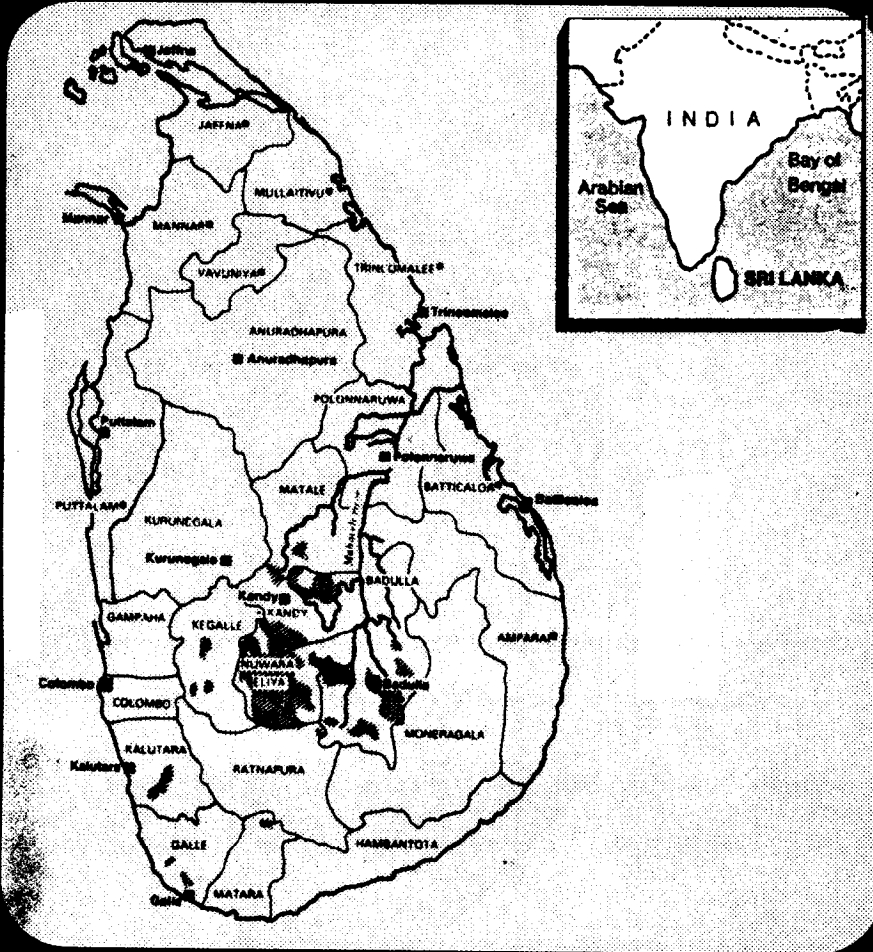


SRI LANKA

A PARADISE IN FLAMES

A SRI LANKA WORKGROUP PUBLICATION

VOLUME.I NUMBER. 01



**INTRODUCTION
TO THE
PRESENT CRISIS**

**CONDEMNATION
OF RECENT
MASSACRES**

CAMPAIGN TO RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PRESENT CRISIS

A paradise island, 22 miles off the southern tip of India, Sri Lanka has been often called "the Pearl of the Orient" by western historians.

While it has always been a paradise to us the Sri Lankan People - it has been introduced as such -- to the western world by successive governments of Sri Lanka: to develop the tourism industry.

Now, particularly after the July '83 pogroms, our country -- which we love so deeply; which our parents and our great-grand parents *developed and built* -- flows with rivers of bloods even as the mountains of dead bodies rise higher and higher.

People of the international community may be shocked at how this has occurred in a country which has such ancient and rich traditions, with great cultural values, and which practices the world's foremost religions - Buddhism, Hinduisim, Christianity and Islam?

Is this a spontaneous event, or an outburst of longstanding contradictions in our society - unsolved problems which over a considerable period of time created the present crisis?

A person casually watching the news on T.V., listening to a radio programme or reading a newspaper, may get this image of Sri Lanka: Eelam Tamil separatists' fighting for division of the country, killing Sinhalese civilians, or, shelling and aerial bombing by government security forces causing injury and death to the Tamil civilians and destruction of hospitals, places of worship, schools and libraries in the traditional homelands of the Tamil-speaking people.

It is, therefore, our duty -- those of us concerned about human rights issues in Sri Lanka -- to try and deepen the awareness of the crisis among all friends of Sri Lankan peoples.

The armed struggle for separate home land, Tamil Eelam - didn't break out suddenly. Successive regimes since independence in 1948, enacted discriminatory measures against a particular community, legalizing oppression against a people with a flourishing language, culture and traditional homeland.

Tamil nationalist leaders staged peaceful protest actions, at first, to focus attention on their particular problems. Settlements negotiated went unimplemented and the various pacts signed, torn up; non violent actions - satyagrahas - were met with government-inspired thuggery and later with deployment of the armed forces. It was under these tragic circumstances that frustrated Tamil youths took up arms to solve their grievances.

This was not the result of an individual act of a hero or an heroic organisation. This was an explosion of our social contradictions which were suppressed for long time.

INDEPENDENCE IN 1948?

In 1948, immediately after 'independence', the United National Party (UNP) government disenfranchised plantation Tamils, who had voted for an opposition party and who constituted nearly a million people, depriving them of their citizenship and nationality. Tamil representation which was about 25 percent in parliament at Independence, was reduced by almost half as a result of this. This strengthened the suspicion between the two communities.

LANGUAGE

It had been an agreed policy among the leaders of all communities and political parties that Sinhala and Tamil would replace English as the official Language of the country. The founder of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the late S.W.R.D. Bandaranayake stated in the SLFP

founding manifesto of September 1951:

It is most essential that Sinhalese and Tamil be adopted as official Languages immediately, so that the people of this country may cease to be aliens in their own land, so that an end may be put to the inequity of condemning those educated in Sinhalese and Tamil to occupy the lowliest walks of life, and above all that society may have the full benefit of the skill and talents of the people. The administration of the government must be carried on in Sinhalese and Tamil.

But, in 1954, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party and the ruling United National Party, abandoned this two-language policy and adopted the policy of Sinhala as the only official Language.

On 5 June 1956 the then Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike introduced the Sinhala only bill which was passed despite the opposition of Tamil Members of Parliament (MPs). Peaceful protests took place all over the Island.

ANTI-TAMIL POGROMS

Tamil MPs and 300 Tamil people launched a satyagraha in front of parliament. But even these MPs were attacked. Every Tamil seen on the road in the capital, Colombo, was attacked. Anti-Tamil pogroms broke out in the Eastern province. In 1956, hundreds of Tamil people, including women and children, were murdered.

The 1956 events were the first in a series of anti-Tamil pogroms caused by a language policy which divided the people.

The Federal Party launched a *Satyagraha* campaign again in February 1961. Thousands of Tamil men and women sat down in front of the district administrative headquarters in the North and East. This continued for several weeks and

•PRESENT CRISIS Cont. on Page 4•

J.R.: NO ELECTIONS AGAIN?

COLOMBO, April 27 (IPS) -- Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene has said the country's next general elections, scheduled for 1989, may not be held unless the "problem of terrorism is resolved," it was reported here today.

The president was speaking yesterday at a rally of his ruling United National Party (UNP) in Karadeniya, in the island's south, after a spate of bombings and massacres on the island over the past 10 days left at least 275 people dead.

"There may be a need to go before the people once again and seek a referendum to remain until terrorism is completely wiped out," Jayewardene said in his first public appearance since the April 21 bomb attack in Colombo, which killed over 110 people. The issue of a referendum is a sensitive one because a controversial plebiscite in 1982 extended the UNP's mandate by six years.

-Canadian Alert on Sri Lanka - "39 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE?"



200 people marched through downtown Toronto on February 7, 1987 to mark the 39th Anniversary of 'Independence' in Sri Lanka on February 4. Organizers, Canadian Alert on Sri Lanka (CANSL) called a day of mourning and said there's no independence, yet.

PLANS TO PUT OFF POLLS ASSAILED

by Kunda Dixit

COLOMBO, May 5 (IPS) -- The leader of Sri Lanka's largest opposition party, Sirima Bandaranaike, has sharply criticized the government for trying to stay in power indefinitely under the pretext that there was increasing "terrorist activity" in the country. Bandaranaike, a former prime minister of the island nation and the leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), was reacting to a statement by President Junius Jayewardene last week that the next general elections scheduled for 1989 may not be held unless the "problem of terrorism is resolved."

The government and the opposition have been increasingly at loggerheads since a series of massacres, bomb explosions and air raids last month that killed at least 400 civilians. Jayewardene threatened to have another referendum to extend his government's mandate without elections because of the prevailing situation in the country. A controversial referendum in 1982 won Jayewardene's government six more years in power. "As long as (Jayewardene) is there, terrorism will

never be wiped out. Our feeling is he has no intention to stop terrorism because that is the only way he can remain in power."

Bandaranaike told reporters at her party headquarters here today. She went on to accuse the government of using the car bomb blast in Colombo on April 21 that killed at least 115 people to postpone elections, ban May Day rallies and stifle the opposition. "This government must go, they have remained long enough. The country is going to the dogs," she said.

The SLFP and some opposition parties today issued a no-confidence motion against the Jayewardene government in Parliament on 40 counts including failure to settle the island's ethnic problem, corruption, nepotism, seeking political revenge and contempt of parliament.

"The government is trying to cling to office at all costs," the motion states. There were unprecedented scenes of pandemonium in the Sri Lankan Parliament last week as opposition members wanted an extension of

. OPPOSITION, Cont. on Pg. 12 .

May 1 (AP) Officials banned rallies marking the international workers' day in South Africa and Sri Lanka.

MAY DAY BANNED

COLOMBO, May 2 (Reuter) Police firing submachine-guns and protesters demanding the resignation of President Junius Jayewardene clashed outside a temple in the Sri Lankan capital in May Day violence that killed two people. About 300 policemen, firing their weapons in the air and using tear gas, fought with about 2,000 rock-throwing protesters -- including 400 saffron-robed Buddhist monks -- who charged out of the Abayaramaya temple in an attempt to hold a May Day rally.

Police with plastic shields and wooden staves contained the protesters and restored peace and order after 30 minutes. As the protesters retreated they hurled rocks, bricks and other missiles at police, who pursued them into the temple compound. Buddhist monk Maduluwewa Sobitha, one of the organizers of the rally, said one of those killed was a 22-year-old student. The identity of the other victim was not immediately known.

•PRESENT CRISIS, Cont. from Pg. 2 •
effectively paralysed the government's civil administration in the North and East. The government responded by sending military forces to North and East, and arrested all the Tamil leaders and kept them in detention.

Government-sponsored resettlement of large numbers of Sinhalese people in the traditional Tamil home lands has been another major grievance.

Objection to Sinhalese resettlement was not only based on the loss of territory but also because of the resulting alteration of the composition of these areas. From the mid-1930s this practice was systematically carried out by successive Governments. The present Government Minister of National Security Lalith Athulathmudali expressed this openly:

"I believe this [resettlement] is the successful method of combating terrorism in a non-violent way. This could mean that somewhere in the future there could be more Sinhalese in the North than the Tamils." [The Sun (Sri Lanka) January 20, 1985.]

A PTI report on 22 January, 1985 reported President Jayawardene's view on this matter that the "government would carry forward the programme of settling Sinhalese in the North and East in accordance with the principle of distributing state lands on the basis of ethnic proportion."

The tragic consequences of this were seen during the later half of 1985, particularly in the eastern province, when armed Sinhalese settlers joined with the security forces in "anti-guerilla" operations. (Emergency Sri Lanka 1986 - page 21)

In 1957, negotiations between then Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranayake and the Tamil leader S.J.V. Chelvanayagam resulted in the famous "B - C Pact" of July 26th. The present President J.R. Jayawardene who had been defeated in the 1956 election initiated and led his infamous march (which ended in a riot) to Kandy on October 1957 to campaign against the B-C pact.

