was asked to come to Delhi to meet Rajiv to pave way for a solution. It was shortly before we boarded the helicopter that Puri referred to some agreement that I must sign. I stopped and told him that if I have to sign an agreement to give up Eelam then don't take me to India. Puri assured us that "we won't pressure you. It is up to you to decide what you want".

Q. But India has made it clear that it will not support Eelam.

A. See, until a satisfactory agreement has been worked out, we will have Eelam as a fundamental principle. We have now been told that once we endorse this agreement there won't be any more talks regarding the actual powers devolved to the administrative unit. Puri said that the powers to be devolved have already been

continued opposite



EROS LEADER, *Balakumar* on the Accord

THE HINDU: *What is the position of EROS on the laying down of arms?*

Mr. Balakumar: "First of all, I must say we rather welcome the Indian peace-keeping force. We have already instructed our cadres to help the peace-keeping force to maintain peace in our areas. We can assure you that our cadres will not hamper the efforts of the Indian peace-keeping force. We don't have objections to handing over our weapons to the Indian peace-keeping force. But we would like the Government of India to understand some of our difficulties and problems."

Q: *What are the difficulties?*

A: "It is not a very easy task to convince our cadres to hand over the weapons immediately. The main reason is that for over 10 years we have used these weapons. It is a psychological bondage and it gives a kind of security to our cadres and people. That is why I said it is very difficult to convince our cadres to hand over weapons without creating a conducive climate."

Ratification needed: "Anyhow, I must clear one thing. We are not crazy after arms. We did not take to arms just for the sake of arms. Arms do not mean power to us. We did not aim at power by using the arms. To speak the truth, we use arms as tools to achieve our political goal. Actually, our position is that the Sri Lankan Parliament should ratify the Rajiv Gandhi-Jayawardene accord: We need a time span to convince our cadres and give them some kind of confidence that the Sri Lankan Parliament has ratified the accord. But anyhow, the Indian peace-keeping force has moved in and we are discussing (the situation) with our cadres. We hope we can come to a solution."

Q: *Are you happy or unhappy with the accord?*

PRABHAKARAN ON THE ACCORD

continued from page 8

discussed by TULF's Natwar Singh and Chidambaram in June 1986. In fact, against that provincial council bill I had written a letter to MGR expressing my objection to it. Now, if in agreement further problems crop up it will be discussed by India and Sri Lanka and not the Tamils.

Q: *Why do you think Jayawardene conceded the major Tamil demands?*

A: *India's pressure on Sri Lanka was mounting, as evidenced by the air-dropping mission. At the same time, with this agreement that seeks to arm us, Sri Lanka could achieve two goals - consolidate the newly captured areas in Vadamarachi and put an end to the Tamil armed force. This agreement is favourable to Sri Lanka, not us.*

Q: *Can you survive without India's or MGR's support?*

A: *The question doesn't arise. As per this accord the Sri Lankan Army has to remain in barracks. If they come out, India has to fight them - they have to fight the Sri Lankan Army.*

Q: *What do you think will happen now?*

A: *I don't think the accord will bring lasting peace.*

By courtesy of INDIA TODAY,
August 15, 1987

A: "We do not welcome the accord or feel fully happy over it. But we are not opposing it. But through this accord, foreign forces and the stooges of American imperialism such as (Israel's) Mossad - which is humanity's number one enemy and has killed many Palestinian fighters - are shown the exit. American designs in the Indian Ocean are also blocked. We welcome the accord on implementing the plans."

Plantation workers ignored: "The reasons why we do not welcome it are: EROS was founded in 1975 on the fundamental plank of protecting the plantation Tamils. They form part and parcel of the Tamil nationality. So, we feel that any solution or accord to solve the Tamil ethnic problem should include a solution to the Tamil plantation workers also. But unfortunately the accord is not like that. None of the problems of the plantation Tamils has either been put forward or solved."

"So we have already expressed our views to the Government of India that we have to continue our struggle in political forms if the Sri Lankan Government allows us. If the Sri Lankan Government does not allow us, we have to resort to other forms of struggle."

Sinhala colonisation: "The second reason is the referendum in the East. We are not worried about the referendum. We are more worried about the Sinhalese colonisation that has taken place in the last four decades. When the December 19, 1986 proposals were mooted, there was a clause to delink the Amparai electorate (from the Eastern province). But now, they are linking these two (Northern and Eastern) provinces."

"Our fear is that for the sake of the

referendum, they can use the Sinhalese majority in these areas to vote against the merger. When the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam pact was agreed upon in 1957, they agreed to stop all colonisation from 1957. Unfortunately, the pact was abrogated. Amparai district was carved out in the East in 1963. In 1970, Amparai electorate and Seruwila electorate (in Trincomalee) were carved out. "We fear that the Sinhalese state-aided colonisation is going to be legalised through this referendum. So, we appeal to the Government of India to look into this matter. It can take a cut-off year, say 1957. In the referendum, these people who came in after 1957, should not vote."

Peace-keeping force welcome: These are the apprehensions and reservations we have in our mind. Anyhow, this is an agreement between two Governments. We feel India is our friend in the longer perspective. We don't believe that the problem will be totally solved through this agreement. So we will try to cooperate with the Government of India and we will not obstruct India's peace initiatives. Anyway, we must thank the Government of India for sending the peace-keeping force to our areas. It will, at least, stop the suffering of the people who have suffered for so many years at the hands of the Sri Lankan security forces."

Q: *There are reports that there is tension in the plantation areas at Talaweke...*

A: These incidents justify our stand. The Sinhalese chauvinists look at the plantation Tamils as part of the Tamil-speaking people. So the Sinhalese chauvinists will give big trouble to the plantation Tamils' problem and commit atrocities. That is why we say that without solving the plantation Tamils' problem you cannot have a permanent solution on the island. We cannot allow the plantation Tamils to suffer or get killed for the peace and well-being of the Tamils in the North and East. This problem will continue and EROS will struggle.

(By courtesy of the Hindu (IE) August 8, 1987)

HIGH GRADE INPUT

How was the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement negotiated and clinched?

Many of the ideas, and certainly the guiding principles for a settlement, were available from the previous "good offices" endeavours of India.

But there was one very major point of departure and this had to be cleared politically at the very top - by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. This was a departure from the role of "good offices" which had attempted to bring the two parties to the ethnic dispute together, narrow the understanding and communication gap, and to make them negotiate a peaceful, political settlement. This "good offices" role held for most of the period since 1983.

The change of India's role - from promoter to party to the settlement with a direct involvement in guaranteeing and underwriting its structure and framework and in cooperating in its implementation - cannot possibly be over-estimated in a qualitative sense. It made all the difference to what appeared intractable. This reflected a major political decision taken by the Prime Minister, that became

a Cabinet decision and very quickly, state-policy.

By all accounts and by every test of performance, the professional Foreign Office input into the exercise was high-grade during this sensitive period. High Commissioner J. N. Dixit played a leading role in building on the sound basis identified, in tying up the details, in getting over or round obstacles, and in getting the agreement in place, ready to sign, by July 29.

Foreign Secretary K. P. S. Menon and his colleagues, working closely with the Prime Minister's office, provided solid encouragement and support to Dixit's endeavours and also the important element of professional coordination.

This bold but close-to-the-ground professional input, which has hardly been reported in the media in any substantive sense, forms a real contrast to the high-flying, compromising and eventually very negative role played by Romesh Bhandari when he was Foreign Secretary and even thereafter, in shaping India's policy towards the Tamil question in Sri Lanka.

N.R.

Courtesy of 'Frontline', 8-21 August, 1987

COUNTING THE COST OF PEACE

Gains and Losses (from our Madras Correspondent)

GAINS

1. The Tamil people now have an opportunity of resuming their peaceful occupations – farming, cultivating, fishing, trading, and employment, if any.
2. Tamil youth can attend schools and universities.
3. The Tamils can, if they so desire, re-enter the political process.
4. Tamil is now an official language.
5. The Northern and Eastern provinces have been recognised by two heads of state (the Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka) as the traditional territories of the Tamil-speaking peoples.
6. The Northern and Eastern provinces are now merged as one single unit, though a referendum in the Eastern province at the end of one year will determine whether the Eastern province wishes to withdraw from the merger.
7. Tamil lives are safe and secure with the presence of the Indian Army, not only in the two Tamil provinces but also in the seven Sinhala provinces.
8. The hated Home Guard responsible for the wanton murders, rapes of Tamil people and brutalities will be disbanded.
9. Pakistan's nefarious role is

cancelled out. The Keeni Meeni Services responsible for state terror against the Tamils will be asked to leave. Israeli military advisers will probably be given similar orders. Thus our traditional enemies have been put to flight.

LOSSES

1. Our separate sovereign state of Tamil Eelam will have to go into cold storage for a while.
2. It has not been made clear that the Sixth Amendment which deprived the Tamils of their representatives in Parliament will be withdrawn.
3. The barbaric security forces will be put into barracks; so will the Special Task Force led by Ravi Jayawardene. But their hated presence will continue when the best thing would have been to have these death squads withdrawn from the Tamil areas.
4. The Prevention of Terrorism Act still remains on the statute book and can be brought into operation again by ruthless Sinhala dictators.
5. No specific arrangement was made for the inspection of the Nazi-style Boosa-Belsen camp.
6. The boys and girls in Boosa-Belsen have not been guaranteed an amnesty and safe passage to their homes.
7. The huge and enormous problem of

discrimination and gross mistreatment of Tamils in recruitment to the public sector and the universities remains unresolved; it is discrimination on these two matters that triggered the civil war.

8. The devolution of powers to provincial councils and their constitution remain the gravest problem. Without a proper demarcation of powers where the Colombo Government will not be permitted to interfere with, modify or veto provincial legislation, the councils will not be viable; these matters will have to be clarified and negotiated upon.

9. More importantly, the Tamil people will need to be assured that an independent judiciary will examine questions of constitutional significance that affect the Tamil people. Provision needs to be made for the Chief Minister of the Tamil homeland and his Board of Ministers to have the right to submit names to the President for appointment to the Supreme Court. At least one-third of the judges should be from the Tamil and Muslim communities. When constitutional issues are judged, a percentage of Supreme Court judges must be from among the Tamil and Muslim judges.

10. A Commission for the payment of Compensation must be set up. Every Tamil person who has suffered loss of life and property must have his damages assessed. Due restitution should be made from the foreign aid that will become available for reconstruction of the Tamil areas.

Mr. Gandhi Explains the Accord and its Benefits to the Tamils, at Madras Meeting

THE PRIME MINISTER, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, said the recently-concluded Indo-Sri Lankan agreement would bring about the much-needed peace to Sri Lanka, especially in the Tamil areas, and appealed to everyone, both in India and in Sri Lanka, to do whatever he could for the implementation of the accord.

Describing the agreement as "unprecedented in the history of the world, at least in this country", the Prime Minister said it had brought peace and tranquillity, secured justice to the Tamil minority, and provided autonomy approximately like that of an Indian State to the Tamils. "It safeguards the Tamils' identity, their language and their culture", he said, addressing a mammoth public meeting on the Marina here.

The meeting, organised jointly by the Tamil Nadu Congress (I) Committee and the AIA DMK to celebrate the signing of the agreement, was also addressed by the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran.

The Prime Minister devoted his entire 55-minute speech to the accord and explained that the agreement represented an immense advance over what had been asked for by the Tamils in "Annexure C" in 1983 and contained major concessions

made by the Sri Lankan Government on the Tamils' demands and for the Tamil sentiments.

