

SRI LANKA A PARADISE IN FLAMES

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CAMPAIGN TO RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

J.R. JAYAWARDENE: AN ENEMY OF HUMANITY

The genocidal designs of the present Sri Lankan regime have never been more evident than in the last few weeks as the armed forces launched yet another offensive "by land, sea and air" against the Tamil-speaking people of the North.

This wholesale massacre of innocent civilians, "the calculated and cold-blooded slaughter of thousands of Sri Lankan citizens" has evoked horror among peace-loving people the world-over and brought international condemnation on the Jayawardene regime.

These atrocities are the latest consequence of the racist policies of the Sri Lankan regime; state policies that have come to be characterised as 'Greater Sinhala Chauvinism.' and hold that the Sinhala-Buddhist people are pre-destined to control all of Sri Lanka, no matter what the cost.

In the last three weeks, the area in the Northern peninsula called Vadamarachchi was reduced to rubble and ashes. Aerial bombardment - using napalm - took place for several days. The indiscriminate slaughter of its own citizens by the state, and the torching of fertile farmlands which have produced subsidy crops - an important contribution to the economy - confirms once more the inhumanity, short-sightedness and shamelessness of the present regime.

Despite the claims of the government that civilian casualties were 'minimal', and despite their own directions through leaflets dropped by air at dawn, two hours before the assault, instructing people to seek refuge in temples -- at least two Hindu temples were bombed by security forces, and the civilians who took shelter there, massacred.

For seventy-two hours, the people of the Jaffna peninsula lived under a continuous curfew which, combined with the economic 'food, medicine and fuel' blockade imposed by Jayawardene regime in January, has caused tremendous suffering. At the same time, foreign journalists and the International Red Cross Society were denied access to the affected areas.

Over 4000 youth were taken to a southern concentration camp, where in the same week, political prisoners who were under detention there, were shot dead presumably "while trying to escape." The actual numbers of those killed are not known. This maximum security torture camp, called Boosa, already holds 3000 mainly Tamil-speaking political prisoners.

It was therefore under these circumstances that the Indian government stepped in, at first by sea, and then by air, to distribute food and medicine to the victims -- on humanitarian grounds.

Predictably, there were anti-Indian demonstrations in the Capital city of Colombo, to oppose the action taken by Indian government. Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa vehemently criticised India's actions and the Sri Lankan government accused India of interfering in an internal conflict.

It is important to note that the Sri Lankan government had asked the Indian government to help resolve the present conflict before. Leading personalities within the Sri Lankan government had visited India and had even accepted India's role as a mediator. Therefore, criticism of the Indian action by the Sri Lankan government carries no weight whatsoever.

But is a planned genocide against the Tamil-speaking people an internal affair?

Particularly after 1977 - since the Jayawardene regime took office, there have been numerous human rights violations. Since 1983 over eight thousand people - the majority of them innocent Tamil civilians -- have been massacred by the Jayawardene regime.

Internationally recognized human rights bodies such as Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists and the World Council of Churches have reported the large-scale human rights violations and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights has severely criticised Sri Lanka's human rights record.

The leader of the opposition in the Sri Lanka Parliament (son of two Ex-Prime Ministers - the late S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and Srimavo Bandaranaike) in a recent parliamentary speech, stated:

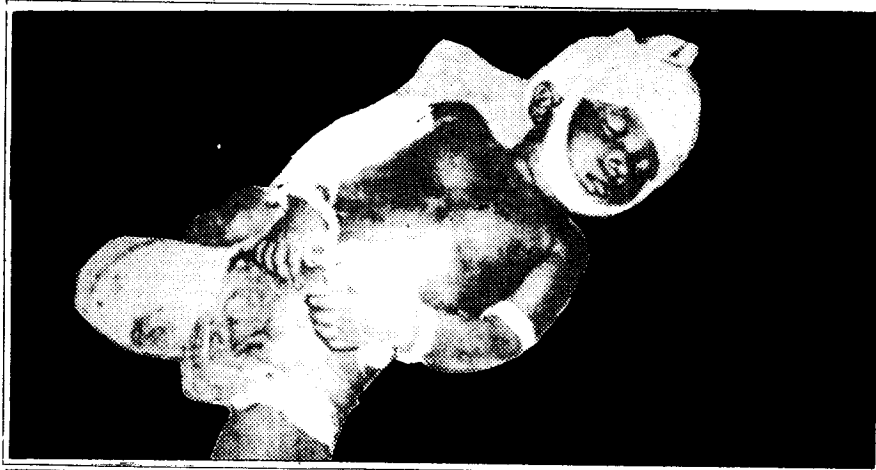
"Let us take from 1977. During the DDC elections that were held in Jaffna, Sir, in 1981 or 1982 you all proved to the Tamil people that democracy was not a viable alternative open to them. You lifted the ballot boxes because certain Ministers came and told your hierarchy in Colombo that, in fact, the TULF could be defeated in Jaffna.

"Under that misguided conception, some of your key Ministers went to Jaffna unleashed JSS thugs [*Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya is a government-controlled trade union- Ed*] on innocent Tamils and lifted ballot boxes. In fact two ballot boxes were

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MILITARY OFFENSIVE BRINGS ISLAND TO THE VERGE OF CIVIL WAR

COLOMBO, May 27 (IPS) -- An all-out military offensive launched by Sri Lankan security forces yesterday to regain control of the northern Jaffna Peninsula from Tamil guerrillas has brought the island to the verge of civil war, diplomatic observers here said.



VANNARPANAI TEMPLE BOMBING VICTIM

Reports from the area, which is the stronghold of Tamil separatists fighting for an independent homeland in the island's northeast, said the army, with air and naval support, had made considerable headway in the area by this morning.

Despite a 48-hour curfew and government instructions to some of the peninsula's 800,000 people to seek shelter in temples and churches, sources here believe civilian casualties in the fighting have been high. The

government has tried to play down the scale of the offensive, while reports of the action describe it as the "final offensive" to regain control of Jaffna.

The government said yesterday it had instructed the armed forces to "restore law and order and extend their control

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JAYAWARDENE REGIME REACTS AGAINST INDIAN RELIEF EFFORT

By Kunda Dixit COLOMBO, June 5 (IPS) -- "When a big country like India does this kind of thing, we don't know whether to laugh or cry," Sri Lankan Minister of National Security Lalit Athulathmudali said after yesterday's dramatic Indian airlift of relief supplies over the northern Jaffna peninsula.

The minister's remark seemed to sum up the mood here the morning after five Indian Air Force cargo planes dropped 25 tons of food and medicine over the peninsula against the wishes of the Sri Lankan government. In the wake of the Indian action there is an undercurrent of anger in this tiny island off India's southern coast -- an island that has always been proud of its independence and national identity.

There is also a palpable sense of relief that both the airlift and the tense confrontation between the Sri Lankan Navy and a flotilla of Indian relief boats did not flare into a major military incident. Sri Lanka now appears to

be pursuing the only course open to it - trying to hit back through international forums. Both countries are members of the British Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement and the newly-established South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

"They have broken all principles of SAARC, the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations," Sri Lankan Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa said yesterday after news came that the Indian aircraft had completed their mission. Premadasa called on the secretary-general of SAARC, Bangladesh's Abul Ahsan, to immediately summon a meeting of its member nations to consider India's action.

But diplomatic observers here say there is little that SAARC, which groups India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and the Maldives, can do -- since its charter has no mandate

to intervene in bilateral issues. And there is no provision in SAARC's charter for convening special sessions during times of emergency.

But one South Asian diplomat here confirmed earlier reports that the leaders of Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal were trying to approach Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi not to do anything that would worsen the situation around Sri Lanka.

South Asian diplomats here agreed that the Indian action was a "serious setback to the spirit of SAARC," and their immediate worry seemed to be to prevent the possible boycott of a meeting of SAARC foreign ministers scheduled to be held later this month in New Delhi.