On April 9th 1958 a large number of

leading Buddhist monks led by Mrs Wimala Wijewardene - the minister who had defeated J.R. Jayawardene at Kelaniya in the 1956 election - went to the Prime Minister's residence and demanded that he abrogate the pact. The B-C pact, as it was called, was torn by its principal author.

The next effort for a negotiated settlement was made between the then Prime Minister, UNP leader, Dudley Senanayake, and S.J.V. Chelvanayagam. On the 24th March 1965, they came in to an agreement which was called the Senanayake - Chelvanayagam pact.

The SLFP, the main opposition party, in alliance with the Buddhist clergy launched a campaign, reminiscent of Jaya-wardene's agitation against the B-C pact of 1956, calling the pact a "sell out to the Tamils." This pact was also abrogated.

Since 'Independence', successive governments have also totally ignored traditional Tamil homelands from all economic developments programmes undertaken with massive foreign aid from western donor countries. As a result unemployment has become a dominant problem among Tamil youth. And for Tamils, the entry into state and private sector employment was seen as the only avenue for economic survival and social advancement:

The Tamils were never large land owners or estate owners like the Sinhala upper classes. The most lucrative export sector of tea, coconut and rubber was never dominated by Tamils. It has been observed in many societies that those who do not hold land tend to go in to professions or business.' (The Ethnic Conflict, Myths, Realities and Perspectives - page 16, 1984 .)

"For a community which had relied heavily on employment as a means of economic survival, the perception of being deprived of this avenue by governmental discrimination has resulted in frustration and alienation." (Emergency Sri Lanka 1986 - page 12.).

'Of approximately 500,000

vacancies filled in the state and corporation sectors after 1977, those belonging to the Tamil Community less than 2%. Tamils constitute less than 2% in the armed services and less than 5% in the police service. (Mervyn de Silva, Far Eastern Economic Review, 30 Oct. 1984)

According to the Department of Census and Statistics, between the years 1977 and 1981, of 9,965 persons recruited into the clerical service, 9,326 (or 93.6 %) were Sinhalese and 492 (or 4.9 %) were Tamils. (Dr. Nihal Jayawickrama, Lanka Guardian, Vol.8, No.1)

The unemployment rate among young Tamil males who have passed the G.C.E. A/L Examination is 41 %. The Sinhalese suffer an unemployed rate of 29 % (Ministry of Plan Implementation and Department of Census and Statistics, p. 83)

Pro. Virginia A Leary, pointed out at the report of the International Commission of Jurists, (1981, p.80), "*Analysts of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka would appear to be convinced that one of the principal causes of the rise in militancy among the educated Tamil Youth has been subject of admission to higher education..* One of the major points of tension among many Tamil youths has been the implicit racial quota under present university admission policies which has barred many competent youths from pursuing higher education."

It is these students and unemployed youths who were so flagrantly and unjustly excluded from universities and job opportunities and prevented by the state from achieving their aspirations who are today in the vanguard of the armed struggle.

One can compare the 1971 youth uprising in Sri Lanka. The same social-strata, mainly Sinhala youth who were also victims of the present social structure, took up arms to change the social system. They couldn't get the support of the toiling masses of the Sinhala population. But Tamil youths now waging an armed struggle for self-
•PRESENT CRISIS, Cont. on Pg. 12•

'39 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE' MARKED AS DAY OF MOURNING AS 200 SILENTLY MARCH THROUGH DOWNTOWN TORONTO

The thirty-ninth anniversary of so-called Independence in Sri Lanka, was marked as a day of mourning by the human rights group, Canadian Alert on Sri Lanka as they marched through the streets of downtown Toronto, on Saturday, February 7 in the afternoon.

Bystanders stopped and stared, and others quietly took CANSL's leaflet, as 200 marchers, some wearing white masks,

silently wove through one of Toronto's busier commercial streets. A large sign at the front of the marchers asked, "39 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE?", as other signs called for a halt to Canadian Aid to Sri Lanka, and the removal of the High Commissioner to Canada.

The leaflet spoke of Tamil people losing their traditional homelands in the North and East, of enslaved plantation workers

in the central highlands, of workers in the oppressive Free Trade Zones of the southwest, and the Sinhala peasants in the southeast who are losing their land to multinationals.

At the downtown Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, CANSL secretary S. Balachandran, reiterated the history of Sri Lanka since 'independence', from the disenfranchisement of the Plantation Tamils to the present conflict that has claimed at least 8,000 lives.

Dipankar Gupta, visiting Professor of Anthropology at the University of Toronto, described the failure of our governments to consider all the people in the building of a nation. Carmencita Hernandez, a Filipino activist, compared the Sri Lanka situation to the Philippines, before Marcos fell.

Charles Roach, a civil rights lawyer, told refugees to challenge the racism they experience here, and compared the present media attack on refugees to the anti-immigrant campaign in the early seventies.

Mitchell Holder from the Biko-Rodney-Malcolm Coalition spoke of the experiences of Black people from South Africa to North America, and compared Sri Lanka, with his native Barbados, which also has a strong Anglicized elite.

Krisantha Sri Bhaggiyadatta, an editor of the Lanka Review, questioned the sincerity of that government's proposals for peace, when they have arrested so many Sinhalese activists who have pushed for a peaceful settlement.

Dan Heap, MP for Spadina spoke of the upcoming changes in the refugee laws and the activities of his New Democratic Party on behalf of refugees.

The meeting, chaired by CANSL President S. Sabanadesan, concluded with a moment of silence.

DEMONSTRATION AGAINST BOMBINGS HELD IN OTTAWA

OTTAWA January 16, 1987 (CP)
About 200 Canadian Tamils demonstrated peacefully in front of the Sri Lankan high commissioner's residence and on Parliament Hill Friday to protest what they said was unrestricted government bombing of Tamil areas in their home country.

The Tamils also protested the continued presence in this country of the Sri Lankan high commissioner, Tissa Weeratunga, who they accuse of having participated in the torture of Tamil civilians in Sri Lanka. Weeratunga is a former army commander who was in charge of government troops battling Tamil dissidents in northern and eastern sectors of Sri Lanka.

The Tamils and Amnesty International have both accused the Sri Lankan government of atrocities in the anti-rebel campaign. Tamil activists in Canada say Weeratunga bears responsibility for the torture of Tamil suspects held in custody by his troops, and they want him declared persona non grata by the Canadian government. Canadian officials refuse to discuss Weeratunga's case, saying they must rely on the Sri Lanka government for verification or denial of the Tamil claims.

A statement from the Tamils of Canada association said food and fuel supplies have been cut off to Tamil areas of Sri Lanka, causing widespread hunger and deprivation among the civilian population.

FOREIGN MERCENARY AIRCRAFT BOMBINGS

They say the city of Jaffna, a Tamil stronghold, has been bombed by foreign mercenary aircraft working at the direction of the government in Colombo. The statement said large but unspecified numbers of innocent Tamils have been killed in the aerial bombardments.

The Tamils also say the Sri Lankan army has been committing atrocities against men, women and children in Tamil areas and that many women have been raped and killed by government security forces. The Canadian Tamils have petitioned the federal government to press Sri Lankan president Junius Jayewardene to restore 3 transportation of food and fuel supplies to the Tamil districts.

They want the Canadian International Development Agency to give emergency relief to thousands of Tamil refugees living in India. Estimates put the number of Tamils living in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu at 100,000. And the Tamils in Canada want the Sri Lankan government to allow the international Red Cross and its agencies access to the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka, from which they have been banned since 1983.

As a means of solving the continuing civil war, the Tamils want Canada to ask the Commonwealth to send a Canadian peace delegation to Sri Lanka to visit areas of conflict and recommend solutions.

NEGOTIATIONS IN JANUARY WHICH PRECEDED ARMY OFFENSIVE IN JAFFNA

INDIA RELAYS CONCERNS OVER JAFFNA BLOCKADE

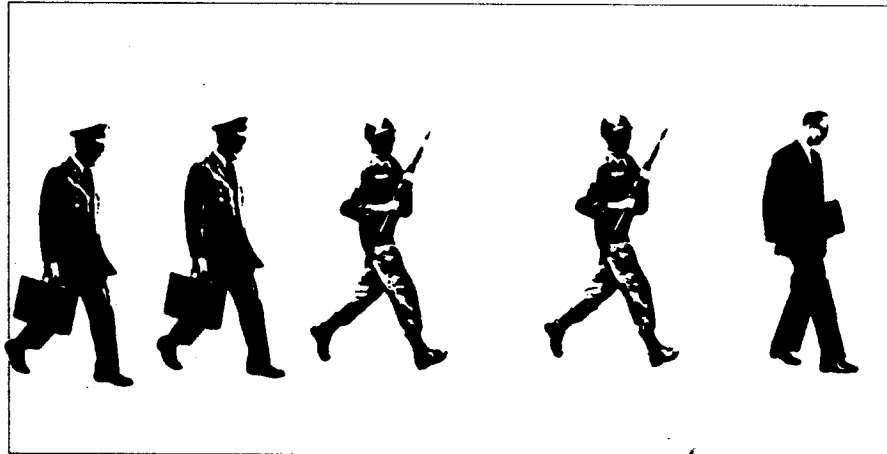
NEW DELHI, Jan. 14 (IPS) -- India today reiterated its concern over developments in the Jaffna peninsula of northern Sri Lanka as visiting Sri Lankan Minister Gamini Dissanayake met Indian ministers here for the second day. Briefing journalists, an official Indian spokesperson said the government hopes that "all parties (to the Sri Lankan ethnic crisis) will exercise restraint."

The Indian view was conveyed to Dissanayake, the Sri Lankan minister for land development, when he met Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Natwar Singh and Minister of State for Home Affairs P. Chidambaram. Their talks began yesterday when Dissanayake called at the Foreign Office. Sri Lankan High Commissioner Bernard Tilakaratne, joined him at the talks today.

According to diplomats here, India is particularly concerned over the escalating confrontation between the Sri Lankan government forces and Tamil militants controlling Jaffna. The government of Sri Lankan President Junius Jayewardene imposed a fuel blockade on the Jaffna peninsula some 10 days ago, following reports that the militants planned to introduce their own administration in parts of the northern province. The militants, mainly the "Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam," have said the blockade is intended to force them into accepting a settlement the Jayewardene government favors.

President Jayewardene has refused to concede the Tamil demand for recognition of a Tamil homeland and the merger of the northern and eastern provinces. The Tamils have indicated that while they may not insist on a separate Tamil state, they cannot give up their "basic" right to self-determination in the area where they have traditionally been in the majority.

A compromise formula, to which the Sri Lankan government reportedly agreed



some six weeks ago, was later turned down by Colombo, Indian diplomats say. At the same time, the Sri Lankan government tried to open direct contacts with the Tigers' representatives in Jaffna to secure their willingness to hold direct talks with Colombo. Releasing two Sri Lankan soldiers in return for two Tigers some four weeks ago in Jaffna, the Tigers made it clear that serious political negotiations can only be held with India's mediation.

The fuel blockade which was imposed later was seen as an attempt to force the militants to talk directly with Colombo. Diplomats here say India will be happy if direct talks are held, arguing that only such talks can go into substantive aspects of the proposals for a settlement. However, they cannot be held under

duress, they say. The Indian envoy in Colombo, J.N. Dixit, conveyed India's views on the Jaffna situation to President Jayewardene last week.

The president reportedly suggested that Dissanayake, a leading member of his government, could talk to Indian ministers this week. Dissanayake arrived in Bhubaneswar over the weekend for talks on the exchange of cricket teams between the two countries and reached the capital Jan. 9.

The talks here, which may continue tomorrow, take place amidst heightened speculation about the next moves of the Sri Lankan government in the northern province and the response of the Tamil militants.

ONE DENTIST FOR 40,000 PEOPLE

Sri Lanka has only around 400 practising dentists, which roughly means there is only one dentist per 40,000 people.