"Every reasonable demand had been met and this is the time to stop fighting, stop the violence and stop the conflict; it is time to start building", he declared.

Mr. Gandhi paid a handsome tribute to the people of Tamil Nadu, and particularly to Mr. M. G. Ramachandran without whose help, he said, the agreement would not have been possible.

Cautioning about the forces which were interested in frustrating the agreement, the Prime Minister said the extremists on both sides should not be allowed to become pawns in the hands of these forces. They should not be allowed to break the peace and provoke retaliation.

Problems getting solved

Mr. Gandhi said it was a little over two years ago, on July 15, 1985, speaking on

the same platform, he had stated there could be only a peaceful solution to the problems of Sri Lanka. Now, he was there again today, and was happy to say that the problems in Sri Lanka were getting solved, and peace had come through patient negotiations and complex discussions and, most of all, through persuasion. During the last four years they were all worried and upset at the way things were taking place in Sri Lanka on account of the ethnic conflict. Many innocent people were killed by bomb explosions, aerial bombing, etc. Lakhs were made homeless and 1.5 lakhs of people had come to Tamil Nadu as refugees. "Now we have created a condition for an end of the violence, for an end of the needless suffering and for an end of all discrimination," he said.

"Now the Tamils in Sri Lanka will continue to live as they lived there for hundreds of years as honoured and respected citizens enjoying all political and civic rights on a footing of equality with all other Sri Lankans".

"The Sri Lankan Government has given us several assurances that it will not take advantage of the disarming of the militants. Before I wanted Sri Lanka to sign the agreement I talked with the militants and the more moderate Tamils in

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LALITH ATHULATHMUDALI'S VIEWS ON THE GANDHI-JAYAWARDENE PACT OF JULY 1987

In an interview with Karan Thapar, in Colombo

Q: Let's talk about some of the details of the offer. Is it true that in the first three points of the document containing your government's latest offer to the Tamil separatists, your government has accepted that the Tamils constitute a "distinct identity" and are the "preponderant ethnic community" to have "an historical association" with the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka?

A: *It is similar to what was done in Canada in a recent agreement between Prime Minister Mulroney and the Premier of Quebec Province. What is recognised is what is actually factual, which is that the Tamil-speaking people have historically lived in the northern and eastern provinces. That is an historical statement, which frankly, if it had been proposed earlier, I for one would have accepted without question. What was proposed earlier was the acceptance of the Tamils as a nationality, which has a number of other consequences. But here a correct set of facts, which I suppose will help the Tamil people to feel more secure, is recognised.*

Q: Does the document also recognise that the Tamils have a distinct identity?

A: *I think there is an acceptance of the fact that they are a distinct identity, which nobody ever denied.*

Q: Are you not then more or less accepting the Tamil definition of themselves as a "nation" with a distinct "homeland" without using those emotive and controversial terms?

A: *Well, I don't think so. I think it is a proper, honourable compromise which accepts the facts as they are on the ground.*

Q: I am told the document also describes Sri Lanka as a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural country and not as a Sinhala-Buddhist country with other national minorities. Is that true, and do you see the change in definition as significant?

A: *If you go back to my speeches during the riots of July-August, 1983, you will see that they refer to Sri Lanka as a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, multi-religious society. You will find the exact wording which I used in the document today. For me that definition is not significant. . .*

Q: Will you go on record with the specific terms of the offer?

A: *Let's first look at the political part of the document, which embodies the Sri Lankan government's latest offer. The northern and eastern provinces as presently constituted will have one provincial council, one governor, one chief minister,*

one board of ministers. That will be set up on or before December 31, 1987. On or before December 31, 1988 there will be a referendum in the eastern province on the question of whether the people of the eastern province want a separate council for themselves or want to remain as they will then be. . .

Then there is the military content. The military content is the cessation of hostilities, handing over of arms by the armed separatist groups, and then the withdrawal of the armed forces from some of the newer bases established in the Jaffna peninsula to the pre-Vadamarachchi operation bases. The army will withdraw to its pre-May 26, 1987 positions in the north and east. That will be after the weapons are laid down by the separatists.

Q: So the demilitarisation of the Tamil groups will precede the withdrawal of the army to its pre-May 26 bases?

A: *Immediately prior. We are talking of immediately prior. We see it as one process, but immediately the weapons are handed over the need for those bases ceases to exist, and normal police functions will resume.*

Then, to return to the details of the offer, there are the Indian obligations. There is the part which refers to joint patrols of the coastal waters, the ones between India and Sri Lanka, the removal of separatists from India, and other such things, which really means that India comes down on the side of the whole of Sri Lanka to enforce this thing.

Q: If an agreement along these lines is reached, will it be between the governments of Sri Lanka and India or

between your government and the various Tamil groups?

A: *It is going to be an agreement between the government of India and the government of Sri Lanka.*

Q: Will there be an amnesty for the Tamil guerrilla-group members? And if so, of what sort will that amnesty be?

A: *We are proposing the most broad-based amnesty possible.*

Q: What does that mean? Can even Mr. Prabhakaran, the leader of the biggest guerrilla organisation, the Tamil Tigers, return and take up normal civilian life?

A: *Yes, why not? We would love him to join the mainstream of politics. Anything he does for the ballot will be allowed.*

Q: Is it true that the Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, might visit Sri Lanka some time within the next two weeks to sign an agreement?

A: *Absolutely. This Wednesday afternoon. He will be here for two days. And the cessation of hostilities will start on Thursday or Friday. And by Saturday of next week, the arms will begin to be delivered and by Monday of the following week, everything else will be enforced. And the week after that Parliament will be presented with the bill.*

Q: So are you saying that in 13 days from today the whole settlement will be operational?

A: *Yes, if it goes like this.*

Courtesy of *The Independent*,
25 July, 1987

Mr. Gandhi Explains the Accord and its Benefits

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Sri Lanka. I had consultations with all the fighters for justice and equality in Sri Lanka. The militants had all understood, and they agreed with the agreement that we have signed. This agreement secured everything that the Sri Lankan Tamils have demanded, short of breaking Sri Lanka, and, in fact, it goes well beyond the initial demands of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

"Under the agreement, approximately one-third of the Sri Lankan territory will be made a single province, where the Tamils will have a clear majority. They will have regional autonomy, comparable to the State Governments in India. This represents an immense advance on what has been asked for by the Tamils in "Annexure C" in 1983. It represents

major concessions made by the Sri Lankan Government.

"A stage has been set for a national reconciliation and we must do everything we can to assist in this task, in the process of reconciliation and rebuilding. There is nothing further to be gained by more violence and more killing".

"There should be no sympathy now to anyone who acts against this agreement because anyone acting against this agreement will be acting against the interests of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Some of the militant groups have been a little apprehensive, perhaps a little worried about their personal security. They were also worried how they will fit into the future set-up. But I have reassured them that the agreement covers both the aspects very effectively and we will see that security and involvement in this rebuilding process is there for everyone in northern Sri Lanka," Mr. Gandhi said.

By courtesy of *The Hindu (IE)* August 8, 1987.

MEDIA REPORTS

27 July - 10 August, 1987

The Leader of the main Tamil militant group, Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, was yesterday flown in an Indian helicopter, from his hideout in Jaffna to New Delhi where he is expected to meet the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, this weekend. (Financial Times, 25 July, 1987)

President Jayawardene said on Saturday that, under the agreement, Tamil guerrillas would have to hand over their weapons within 72 hours to a government representative while troops would be confined to barracks. There would be one regional council in the Northern and Eastern provinces, and elections would be held before December 31 - but the east would have an opportunity in a year's time at a referendum to decide if it wanted to continue the association.

He said that only 40 per cent of the Eastern province population are Tamils, with 33 per cent being Muslims and the other 27 per cent Sinhalese. He said that a majority would oppose the merger. "Then what do we gain by this temporary merger?" he asked the 1,200-strong executive committee of his United National Party on Saturday, and answered: "The end of the terrorist movement" which has so far cost 6,000 lives.

(The Times, 27 July, 1987)

The Indian government has imposed a news blackout on its talks here with Tamil separatists on Colombo's proposals to end the Sri Lankan crisis. It is not even known if Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister, has met Velupillai Prabhakaran, leader of the most influential guerrilla group, the Tamil Tigers. Mr. Gandhi said at the weekend that he thought the Sri Lankan proposals were a big advance, but advised caution: "Too much news is coming out of Sri Lanka. Let's wait and see."

(The Independent, 27 July, 1987)

India's Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, is likely to use threats if necessary to persuade Tamil guerrillas to sign an agreement seen as a prelude to a settlement to the four-year crisis in Sri Lanka, according to the Sri Lankan Minister of National Security.

The leader of the main rebel group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, was quoted yesterday as saying prospects were dim for signing the pact on Wednesday. Velupillai Prabhakaran said the proposals were unsatisfactory and would have to be improved. The group had earlier expressed general willingness to accept the peace agreement. The Sri Lankan Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali, said Mr. Gandhi would take a hard line. "As yet I'm not sure about the attitude of Prabhakaran," Mr. Athulathmudali said. "Mr. Gandhi called him to Delhi. And there are grounds for some hope. He will be told: "Yes, Mr. Prabhakaran, I am the Prime Minister of India. I am meeting you. Fine. What have you got to say? Yes, I have taken it down. This is the agreement I have come to with Sri Lanka. Would you like to sign?"

Mr. Athulathmudali said that if the rebel leader refused to sign, "he will be told: 'There is a door there, and there will be people waiting there to receive you.'" - and he would be sent to jail as a recognised terrorist, with the Indians enforcing the law. He said a senior Indian diplomat had told Mr. Prabhakaran in Jaffna: "We are keen to end this mess. Sri Lanka has made an offer; many Tamils are prepared to accept this... India just cannot

dilly-dally. We are not asking you whether you agree or not; we are telling you. If you don't, we are going ahead and we are on their side so you'll take the consequences."

(The Independent, 27 July, 1987)

The key element of the plan is to give the Tamils their semi-autonomous homeland by merging the Northern and Eastern provinces although the eastern population is only one-third Tamil. Mr. Gandhi is putting pressure on the Tamils, who have been sustained by Indian support, and he is expected to sign two separate agreements with the Tamil rebels and the Sri Lankan Government.



Crowds in Colombo restrain Buddhist monks from attacking police after demonstrators were tear-gassed and baton-charged.

In Ampara in Sri Lanka's Eastern province, tear gas was used yesterday to disperse a crowd of about 2,000 Sinhalese protestors, including 300 Buddhist monks. Several people were injured in the first outburst of Sinhalese protest against the plans. Ampara, a predominantly Sinhalese town, has been a scene of communal violence since the mid-1950s. In Colombo, about 3,000 Buddhist monks gathered yesterday afternoon at Kelaniya University, once a renowned centre of Buddhist scholarship. They later marched to Kelaniya temple, where they vowed to frustrate the Government's plans. Leaflets distributed at the meeting denounced the proposed agreement as a "sell-out to the separatist Tamils" and "a surrender to India."

(Financial Times, 28 July 1987)

Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa, who is opposed to the peace plan, expressed his reservations at a special ministerial session, called for a national referendum and urged President Jayawardene to persuade Mr. Gandhi to delay his visit.