And in a statement released today in Islamabad, Pakistani Prime Minister

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Who Invited Foreign Soliders to Kill Our Own Citizens?

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found in the Subhas Hotel. This was unprecedented in this so-called democracy. Ferdinand Marcos did not do it in the Philippines. Then you arrested Mr. Amirhalingam who was then leader of the opposition. He phoned me at 2 in the morning.

"You also arrested Mr. Sivasithamparam then member of Nallur, and also I believe, the then member of Jaffna, Mr.Yogeswaran. They were all former Members of Parliament....Anyway Jaffna Library was burnt. The Tamils felt that there was absolutely no viable democratic alternative available to them.* "

Since then, thousands of Tamil-speaking people - a section of the Sri Lankan population -- have been burnt alive by the racist conflagration ignited by Jayawardene regime.

Are these atrocities, then, internal matters? And who is it who has invited foreigners to interfere in our own affairs?

It was Jayawardane who invited foreign soldiers to kill our own citizens, whether they are Tamils or Sinhalese.

The whole world knows that Israeli Mossad is operating in Sri Lanka.

* "The Hon. Minister of National Security and Deputy Minister of Defence told this House that the Israelis are not advising us on security matters but if I remember right when His Excellency the President was interviewed by a Hong Kong paper, he told them that Israelis were advising us on defence."(Parliamentary speech Mr.M.Haleem Ishak-Third M.P. for Colombo Central)

What is the advice we got from the Israeli defence advisors?

Mr.Haleem Ishak - (MP for Colombo Central) : I feel that after the Israelis went into the Eastern Province they created the rift between the Muslims and the Tamils there. They will not only create a rift between the Muslims and the Tamils, I assure this House today, Sir, but they will create rifts even between the Sinhalese and the Muslims living in the same villages all over the country.

A Member: Is that your opinion or the opinion of the party?

Mr.Anura Bandaranaike: (Leader of the Opposition in the Parliament) That is the opinion of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

Mr. Haleem Ishak: Never had the Muslims fought the Tamils before.

Mr. Anura Bandaranaike: For the first time this happened.

Mr.Haleem Ishak: The Muslims disagree with the Tamils on one question, the division of this country.

Mr. Anura Bandaranaike: Never had they fought before. (* Extracts from Parliamentary speeches in the Sri Lanka Parliament)

It is a well known fact that the British SAS and the unpopular KMS are giving military advice and training to the Sri Lankan armed forces. They have also been directly involved in the killing of our own civilians. This direct involvement of foreign mercenaries in Jaffna peninsula had been proven on several occasions and has not been denied by the Jayawardane government.

"How many Muslims were killed in Kalmunai? Who is responsible for this? It is the Israeli presence in this country. I appeal to you, sir, in the name of God to advise this Government to send the Israelis away from this country. The more they stay in this country, the more it is going to affect not only the Muslims, but it is going to affect every community in this country." (Mr.Haleem Isak, in the Sri Lankan Parliament)

Who invited these foreign soldiers to operate on our soil and to kill our people?

The Jayawardane regime cannot escape these accusations and cannot fool the world by shouting 'India is interfering in our internal problems'. The present UNP government does not have the right to criticise anyone's involvement in our own affairs. They abrogated this right themselves, a long time ago. For it is Jayawardane and his lackeys who have betrayed our motherland to foreign powers.

The 'patriotic' UNP government's Land Development and Mahaweli Development Minister, Gamini Dissa-nayake at a symposium held in the Chamber of Commerce, Colombo in early '80's stated "150 years after the British arrived in Sri Lanka and started plantations in the hill country, I am happy to invite foreigners to come to Sri Lanka and invest in agribusiness. I am prepared to allocate lands for them from Mahaweli Development areas and other lands which have irrigation facilities."

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SRI LANKA FREEDOM PARTY OPPOSES MAY DAY BAN

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party has condemned the decision of the government to ban meetings, traditional demonstrations etc on May Day 1987.