The main reason for this severe shortage of dental surgeons in the country, is the limited intake admitted to dental courses in the country's universities. Surgeon-in-charge of the Dental Institute, Colombo Dr.K.H.T.de Silva believes.

He told a recent workshop on National Oral Health that only 80 students are

admitted each year to the Faculty of Dental Sciences, University of Peradeniya. The numbers of dental technicians and dental therapists who pass out each year are 4 and 25, he revealed.

He said inspite of this severe shortage of dentists, at present there was no dental manpower unit in the Department of Health Services.

("WEEKEND" March 22, 1987)

BUS BOMB FLASHES ATTENTION ON 'PLANTATION TAMILS'

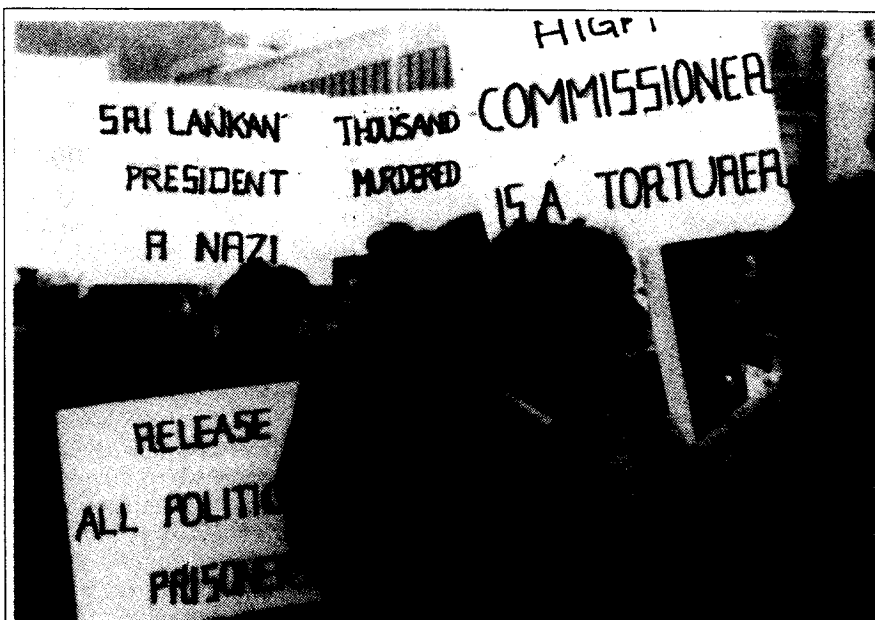
Kunda Dixit

COLOMBO, Jan. 19 (IPS) -- A bus bomb that killed six and injured 51 in central Sri Lanka yesterday has flashed attention on the island's one million "other Tamils" -- those that inhabit the tea-growing central hills. The British brought in thousands of Tamils from southern India to work in the tea and rubber plantations in the last century, and these Tamils now form nearly six percent of Sri Lanka's population. They are distinct from the "Jaffna Tamils" -- the original inhabitants of northern Sri Lanka who make up 13 percent of Sri Lanka's 16 million people.

The tea plantations of the central hills have so far been relatively untouched by the fighting raging between government forces and Tamil separatist guerrillas in the northeast of the island. But three people were shot by police during a riot in a tea estate at Talawakelle, 62 miles east of here last month. Fifteen estate Tamils were reported arrested last week in a sweep by security forces in the town.

Intelligence officials here were quoted as saying that the men were part of a "hard core" group affiliated with guerrilla groups based in northern Sri Lanka. Police sources here haven't blamed any one group for yesterday's bus blast, but didn't discount the possibility of "local extremists" being responsible. Of the killed four were Sinhalese and two Tamil, hospital sources in Badulla, 95 miles east of Colombo, said. The police also said a curfew had been imposed on Badulla and adjoining Haliela till 6 A.M. tomorrow to prevent reprisals or an escalation of the violence.

Observers here say this is the first time that a powerful bomb of this type has been used in the hill country, and say it represents a dangerous spread of the ethnic conflict on the island. Leaders of the plantation Tamils have said that efforts by the government in Colombo to "perpetuate sectarian Sinhala hegemony in the hill country" will bring disaster.



February 7 1987. Demonstrators in Toronto marked the 39th Anniversary of 'Independence' as a day of mourning. Independence was granted by the British in 1948. Speakers asked the Sri Lankan government to release political prisoners and seek a negotiated settlement.

The plantation Tamils have a very active trade union movement, and is represented in the Sri Lankan Parliament by the Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC).

Over the years, there has been simmering discontent among the Tamils of the estate over question of Sri Lankan citizenship, and because of what the CWC says is Colombo's deliberate efforts to change the demographic pattern of the hills. "The Sinhalese think they can make the hill country a Sinhala-only preserve, and to keep (the Tamils) a segregated and divided lot, they are using the same device that has proved suicidal in the north and the east," a recent CWC statement said. The CWC has accused the "Sinhalese ultras" of trying to impose "pocket type" armed Sinhalese settlements in the midst of the Tamil-dominated estates. But the Congress denies having any links with Tamil guerrilla groups in the north.

It has blamed recent outbursts of violence

on local plantation officials and inter-union rivalry. Analysts say the Badulla blast could also be an attempt by Tamil militant groups to spread the conflict to the island's central hills and the south. Two powerful bombs that the government says were planted by the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students have been discovered and defused in Colombo in the past month. The island's ethnic conflict has taken a turn for the worse after Tamil guerrillas announced their own civilian administration in the northern Jaffna peninsula on Jan. 1.

With the Indian-backed peace initiative floundering, the government answered by imposing a fuel blockade on the peninsula and launching a limited military offensive. Guerrilla groups in Jaffna have threatened to retaliate on key economic installations in the south if the blockade is extended to include foodstuffs and other essentials.

SEAFOOD FIRM TO SUE GOVERNMENT FOR STF COMMANDO KILLINGS

COLOMBO, Feb. 2 (IPS) -- The owners of a multi-million dollar seafood company have threatened to sue the Sri Lankan government unless they receive "adequate compensation" for what they charge was a massacre of employees by security forces last week. At least 21 employees of the firm's prawn farm were said to have been shot dead by members of a police Special Task Force (STF) on Jan. 28 during a major military offensive against Tamil separatist guerrillas near the coastal town of Batticaloa, 140 miles east of here.

The \$3 million farm, Serendib Seafoods, is owned jointly by Sri Lankan businessmen and investors from Britain, the United States and West Germany. Managing Director Victor Santiapillai told reporters here today that on the morning of Jan. 28, 21 of the farm's employees were rounded up by security forces, taken to a Methodist church five miles away, and shot dead. He said

among those killed was the manager of the farm and a 12-year-old boy who worked in the kitchen. Fourteen other young employees, many of them "bird boys" hired to scare away gulls from the prawn hatcheries, were still missing, Santiapillai said.

He said the company had asked the government for compensation for the loss of investment, adding that if the request is not met, the company will sue the government for damages under the investment protection guarantee agreement between Sri Lanka and Britain. The company's foreign partners are registered in Hong Kong. At least 100 people are estimated to have been killed in the military operation in which the government claims to have destroyed a major guerrilla stronghold in eastern Sri Lanka. The company's account of the incident is sharply contradicted by the government, which claims the farm was being used by various Tamil militant groups.

The government also said that there was a "symbiotic relationship" between the technical staff at the camp and the militants. Santiapillai hotly denied the charges, calling them "utter nonsense." Eye witness reports from survivors in Batticaloa were quoted as saying that the farm employees were shot together with 63 other young men rounded up from surrounding villages. From details pieced together from various sources, the massacre at the church on Jan. 28 appears to have been a reprisal by the STF for the death of their comrades in an explosion that morning about 10 miles from the farm. Thirteen STF commandos were killed when a South African-built armored personnel carrier exploded after running over a landmine, allegedly planted by guerrillas. "A few people seem to have gone berserk," Santiapillai said. "A decent way out of it would be for the government to accept it."

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL ON 150 KILLINGS IN JANUARY

(This is the text of the Amnesty International URGENT ACTION newsletter Index:ASA 37102187 of 6th February 1987. Emphasis ours)

Amnesty International is gravely concerned at reports published in the international press, supported by mounting evidence, including testimony from survivors and other witnesses, that at least 150 civilians, nearly all Tamils, have been deliberately killed by members of the Special Task Force (STF) in the Batticaloa area during a three day military operation starting Wednesday 28 January 1987. That day, 13 STF men were killed, most of them in a landmine explosion attributed to armed Tamil separatists, at Kokkoddicholai, about eight miles west of Batticaloa.

Killings were reported from the villages of Kokkoddicholai, Arulnesapuram, Arasadithivu, Ampalanthurai, where over 45 people were reported killed, as well as Mudalaikuda, Munaikadu, Ilupadichenai,

Thandiady and Mahiladithaivu, where an estimated 83 civilians have been killed. The Sri Lankan government officials have repeatedly denied the charges that civilians have been deliberately killed, identifying 23 of the dead as separatist guerrillas, four as civilians and 13 as members of the STF.

However, survivors of these killings have reported that from 28 January onwards, men, women and children were deliberately killed in helicopter gunfire and that STF personnel entered houses of Tamils in the area, ordered male Tamils to come out and shot them. In one incident at Mahaladithaivu, near Kokkoddicholai, detailed allegations have been made that at least 22 employees of Serendib Sea Foods, a prawn farm which is part of a foreign concern, were taken away in a tractor and truck by three members of the STF to a nearby church and shot dead. Seven of the victims are said to be between 12 and 14 years old. Another 12 men are reported

missing, feared dead, and survivors have reported that dozens of others, seeking refuge in the prawn farm later, were also shot. The bodies of the victims were reportedly burned on old tyres collected from the local bus depot. Official reports of the incident stated that those killed were armed Tamil separatists who had occupied the farm after its alleged closure several weeks ago. However, one of the foreign directors of the farm denied its use by political groups, adding that the employees killed were "innocent technicians and casual labour."

Amnesty International appeals to the Sri Lanka government immediately to establish a comprehensive independent investigation by persons trusted for their impartiality to investigate these allegations of widespread extrajudicial killings and to search for the "disappeared" people.

TRAINS SRI LANKAN COMMANDOS AND CENTRAL AMERICAN CONTRAS BRITISH MERCENARIES WITH LINKS TO THATCHER QUIT SRI LANKA OVER TORTURE OF CIVILIANS

British mercenaries in Sri Lanka have walked out after complaining that the Government troops they trained have committed a series of atrocities against the minority Tamil population.

Security sources say the men, most of whom are ex-SAS, were sent with Whitehall's approval. They work for KMS Ltd., the powerful London security company which has been implicated in the contra arms scandal in Washington.

The firm links with the Prime Minister are being probed by senior Labour MPs who want to know whether she has been secretly helping President Regan by authorising the company to support the American contras in Nicaragua.

The mercenaries walked out on their £20,000 a year tax-free jobs after complaining that the Special Task Force, which they set up for the Sri Lankan Government in 1984, was running out of control and was indiscriminately killing and torturing Tamil civilians.

Amnesty International has gathered evidence that the force has kidnapped Tamil civilians who have never been seen again. Soldiers are also accused of executing detainees after ordering them to dig their own graves, using nails and pliers to torture prisoners and burning the bodies of those who died under interrogation. The Sri Lankan Government has rejected the charges.

Last week the ex-SAS major who runs KMS, David Walker, flew to Sri Lanka to try to salvage the company's contract.

Sixty of his men have now either walked out, refused to renew their contracts or been sacked. "The whole operation is a bag of worms," said one source.

KMS has been working from a base at Katukurunda, an hour's drive south of the capital, Colombo.

The company's role believed to have been endorsed by the Secret Intelligence Service, M16,

in an attempt to bolster the Sri Lankan Government against overtures from the Russians, who want naval facilities on the Island.

Sri Lanka originally asked the Foreign Office for an SAS unit. But the Government declined for fear of alienating the Indian Government, which supports the Tamil separatist movement.

Instead, say sources, the FO sent a squad of 12 KMS mercenaries, including an ex-SAS colonel and an ex-SAS adjutant.