(The Daily Telegraph, 29 July, 1987)

Outside the state official home of the Prime Minister, Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa, only the flag of Buddhism, the majority religion, flew in mute reminder that the second most powerful politician in the island is opposed to the accord. Officials did not know last night whether Mr. Premadasa would greet his Indian counterpart. Failure to do so would signal a disastrous split in the Sri Lankan ruling party, which has long championed the rights and supremacy of the Sinhalese majority.

Mr. Gandhi said yesterday that he was going ahead with plans to sign the accord with President Jayawardene today despite opposition from Tamils. He told leaders of opposition parties in New Delhi that the rejection of the accord by the main Tamil militant group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, had in no way changed his plans. The leader

of the Tamil Tigers, Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, described the accord as "a betrayal by India". He said his group would not adhere to the proposed 17-point peace plan which includes an immediate ceasefire between Sri Lankan forces and Tamil militants in Colombo's Northern province.

(The Guardian, 29 July, 1987)

Asked the reason for the rioting, Mr. Jayawardene said: "The reason? Ignorance."

(International Herald Tribune, 30 July, 1987)

Athulathmudali's position is, typically, more subtle and equivocal. He has long argued for a political solution, and simultaneously for a strong stand against terrorism. Similarly, he has now chosen neither to condemn the peace act outright nor to turn up at the elaborate ceremonies yesterday.

(The Guardian, 30 July, 1987)

The threat of Indian military intervention is essential to the cause of peace in Sri Lanka.

(The Daily Telegraph, 30 July, 1987)

The leader of the Opposition, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike, in a letter to Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, said: "The people of Sri Lanka are vehemently opposed to the accord you are going to sign today. Hardly 24 hours ago 20 people were brutally massacred by the police and hundreds injured. They were peacefully demonstrating against the proposed accord. "What you are about to do today is the greatest betrayal of my country".

(The Times, 30 July, 1987)

Four key ministers failed to attend the ceremonies yesterday, fuelling speculation about a split in the Cabinet. They included the Prime Minister, Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa, and the National Security Minister, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali.

(The Guardian, 30 July, 1987)

In the past, when it had been approached to beef up the Sri Lankan military, the Administration declined in order to discourage the Jayawardene Government from going down the military road to solve the Tamil problem. The Sri Lankan national security chief, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, has left Washington empty handed on several occasions.

(The Guardian, 31 July, 1987)



Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, is firmly opposed to the agreement and refused to attend official functions when Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the Indian Prime Minister, came to Colombo to sign it. Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, the Minister of National Security, threatened to resign when he discovered the deal called initially for the withdrawal of his troops from areas they had captured after heavy fighting in May and June.

(The Times, 31 July, 1987)

continued opposite

"I don't know how long the troops will stay at this stage," said the Indian High Commissioner, Jyotindra Nath Dixit. "We have come in. There are tasks to be fulfilled to the mutual satisfaction of both governments."

(International Herald Tribune, 31 July, 1987)

When asked if Sri Lanka could change its mind about the desirability of the presence of Indian troops on its soil, Mr. Dixit said: "When you come to something jointly, you can't change your mind unilaterally. There has been a meeting of the minds so far, why should it change?"

(International Herald Tribune, 31 July, 1987)

The United States yesterday confirmed that it would provide military aid in the form of transport aircraft as part of an international package in connection with the Sri Lankan peace plan.

(The Guardian, 31 July, 1987)

An immediate problem is to repair the damage, estimated at 3bn rupees (£64m), to the transport system, buses, roads, rail tracks and coaches caused by last week's riots.

(Financial Times, 31 July, 1987)

DELHI: Mr. Gandhi returned to Delhi yesterday apparently unconcerned by the attack on him, (Our Correspondent writes).

"Can't you see I am not hurt?" he asked a crowd of about 600 waiting to welcome him at the airport. "Do you want me to take off my clothes?" Among those waiting for his arrival were the newly elected President Venkataraman, most of the Cabinet, leading Congress (I) members and several hundred of the party's youth wing. On the Indian Airlines jet home, Mr. Gandhi gave his version of the attack to reporters. "When I was inspecting the guard of honour, and as I walked past one person, I saw through the corner of my eye some movement," he



Mr. Gandhi indicates where he was hit on the shoulder by a Sri Lankan member of a guard of honour.

said. "Then I saw a man reverse his rifle at me." He said he ducked as "a reflex action" and the man "missed my head, and the brunt of the blow came on my shoulder below the left ear."

In Delhi, the Lok Sabha (Assembly) condemned the incident as "a dastardly attack on the precious life" of the Prime Minister. The Speaker, Mr. Balram Jakhar, told the House that "we are relieved to see his safe return; we convey our best wishes and prayers for his long life in the service of the nation".

(The Times, 31 July, 1987)

The Prime Minister (Mr. Gandhi) suffered bruises and abrasions to his neck and shoulder, but was otherwise unharmed. Mani Dixit, India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, said: "It... shows the state of involuted tension in Sri Lanka today that a man who comes and offers them a reasonable peace package is attacked."

(The Independent, 31 July, 1987)

Mr. Gandhi told the upper house of parliament: "The marriage had taken place without the consent of a particular party."

(The Guardian, 1 August, 1987)



The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, who flew in today at the insistence of the Prime Minister met Mr. Prabhakaran for nearly three hours. Mr. S. Ramachandran, Tamil Nadu Food Minister and Mr. Dixit, were present. Mr. Ramachandran came here by a special IAF plane to exercise his moral authority and influence with the LTTE leadership, particularly, Mr. Prabhakaran.

Also in the capital were leaders of the other Tamil groups including the TULF Secretary-General, Mr. A. Amirthalingam and representatives of the EROS, EPRLF and TELU. Mr. Ramachandran told the LTTE leaders that he would convey their views (especially their apprehensions about the requirement to lay down arms) to the Prime Minister and get back to them.

(The Hindu, 1 August, 1987)

Tamil Extremists in Sri Lanka's Northern Jaffna peninsula are refusing to hand over their weapons to India's peace-keeping force until Mr. V. Prabhakaran, their leader, returns from New Delhi where he has been holding talks with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, Indian Prime Minister, and government officials.

(Financial Times, 1 August, 1987)

Mr. de Mel said Mr. Athulathmudali should resign because the attack on Mr. Gandhi on Wednesday by a Sri Lankan sailor had been a "total lapse of security." There had also been a breakdown of law and order during two days of rioting in south Sri Lanka which police had not been able to quell till the army moved in. Mr. de Mel said: "In the interests of the country, Mr. Athulathmudali must go. Unless he does, he will sabotage the peace accord."

(The Financial Times, 1 August, 1987)

"We are very happy. But it is because of the boys (the local euphemism for the Tigers) that we are achieving something," said a man in the battered coastal town of Point Pedro. "But we still don't believe the Government, the boys should not give up their guns."

(The Guardian, 1 August, 1987)

The Sri Lankan army, meanwhile, is fading from the flat countryside. Two thousand men have been airlifted to Colombo in the same Indian transporters which brought their replacements to the peninsula. Many will start a new peace-keeping duty in the riot-scarred streets of the capital.

At Palaly, the Sri Lankan army is cooperating closely with the Indian contingent which now outnumbers it. The national chief of staff, General Cyril Ranatunga, gently reminded visiting reporters yesterday who was boss. "As general officer commanding this country I direct operations," he said. "There is basic understanding between us on that."

He went on to agree with Lieutenant-General Singh that each unit had its own commander, that there was no conventional ladder of command for

both forces, and that there was "utmost cooperation."

(The Guardian, 1 August, 1987)

A Sri Lankan Government MP was shot dead by Sinhalese rioters yesterday as Indian troops prepared to assist with the handing over of arms by Tamil guerrillas under the peace accord signed this week. The shooting of Mr. Jinadasa Weerasinghe happened in his constituency of Tangalle, where mobs also attacked houses belonging to government workers in violent Sinhalese protests against the proposed merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces of the island.

The Times, 1 August, 1987

Giving details of the proposals, Mr. Jayawardene told the UNP committee that the Provincial Council for the Northern and Eastern provinces would have 52 members - 27 from the North and 25 from the East. The Chief Minister would be from the party which won the largest number of seats in elections.

Mr. Jayawardene had denied that any of the Government's military bases in the North and East will be removed. The Government will retain the power to remove the Chief Minister of the combined Tamil region's ruling council "if the need arose". The proposed agreement also provides for the "repatriation from Sri Lanka to India of over 200,000 Tamils of Indian origin and the return to Sri Lanka of 125,000 Tamil refugees. The UNP endorsed the plan after Mr. Jayawardene and senior Ministers gave the details.

(The Hindu, 1 August, 1987)

The President is regarded locally as a political colossus and his skill as a tactician is highly regarded. Many had expected him to use his Prime Minister's opposition to the settlement terms as an excuse for backing off. In the past he has been able to project himself as both in favour of a political solution and against concessions to the Tamils. This time however it seems that he is prepared to ride out the storm. He has the parliamentary power to dominate the political opposition and the willingness to outwit the Buddhist clergy. Perhaps at the age of 80 this is the memorial he wishes to leave behind.

(Sunday Telegraph, 2 August, 1987)

Since he won't cooperate, Prabhakaran languishes as a virtual prisoner at the hotel in New Delhi where he was brought from his hideout in Jaffna a week ago. According to one report, his incoming telephone calls are monitored, and he is refused access to journalists.

Because of his treatment, the response of the Jaffna Tamils to the Indian Army presence has been tepid and even hostile at times. Certainly, they have not been accorded the kind of treatment normally reserved for liberating armies. If the Indian soldiers expected the sort of reception they got from what is now Bangladesh 16 years ago they must be sorely disappointed. The Jeep of Maj.-Gen. Harkirat Singh, who commands the Indian forces in Sri Lanka, was rocked by an angry mob demanding the return of Prabhakaran. 'Just normal mob tendency,' said the general, who managed to extricate himself without resorting to gunfire.

(The Observer, 2 August, 1987)

The peace agreement to end the island's civil war, which Rajiv Gandhi and Junius Jayawardene, the Sri Lankan president, signed last Wednesday, had been secretly prepared by the chairmen of the two countries' cricket boards. Gaminis Dissanayake, who is also Sri Lanka's land minister, and K. D. Salve, who has high contacts in Delhi, worked out the details in India and London over the past few months.

(Sunday Times, 2 August, 1987)

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MEDIA REPORTS

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The main street of this prosperous coastal town (Panadura) appears to have been hit by dozens of highly selective miniature tornadoes. For a long stretch, every telephone pole has been uprooted; elsewhere service stations and buses have been burnt out. But **this destruction was an act of man rather than God.** Its perpetrators have scrawled political slogans on every available wall and stretched banners across the highway. This was the work of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna or People's Revolutionary Party - an outlawed Sinhalese Marxist group. The message is one of outright hostility to last week's Tamil peace agreement and the Sri Lankan government.

Last Friday, a government MP was murdered south of Panadura by opponents of the agreement. And Mervyn Cooray, the MP for Panadura district, was confronted last week by a mob of 1,500 demanding that he refuse to ratify the agreement when Parliament votes on it later this month. "I was warned of their arrival by my villagers, who gathered together and protected me," he told *The Independent*.

The rally was organised by a left-wing former MP for the district, but according to Mr. Cooray, it included Buddhist priests, JVP activists and other members of left-wing organisations. After failing to convince him to change his vote, the protesters went on the rampage, burning down the old council office and wrecking schools and other government buildings. (*The Independent*, 3 August, 1987)

The Indian President broke with protocol to rush to the airport to embrace Rajiv and he was given a standing ovation in parliament.