In a press statement issued yesterday the SLFP said "This decision is anti-working class, anti-democratic and savours of fascism for it is reminiscent of Hitler's suppression of the working class in Fascist Germany," the statement further said.

The statement adds the decision in addition has a meaningless and ridiculous dimension specially when the Government took the unprecedented and arbitrary step to postpone May Day -- a day internationally recognised and firmly fixed for over a century as a day solemnly revered by working class people - to 22nd May, a day which has no association whatsoever with the international working class movement.

While the Government deployed its Security Forces to use teargas, batons, whips, rubber bullets, fire-arms etc on May Day assemblies resulting in the killing of two persons and injuring several others, paradoxically it was

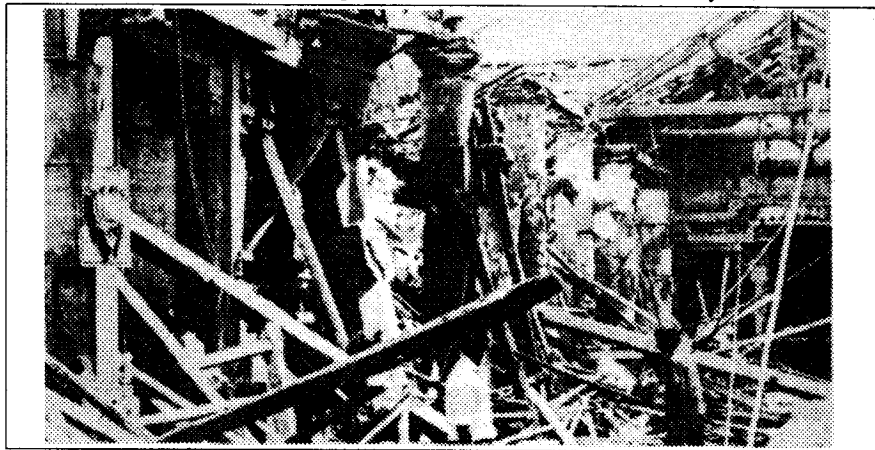
powerless to prevent or suppress demonstrations, meetings, processions etc which were held in the Jaffna Peninsula in open defiance of the government and within gunshot distance of the Government's Security Forces.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party warns the government that in the interest of the future of democracy and democratic institutions, free and fair elections periodically held according to the Constitutions, and trade union rights of the workers, the suppression of democratic rights of the people, specially freedom of speech, assembly and the right of the working class

would only result in the subversion of democracy in this country and instead the emergence of violent and anarchic methods as an alternative to the democratic process.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party takes this opportunity to very strongly condemn the brutal shooting of two by-standers within the precincts of a Buddhist temple by the government Security Forces and extends sincere sympathies to the families, relatives and friends of the deceased. We firmly hold the Government responsible for the killings and all the blood that was shed on May day.

•Lanka Guardian May 15, 1987•



VANNAPARNAI TEMPLE: BOMBED AFTER REGIME TOLD CIVILIANS TO TAKE REFUGE THERE

AN ACT OF EXTREME IRRESPONSIBILITY: TULF

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to specific areas of the Jaffna Peninsula." But political observers and diplomats here said the military offensive is "unprecedented" and has wrecked the delicate Indian-mediated efforts to find a peace formula, bringing the country to the verge of a full-fledged civil war.

"The offensive is an act of extreme irresponsibility on the part of the government. The civilian casualties will be enormous, and it will negate all efforts by moderate Sinhalese and Tamils to find a solution," said Neelan Tiruchelvam, representative of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) here.

A Sri Lankan army garrison, holed up in a Dutch fort outside Jaffna, had reportedly begun trying to extend its perimeter of control into areas of the city heavily-mined by the guerrillas.

Government troops began preliminary forays out of their bases in the peninsula last week, probing guerrilla resistance and minefields. Defense analysts here said the security forces gauged that a major offensive would enable them to gain control of key areas including Elephant Pass -- a narrow land bridge linking the peninsula to the rest of the island.