The Ministry of Defence is also believed to have supplied sophisticated new automatic rifles which have been developed by the Royal Ordnance factory and are not yet available even for regular British Army units.

The mercenaries first got into trouble for indiscipline. One got drunk in a tourist hotel in nearby Kalutara and fired his gun into the ceiling. A group of former Rhodesian SAS men were sacked for making racist remarks to the Sri Lankans they were training and a South-African pilot who disobeyed orders was transferred to the KMS operation with the contras in Central America.

But more serious problems followed. The Special Task Force moved into the island's Eastern Province and the KMS men began to hear reports of atrocities.

The mercenaries, many of whom have long SAS experience of counter-insurgency, complained that this was a fatal error. They wanted the Task Force to win the "hearts and minds" of Tamil villagers to cut off the support they offered to Tamil guerrillas.

They complained the Task Force was making enemies of them all and made a series of protests to the senior mercenary on the ground, an ex-SAS colonel who joined KMS after being targeted by Irish terrorists.

He could do nothing. The mercenaries then pressed to be allowed to go into

combat with the Task Force in an attempt to control them. But they were told this was unacceptable to the Foreign Office in London.

Discontent in the mercenary ranks grew. Less-qualified "cowboy" reinforcements were sent from London. Including one man who has served a jail sentence for armed robbery.

Then Israeli security consultants arrived on the island and unhampered by restrictions from their own Government, began to take over parts of the KMS operation.

Now senior ex-SAS men have refused to renew their contracts and others have walked out.

David Walker, who is believed to still be in Sri Lanka, is reported to have sacked KMS teams who had been training other specialist army and navy units for the Sri Lankans, in an attempt to save the contract with the Task Force.

The Sri Lankan High Commissioner in London, Mr Chandra Monerawela, yesterday confirmed that his Government had approved the contract and rejected the reports of atrocities.

"There may sometimes be excesses or civilian casualties, but when you are dealing with guerrillas, anything can happen. They don't wear uniforms," he said.

A Foreign Office spokesman denied that KMS been given any Government approval for its work in Sri Lanka. Labour's Foreign Affairs spokesman George Foulkes has tabled Parliamentary Questions asking Mrs Thatcher about meetings with David Walker and links between the company and Governments.

(London 'Daily News'
Wednesday March 4, 1987,
Empasis ours)

VOICES NORTH AND SOUTH: MOTHER'S FRONT -- WOMEN FOR PEACE

COLOMBO, Jan. 13 (IPS) -- Annamma was sitting down to lunch at her home in Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka when there was a knock on the door. Five army officers were standing outside. "They said

they wanted to talk to my youngest son," says the 52-year-old widow with six children. He was not at home, so they asked Annamma to send him to the army camp when he returned. "I was worried,"

says Annamma, "but my son said there was nothing to fear."

The next time she saw him was in a hospital mortuary 10 days later. "His body was wrapped in a cloth and only his face was visible," recalls Annamma. "He had already been dead 10 days." Annamma is one of hundreds of mothers who have lost their sons to the violence that has ravaged Sri Lanka for the last four years. Tamil separatists, demanding an independent state for the minority Tamils, are locked in a bloody battle with a government committed to preserving a unitary state.

In an atmosphere of growing racialism between the majority Sinhalese and the Tamils, women on both sides are raising their voices against the continuing violence. "Our children end up by killing each other and it is we mothers who have to live with this unbearable sorrow," says a Sinhalese woman from southern Sri Lanka, whose soldier son died recently in a landmine blast in the north.

"Women for Peace" is one of the concerned voices in the peace movement. It began after the "Black July" in 1983, when hundreds of Tamils lost their lives, thousands fled to refugee camps, and still others crossed the continents, to the United States, Australia, Canada, Europe and closer home to the sub-continent. Tara Coomaraswamy, one of the eight founders of the movement, says, "The escalating ethnic violence made us feel the need for a negotiated settlement to end the conflict." The eight women began a signature campaign for peace in December 1984. In less than six months, they had collected 10,000 signatures.

"Women from all communities and every walk of life joined the campaign," Coomaraswamy notes. The Women for Peace members believe that the present conflict can be resolved only through dialogue. They began an educational campaign -- poster competitions, leaflets, group discussions and seminars on the key issues. "What we do is not quantifiable," argues Coomaraswamy. "It has a snowballing effect." Another women's organization that believes in consciousness raising is the Sri Lanka

•WOMEN'S VOICES, Cont. on Pg.11•

WOMEN UNITE FOR PEACE

The national question has grown into a grave crisis that has caught every social strata in its grip in Sri Lanka today. The destruction of lives as a result of the tensions between the Sinhala and Tamil people of our Island that have gone on unresolved for decades, no matter to what ethnic group the affected persons belong, pose a dire threat to the lives of the women of these two major communities.

CAN LIFE BE MEASURED IN RUPEES & CENTS?

Can the State truly compensate, in rupees and cents for the sorrow that the weight of responsibilities that must now be borne alone, that must be the lot of all those women - mothers, wives, sisters and daughters - who have their fathers, husbands, brothers and sons killed or wounded in service in the Northern and Eastern parts of our Island.

Even if we do not understand the language, can't we, as Sinhala women, feel the pain and sorrow of the thousands of women in the North and East who cry out in lamentation in the face of the brutal repression which goes on in their parts of the country, in the face of indeterminate arrests and disappearances but also the wanton destruction of entire villages in which many lives are lost and women even pregnant women, are raped and humiliated and intimidated.

Are tears our only recourse when confronted with such criminal destruction of life and such cruel repression? Is this as it should be? Or should we be going around from Church to Temple to Kovil to Mosque, entrusting our fate to the hands of the Gods? As women, shall we be any longer silent about this inhuman and unjust war which is turning all our hopes and our children's hopes of the future into ashes? No, the women of the North realised that it could not be so, that justice cannot be won through lamentation, but that the strength and

unity of those who are oppressed and of those who suffer is the only force that can see justice done. They organised themselves into the Mothers' Front.

The Women's Peace Committee also has the same goals. Since we face the same frightful fate and since our lives are shattered by the heightened racial tensions, whether we live in the North or in the South, we decided that as women we have a responsibility to build public opinion for the creation of a fair and just peace. As the first step towards achieving this goal, we set about collecting signatures to a public petition that bore this message in all three languages

The women who signed this petition took the first decision about the future word programme of the Women's Peace Committee. We printed and distributed a small leaflet aimed at building public opinion against racialism. We tried to make people aware of the horrible consequences of this unjust war by sharing experiences of two mothers, one from the South and one from the North.

We have also begun a similar programme to combat racialism through a broad educational approach in collaboration with schools.

This is only one small part of the immense task confronting women of Sri Lanka today. Such a task cannot be undertaken by a handful of women alone. This is why we aim our appeal to the entire female population of our country.

We do not live in times where peace can be achieved by lamentation. We are on the threshold of a time where peace can be won through our strength. And our strength is founded on our unity. So, sisters, let us unite let us win peace with strength.

(courtesy: 'Kantha Maga' No.5)

HOSPITAL BOMBED IN MID-APRIL JAFFNA: CIVILIANS CAUGHT IN CROSSFIRE

JAFFNA, Sri Lanka, April 15 (IPS) - Lena Paranjothy was on nurse duty in the hospital early one morning when she heard the whistle of an approaching mortar shell followed by the shattering crash of an explosion. Eight patients were killed in their beds and 21 others seriously injured when the shell destroyed two crowded wards in the Jaffna hospital. Two weeks after the incident, 38-year-old Lena is still battling for her life -- the left side of her body paralyzed by a shell fragment in her brain.

Twisted metal beds, heaps of rubble and splintered glass are all that remain of the hospital wards, and most of the patients who survived have fled. The hospital in this battle-scarred Sri Lankan town 185 miles north of the capital, Colombo, lies in the direct line of fire between government security forces, holed up in an 18-century Dutch fort, and Tamil guerrilla bunkers in the town.

As in all conflicts, the people who suffer most are the civilians who get caught in the crossfire. For the residents of the peninsula the sound of mortar fire and automatic weapons have become a fact of life. "It is time the two sides sat down

and talked instead of letting the situation deteriorate further," says Betram Lawrence, attending mass at the Church of our Lady of Refuge here. Betram and his wife, Anna, say they want to live in peace and they are worried about their 15-year-old son's future. "It is frightening, the constant shelling. We hardly sleep at night wondering whether we are going to be the next victims," says Anna.

The main worry for most residents today is the fuel embargo imposed on the peninsula since January. Most private vehicles are now off the roads, replaced by bicycles. Petrol and diesel, if available, costs ten times more than in Colombo, and farmers can no longer afford diesel for their irrigation pumps.

Ironically, the fuel shortage has actually lowered some food prices because of the surplus of food which would otherwise have been exported to other parts of the island, residents say. Caught up in the politics of separatism, the more conservative and tradition-bound northern Tamils of Sri Lanka find themselves in a dilemma. Even if they do not support the Tigers' call for a separate state, they are thankful to the guerrillas for keeping

the army in its camps, making it possible for them to move about freely.

The Tigers themselves have been ruthless in their elimination of several rival militant groups, and after the grenade attack on "Kittu," sources in Jaffna said the Tigers killed about 25 members of a rival militant organization they blamed for the incident.

By Rita Sebastian

TROUBLED LAND

Urvashi Narayanan

It is a Troubled Land
When soldiers fire randomly,
And a flame of life
Burns out,
When widows weep
For husbands lost,
And mothers
For sons long gone.

It is a Troubled Land
When 12-year-olds must learn
To assemble guns so fast,
And harden their young hearts,
For you never know
When the sounds
Of an armoured truck
Will be heard,
Or the shelling
Of your village,
And deafening screams of pain.

How much longer
Will this linger,
Our lives
One mass of misery,
Anger spewing
From all sides,
With no end in sight,
With each life lost
A dream is gone
And 2000 brothers
And sisters remain
Chained in prison cells
While the battle
Goes on in vain?

Urvashi Narayanan is a Sri Lankan writer living in North America. She left Sri Lanka in 1983. She has a brother who's been in prison since '82.

WOMEN'S VOICES NORTH & SOUTH

• VOICES, Cont. from Pg. 10 •

Women's Conference (SLWC), an umbrella organization with 34 affiliates. "Unless we change ourselves how can we change society?" asks Jezima Ismail, the SLWC president. A "Who am I?" series of skits has been the first step in the SLWC peace effort. "Most of the affiliates are strongly religious and it has brought us together on a common platform of shared beliefs," says Ismail. Ismail, who is the principal of the leading school for Moslem girls in Colombo, feels that the right values and attitudes on national integration should be taught in the school curriculum. "The only approach to peace is individual rehabilitation," she stresses.

"So much is talked about the present conflict," says Dr. Wimala de Silva, chairman of the peace program of the

Federation of University Women and the only woman chancellor of a university in the country. "What is necessary," she explains, "is to get down to the root causes, analyze them and be aware of the elements that cause conflict." "Since we cannot get out of it, let us not let it get out of hand," she adds. The federation focuses attention on what a woman can do in the home, what a school can do, and what the country's leaders can do in facing the conflict. Despite the unabated violence, the women feel they are making gains. As one woman activist working in a Colombo slum puts it: "however minimal the pay-offs, the very fact that the women have come together is encouraging." "There is a new awareness among women that one half of the population cannot sit back while the other half goes to war," she adds.

MRS. B: "WE WILL FILL THE JAILS"

• OPPOSITION, Cont. from Pg. 3 •
discussion on the emergency situation in the aftermath of the Colombo blast, and six opposition members were expelled for defying the speaker.

However, observers here said today's censure motion was sure to be rejected on technical grounds, and Bandaranaike herself admitted, "they most probably won't allow us to table it." The SLFP is also planning to start a nationwide "save democracy" campaign in June to coincide with the tenth anniversary of the rise of Jayewardene's United National Party (UNP) to power.