(*Sunday Times*, 3 August, 1987)

Mr. Prabhakaran did not say anything on the surrender of arms. But Mr. V. Balakumar, leader of an allied group, said: "Mr. Prabhakaran and I feel we should not antagonise the Indian peace force, and that there should not be any more difficulties about surrendering arms."

(*The Times*, 3 August, 1987)

Mr. de Mel, an ambitious man, called for the removal of Mr. Athulathmudali, his bitter rival on the intellectual wing of the party, for failing to control the security situation.

(*The Guardian*, 3 August, 1987)

The Tamil Tigers yesterday made the first significant breach in the Indo-Sri Lanka peace accord by refusing to hand over their arms by the deadline. But the leader of the rebel group, Mr. Velupillai Prabhakaran, last night raised hopes of a belated breakthrough when he said he would make his decision known on the "modalities" of the handover this evening at his headquarters in Jaffna town. **The two governments had little option but to extend the deadline by 72 hours.**

(*The Guardian*, 4 August, 1987)

A Western military attache said he understood that a garrison of two battalions of Sri Lankan troops would be kept in the area. He said he expected the Indian forces to remain in Sri Lanka for 18 months to two years, and to provide security for elections to the government of the autonomous region.

(*International Herald Tribune*, 5 August, 1987)

The only other regular officer at the rally was the British military attache from Colombo, Colonel Peter Cameron. Sporting a green beret and

smoking a cheroot, he said: "It would not have occurred to me a month ago in my wildest dreams that today I would be listening to Prabhakaran addressing this huge rally on Sri Lanka territory."

(*The Independent*, 5 August, 1987)

As the leaders of one of the World's most deadly guerrilla armies melted away for their last night under arms, crowd control broke down and they were mobbed. So, too, was the press, whose lorries were sent from the field of celebration with cheers and laughter. Everyone hopes it was the end of a war. But it certainly did not end in defeat.

(*The Guardian*, 5 August, 1987)

The Tamil detainees on hunger strike on board the former Sealink car ferry Earl William have dropped their demands to stay in Britain and say they want to go home.

As the 49 hunger strikers yesterday extended their protest to a "lie-in" they wrapped themselves in sheets and blankets and refused to move from the floor of the lounge of the floating detention centre for suspected illegal immigrants, which is moored at Harwich. The Tamils, who have refused food for five days, threatened to continue their hunger strike "to the death" unless they are released immediately.

(*The Daily Telegraph*, 6 August, 1987)

Many of the weapons relinquished on Wednesday were broken and rusty, *United Press International* reported from Palaly. "This is a token gesture," said Major General Deprinder Singh, commander of the Indian force. **Dilip Yogi, a leader of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, handed over a single pistol to a senior Sri Lankan officer at the ceremony,**



Mr. Yogi (left) handing over a muser pistol to Gen. Attygalle (right), while Maj. Gen. Singh (centre of two) looks on at a ceremony at Palaly airfield.

symbolising the group's compliance with the peace accord.

General Sepala Attygalle, secretary to the Ministry of Defence, put his hand on the weapon to acknowledge the surrender and gave Mr. Yogi a document authorising amnesty for rebels and political prisoners.

(*The International Herald Tribune*, 6 August, 1987)

So far, so good. There have been riots and resentments and significant loss of life since Sri Lanka's President, Junius Jayawardene, and India's Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, signed their peace agreement at the end of last month. Mr. Gandhi was beaten with a rifle butt by a member of a Sri Lankan guard of honour when he visited the country.

But, against the odds, the agreement has held and some members of the most militant Tamil separatist groups are now handing in truck-loads of weapons on the instructions, albeit reluctant, of

their leader Velupillai Prabhakaran. This is a remarkable and unexpected achievement and both Mr. Gandhi and President Jayawardene deserve credit.

(*The Independent*, 6 August, 1987)



Mr. S. Thondaman, the Minister for Rural Industrial Development, summed up the situation succinctly in an interview with *The Times* yesterday: "There are reservations, but we have been presented with a fait accompli. Those opposed to the majority decision will just have to learn to live with it." Asked whether the accord constituted a lasting solution, he said: "The referendum may be a source of irritation, but it is a solution for the time being."

(*The Times*, 6 August, 1987)

That the Tigers and the smaller fighting groups are leaving the field undefeated was acknowledged yesterday with the first release of Tamil guerrilla suspects from detention camps in the south of the island as part of Mr. Gandhi's deal. There are problems about this. **When the released detainees arrive home they will bring back memories of the treatment they received when they were arrested.** And it will provide a chance of confirmation of the fate of the Tamils allegedly missing. With that said there is now an atmosphere of optimism.

(*The Guardian*, 7 August, 1987)

Preparations were underway yesterday for the release of hundreds of political detainees and suspected terrorists from the notorious Boosa camp in southern Sri Lanka. Government officials said 800 release orders had been signed, and the first batch of 500 men could be freed today. They would be returned to their homes in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka when sea transport could be arranged... released as part of the general amnesty agreed by the Government in its peace pact with India.

(*The Guardian*, 7 August, 1987)

Asked at a news conference last week why he had not made those concessions before, Jayawardene drew gasps when he replied, "Lack of courage on my part, lack of intelligence on my part, lack of foresight on my part."

(*The Times*, 10 August, 1987)

Moderate Tamils say they are willing to give the plan a try. "We have the opportunity to work out a deal with the Muslims and win the referendum's passage," says Neelan Tiruchelvam, a leading Tamil moderate. "We have a chance for success." That's more than Sri Lanka had just a few short weeks ago.

(*Newsweek*, 10 August, 1987)

The SLFP argues that the accord was "hatched under a veil of secrecy and signed in haste under a nationwide curfew followed by tight press censorship, a ban on meetings and a military presence which prevents people affected by it from expressing their views publicly." The party has expressed very strong opposition to the merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces provided under the agreement saying that the Sinhalese and

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Sinhala Perceptions of the Accord

by D. S. S. Mayadunne

Born in 1936 at Delgoda in the Kalutara District of Sri Lanka. Educated at first in the village school, and later on a Government scholarship at Taxila Central College, Horana and at Royal College, Colombo.

Has been a teacher for a few months and a translator for many years under the Government. Was a part-time member of the original editorial staff of the radical Sinhala newspaper "Aththa"

In the aftermath of the 1971 insurrection he was arrested and was in custody for two years. As a remand prisoner he was detained in a number of places including the Jaffna prison, the island of Hammanheil off the Jaffna peninsula and at Akkarayankulam.

Has been a Sinhala writer and freelance journalist for a long time. Among his published works are translations of Tolstoy's 'Death of Ivan Ilyich', a collection of short stories by Anton Chekhov and an introduction to Einstein's theory of relativity: "What is the Theory of Relativity?"

CONDEMNATION of the sailor Rohan de Silva's attack on Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was nearly unanimous (nearly, and not entirely, because there were very rare instances of approval). Sympathy for the youthful Prime Minister, too, was almost universal. But all that did not dispel the misgivings in the people's minds about the Accord.

For many Sinhalese, something long feared has happened. For them, the Accord means a division of the country or something very close to it. Echoing what the Government's own media had been saying up to the very eve of the Accord, these people say that this linking of the North and the East is equivalent to granting Eelam.

As to be expected, very few have read the text of the Accord, although it was given wide publicity by the newspapers.

In the prevailing confusion in the minds of a large number of ordinary Sinhalese men and women the dominant sentiments appear to be fear and distrust, as shown in

the following representative statements made by three different persons:

"If Prabhakaran could establish himself so well in the North by operating from India, will he not capture the whole island if he is given power as the Chief Minister?"

"Will not the Tamils operating from the North and the East drive the Sinhalese out of the country compelling them to become refugees like the Palestinians?"

"What is inevitable is that the Tamils entrenched in the North and the East will in the course of time, capture the hill country and have a tea-based economy and the Sinhalese will gradually become a minority."

Of course these do not represent the entirety of Sinhala opinion. Another fairly popular view is - "The Accord is good. It will stop all the unnecessary killings and expenditure. But why could not the government do it before all those deaths?"

There are also those who say that the war should be fought to a finish because it has

already caused thousands of deaths.

The young woman who said the following expressed a point of view not confined to her alone:

"We cannot deny the rights of the Tamil people. Further, Prabhakaran, after all, is a Sri Lankan. Why could not the government work out the same arrangement with him without Indian participation? The Indian participation can later turn Sri Lanka into a province of India."

However, there are also those who see no harm at all to Sinhala interests in the provisions of the Accord, like the middle grade public servant who said:

"This is the best solution in the present situation. But the Tamils have gained hardly anything for their sacrifices. Unfortunately Prabhakaran is motivated by nationalism which is a despicable creed."

Among such people there is a grudging respect for Prabhakaran who is seen as a man who has stood up not only to the government of Sri Lanka but also that of India.

Amidst this welter of views there is also the one which expresses serious doubt about President Jayawardene's will to implement the Accord, and says that he might go back on his commitment and try to double cross India.

The stationing of Indian troops on Sri Lankan soil has also caused concern among some sections, notably among young people including students: When will India withdraw them or will she keep them here permanently? Is not India dictating to us what to do with our territory and our ports? Isn't she dictating our foreign policy for us?

In spite of all this the sense of relief felt by the people is more widespread than appears on the surface. The fond father of a girl killed by the Pettah bomb blast said: "If they had done this earlier my daughter wouldn't have had to die". The possible salary increase for public servants and the prospect of travelling about without fear, too, are not lost sight of.



It is good to be getting back home, seems to be the expression on the faces of these young soldiers of the Sri Lankan Army, as they wait for an airlift from the Jaffna peninsula back to Colombo and home, in terms of the Gandhi-Jayawardene peace accord.

(Daily News, August 7, 1987)



The Plight of the Earl William Tamils

TAMILS REJECT OFFER OF FREE FLIGHTS HOME



THE 45 TAMIL REFUGEES on hunger strike on the Earl William floating detention centre, rejected the Government's offer of free flights to Sri Lanka.

The offer was made by Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, after a spokesman for the Tamils indicated recently that they were ready to go home.

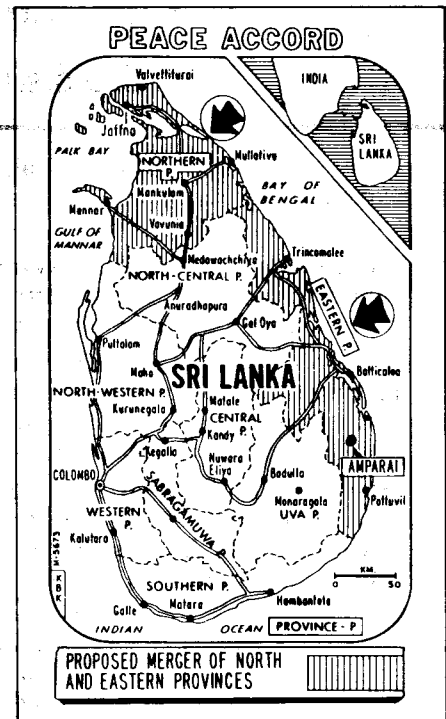
The Tamils were interviewed individually by immigration officers. A Home Office spokesman said afterwards: "None

indicated their desire to return to Sri Lanka. But our offer still stands."