And a military source here told IPS that Sri Lankan Air Force helicopters had been busy ferrying troops behind

guerrilla lines in a bid to encircle their bases in Velvettiturai, Point Pedro, Navatkuli and Elephant Pass in the Peninsula.

"The idea is to encircle and trap them," the source said. The Air Force's Italian-built Siai Marchetti light bombers and U.S. - Bell 212 helicopter gunships were also said to have been in action all day yesterday "softening" suspected guerrilla positions before the army's advance.

The offensive began at six A.M. local time yesterday and was preceded two hours earlier by helicopters dropping leaflets urging residents to seek shelter in Hindu temples, churches and schools.

ABOUT 200 PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED WHEN BOMBS FELL ON TEMPLE WHERE 1500 TOOK REFUGE

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Mohammed Khan Junejo asked India and Sri Lanka to "amicably settle their differences." Junejo also confirmed that Pakistan would be giving food and medical supplies to the Sri Lankan government to "supplement its efforts to help the victims of strife."

The Sri Lankan leaders have pointed at Pakistan's gesture, saying that it is an example of the way India should have given its relief aid -- through normal diplomatic channels. India's action yesterday also highlighted the growing geo-political rift in the South Asian subcontinent, caused by what India sees as Sri Lanka's growing pro-Western tilt.

India believes Sri Lanka intends to permit the United States to have military bases on the island - particularly a naval center at Trincomalee on the east coast, which is said to have the biggest natural harbor in Asia.

India is also peeved that Sri Lanka has given land for a powerful Voice of America transmitting station near Colombo, and is irritated by Sri Lanka's pro-Western foreign policy.

Political observers here note that India has been showing its displeasure by boycotting most international and regional conferences held in Colombo. Indian delegates did not attend a meeting of parliamentarians organized by UNICEF last year, and also stayed away from a recent conference on sharing the resources of the Indian ocean.

Some analysts see Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict as an extension of big power rivalry in the region with India's interests coinciding with those of the Soviet Union. But other diplomatic observers scoff at this. "Just look at the map," said one. "Do you think India would put its international prestige on line for this tiny island?"

But India's interests in Sri Lanka are also dictated by the need to convince its own Tamils living in the southern state of Tamil Nadu that it is concerned about the welfare of their ethnic cousins across the Palk Strait in Sri Lanka.

After the Sri Lankan military offensive against rebels in the north last week, Tamil Nadu's chief minister, M.G. Ramachandran warned Prime Minister Gandhi that further tolerance of Sri Lanka's "genocidal intent" would lead to an uprising among the 50 million Tamils living in his state.

Whatever the reasons behind Gandhi's decision to send the dramatic airlift mission yesterday, Sri Lankan officials say this is the first time since the country gained independence from Britain in 1948 that its sovereignty has been violated.

"Relations with India are never going to be the same again," said one senior government official here who did not want to be named. "There is a consensus of outrage."

The anger was also apparent in the upper echelons of Sri Lanka's Armed Forces, which recently made considerable headway in regaining control over parts of the Jaffna Peninsula.

"It is rather frustrating. Just when we had the terrorists on the run we have been threatened to stop," one officer said privately. "We have to suffer for the sake of a popularity contest in India's domestic politics."

Except for some anti-Indian slogans scrawled in tar on the wall of the Indian high commissioner's residence here, there has been no overt reaction to yesterday's airlift. But about 100 Indian diplomats, businessmen and journalists are taking no chances and will be staying for a few more days at some of Colombo's luxury hotels.

The Sri Lankan media has been playing up international press criticism of India's action, and some editorials have even urged the government to consider severing diplomatic relations with India. But few observers believe it will come to that, though a lot will depend on the situation in Jaffna and whether or not the government will decide to resume its offensive.

The peninsula has been cut off from the outside world for the past two weeks, and reports from eye witnesses have just begun to filter out. One injured woman airlifted to a hospital in Anura-dhapura, 90 miles north of here, said about 200 people had been killed when bombs fell on a Hindu temple north of Jaffna in which 1,500 people had taken refuge on May 26, the first day of the offensive.