Bandaranaike said the campaign would be non-violent, and that she and her supporters were prepared to go to jail. "We will fill the jails," she said. "They will have to find new jails." The SLFP has been sharply critical of the Jayewardene government in the past, but this is the first time it has called for a major anti-government campaign. Political observers here say it could be to prevent the government from using another referendum to postpone elections.

The Jayewardene government has come under considerable criticism from within the majority Sinhalese Buddhist

community in the south of the island for what is seen as the government's inability to solve the conflict, either militarily or through negotiations.

Following last month's bomb blast in Colombo, demonstrators led by saffron-robed Buddhist monks, staged demonstrations calling for Jayewardene's resignation. Opposition parties defied a government ban on gatherings on May Day, and two people were killed in another incident in Colombo when police fired on a crowd of protestors which included monks.

The protests have now spread to the universities, and police yesterday baton charged 1,000 demonstrating students protesting the May Day killings. The government, for its part, has accused the outlawed Peoples' Liberation Front (JVP) for being behind the May Day disturbances.

Jayewardene today told a Parliament group that the JVP was trying to overthrow the government, assassinate top leaders and "create chaos" in the country. He also accused the JVP of joining hands with the "northern terrorists" -- a term used to describe Tamil separatist guerrillas fighting for a homeland in the island's northeast. The JVP launched a widespread insurrection in 1971 which was crushed by the country's security forces.

•PRESENT CRISIS, Cont. from Pg. 4•

determination are supported by the majority of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka.

The present President Jayawardene had recognised before the '77 elections that "the lack of a solution to their problems has made the Tamil speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate State". The Sinhala people gave a large mandate to the Jayawardene regime in the 1977 election to solve the Tamil problem. The UNP received a large number of Tamil votes except where the Tamil United Liberation Front contested. The UNP Manifesto upon which it secured its massive victory clearly stated:

"The United National Party accepts the position that there are numerous problems confronting the Tamil speaking people. The lack of a solution to their problems has made the Tamil-speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate state. In the interest of a national integration and unity so necessary for the economic development of the whole country, the Party feels such problems should be solved without loss of time.

"The party, when it comes to power will take all possible steps to remedy their grievances in such fields as: (1) Education (2) Colonization (3) Use of Tamil

Language (4) Employment in the Public and Semi-Public Corporations."

The government, did not summon a round table conference after the election to address the needs it clearly stated existed. Instead Jayawardene called for a war against the Tamils, which sparked the 1977 August Anti-Tamil Riots where hundreds of Tamils lost their lives and tens of thousands were displaced.

The clear example of the present Jayawardene regime's racist policy could be seen from the "Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka's" 1978 Constitution. It says:

Sinhala is the sole official Language and is to be language of administration through out Sri Lanka. The State shall give Buddhism the foremost place and, accordingly it shall be the duty of the State to protect and foster the Buddha Sasana."

It is now ten years and a long time since the present ruling party stated clearly the grievances of the Tamil-speaking people. Elections have been postponed. Emergency rule has existed since 1983. Pogroms have escalated into a civil war.

To save our Paradise, we request all friends of the Sri Lankan People, and concerned groups to pressure the Sri Lankan Government for a Political Solution for the conflict based on Justice and Democracy.

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MONERAGALA PEASANTS RESIST TAKEOVER BY SUGAR MULTINATIONALS

Sri Lanka, ('The Island' March 16, 1987) Armed policemen have been used in Moneragala in the government's continuing efforts to crush growing unrest among peasants struggling to prevent their traditional lands being taken over by a sugar multinational.

A spokesman for the Peasant solidarity Committee, Patrick Fernando told a news conference last week, men in camouflaged uniforms and armed with automatic weapons were among a contingent of policemen deployed in Moneragala to prevent Wednesday's fast by the peasants.

He said the fast by about 15 peasants was organised at Kodayana, Siyambalanduwa in Moneragala to draw attention to the peasants' three year long struggle to prevent the Moneragala Sugar Company from taking over their lands for sugar cultivation.

The peasants fear the take over of about 54,000 acres around Siyambalanduwa by the company, a joint venture between the India-African MNC- Meta International

and the Government, will drastically change their traditional way of life reducing them to labourers or sugar-cane growers of the company, he said.

The take over would result in mass unemployment not only among the peasants and their children but also among small traders in the area and those transporting food from the fertile agricultural lands in Moneragala to the rest of the country, he said.

Mr. Fernando said one reason for the intensity of the struggle was that the 25 villages which were to be taken over under the original plan were ancient ones, where villagers had cultivated their land for centuries growing their own food crops, which was their main livelihood.

Two of these villages, Madugama and Polgahagama, were supposed to have been key centres in the 1818 rebellion against the British colonial rulers.

He said the peasants decided to intensify their struggle after several rounds of talks with company and government officials

and numerous petitions sent to Members of Parliament failed to produce results.

Under pressure from the peasants it was decided to change the original plan under which the 25 villages were to be cleared, he said.

But he said the peasants even opposed the new plan which leaves the villages intact since they would have no means of living when the surrounding areas were bulldozed.

He said the peasants were demanding the removal of Meta International and other agribusiness companies or that they be allowed to operate only on the condition that the peasants retained their cultivated land and settlement areas.

They were also demanding an immediate halt to the legal harassment and intimidation of peasants who had resisted the take over of their land by the company. Eighty three farmers had been prosecuted for trying to stop the company bulldozing their gardens.

RURAL WOMEN ORGANISE AGAINST MNCs

Sumika Perera of Progressive Women's Front shares her experience in helping rural women organize themselves, in Moneragala.

We travelled over 200 miles from our home town, Kurunegala, to reach Wellassa. We first went to a village named Polgahagama. Peasant activists helped us to set up our first contacts. We held discussions in the Polgahagama areas, which are a part of the 12,000 acres that will form the core of the Moneragala Sugar Corporation's project. Only 7 women turned up.

We began to seek answers to the question why so few women, out of a village with a population of at least 60 to 70 women, had turned up to discuss an issue that was so crucial for their survival.

We went from house to house, and from



village to village, in search of these women. Mothers who greeted us with warmth and cordiality began to pay attention to what we were saying. They all had at least a vague idea about what their future held in store for them. Yet, they knew little of its true significance or

that they themselves had a responsibility in this respect. Nobody had tried to speak to them of these matters.

The women, as well as the men, believed that social activities were a male domain.

•RURAL women, Cont. on Pg. 14 •

"WOMEN WERE ONLY GOOD FOR HOUSEWORK"

• RURAL WOMEN Cont. from Pg. 10 •
Even the few young women we met who were members of the local 'Mahila Samithis' were adrift in an ocean of needlework, flower making and home decor!

'THERE'S NO NEED FOR WOMEN ON THE BATTLEFIELD...'

These women had internalised the notion that women were not suited for any type of public activity but were only good for household work, child-care and work on the paddy field or chena.

When we asked one mother to come to our discussions, she said - "my sons are going for these discussions, so why should I also go? And anyway, what could I do by going?" They had no confidence in their abilities.

We became more and more convinced that we should overcome this situation somehow. We next went to Dematabedda, 4 miles away from Polgahagama. There was no transportation and we walked miles and miles. 23 women and a few men attended the second discussion we held at Dematabedda. We ourselves did not have much experience in putting forward our ideas. Gradually we learnt methods of expressing ourselves clearly but simply.

Over a period of time, we were able to discuss the land rights issue with women in several villages and established a number of Peasant Women's Committees. At the first meetings, only we spoke. Among the women present were those who lacked the courage to stand up and tell us their names.

Once a young woman who was elected President of a Peasant Women's Committee tendered her resignation. When asked why, she said she felt she lacked oratorical ability. We gave her courage, especially by telling her of our own experiences in organising women. There were many instances where we came face to face with similar situations.

No matter how persuasive we were, there were some mothers who never attended our meetings. When we looked into the reasons for their absence, it turned out



that either their sons or husbands were attending meetings of Peasants' Committees, or else the women were burdened with housework or had to look after the children.

We decided to bring this matter up at the Peasants' Committees at which only men met, in order to see if we could find some remedy for this situation. Our appeal was that our only strength lay in unity and that therefore imprisoning women, who comprise half of our strength, within the four walls of their homes, was a negative feature of our struggle. The mature peasant men who were a part of that meeting immediately promised to send their wives and daughters to our next meeting.

Women who had been shy to speak out their name at the first meetings, soon lost their shyness and began to participate in the discussions. The fury that was built up in them about the Multinational Corporations knew no bounds. One mother speaking at a village level discussion, said :

'We live by the sweat of our brow, without bothering anybody. If the sugar cane companies come, we will become their slaves. We don't want to live like slaves. If the company brings bulldozers to our village, they will have to go over our dead bodies. We won't give up an inch of our land, even if we have to die for it.'

That was the extent of the rage in their hearts. Committee meeting to which at first only ten women had turned up began to swell upto 30 to 40. Once the women began to participate more in the peasant struggle, the men began to take more notice of the women. They began to support the activities of the women's committees. Mothers and fathers opened their homes to us for weeks on end and treated us like their own children. This affection and closeness gave us strength and encouragement.

Women came to the forefront in the campaigns, to collect signatures for the peasant petition, to organise meetings, and even to drive away the company officials who turned up now and again to demarcate the boundaries of the land allocated to them. The workers of the sugar company who turned up at the village of Kivulayaya were driven off by the women of the village.

As soon as the news, that the company was sending men to mark boundaries, reached the village, the women activists went around asking everyone to gather at a given place at a given time. Those women prevented the company workers entering the village, despite the heavy rains that poured down for hours. When a government official present at the time said that the men would be arrested for 'obstruction of duty', the women were bold enough to come forward and demand that they be arrested.

•RURAL WOMEN Cont. on Pg.15 •

FIRST SINHALA WOMAN INDICTED UNDER PTA

The imprisonment of Nirmala Nithiyandanan, from the northern, University of Jaffna, a lecturer and feminist, who spoke out against the violation of human rights in Sri Lanka, and who narrowly survived the massacre

of 55 Tamil-speaking political prisoners during the horror of July 1983, is now being repeated in the South with the imprisonment of a feminist and University lecturer, Ms. Pulsara Liyanage, the first Sinhalese woman to

be indicted under the infamous Prevention of Terrorism Act.

Ms. Liyanage, age 26, was a lecturer in Western classics at Kelaniya University, the seat of Buddhist learning in Sri Lanka. She was arrested on November 1, 1986 after major surgery and has been in detention ever since.

UNDER-EMPLOYMENT

• COLOMBO (WEEKEND) March 22, • Around 75 per cent of Lankan women are economically inactive, a survey has revealed.

A survey of women aged over 10 years has shown that almost half of the country's women are houseworkers, while about one fifth are students.

Of those considered to be economically

active, almost one third are in fact unemployed, the survey revealed.

A study of occupational groups showed that around 80 percent urban women work in professional, clerical or production related fields.

On the other hand women in the rural sector are engaged predominantly in agriculture, forestry work and fishing, the survey found.

She has been indicted along with twenty-three others and joins the almost 300 Sinhala-speaking political prisoners in the South. [There are over 100 Tamil-speaking women political prisoners in jails across the country and over 3000 Tamil-speaking political prisoners altogether.]

Liyanage was active in the movement, 'Women for Peace', an organization of women from all nationalities, who have been pressing for a peaceful settlement to the current conflict and against the escalating militarism in Sri Lanka. She has also been an active member of the Women's Action Committee, The Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE), and the Committee for the Release of Political Prisoners (CROPP).

MNC OPERATIONS IN HADDAWA HALTED

•RURAL WOMEN Cont. from Pg.14 • The company had already begun destroying the forest land of about 600 acres known as Haddawa. When they heard this, peasant men and women went in a large delegation to the Moneragala Government Agent's office to demand that the desecration of this valuable forest be halted immediately and also to demand clarification about the lands handed over to the sugar company. The occasion when the peasants themselves apprised the Government Agent about their problems was another milestone of the peasant struggle in Moneragala. There one old mother said: I have a license for my land. I'll die before I give over my land to the sugar company.