The Home Office confirmed that all 45 were on hunger strike, taking only liquids. The spokesman said that none of the Tamils was seriously ill, although he confirmed that one was suffering from dizziness and another from gastritis and mild nausea. He said their medical condition was being closely monitored.

Jessica Morris, of the British Refugee Council, said reports that the Tamils wanted to go back to Sri Lanka had been misinterpreted. She said: "It is true to say that some would eventually like to go home, but not until the situation in Sri Lanka is stable."

The Council and the independent United Kingdom Immigration Advisory Service have made strong protests to the Home Office about conditions on the ship, a former car ferry.



Gandhi Attacked by Sri Lankan Sailor in Guard of Honour

MR. RAJIV GANDHI was the victim of a dramatic parade ground attack by a Sri Lankan sailor standing in a guard of honour for the Indian Prime Minister outside the President's palace in Colombo.

"I ducked and the rifle butt hit me on my left shoulder blade," Mr. Gandhi told cheering members of Parliament when he arrived back in New Delhi. He added that he had seen the raised rifle butt out of the corner of his eye just as he had passed the first line of the inter-service guard of honour.

Sri Lanka's President Junius Jayawardene

publicly apologised to Mr. Gandhi and the people of India for the assault. In a televised address to the nation, he expressed "deep sorrow" at rioting by the island's Sinhalese majority against the peace pact designed to end Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

"I express my regrets also to the Prime Minister of India, Mrs. Gandhi and the two children, and the Government and people of India, for the insult offered to him," the President added.

Hundreds of Congress party members of India's Parliament and their supporters thronged the Palam air-base outside New Delhi, to give Mr. Gandhi a hero's welcome.

SINHALESE NOW MAIN THREAT IN SRI LANKA

PRESIDENT JUNIUS JAYAWARDENE declared in an address to the nation: "Terrorism is now confined to the south." He appealed to everyone to help stamp it out.

Extremist Sinhalese nationalism is a real threat to the government and the peace accord, say diplomatic sources.

A Colombo newspaper, the Daily News, argued that xenophobic racist attitudes by the Sinhalese majority led to the alienation of the Tamils.

"We who condemn Hitler's Herren-volk theory; we who condemn South Africa's apartheid; must not erect any narrow, exclusive Brahminism of our own," it states.

FIGHT FOR PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION:

Lalith to Alter Gandhi's Pact

The London based *ECONOMIST* of August 8, writes:

THE RULING UNITED NATIONAL PARTY was itself divided. Some members of the cabinet accused the national security minister, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, of making grave mistakes during the riots in Colombo. They cited two specific blunders: about 2,000 policemen had been sent away to keep order at a festival in Kandy; and, after letting huge crowds assemble in Colombo, the police maddened them by using tear gas (*foreign reporters who had to scramble over walls to escape the fumes confirm this version of events.*)

By July 29, the president had virtually taken over control of security operations himself, and was relying heavily on his finance minister, Mr. Ronnie de Mel, a supporter of the agreement and a bitter rival of the security minister. After a sailor in a Sri Lankan guard of honour struck

Mr. Gandhi with his rifle butt on July 30, Mr. de Mel publicly demanded Mr. Athulathmudali's resignation.

The security minister and the prime minister, Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa, had signally failed to support the president over his peace pact. Both have their eyes on the next presidential election. In that election, due in about 18 months' time, it is almost certain that the main opposition candidate will denounce the pact in order to appeal to chauvinists among Sri Lanka's Sinhalese majority.

Some think the ruling party will have to trim its sails accordingly. Mr. Athulathmudali has already increased his popularity among Sinhalese, who see him as an outright opponent of the pact. (*They might be disappointed: he has suggested that if he*

became president he would seek to alter its terms rather than scrap it.)

His elevation to the presidency would cut short the political ambitions of Mr. de Mel. The finance minister, who is long on service but short on magnetism, might choose to hitch his wagon to a rising young star, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, the minister for lands, who was largely responsible for negotiating the peace pact.

The fact that Mr. Jayawardene is already 80 may not deter him from seeking to retain the presidency himself. Some people think he is counting on the prospect that the proposed merger of the Northern and Eastern provinces – a central element in the accord – will be annulled when it is submitted to a referendum next year.

The Eastern province, where the Tamils are in a minority, may well vote against the merger if its Muslim inhabitants side with the Sinhalese.

The president might then be able to base his campaign for re-election on the claim that he had both tamed the Tigers and wriggled out of the merger.

G.P., the Architect of the Accord?

The President's House in Colombo had originally been the private residence of the last Dutch Governor Johan Gerard van Angelbeak, and formed the nucleus of the Fort of Colombo. It is an architectural treasure, gracefully designed with polished canewood ceilings and its floors covered by a mosaic of tiles. Seventeenth century shell patterned Dutch chests, wooden cabinets, ebony sofas and centre-tables adorn the reception areas and the Conference room.

On July 29, a row of distinguished Indian politicians and senior bureaucrats stood nervously in the Conference room awaiting the arrival of the two heads of Government. They included Union Minister Mr. Narasimha Rao, Mr. Natwar Singh looking solemn in their formal sharwanis, and Mr. P. Chidambaram, Mr. S. Ramachandran and Mr. G. Moopanar clad more informally in their spotless white shirts. All of them had played their part in the complex and tortuous negotiations which preceded the formal understanding. Also present was Dinesh Singh, the former Foreign Minister whose fleeting visit to Colombo apparently stalled a military offensive on the Northern peninsula. There was, however, one person who played a decisive role in defining the framework of the accord who was conspicuous by his absence.

Parthasarathy's role in 1983

In August 1983 the Sri Lankan President accepted Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's offer of good offices to facilitate a political solution. This was an important watershed in Indo-Sri Lankan relations and the search for a special envoy to Sri Lanka to undertake the delicate and complex mediatory efforts was intensified. There were three criterias that had been articulated within the higher reaches of the Government for this position which was highly prized within the political and bureaucratic establishment. Firstly, the negotiator must be a skilled diplomat who is sensitive to the geo-politics of the region. Secondly, he must be a lawyer capable of coping with Byzantine complexities of Sri Lanka's constitution, and the riddles in carving out an autonomous region within an unitary State. Thirdly, he had to understand the domestic politics of India and be capable of commanding the confidence of political opinion within Tamil Nadu, which had expressed solidarity for the predicament of the Tamils of Sri Lanka. G. Parthasarathy clearly met all of this criteria given his legal training and distinguished diplomatic career spanning several decades.

Gopalswamy Parthasarathy had other advantages. He enjoyed total access to and the complete confidence of the then Prime Minister of India, and was frequently consulted on sensitive issues of both foreign and domestic policy. He was



Gopalswamy Parthasarathy

thus able to symbolise the authority and concern of the Government of India at the highest levels. A lesser known fact was that Gopalswamy Parthasarathy knows Sri Lanka and had forged personal friendship and linkages which had grown over the years with the incestuous middle class western educated elite in Colombo. He had led a cricket team from the Presidency College in Madras, and played against such stalwarts as F. C. de Saram, the Oxford Blue who dominated Sri Lankan cricket in the post-war years. His Oxbridge associates, included Raju Coomaraswamy, the international civil servant; Pieter Kueneman, the President of the Sri Lankan Communist Party (a contemporary of Mohan Kumaramangalam, both of whom were Presidents of the Cambridge Union). He had also known the political power broker Esmond Wickremasinghe, who had controlled Lake House for many years, and was close adviser to political leadership within the United National Party.

by Neelan Tiruchelvam

Gopalswamy Parthasarathy soon grasped the complexities and the many pitfalls in the tasks ahead. The traumatic events of July 1983 had so deeply polarised the two communities, that the prospects of ethnic reconciliation seemed dismal. Each community's perceptions of the problem had become so deeply embedded in their respective psyches, that there was little common-ground on which he could work. He had to familiarise himself with the history, contemporary political events and developments, and with the personalities and attitudes of the key actors on the Sinhala and Tamil sides. Above all, if perceptions were to be altered, he had to work on the consciousness of the two communities and their leadership.

Gopalswamy Parthasarathy's first few

visits were directed towards familiarising himself with the key political actors on the Sinhala side. He briefed himself on the background of the senior and more influential cabinet ministers, and opposition leaders. He then met them individually and listened patiently to their perceptions, fears, anxieties and obsessions. He consulted with the widest cross section of Sinhala opinion, including Gamini Iriyagolle, the President of the Buddhist Theosophical Society, and the Venerable Walpola Rahula, the scholar-monk who was the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of the Maha Sangha. Although some of their views were emotionally charged they were invariably deferential to the stoic patriarch. He brushed aside small discourtesies with his characteristic humility and good humour. A youthful opposition leader had insisted that G. Parthasarathy call on him, and conform strictly to the norms of protocol. G. Parthasarathy cheerfully complied, but his measure of the man had diminished. He realised that the vanities and personality quirks of the key actors were as important as their substantive beliefs.

He moved more easily with the old Left, such as the Trotskyite leaders - Dr. Colvin R. de Silva and Mr. Bernard Soya, and his old friend Pieter Kueneman. He had immediate empathy for their secular outlook, and instinctive response to the aspirations of national minorities.

Talks with Tamils

On the Tamil side, he soon became the focal point of their anguish and hopes. He was generous with his time: he met with innumerable delegations of expatriate groups, he met personally with leaders of the different militant organisations.

He advised them, admonished them and constantly pushed them to explore and recognise the limits of their political options. Struggle and negotiate was his response to those who obstinately adopted fundamentalist positions on even the process of negotiation. His task was a difficult one. While he frequently counselled restraint, he was distressed by the escalating violence and the incalculable suffering of the ordinary people. He was moved by the sense of deprivation and passion which underscored the sacrifice of the youth. He often had little more than sympathy to offer to those who complained of the excesses of the State, the gross and persistent violations of human rights. Denied legal or political redress the Tamil mood soon turned to despair.

G. Parthasarathy inevitably developed a special relationship with the TULF leadership. He engaged them intellectually, while remaining emotionally detached. He questioned the conceptual underpinnings of their political demands. Concepts such as 'self determination',

continued overleaf

Sinhalese resistance now Jayawardene's worry

After years of civil warfare, President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka is optimistic that his landmark agreement with India will survive initial opposition and provide a lasting solution to the Tamil separatist conflict.

In his first interview since signing the controversial accord with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Jayawardene told *The Times* he believed that a 7,000-strong Indian peacekeeping force could be withdrawn within two weeks – and, in any event, long before provincial elections scheduled to be held by the end of the year.

He made it clear he did not wish his island's Eastern province to be part of a semi-autonomous Tamil "homeland" in the northern Jaffna region, and did not expect any "intelligent opposition" to the compromise settlement.

The President believed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam would honour the agreement and hand over all their weapons. Indian troops were in Sri Lanka only to enforce the ceasefire and to supervise the surrender of arms. Thereafter, their task would be over and they would be asked to leave.

The President said he would wish the Indians to leave by August 20. "If there is a complete cessation of hostilities, then we don't want any troops." Under the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, elections are to be held by December 31 for a single council to administer Northern and Eastern provinces for a year.

The Eastern province, where Sinhalese and Muslims outnumber Tamils, would then have an opportunity, via a referendum, to opt out of the arrangement. Mr. Jayawardene said he intended to appoint an interim administration for the two regions within a few days, principally comprised of government agents. He added that some people, who had previously opposed the Government but were now coming into "the mainstream of politics", might also be brought in.