We built a District Committee to coordinate the work of the womens committees set up in six villages - Polgahagama, Dematabedde, Kivulayaya, Damumulanda, Madugama - and to develop our unity in order to carry the most important and decisive struggles being waged in Sri Lanka today. Broad popular forces from all over the country have come together to support this struggle and to shout out loud and clear against the handing over of the peasants lands to MNCs. The struggle has now

continued for more than two and a half years. The company has been prevented successfully from carrying out their operations. This struggle of the peasants is one of the longest struggles in the recent history of peasant protest and struggle in Sri Lanka.

THE STRUGGLE GOES ON.....

Women have now begun to participate actively in all of the activities related to the struggle which vary from discussions, meetings, negotiations with Government officials, to actual protest actions, preventing company intrusions, cultivating the neighbourhood land within the villages to claim the rights of the village land, etc. When 83 persons were charged in courts with obstruction and threatening company workers and the management, there were women activists who were charged too. The women as well as the men understood that this struggle would be a long term one. However the women have shown that they are willing to bear the costs to their productive activities in the field. This participation of women has made a useful contribution towards better sharing of work in the homes of some young families where the men have begun to see the need to release women from the bondages in the home.

Fears are increasing again for all political prisoners, particularly after the recent bombings. There has yet to be a public inquiry into the murder of the 55 prisoners in July 1983 and the situation of Sinhala prisoners - particularly those who have been critical of the government's handling of the national conflict - are also precarious.

Human rights groups have been alerted to the situation and there is also an international campaign calling on the Sri Lankan government to release Pulsara and all political prisoners in Sri Lanka so as to bring about a peaceful settlement.

Pulsara has occupied the Women's Section, in Welikada Jail, Colombo, where Nirmala Nithiyandanan was. She is now in Slave Island Police Station. Nirmala Nithiyandanan eventually escaped prison in 1985, after she was moved from Colombo to Batticaloa.

REPORT OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 1983 OUTBURSTS

PROFESSOR KARTHIGESU SIVATHAMBY
(From an International Alert Seminar held
In Oslo, Norway, 24 October 1986)

Any analysis of the situation in Sri Lanka will have to deal with how violations of human rights actually constitute the core of problems, and how such violations have determined the attitudes and actions of the affected party, namely the Tamils, towards the State and the character of the political solution itself.

1983 constitutes a landmark in the history of the ethnic conflict, as it became clear that it was to the north and the east that the Sri Lankan Tamils could fall back. Security measures taken by the state since the 1983 riots include night curfews and declarations of Security Zones and Prohibited Zones in the north and east, and surveillance of Tamils in non-Tamil area.

The character of the ethnic violence changed after the attacks on the Dollar and Kent farms in Mullaitivu District and the incident at Anuradhapura. Retaliation attacks have led to the killing of hundreds of unarmed civilians.

Amnesty International has published reliable and impartial reports on human right violations: arbitrary killings, "disappearances", arbitrary arrest and detention, and torture. These violations have led to dislocation and disruption of civil life. They are committed by members of the armed forces, which in the north and east are completely Sinhala.

Tamils were forced to leave their homes for safety and security reasons; on 30 September 1986, there were over 100,000 displaced persons, most of them staying in refugee camps. Government assistance to them is limited.

With India acting as mediator, a ceasefire was arranged in 1985 between the militant organizations and the Sri Lankan government. Consequently, two rounds of

talks were held in Thimpu, Bhutan, which however broke down. A common committee to Monitor the Ceasation of Hostilities effectively ceased to function after an incident in Jaffna.

At the moment, negotiations at the political level are being conducted through the good offices of the government of India. It is clear that without the participation and sanction of the militants, no implementation of any agreement is possible.

Due to the activities of the armed forces, especially the attacks on civilians and air attacks, the ties, between the Tamil people at large and the militants have become stronger.

In reply to the disruptions of normal life, the Tamil community has established local Citizens Committees. They are a means to have contacts with the military and civil authorities, to seek redress for damage done and inconveniences caused. It are non-political organizations working on an adhoc basis. The Citizens Committees have gained credibility with governmental authorities and the militant groups. A Co-ordinating Committee has been formed to co-ordinate the work. Because of the growing opposition and violence between the governmental armed forces and the Tamil people and militants, the Citizens Committees face more difficulties in exercising their monitoring functions. Other bodies are being developed, to fulfil basic needs and perform social work on the village level.

With the people becoming increasingly dependent on them, the militant organizations are becoming a political force speaking on behalf of the Tamil community. Their role should also be seen against the context of the development of political and social radicalism among the Tamil youth, struggling for nationalism and social egalitarianism.

The demands of the militant groups have to be taken stronger into account when searching for a political solution for the present crisis. The Tamils demand a special constitutional arrangement, in which their safety as persons and security and continuity as an ethnic group are maintained within a defined geographic area. The ethnic issue has to be solved as a Tamil issue, and the government should not try to pose the problem as being one of an overall constitutional situation for the nation state of Sri Lanka as such. Guarantees should be given for the implementation of a negotiated solution, which should be presented in clear terms to all ethnic groups in Sri Lanka, also and especially to the Sinhala population, which has to agree on any solution being reached.



MRS. S., EX-PM: ON TAMIL YOUTH

"[The] UNP won the last election by getting the support of the Tamils with a promise to redress the grievances of the Tamil youth. There was a link between the TULF and the UNP and 99 percent of the Tamils voted for these two parties.

The Tamil youth waited for two or three years to see whether the promise that had been made to them would be honoured by the government. When this did not happen they resorted to violence against the TULF and the UNP regime."

(Ex-Prime Minister Mrs. S. Bandaranaike, Daily News' March 27, '87)

VIOLATIONS OF GENEVA CONVENTION

The following are extracts from interventions by Ms. Karen Parker, on behalf of the International Human Rights Advocates at the recently held 43rd sessions of the U.N. Human Rights Commission:

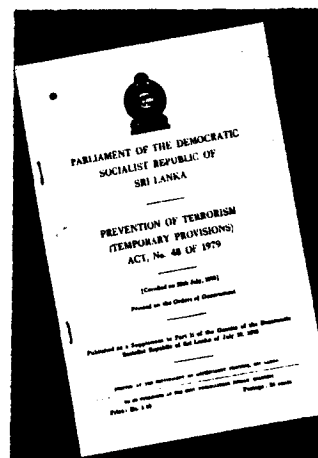
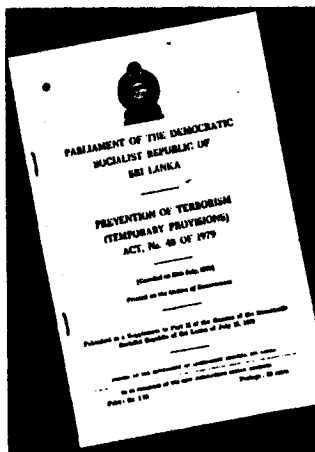
IN SRI LANKA, where armed conflict governed by Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions continues, serious unjustified abrogations of the rights of Civilian detainees occur, especially in regard to persons arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act No. 48 of 1979, directed mostly at the Tamil population, and the Emergency Regulations.

Both acts allow the government to detain persons for lengthy periods (18 months under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and "for an unlimited period as determined by the Secretary" under the Emergency Regulations) with no judicial recourse.

Although Article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights does allow derogations of many procedural rights in situations of armed conflicts, Common Article 3 of the Geneva conventions, automatically

invoked by the armed conflict requires judicial processes "affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognised as indispensable by civilised peoples."

• GENEVA Cont. on Pg. 18 •



• TWENTY-THREE YOUTH CHARGED IN THE SOUTH •

REFUSAL TO ACCEPT INDICTMENTS IN CONSPIRACY CASE

Colombo, March 24 (Sri Lanka Daily News) Eight of the ten accused who were present in court in connection with a plot to overthrow the government, refused to accept the indictments against them when the case was called before High Court Judge, Colombo, Mr. T. Suntheralingam yesterday.

In this case, 23 persons are indicted on 14 counts under the Emergency Regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act with conspiring to overthrow the legally constituted government of Sri Lanka by violence, collection and possession of arms, ammunition and explosives, committing robberies, sending people to India for military training, attempting to incite the people to overthrow the government by violence, spreading disaffection among the people and possessing explosives within the security zone of Colombo.

The accused are alleged to have committed the offences along with Madapathage Wimalasena, Kaluarachchige Dhanapala and others at Colombo and other places between August 1, 1983 and April 30, 1986.

The accused are Ahangama Vithanage Mario Dayan Jayatileke de Silva alias K.K., H. Thomas George alias Joe Seneviratne, Dayapala Tiranagama alias Loku Silva, Pulsara Nayani Liyanage alias Pulsi, Chintana de Silva alias Kamal, Puranaka de Silva alias Lalith alias P.L., Periyasamy Muthulingam alias Muthu, K. Pathmanabha alias Ranjan, Ramanujan Manikkalingam alias Mohan alias Ram, R.A. Jayaratne alias Jegan, Kariyawasam Indipolage Sarath Gamini alias Stanley, Piyadasa Gallage alias Cyril, Liveris Caldera alias Dicky, Godigamuwa Mudiyanalage Dharmasena alias Ralahamy, Haputantrige Karunasena Dayananda alias Santha, Kandamullage Karunadasa alias Leo, Miriyagalla Kankanamlage Karunaratne alias Sudha, Christom Ranjith Kumara Henry, Iqbal alias Ibba, Thuihandige Sarath Silva alias Podi Silva alias Somasiri Silva, Koralalage Piyadasa alias Manager, Ariyadasa alias Michael.

The ten accused present in court were K. Thomas George, Pulsara Nayani Liyanage alias Pulsi, Ramanujan Manikkalingam, Kariyawasam Sarath Gamini, Dharmasena, Dayananda,

Karunadasa, Karunaratne, Sarath Silva and Piyadasa.

At the outset, after appearances were marked, court directed that the indictment be served separately on the accused. All the accused expect Liyanage and Manikkalingam refused to accept the indictment.

However Liyanage asked for an English translation of the indictment while Manikkalingam wanted the indictment in Tamil. Mr. Kolitha Dharmawardena, State counsel, said he would provide a Tamil translation of the indictment, but there was no provision to furnish an English translation.

Mr. Bala Tampoe: There is no such thing as a Sinhalese or Tamil. There are only Sinhala-speaking people and Tamil-speaking people.

Mr. Dharmawardena: We can only provide documents in Sinhala and Tamil. That is as far as the state can go. The law is very clear on that. It is for the defence counsel to make arrangements to provide for a translation in English.

•GENEVA Cont. from Pg. 17 •
The Government of Sri Lanka does not meet this minimum standard. Additionally, Sri Lanka has yet to conform to minimum standards of detention of prisoners-of-war."

"Several other situations warrant attention under this item because, although the governments are able to justify some suspensions of rights because of actual armed conflict conditions, the suspensions have been excessive.

In El Salvador, Guatemala and Sri Lanka, objective conditions for civil war governed by Common Article 3 and Protocol Additional II of the Geneva Conventions are clearly met. Nonetheless, the Governments violate the rights of both civilian detainees and prisoners-of-war."

The governments of both Sri Lanka and Guatemala have refused to apply the Geneva Conventions in the course of armed conflict raging in those countries. The refusal is egregious in the case of Guatemala in light of repeated Commission and General Assembly resolutions indicating application of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions to the armed conflict in Guatemala."

Objective conditions for the automatic application of internal armed conflict rules clearly are met in Sri Lanka - there are armed dissidents, controlling territory, engaged in military operations against government armed forces. Refusal of the governments of Guatemala and Sri Lanka to acknowledge the obvious does not impair the rights of civilians who have fled - they still are entitled to the right of *non-refoulement* as long as the civil strife continues.