Asked whether militants of the Tamil Tigers would be included, he replied: "Yes – all of them." However, the President was opposed to the long-term linkage of the two provinces. "I have no particular objection, but I think the Sinhalese and Muslims don't want it."

Mr. Jayawardene said he was confident of overcoming opposition to the accord from within his Cabinet and ruling parliamentary group, and expected to submit the legislation to Parliament by the end of September or early October. "You can't be in the Cabinet and keep on opposing the chairman of the Cabinet, but I don't

think anyone will leave. They will all vote with me. That Bill will be passed unanimously.

The President said that his main worry now was the violence of "Sinhalese terrorists" in the south of the country, where the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna, a clandestine left-wing group, has been blamed for a wave of gun and fire-bomb attacks on officials. However, he said: "It is not as serious as the problem we had in the north. I think we will get over it quickly. I represent the Sinhalese. My Government represents them. They have to accept the settlement, otherwise they'll be locked up."

He confirmed that two Indian frigates off Colombo were sent in response to fears of a revolt against his Government. "There have been various threats of assassination of members of the Government, one member of Parliament has already been shot and killed, and several of their houses have been destroyed."



President Jayawardene: acceptance of the fact that India is the dominant power in the region.

Mr. Jayawardene said he was always under personal threats. The Indo-Sri Lanka accord had made his position "more dangerous". He said Sri Lanka had to accept that India was the dominant power of the region, but he denied charges that he had surrendered Sri Lankan sovereignty by pledging not to allow its ports to be used for military purposes by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests. "India is the most powerful nation in the Indian Ocean. Either I must go to some bigger power, which I don't want to do, or I must accept that fact."

Asked about the ports issue, he said: "You can only, if I may say so, take away from my independence by laws, not by words. There is nothing that we are doing there without discussions."

Mr. Jayawardene was disappointed by the American response to his request for military assistance, which he said was small.

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But he criticised India's past actions in providing the Tamil guerrillas with arms supplies, and dropping food on the Jaffna peninsula. "I am for non-violence. I believe in Gandhian philosophy. I am more Gandhian than any Indian, more than Rajiv Gandhi. I would not do some of the things he has done and said. I wouldn't have tried to invade Sri Lanka. I wouldn't have dropped the foodstuffs. That was a foolish and impetuous act."

Courtesy of The Times, August 8, 1987

MEDIA REPORTS

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Muslims of the Eastern province, who together outnumber the Tamils there, will be at the mercy of a Tamil terrorist-dominated administration.

(Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 August, 1987)



The Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, H. N. Dixit – nicknamed ironically in Sinhalese intellectual circles "the Indian viceroy" – has said that Indian troops will remain in Sri Lanka as provided under the accord, only as long as Colombo wishes. . . On board the frigates there are thought to be troops who could be quickly landed in an emergency. Dixit, who was actively involved in forging the accord, candidly told newsmen that "there are enough men on board to protect me if I am attacked."

(Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 August 1987)



TAMIL ASPIRATIONS AND THE RAJIV-J.R. PEACE ACCORD

THE RECENT PEACE ACCORD signed by the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayawardene has been welcomed with a sigh of relief by most Sri Lankan Tamils all over the world. It certainly broke the chain of violence, killings, starvation and the creation of a mass-scale refugee problem. The long term outcome of this Accord depends on whether the underlying causes of the conflict in Sri Lanka have been penetrated adequately.

Without going too far back into history, one can point to certain landmarks within the past forty years. Even before the departure of the British there were symptoms of suspicions and manoeuvrings whereby the political and economic base of the Tamils in the island was being undermined by the majority Sinhalese community. This became clear when the Citizenship laws were passed depriving a large section of the plantation workers, mainly Tamils, of their democratic rights. This death-blow to the political sharing of power by the Tamils which was supposed to have been guaranteed by the Soulbury constitution under which the British granted independence to Ceylon, created the Ilankai Thamil Arasu Kadchi (popularly known as the Federal Party). Successive Sinhala-dominated governments implemented schemes mainly aimed at colonising the traditional Tamil homelands with Sinhalese thus reducing the Tamils to minority areas.

Traditionally the Tamils depended on government employment for their livelihood. This was denied by the emergence of full scale Sinhala nationalism as evidenced by the passing in 1956 of an Act making Sinhala the only official language. Peaceful protests by the Tamils sparked off large scale violence by some Sinhalese elements against the life and property of uninvolved Tamils living amongst them. The deprivation of job opportunities and promotion prospects for the Tamils in Government and in the private sector undermined the vulnerable economic base of the Tamils in the island.

The 'standardisation of University admissions', by which the number of places available for Tamil students in the Universities was reduced drastically and the lack of opportunities for Tamil youths to progress either in education or in employment made them disillusioned to such an extent that they threw themselves into the struggle for self-determination proposed by the Tamil political leadership. The insensitive manner in which the Sri Lankan Government handled this issue provoked further violence which culminated in mass scale destruction, in 1983, of life and property of Tamils living in the south of the island.

The Tamil resistance movement

attempted to unify all shades of Tamil opinion irrespective of class and other distinctions and carried on a struggle which put its demand for the recognition of the Tamils of Sri Lanka as a distinct nationality, the recognition of their right to a homeland, their right of self-determination and full democratic rights for the Plantation Tamils. These demands were based on the well-considered fact that the economic survival of the Tamils in the island could not be left to the whims and fancies of Sinhala-dominated governments.

By Dr. S. Navaratnam

The question one asks at this juncture is whether the Accord has the potential to contain and confirm Tamil aspirations for economic stability. One would wish to think that this Accord is not just a damp cloth on a smouldering fire, but is the beginning of a way forward for both communities to live in the island with dignity. Freedom to the Provincial Administration to attract capital and other investments so as to provide development opportunities, without undue restrictions by the Centre, is a necessary pre-requisite.

We would hope that India, along with other countries, contributes and encourages investments and development of the devastated areas.

Both the Indian and Sri Lankan governments may feel that with the recent amendments to the Citizenship laws and with arrangements for repatriation to India of those not successful in their quest for Sri Lankan citizenship, the problems of the Plantation Tamils in Sri Lanka are solved. Obtaining citizenship is only an aid to economic emancipation. The need for the upliftment of the life-style of the plantation workers who continue to live in most appalling conditions should always be kept in the forefront by the Tamil representatives and activists.

Some of the major demands of the Tamils of Sri Lanka would appear to have been met, at least on paper, in the historic Accord signed by Rajiv and J.R. What matters more is not what is on paper, rather what is implemented and how it is implemented. The Accord has the potential to generate cordiality between the communities and peaceful development of all geographical areas in the island. Where it might fail is if the implementation is undertaken in a half-hearted manner without commitment by the Sinhala government. One cannot fail to recognise the fact that the Accord affects the whole of Sri Lanka and that India, the regional power, as a party to the Accord would be interested and capable of seeing that it is implemented in its true spirit.



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Spotlight On Lalith Athulathmudali

LALITH AS HE IS POPULARLY KNOWN, is, in conventional wisdom, an acceptable candidate for the position of President of Sri Lanka. He is a towering giant, intellectually, in the use of language (public speaking) and socially indestructible. Lalith's father, D. D. Athulathmudali, from the Low Country Sinhalese Buddhist Goigamas, was a member of the State Council under the Donoughmore Constitution. His mother is Kandyan and his wife, a Ms. de Saram, is in some way connected to President Jayawardene's family.

He could not have had a better education: Royal College, Colombo; Oxford University and a barrister of Gray's Inn. At Oxford he served as Secretary of the Oxford Union and then crowned his career by being elected its President. For a time, Lalith was Lecturer in International Law at the University of Singapore. Then he came back to Sri Lanka to practise law and enter politics. What better credentials?

Why then did Lalith risk becoming unpopular with a sizeable section of his electorate, the Tamils of Sri Lanka? Perhaps a school day encounter with Nirmalingam (a son of the late C. Thiagalingam, Q.C.)? Lalith contested Nirmalingam for the post of Secretary of the Royal College Senior Literary Association and lost. Was he even then communal? His school mates will know.

Or he knows which side his bread is buttered, the Sinhala Buddhists (the SBs). And he is finely tuned politically. He maintains good relations

with the Sri Lankan Freedom Party. On the international stage, he has a good image, in London and Washington, though in New Delhi he may not be taken at his word. But New Delhi's distrust of Lalith will upstage him among the SBs.

What has Lalith done to merit the uneasy position of President of Sri Lanka? Not very much. He entered Parliament for the first time only in 1977. He was not a proven success as Minister of Trade and Commerce. But he has been very close to President Jayawardene.

Then came the crisis of July 1983. He rushed in to accept the position of Minister of National Security. From then began the downward slope. Lalith desperately hoped for a military victory. This eluded him. If the gamble had succeeded, he would have been the contemporary reincarnation of Dutu Gemunu. Instead, the Sinhala army became targets for the Tamil Resistance. Lalith faced increasing criticism from the Government Parliamentary Group.

His colleagues in the Cabinet were appalled by the enormous military expenditure.

Fears and doubts surfaced among the Sinhala elites as to whether Sri Lanka was becoming Lebanonised. Lalith became incorporated into Tamil demonology. He has probably earned the everlasting opposition of the Tamil electorate.

Lalith was overtaken by events on the ever-changing military scene. A deal had been negotiated with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, without, perhaps, his knowledge. For all his verbiage and boasting, Lalith had to eat humble pie when the



Indian Prime Minister signed the peace accord with President Jayawardene. Why had the expert on international law not been consulted? Instead a home-grown K.G.B. (Kandyan Goigama Buddhist), the urban Gamini Dissanayake, risked his political career but proved successful in terminating a horrible and counter-productive war of attrition. Lalith and Prime Minister Premadasa are sulking. But they cannot any longer outdo Mrs. Bandaranaike in their Sinhala Buddhist populism.

Ironically, sections of the British press, whilst reporting on Lalith's discomfiture, are guessing that Lalith will be relieved of National Security and be made Minister of National Reconstruction.

They say, charity begins at home. So Lalith will have to spend time in reconstructing his lost image.

Auld Acquaintance

A BLOOMSBURY VIEW ON CEYLON

LEONARD WOOLF: A FEDERAL SOLUTION FOR THE ETHNIC SITUATION

(Memorandum - November 1938)

IN 1938 WOOLF suggested a method of solving Ceylon's ethnic problem, namely, the possibility of ensuring a large measure of devolution or even of introducing a federal system on the Swiss model.

The indigenous Tamil minorities, he wrote, are concentrated in the extreme north and east of the island. The Kandyan Sinhalese, who are in many ways very different from the Low Country Sinhalese, form a homogeneous Sinhalese block in the centre of the island.

At least four cantons on the Swiss model could, he noted, be created: i.e., the Low Country Sinhalese Provinces, the Kandyan Sinhalese Provinces, the Tamil Northern Province and the Tamil Eastern Province; and it might even be possible to create a fifth canton out of the area where the immigrant Indian Tamils form the majority of the population on tea estates.

The objection that Ceylon and its sub-divisions are too small for such a system, did not, in his view, hold water. Woolf compared Switzerland with Ceylon. Ceylon, he stated, is about 10,000 sq. miles greater than

that of Switzerland; the population of Ceylon is roughly 5,300,000 and that of Switzerland 4,000,000. If the Swiss federal system were adapted to Ceylon the smallest canton would be the Eastern Province with over a 200,000 population; in Switzerland the smallest canton has a population of about 14,000 and the largest about 700,000.

The Swiss federal cantonal system has proved extraordinarily successful under circumstances very similar to those in Ceylon, i.e., the co-existence in a single democratic state of communities of very different size, sharply distinguished from one another by race, language and religion.

Thus the German-speaking Swiss with a population of 2,750,000 occupy the numerical position of the Sinhalese, the French-speaking Swiss with 824,000, that of the Tamils and the Italian-speaking Swiss with 284,000 that of the Moormen.

The democratic canton and federal system in Switzerland, Woolf concluded, has safeguarded the legitimate minorities interests.

BOOK REVIEW

Gopal Gandhi's novel Novel

GOPAL GANDHI'S (*First Secretary, Assistant High Commission of India, Kandy, 1978-82*); **Saragam: A Novel of Refuge** (Affiliated East West Press Private Ltd., New Delhi 1981) is a rich contribution to English language literature on Sri Lanka.

A "Foreword" by Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay encapsulates the feelings of the author translated into the intelligence of words and capturing the plight of a nearly forgotten people - the so-called Indian Tamil plantation workers also referred to as "stateless" - a component of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka deprived of their address in 1948 and 1949 consequent on legislation enacted by the blossoming Sinhala Buddhist State, *The Grand Old Lady of India* states "reading this book was a rare experience".

Gandhi has converted his administrative experience (during 1978-82) of the plantation workers' painful uncertain feeling of the unknown but damning future into a language which, as Smt. Kamaladevi writes, "no artist could do with a swarm of brushes and a multitude of colours". It is the story of Valliamma typical of the drudgery and struggle for life of the so-called Indian Tamils. The administrator as writer and novelist was conscious of and had sensitivity for the downtrodden Tamil people of Sri Lanka's plantations. Priced at 40 Indian rupees, the author wrestles with our human consciousness. It must be read.

TAMILS IN EXILE SALUTE

The agreement signed by the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene on July 29, 1987, in Colombo gives a sigh of relief and much expectation among the Tamils. This agreement will go down in history as a model way of solving ethnic crises. It is the duty of all concerned to implement it and make it work.

We Select:

1. The Tamil politicians who had the foresight to lay the foundation for this solution before the 1970's.
2. The various Tamil groups who accelerated the process of settlement after that.
3. Tamils who sacrificed their lives and property in achieving this settlement.
4. Tamils who endured hard and difficult times in their homeland.
5. Tamils living abroad who helped in numerous ways.
6. The Indian Government (including Tamil Nadu Government) for concluding the agreement.
7. The Sri Lankan Government for realising, even at this stage, the merits of ending "the military solution."

For the Tamils:

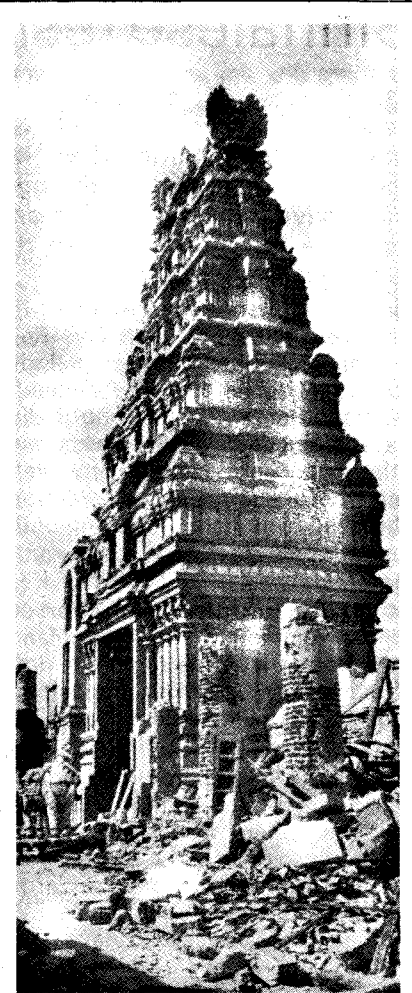
1. It is not a time to discuss or claim as to which political party or group did more or less.

2. No political party or group has the automatic right to govern until the people's will is exercised in the new autonomous government.
3. Tamils expect the educated, able and concerned among them to rally and go to the polls.
4. No need at this time to experiment and change the ideological set-up but to consolidate the existing.

For the Sinhalese:

1. After the initial furore, if viewed on a realistic basis, they will realise that they have not lost anything.
2. When the agreement is implemented they will realise that the country as a whole will gain in terms of political stability, peace and economic recovery.

It is now the duty of all Sri Lankans to make this unique settlement work and to build a politically stable, peaceful and economically strong Sri Lanka in this "unity in diversity" set-up.



Jaffna's Sivan Temple, declared a sanctuary by the Sri Lankan Army but bombed from the air on May 27...

LATEST AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT REQUESTS:

A Probe On Tamil Torture

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL has urged Sri Lanka to investigate reports that several hundred Tamils have been tortured and almost 500 have disappeared after being arrested by Government Security Forces in the last two and a half years.

The London-based human rights organisation said it has sworn statements, often from witnesses, detailing 216 cases of young Tamil men who disappeared after being seized in Sri Lanka's Eastern province by members of a special police task-force commando unit.

This is in addition to the 272 Tamils the Nobel peace-prize-winning organisation described as missing in a report last September.

We have strong reason to believe that many of the 'disappeared' have been tortured, some dying as a result, and that others have been shot after arrest, their bodies being disposed of in secret," Amnesty said in a news report.

HELICOPTER TRAINING

The report cites testimony from former prisoners who said their hands were tied behind their backs with a nylon rope that was then used to suspend them from a ceiling beam. They were then beaten,

sometimes with heated iron rods, in what was called "helicopter training."

It also quoted former prisoners as saying chilli powder was smeared on sensitive parts of their bodies, or they were forced to inhale the acrid fumes of burning chillies. Others were quoted as saying they had been forced to burn the bodies of victims allegedly shot by the special task force.

Amnesty said as far as it knows the Sri Lankan Government did nothing in response to its report last year describing 272 missing Tamils. "So far we have only been able to clarify the fate of four of the 272 cases listed," the report said.

Two people were found in prison, one was released from an army camp and another was found dead, shot by security forces, Amnesty said.

Last year's report urged the Sri Lankan Government to launch an impartial inquiry into the disappearances and create a central registry of arrests and detentions.

"None of Amnesty International's recommendations has been implemented and no steps have been taken to prevent the recurrence of disappearances in future."

(Courtesy of 'The Times of India')

NEELAN TIRUCHELVAM has been a

consistent advocate for human rights and social justice in Sri Lanka. He has been interviewed by every major newspaper and news-magazine in Western



Europe, North America, Eastern Europe and in Asia, including the Middle East. He has also been featured in several television programmes in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Italy, The Netherlands, West Germany, Australia and the United States. He has been repeatedly interviewed for radio by the B.B.C., the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. He has authored several books and articles, many of which have also appeared in the Tamil and Sinhala press. He is completing a book titled, "ETHNIC CONFLICT IN SRI LANKA", which will soon appear in translation in Tamil and Sinhala.

The article which appears on pages 17 and 18 will form part of this book.

Sinhalese resistance now Jayawardene's worry

After years of civil warfare, President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka is optimistic that his landmark agreement with India will survive initial opposition and provide a lasting solution to the Tamil separatist conflict.

In his first interview since signing the controversial accord with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Jayawardene told *The Times* he believed that a 7,000-strong Indian peacekeeping force could be withdrawn within two weeks – and, in any event, long before provincial elections scheduled to be held by the end of the year.

He made it clear he did not wish his island's Eastern province to be part of a semi-autonomous Tamil "homeland" in the northern Jaffna region, and did not expect any "intelligent opposition" to the compromise settlement.

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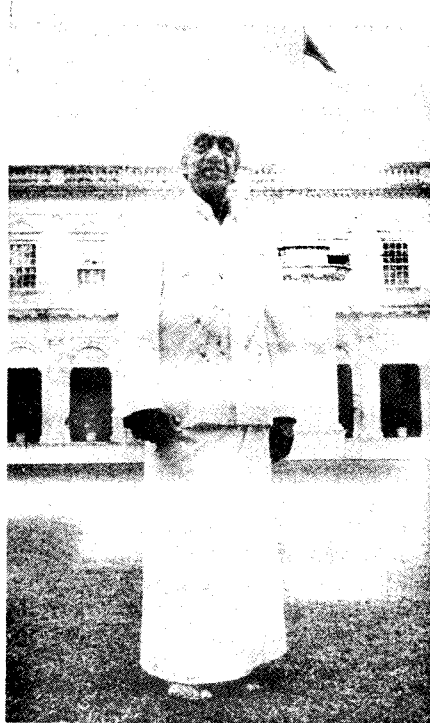
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President Jayawardene: acceptance of the fact that India is the dominant power in the region.

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Muslims of the Eastern province, who together outnumber the Tamils there, will be at the mercy of a Tamil terrorist-dominated administration.

(Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 August, 1987)



The Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, H. N. Dixit – nicknamed ironically in Sinhalese intellectual circles "the Indian viceroy" – has said that Indian troops will remain in Sri Lanka as provided under the accord, only as long as Colombo wishes. . . On board the frigates there are thought to be troops who could be quickly landed in an emergency. Dixit, who was actively involved in forging the accord, candidly told newsmen that "there are enough men on board to protect me if I am attacked."

(Far Eastern Economic Review, 13 August 1987)



TAMIL ASPIRATIONS AND THE RAJIV-J.R. PEACE ACCORD

THE RECENT PEACE ACCORD signed by the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and the Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayawardene has been welcomed with a sigh of relief by most Sri Lankan Tamils all over the world. It certainly broke the chain of violence, killings, starvation and the creation of a mass-scale refugee problem. The long term outcome of this Accord depends on whether the underlying causes of the conflict in Sri Lanka have been penetrated adequately.

Without going too far back into history, one can point to certain landmarks within the past forty years. Even before the departure of the British there were symptoms of suspicions and manoeuvrings whereby the political and economic base of the Tamils in the island was being undermined by the majority Sinhalese community. This became clear when the Citizenship laws were passed depriving a large section of the plantation workers, mainly Tamils, of their democratic rights. This death-blow to the political sharing of power by the Tamils which was supposed to have been guaranteed by the Soulbury constitution under which the British granted independence to Ceylon, created the Ilankai Thamizh Arasu Kadchi (popularly known as the Federal Party). Successive Sinhala-dominated governments implemented schemes mainly aimed at colonising the traditional Tamil homelands with Sinhalese thus reducing the Tamils to minority areas.

Traditionally the Tamils depended on government employment for their livelihood. This was denied by the emergence of full scale Sinhala nationalism as evidenced by the passing in 1956 of an Act making Sinhala the only official language. Peaceful protests by the Tamils sparked off large scale violence by some Sinhalese elements against the life and property of uninvolved Tamils living amongst them. The deprivation of job opportunities and promotion prospects for the Tamils in Government and in the private sector undermined the vulnerable economic base of the Tamils in the island.

The 'standardisation of University admissions', by which the number of places available for Tamil students in the Universities was reduced drastically and the lack of opportunities for Tamil youths to progress either in education or in employment made them disillusioned to such an extent that they threw themselves into the struggle for self-determination proposed by the Tamil political leadership. The insensitive manner in which the Sri Lankan Government handled this issue provoked further violence which culminated in mass scale destruction, in 1983, of life and property of Tamils living in the south of the island.