The refusal of these governments to recognise their obligations under humanitarian law only serves to enhance rights of refugees. Countries that forcibly repatriate Sri Lankan or Guatemalan civilians commit grave breaches of humanitarian law. We particularly call on Switzerland to ensure compliance with its obligations under general principles of humanitarian law regarding Sri Lankans."

WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION: ROOT CAUSES IGNORED

The following is the text of the intervention by Miss Tamara Kuranayakam on behalf of the World Student Christian Federation made during the 43rd sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission held during February-March 1987:

I speak on behalf of the World Student Christian Federation, a non-governmental organisation with movements in more than 90 countries throughout the world.

It is increasingly recognised in reports of the Commission's monitoring bodies in respect of detention, torture, enforced disappearances and summary executions, that these violations are usually part of a systematic pattern; and such systematic violations of human rights usually betray structural root causes which need to be addressed before the violations will disappear.

For example, the Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (E/CN.4/1987/15/Add.1, paragraph 43) stated with regard to Peru that "it is not feasible to divorce the issue of disappearance completely from related violations of human rights or from the socio-political processes that have engendered them".

He concludes that "only when the structural factors that contributed to the spiral of terror and counter-terror are properly dealt with, can there be any hope of preventing a recurrence of the excesses of the past". The report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture (E/CN.4/1987/13, para.5) states that "torture almost invariably takes place in a political context," and that "victims of torture are very often opponents of the government in power."

These reports show that the inter-related violations such as torture, disappearances and summary executions and manifestations of deeper structural realities. Mr Chairman, it is within this wider context identified by the Special Rapporteurs that we wish to deal with the violations of human rights that occur in Sri Lanka. Our case is that the government of Sri Lanka should address itself to the

underlying causes if it is genuinely committed to the restoration of human rights in that country.

The distinguished delegate of Norway yesterday (24/2/87) said "Enforced and involuntary disappearances and torture of persons seem to be used as convenient tactics for governments suppressing opponents and espousing a policy of stifling dissent often on grounds of national security or with reference to the national integrity and sovereignty." This is exactly the practice prevailing in Sri Lanka today, in the context of the government's failure to address itself to the legitimate grievances of the Tamil people stemming from socio-economic and political causes.

"There is incontrovertible evidence that compared to previous years, larger numbers of people have been arrested in 1986, very often on a mass scale, and detained for prolonged periods. A civil rights monitoring group in Sri Lanka estimates that the total number taken into custody during 1986 to be in the region of 14,000 persons.

Those arrested are detained not in normal detention centres but in army camps located in various parts of the country under degrading conditions. Most of the arrests, the victims of which, by and large, are Tamils, are effected under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations.

It may be noted that the Prevention of Terrorism Act has been described by the International Commission of Jurists as an ugly blot on the statute book of any civilised country. Sri Lanka has been ruled by the present government under a state of emergency for most of its life since 1977.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act authorises detention up to a period of 18 months and Emergency Regulations for an unlimited period. Yesterday (24/2/87) the Sri Lankan delegate sought to argue that unlimited detention is not possible

• CAUSES Cont. on Pg.19 •

WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION: EMERGENCY RENEWED EVERY MONTH ENABLES UNLIMITED DETENTION

• CAUSES Cont. from Pg. 18 •

under Emergency Regulations because orders under a State of Emergency can legally last only for a month.

The fact of the matter is that the State of Emergency has been renewed every month without interruption during the last several years thus enabling detention of persons for unlimited periods.

The Committee of Monitoring Cessation of Hostilities appointed by the government itself in its report dated 17 January, 1986 stated that "Those held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for more than 18 months are served with detention orders under Emergency Regulations which authorise unlimited detention."

For all practical purposes there is no prospect of judicial review of detention of persons whether under the Prevention of Terrorism Act or Emergency Regulations. Mr Chairman, yesterday (24/2/87) the Sri Lankan delegate sought to impress this Commission about the remedy available by way of habeas corpus applications. This remedy in actual practice has proved ineffective and in most cases unavailable.

In this connection the President of the Law Society Sri Lanka has said "Since it is a tedious legal process which entails inordinate delays, a Habeas Corpus application does not serve the intended purpose. Quite a large number of applications in respect of persons about whom nothing is known after arrest, is still pending in the Appeal Court." (Island, 20 January, 1986).

The Sri Lankan delegate also claimed yesterday, that detainees or their relative have the right to make representations to an Advisory Board appointed by the President. A delegation of the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group which visited Sri Lanka in February 1985 stated, "The problem is that it frequently takes several months for the parent's or mother's letter requesting a review to reach the Advisory Board via the Ministry of Defence. And, once the

Board has made its recommendation, it takes several more months before the Ministry of Defence acts upon it."

The Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations have removed most of the legal safeguards prescribed under the International Covenants on Human Rights. Prolonged incommunicado detention without trial is the norm. The whereabouts of people arrested and detained are not made known to relatives. Lawyers and relatives have no access to detainees in most cases.

Mr Chairman, it is in this context that many substantiated cases of torture and deaths in custody have been reported, so much so that the Special Rapporteur on Torture has expressed great concern in his report referring to Sri Lanka.

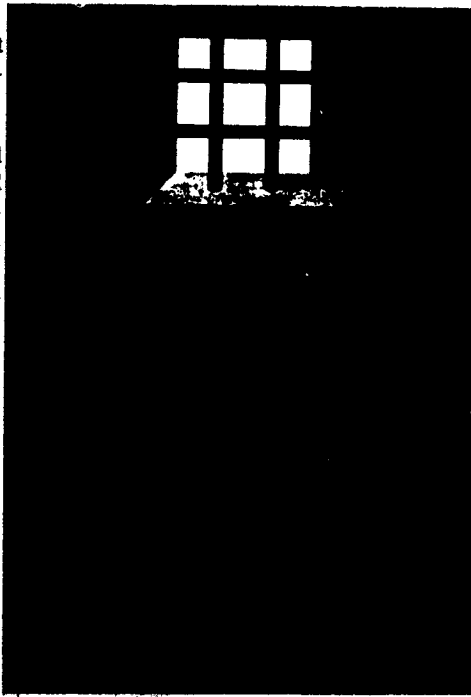
The suspension of important legal safeguards under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations have created conditions conducive to the practice of torture.

Another new but reprehensible development reported during 1986 has been the use of detainees as hostages and/or human shields during military operations by security forces.

There is also substantial evidence to indicate that over a thousand persons have disappeared or gone missing after being taken into custody. Besides the well documented Amnesty International Report on "Disappearances", dated September 1986, the UN Working Group also has reported an increasing number of disappearances.

The current report before this Commission by the Special Rapporteur refers to 321 outstanding cases of disappearances transmitted to the Sri Lankan government of which it was able to provide clarification in only 5 cases. By any standards, this is unacceptable.

Mr Chairman, while the violations of human rights to which we have adverted occur in the context of a continuing ethnic conflict, there is increasing evi-



dence that wider sections of the whole Sri Lankan population, including those belonging to the majority Sinhala community, are becoming victims of similar violations. And very often the victims have been members of some political parties, trade unions, women, student and human rights organisations.

Referring to the situation in South Sri Lanka, the Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners (CROPP), an organisation based mainly in South Sri Lanka and whose leadership by and large belong to the Sinhala community, in a recent statement said

"Reports coming in from those close to arrested persons reveal that tactics of arrest and detention long associated with repressive regimes in Latin America and in Asia, in the Philippines under the Marcos government, have been put into practice in Sri Lanka:

* people are followed and picked up from the street, from public transport, in unmarked vehicles by persons in civil clothes;

• CAUSES Cont. on Pg. 22 •

REPORT TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

SRI LANKA WORK GROUP CONDEMNS ATTACKS ON UNARMED CIVILIANS

We, the Sri Lanka Work Group, condemn the recent atrocities perpetrated against unarmed civilians by persons unknown.

The victims of these recent attacks in the districts of Trincomalee and Colombo, were mostly from the Sinhalese-speaking community.

No one has the right to kill unarmed civilians, whether they are from the Sinhalese or Tamil-speaking communities. No one approves, nor can their be any justification except the narrowest political ambitions of a few people.

People, actively working in the interests of the oppressed Tamil-speaking people of Sri Lanka certainly cannot tolerate such actions.

These incidents, however, have taken place under the following circumstances:

- The racist policies of the Jayawardene regime and the escalating human rights violations which are being condemned by both national and international organisations.
- A major part of the national budget goes towards funding the militaristic policies pursued by the present regime. These policies have placed a severe economic burden on the people and have caused unprecedented suffering across the country. This has sharpened opposition to the present regime, particularly among the Southern working class and peasants.
- Unable to resolve the current economic crisis and to balance the budget, Finance Minister Mr. Ronnie De Mel, is preparing once again for his beggarman's journey around the western world.

What are the effects of these attacks on unarmed civilians?

- Tamil people have lived under oppressive conditions for the last four decades, and over the last eight years have lived under a Sinhala-speaking army

whose presence resembles occupation by a foreign military force. Because of these conditions, people around the world have expressed sympathy for the Tamil-speaking peoples' suffering and have understood that the growth of their armed resistance was based on a just cause. These attacks could silence international opinion against the UNP regime and can only damage the cause of the Tamil people world-wide.

•• Justification of the elimination of Popular organisations, Trade Unions and Student Movements who are organizing to overcome their economic burdens. They are being liquidated by the government under the slogan: 'Marxist extremists are sabotaging the government's attempts to solve the national crisis, eradicate separatism & terrorism, and build peace.'

•• Divert the attention of the Southern people against the opposition political parties and isolate those parties from the people, on the basis of 'national unity.'

•• The banning of the recent May day demonstrations is a clear example of the government's use of recent incidents to suppress workers' voices. Since 1977, all forms of demonstration have been illegal and May Day has been the only form of democratic protest left to them.

•• Finance Minister Mr. Ronnie de Mel, has always had to face embarrassing queries about the UNP government's human rights record. Now he could elicit their aid, to help 'fight against blood-thirsty terrorists.'

•• There are progressive forces in the South who have been exposing the oppressive and brutal measures perpetrated against Tamil-speaking people. They have tried to explain the just nature of the Tamil-speaking militants' armed resistance to the Sinhala-speaking people. There are almost 300 Sinhala-speaking political prisoners, whose main crime has been to speak against the military aggression in the North and East. Not

only will these voices be totally silenced, there is the serious possibility that progressive people will be pushed to safeguard the lives of Sinhala-speaking people living in areas where progressive forces are at work.

Those responsible for these recent atrocities have helped to temporarily wash the blood-stained hands of the Jayawardene regime. But while those responsible may try to wash the hands of the regime, they definitely cannot prevent the regime from re-immersing their hands in more blood. The Sri Lankan government can now shamelessly boast in the South, that they bombed 200 people in their retaliatory air raids.

We, therefore, condemn the recent atrocities, which have damaged the people's just struggle all over the country.

We condemn the Jayawardene regime's escalation of state-terrorism against unarmed civilians in the North and East through their security forces and so-called "home-guards" -- armed by UNP MPs - - who are nothing but death squads.

The UNP, under the leadership of J.R. Jayawardene, the present President, recognized before their election in 1977, "there are numerous problems confronting the Tamil-speaking people...such problems should be solved without loss of time."

If, indeed, the regime had taken steps towards a negotiated settlement earlier, these tragic events would have been avoided. The present crisis is due to the regime's failure to implement their own pre-election promises.

We, the Sri Lanka Work Group, believe profoundly, that it is only through the immediate implementation of a negotiated political settlement -- a settlement based on justice and democracy - - that such incidents would be prevented in the future.

US ARMS TO SRI LANKA

NEW YORK, Feb. 2 (IPS) -- After the fall of Jean-Claude Duvalier of Haiti and Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines last year, President Ronald Reagan proclaimed a policy of opposing "tyrannies of both the left and the right." But a new report on the Reagan Administration's human rights record in 1986 said that the U.S. government returned to its practice of opposing most "tyrannies of the left, and has provided varying degrees of support to most...tyrannies of the right." The extensive report released here today is an annual joint effort of the New York-based Lawyers Committee for Human Rights and the "Watch" committees: Americas Watch, Asia Watch and Helsinki Watch. The report said U.S. foreign military aid to governments which violate human rights has increased tremendously since Reagan took office, despite U.S. legal proscriptions against such aid. Among the nations listed were Pakistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Turkey.

**MY NSC ELEPHANTS WERE
BABY ONES, NOT ROGUES**
BY Geoffrey Kemp 12/07/86
(WASHINGTON POST)

BY NOW, the American psyche is reeling with visions of "rogue elephants" and "cowboys" running amok in the White House basement -- such are the images the media has used to hint at derring-do and macho romance on the National Security Council staff. Granted, Lt. Col. Oliver North may have been one of the few on-the-job cigar smokers left in this pristine city, and I always felt that he was enjoying himself. And I would like to be able to say that life at the NSC is a high rolling game with action at every turn. But during my four years on the NSC staff, secret arms deals and money shipments were very far from most of our minds. We would gladly have settled for an occasional taste of Kissingerian analytical brilliance, but that was rare as well.

One time-consuming episode in my stay at the NSC began when the president of Sri Lanka gave us a problem not with rogue elephants but with a baby one named Jayatu that he wanted to present to the president. This was such a nice gesture (and good photo opportunity) that the presentation was to be on the White House lawn after the formal arrival ceremony. Fine, but how would the elephant react to the noise from the 21-gun salute? Badly, according to the National Zoo.

So how to keep him out of cannon range but close enough to be whisked onto the lawn without keeping everybody waiting? We found a truck. But then we saw a photo of the little creature, who was an orphan, found abandoned in a hole in deepest Sri Lanka. "The president can't be seen accepting that," cried an earnest domestic aide with a keen sensitivity to the animal lobby. Why not? "He's much too thin." The zoo doctor assured us the elephant was only a "little thin" so we wrapped it in a coat of striking colors and the president received it, handling the occasion brilliantly as usual...

(Editor: The Elephant eventually died...)

**ARBITRARY EXECUTIONS
IN SRI LANKA: UN REPORTS**

February 16, 1987 GENEVA (Reuter)
The United Nations said Monday there were hundreds of arbitrary executions around the world last year, many of them in Brazil, Iran, Iraq, Liberia and Sri Lanka. The report submitted by a UN special reporter, S. Amos Wako of Kenya, to the 43-nation UN Human Rights Commission, covered killings in civil wars, deaths in custody and through the illegal use of force by law enforcement agents.

"The victims were mostly innocent civilians, but included some military," the report said. "It was alleged that the killings had in some cases been accompanied by acts of savage brutality, including castration, mutilation and dismemberment." In Sri Lanka, where civil war has raged for four years between government forces and Tamil separatists, the toll was high, Wako said.

A government official informed the special reporter that 221 members of the security forces and 638 civilians were killed in the first 11 months of 1986.

**THE UNHRC RESOLUTION
ON SRI LANKA**

The following resolution co-sponsored by Argentina, Canada and Norway was unanimously adopted by 43rd sessions of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations on 12 March, 1987:

SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

The Commission on Human Rights, guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universally accepted rules of International Humanitarian Law,

Recalling its decision 1984/III of 14 March, 1984,

Taking Note of the Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and the Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance,

1. Calls upon all parties and groups to respect fully the universally accepted rules of humanitarian law,

2. Calls upon all parties and groups to

renounce the use of force and acts of violence and to pursue a negotiated political solution, based on principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

3. Invites the Government of Sri Lanka to intensify its co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross in the fields of dissemination and promotion of international humanitarian law and invites the Government of Sri Lanka to consider favourably the offer of the services of the International Committee of the Red Cross to fulfill its functions of protection of humanitarian standards, including the provision of assistance and protection to victims of all affected parties, and

4. Expresses the hope that the Government of Sri Lanka will continue to provide information to the Commission on Human Rights on this question.

(TAMIL TIMES March 1987)

WORLD STUDENT CHRISTIAN FEDERATION
TO UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION:

Private Homes Used For Detention & Interrogation

• CAUSES Cont. from Pg. 19 •

*houses and boarding houses are raided at night;

*torches are flashed into the faces of suspects to 'blind' them and prevent identification;

*private homes and offices are used as places of detention and interrogation;

*families are never informed as to the cause of arrest; deliberate deception is also resorted to, to prevent families pursuing inquiries."

The same organisation also expressed its concern that "powers of arbitrary arrest and detention arrogated by the State are being increasingly used to silence its political opponents and to stifle popular protest against the regime."

Mr Chairman, it should thus be recognised that these violations in the south are also occurring in a broader socio-political context, denial of basic trade union and democratic rights.

Pickets, demonstrations and strikes have often been banned under Emergency Regulations, and when they had taken place those workers who participated have been summarily dismissed from employment.

For instance, when the Bank Employees decided to take industrial action in the form of a 'work to rule' campaign, Emergency Regulations were promulgated declaring banking and associated activities - Essential Services, all industrial action made illegal, the entire leadership of the Bank Employees Union summarily dismissed and the Unions's assets made liable to confiscation. In addition, the civic rights of the leaders of the Bank Union were made liable to be deprived.

In the political arena, the right of the people to participate in the political processes by means of regular elections

has been denied since 1977, by the extension of the life of parliament without a general election. In place of a general election, a referendum was held under a State of Emergency. The Parliamentary Elections Commissioner in a recent report has catalogued substantial electoral malpractices as having taken place during this referendum.

In the absence of an orderly democratic means of expression by the people or sections of the people, contradictions and conflicts are bound to result leading to repressive response from the State.

And it is that response, accompanied by a process of militarisation, which has brought in its train the practice of arbitrary arrest, detention, torture, disappearances and summary executions, not only in areas affected by the armed ethnic conflict, but increasingly so in the South of the Island.

Mr Chairman, the real situation is reflected by the fact that Sri Lanka has figured prominently in the three reports of the Special Rapporteurs and by the fact that thousands have fled the country in search of physical security, and not by the abstract, technical and often theoretical arguments advanced by Sri Lanka before this Commission.

Mr Chairman, no longer can the government of Sri Lanka divert the attention of those genuinely concerned by the human rights situation in that country by references to separatism and terrorism. It must, as we said earlier, address itself to the root causes that have given rise to violence and violations that characterise Sri Lankan society today.

(Courtesy of Tamil Times, March 1987- emphasis ours)

PARLIAMENTARY
VOICES FROM THE SOUTH

HUNDREDS IN JAIL WITHOUT CHARGES

Keeping a person behind the bars without framing charges in this manner was a violation of fundamental human rights. No wonder world forums have discussed this. When a person is arrested a charge or charges should be framed. Otherwise he must be released. Undergraduates have been taken into custody. Hundreds are languishing in remand without charge today. The Minister in charge should be held responsible for this. If a suspect is not released after 18 months under detention under the PTA, under what law does the authorities continue to keep him in remand? They may be Sinhalese, Tamils or Muslims, but to whatever community they may belong to, it is a violation of the Human Rights Charter to detain them in this manner. It will turn out to be a "telling indictment".

(Dinesh Gunawardena MP for Maharagama in Parliament, source 'The Island' 21st March, 1987)

DEFENCE BUDGET RISES TWENTYFOLD

"The ethnic conflict has increased our defence budget almost twentyfold in nominal terms, from (Sri Lankan) Rs.500 millions in 1977 to Rs.10,000 millions this year. Ten thousand million rupees represents almost 25 per cent of our entire domestic Budget - with out taking foreign aid into account. (And, as you know, we don't get any foreign aid for defence in Sri Lanka)

Then, this ethnic conflict has had very serious consequences on our tourist industry which has declined by about 50 per cent. It has also slowed down foreign investment. Rice production has declined by about 30 per cent, because some of the very productive rice areas are in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Fish production has declined by about 50 per cent because a good proportion of the fishing grounds are off the Northern and Eastern coast. So all this has had a tremendous effect on our economy." (Finance Minister Mr. Ronnie de Mel, interviewed by 'Hindu' correspondent N.Ram)

WELCOME TO ISSUE #1

OF

SRI LANKA

A PARADISE IN FLAMES

Welcome to the first issue of SRI LANKA, PARADISE IN FLAMES. It is the collective effort of a group of Sri Lankans and Canadians who aim to present an accurate account of the situation in our country of birth, as well as provide a context for the seemingly random events that make the news every now and again.

As you peruse these pages, you will see that we use a variety of sources: from (heavily-censored) local newspaper coverage and opposition critics within the country; and from the international news services and concerned human rights' bodies around the world. While we reproduce these materials in their original form, we do not, however, endorse the use of terminology such as 'terrorists', 'separatists', and 'ethnic conflict'.

We wholeheartedly welcome constructive criticism, as well as articles, poems, photographs and other contributions. Please drop us a line as we intend to carry a lively letters-to-the-editor section. We also need financial donations in order to publish on a regular basis.

SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS:

- AFP-Agence France Press
 AP- Associated Press (US)
 BCAS- Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars(US)
 CDN-Ceylon Daily News(SL)
 EL-Economist (UK)
 FEER-Far Eastern Economic Review (HK)
 GM-Globe & Mail (Canada)
 H- The Hindu (Madras)
 IT-India Today (Delhi)
 I-The Island (SL)
 IPS -Inter Press Service (Rome)
 LG-Lanka Guardian (SL)
 LR-Lanka Review (Canada)
 MG-Manchester Guardian (UK)
 NYG-New York Guardian (US)
 NYT-New York Times (US)
 OHT-Overseas Hindustan Times (I)
 PTI-Press Trust of India (I)
 RT-Reuters (UK)
 S-South(UK)
 SLN-Sri Lanka News (SL)
 SW-Statesman Weekly (I)
 TI-Times of India (I)
 TS-The Sun (SL)
 UNI-United News of India (I)
 UPI-United Press International (US)
 XH-Xinhua (China)

Selected List Of Journals On Sri Lanka:

Kantha Maga, Journal of the Progressive Women's Front, is published in Sinhlaa and English, and focusses on rural women. Write: Sumika Perera, PWF, Ibbagamuwa, Kurunegala, Sri Lanka.

Voice of Women (Kantha Handa / Penin Kural), a Sri Lankan Journal for Women's Emancipation is a quarterly on women in Sri Lanka. In English, Sinhalese and Tamil. Previous issues have focussed on Women in Free Trade Zones, Plantations, Tourism, and the Mass Media. Write: Kantha Handa, 1 Jayakontha Lane, Colombo 5, Sri Lanka.

Saturday Review is an English weekly from Jaffna. Blow-by-blow, day-to-day accounts. (Annual Sub: US\$50) Write: New Era Publications Ltd. 118, 4th. Cross Street, Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Lanka Guardian. Monthly. Analytical. Interviews and Newstories. (Annual Sub: US\$37.50) Write: Lanka Guardian Publishing Company, 246 Union Place, Colombo 2. Sri Lanka.

Tamil Times: A monthly journal with a broad perspective on events in Sri Lanka. (Annual Sub: US\$20) Write: Tamil Times Ltd. P.O. Box 304, London, W13 9QN

Sri Lanka Human Rights Bulletin: Compiled by the Sydney-based Sri Lanka Human Rights Campaign, P.O. Box 56, St. Paul's, NSW 2031, Australia. Annual Sub: \$10.00 Overseas.

Race & Class: Published by the Institute of Race Relations 2-6 Leeke Street, Kings Cross Road, London WC1X 9HS. Important issues on Sri Lanka: Racism & The Authoritarian State; Sri Lanka: Economics of Capitulation.

Voice of the Voiceless: Bulletin of the Co-ordinating Secretariat for Plantation Areas, and Satyodaya: Bulletin of the Satyodaya Centre. For both bulletins: Satyodaya, 30 Pushpadana Mawatha, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Christian Worker - The Quarterly Bulletin of the Christian Workers Fellowship. Write: Christian Workers Fellowship, 39 Bristol Street, Colombo 1. Sri Lanka.

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