The Tamil resistance movement

attempted to unify all shades of Tamil opinion irrespective of class and other distinctions and carried on a struggle which put its demand for the recognition of the Tamils of Sri Lanka as a distinct nationality, the recognition of their right to a homeland, their right of self-determination and full democratic rights for the Plantation Tamils. These demands were based on the well-considered fact that the economic survival of the Tamils in the island could not be left to the whims and fancies of Sinhala-dominated governments.

By Dr. S. Navaratnam

The question one asks at this juncture is whether the Accord has the potential to contain and confirm Tamil aspirations for economic stability. One would wish to think that this Accord is not just a damp cloth on a smouldering fire, but is the beginning of a way forward for both communities to live in the island with dignity. Freedom to the Provincial Administration to attract capital and other investments so as to provide development opportunities, without undue restrictions by the Centre, is a necessary pre-requisite.

We would hope that India, along with other countries, contributes and encourages investments and development of the devastated areas.

Both the Indian and Sri Lankan governments may feel that with the recent amendments to the Citizenship laws and with arrangements for repatriation to India of those not successful in their quest for Sri Lankan citizenship, the problems of the Plantation Tamils in Sri Lanka are solved. Obtaining citizenship is only an aid to economic emancipation. The need for the upliftment of the life-style of the plantation workers who continue to live in most appalling conditions should always be kept in the forefront by the Tamil representatives and activists.

Some of the major demands of the Tamils of Sri Lanka would appear to have been met, at least on paper, in the historic Accord signed by Rajiv and J.R. What matters more is not what is on paper, rather what is implemented and how it is implemented. The Accord has the potential to generate cordiality between the communities and peaceful development of all geographical areas in the island. Where it might fail is if the implementation is undertaken in a half-hearted manner without commitment by the Sinhala government. One cannot fail to recognise the fact that the Accord affects the whole of Sri Lanka and that India, the regional power, as a party to the Accord would be interested and capable of seeing that it is implemented in its true spirit.



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Spotlight On Lalith Athulathmudali

LALITH AS HE IS POPULARLY KNOWN, is, in conventional wisdom, an acceptable candidate for the position of President of Sri Lanka. He is a towering giant, intellectually, in the use of language (public speaking) and socially indestructible. Lalith's father, D. D. Athulathmudali, from the Low Country Sinhalese Buddhist Goigamas, was a member of the State Council under the Donoughmore Constitution. His mother is Kandyan and his wife, a Ms. de Saram, is in some way connected to President Jayawardene's family.

He could not have had a better education: Royal College, Colombo; Oxford University and a barrister of Gray's Inn. At Oxford he served as Secretary of the Oxford Union and then crowned his career by being elected its President. For a time, Lalith was Lecturer in International Law at the University of Singapore. Then he came back to Sri Lanka to practise law and enter politics. What better credentials?

Why then did Lalith risk becoming unpopular with a sizeable section of his electorate, the Tamils of Sri Lanka? Perhaps a school day encounter with Nirmalingam (a son of the late C. Thiagalingam, Q.C.)? Lalith contested Nirmalingam for the post of Secretary of the Royal College Senior Literary Association and lost. Was he even then communal? His school mates will know.

Or he knows which side his bread is buttered, the Sinhala Buddhists (the SBs). And he is finely tuned politically. He maintains good relations

with the Sri Lankan Freedom Party. On the international stage, he has a good image, in London and Washington, though in New Delhi he may not be taken at his word. But New Delhi's distrust of Lalith will upstage him among the SBs.

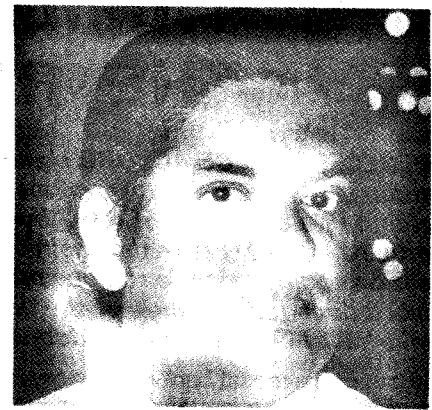
What has Lalith done to merit the uneasy position of President of Sri Lanka? Not very much. He entered Parliament for the first time only in 1977. He was not a proven success as Minister of Trade and Commerce. But he has been very close to President Jayawardene.

Then came the crisis of July 1983. He rushed in to accept the position of Minister of National Security. From then began the downward slope. Lalith desperately hoped for a military victory. This eluded him. If the gamble had succeeded, he would have been the contemporary reincarnation of Dutu Gemunu. Instead, the Sinhala army became targets for the Tamil Resistance. Lalith faced increasing criticism from the Government Parliamentary Group.

His colleagues in the Cabinet were appalled by the enormous military expenditure.

Fears and doubts surfaced among the Sinhala elites as to whether Sri Lanka was becoming Lebanonised. Lalith became incorporated into Tamil demonology. He has probably earned the everlasting opposition of the Tamil electorate.

Lalith was overtaken by events on the ever-changing military scene. A deal had been negotiated with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, without, perhaps, his knowledge. For all his verbiage and boasting, Lalith had to eat humble pie when the



Indian Prime Minister signed the peace accord with President Jayawardene. Why had the expert on international law not been consulted? Instead a home-grown K.G.B. (Kandyan Goigama Buddhist), the urban Gamini Dissanayake, risked his political career but proved successful in terminating a horrible and counter-productive war of attrition. Lalith and Prime Minister Premadasa are sulking. But they cannot any longer outdo Mrs. Bandaranaike in their Sinhala Buddhist populism.

Ironically, sections of the British press, whilst reporting on Lalith's discomfiture, are guessing that Lalith will be relieved of National Security and be made Minister of National Reconstruction.

They say, charity begins at home. So Lalith will have to spend time in reconstructing his lost image.

Auld Acquaintance

A BLOOMSBURY VIEW ON CEYLON

LEONARD WOOLF: A FEDERAL SOLUTION FOR THE ETHNIC SITUATION

(Memorandum - November 1938)

IN 1938 WOOLF suggested a method of solving Ceylon's ethnic problem, namely, the possibility of ensuring a large measure of devolution or even of introducing a federal system on the Swiss model.

The indigenous Tamil minorities, he wrote, are concentrated in the extreme north and east of the island. The Kandyan Sinhalese, who are in many ways very different from the Low Country Sinhalese, form a homogeneous Sinhalese block in the centre of the island.

At least four cantons on the Swiss model could, he noted, be created: i.e., the Low Country Sinhalese Provinces, the Kandyan Sinhalese Provinces, the Tamil Northern Province and the Tamil Eastern Province; and it might even be possible to create a fifth canton out of the area where the immigrant Indian Tamils form the majority of the population on tea estates.

The objection that Ceylon and its sub-divisions are too small for such a system, did not, in his view, hold water. Woolf compared Switzerland with Ceylon. Ceylon, he stated, is about 10,000 sq. miles greater than

that of Switzerland; the population of Ceylon is roughly 5,300,000 and that of Switzerland 4,000,000. If the Swiss federal system were adapted to Ceylon the smallest canton would be the Eastern Province with over a 200,000 population; in Switzerland the smallest canton has a population of about 14,000 and the largest about 700,000.

The Swiss federal cantonal system has proved extraordinarily successful under circumstances very similar to those in Ceylon, i.e., the co-existence in a single democratic state of communities of very different size, sharply distinguished from one another by race, language and religion.

Thus the German-speaking Swiss with a population of 2,750,000 occupy the numerical position of the Sinhalese, the French-speaking Swiss with 824,000, that of the Tamils and the Italian-speaking Swiss with 284,000 that of the Moormen.

The democratic canton and federal system in Switzerland, Woolf concluded, has safeguarded the legitimate minorities interests.

BOOK REVIEW

Gopal Gandhi's novel Novel

GOPAL GANDHI'S (*First Secretary, Assistant High Commission of India, Kandy, 1978-82*); Saragam: A Novel of Refuge (Affiliated East West Press Private Ltd., New Delhi 1981) is a rich contribution to English language literature on Sri Lanka.

A "Foreword" by Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay encapsulates the feelings of the author translated into the intelligence of words and capturing the plight of a nearly forgotten people - the so-called Indian Tamil plantation workers also referred to as "stateless" - a component of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka deprived of their address in 1948 and 1949 consequent on legislation enacted by the blossoming Sinhala Buddhist State, The Grand Old Lady of India states "reading this book was a rare experience".

Gandhi has converted his administrative experience (during 1978-82) of the plantation workers' painful uncertain feeling of the unknown but damning future into a language which, as Smt. Kamaladevi writes, "no artist could do with a swarm of brushes and a multitude of colours". It is the story of Valliamma typical of the drudgery and struggle for life of the so-called Indian Tamils. The administrator as writer and novelist was conscious of and had sensitivity for the downtrodden Tamil people of Sri Lanka's plantations. Priced at 40 Indian rupees, the author wrestles with our human consciousness. It must be read.

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Pupils put on a show

CHILDREN took to the stage to
provide entertainment at their
speech day.

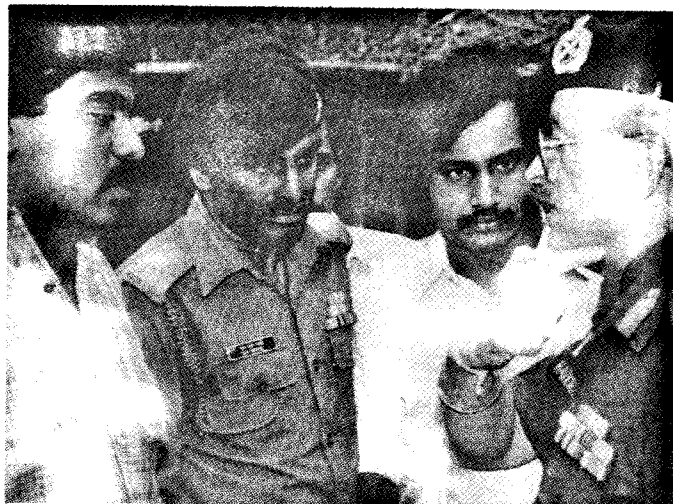
Pupils from the West London Tamil
School, based in Greenford, put on a
performance of singing and dancing on
Saturday, July 18.

The youngsters, aged between 4 and 20,
were presented with their prizes by Prof.
Bertram Farmer, pictured, of St. John's
College, Cambridge.

Prof. Farmer handed over awards for
excellence to more than 100 pupils from the
school in Mansell Road, Greenford.



An Indian armoured personnel carrier guarding the Jaffna airport recently.



Tamil guerrilla leader Ajit Mahayatta (second left) refused to surrender his weapons under the Indian-backed peace pact, when requested by Indian General Harkirat Singh (right).



The LTTE leader, Mr. V. Prabhakaran with Mr. Kittu, former Jaffna commander of the LTTE, at Madras airport before they left for Delhi to meet the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi.



A Tamil prisoner (right), about to be freed in southern Sri Lanka, embracing a comrade not yet released.



Peace-keeping troops guard surrendered arms.



Tamil fighters walk through the crowd at a rally in Jaffna where their leader said they would surrender their arms.



Lt. Gen. Depinder Singh, GOC-in-C, Southern Command, who is overseeing the Indian peace-keeping in Sri Lanka, with Brig. G.H. de Silva, the Commander of the Sri Lankan security forces.



Indian troops in Sri Lanka to enforce the Peace Accord.