About 3,000 Tamil youths are also said to have been taken by sea from the Vadamarachchi area, now under government control, to a detention center in Boosa, southern Sri Lanka.

The detention center already holds 3,000 other people, mostly Tamils, held under the country's prevention of terrorism act. If more news like this gets out, public and press opinion in India could build up again and force Gandhi to paratroop more of the 1,000 tons of food medicines reportedly earmarked for Jaffna.

Meanwhile, the government here has been trying to show that there was no need for the Indian airlift, and that it is fully capable of taking care of its citizens. Yesterday, it lifted a fuel embargo imposed on the Jaffna Peninsula in January and has given wide publicity to the army's "operation goodwill" which is distributing free food in Vadamarachchi.

**10,000 STUDENTS
EVICTED!**

May 10, 1987 COLOMBO (AP) On Sunday, the government ordered the closure of three university campuses closed, with 10,000 students evicted from dormitories and 1,000 faculty and other employees told not to report for work.

The government said five other university closures might be imposed because of rising student disturbances and what police say is infiltration of the schools by anti-government Marxists.

**JAFFNA HOSPITAL
TO MOVE?**

The government announced last week that it was moving most units of the 2,400-bed hospital in the town of Jaffna to outlying areas for the safety of patients and staff, but the move was delayed after public protests. Eight patients and a nurse were killed and at least 20 other people were injured when shells hit the hospital in March.

THREE MUSLIMS SHOT

Colombo, May 16 (AP-Reuter) In Navaikudah village, in Batticaloa district, police shot to death three men when their car did not stop at a checkpoint, a government communique said. Residents who spoke on condition of "anonymity," said the three were Muslims.

HELICOPTER FIRES ON BUS

Colombo, May 17 (AP) Ten passengers were killed when a Sri Lankan air-force helicopter fired at a mini-bus in Iyakachi.

2500 CANADIAN TAMILS RALLY AGAINST GENOCIDE

A large contingent of two thousand five hundred Canadians of Sri Lankan origin, including 300 women, demonstrated in Ottawa on June 2, against the present UNP Government's genocidal offensive in the North.

Tamils living in Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa rallied at Parliament Hill, and then marched to the Sri Lanka High Commissioner's mansion.

**'THE SMOKE AND SMELL OF CORPSES'
AFTER HUNDREDS DISAPPEAR IN BATTICALOA**

BATTICALOA, Sri Lanka, May 21, 1987 (Reuter) Hundreds of Tamil civilians have disappeared in the Batticaloa region after being arrested by British-trained security forces, a citizens' group, clergymen and trade unionists say.

The Batticaloa Citizens' Committee, a volunteer group set up to help people during Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict, says it has documented 650 cases in which men between the ages of 14 and 55 have disappeared since their arrests were reported by relatives.

The citizens' committee says the Tamils among Batticaloa's 50,000 inhabitants are too afraid of police -- almost all of whom are Sinhalese -- to complain about their behavior. Tamils are in the majority in Batticaloa, an eastern region.

Committee members showed a reporter hundreds of affidavits sworn before a justice of the peace by relatives and friends of missing men, detailing how they were detained. They said they had affidavits for the arrest of each of the 650 people they believe are missing.

Committee members say most of the men were detained in the almost daily operations carried out by the Security Task Force, an anti-guerrilla unit they say is trained by Keeny Meeny Services, a British company employing

Telephone interviews with people in Iyakachi village said, fifty people had been killed and 50 injured. Witnesses spoke on condition of anonymity. Tilak

ex-servicemen from Britain's Special Air Services.

Residents say 50 to 200 youths are rounded up in each operation and paraded before hooded informers who point out suspected members or sympathizers of Tamil rebel groups.

Sam Tambimuttu, secretary to the committee, showed a reporter a list with information on 359 missing people, detailing the date and circumstances of their arrests. The committee has since prepared a second list of 97 missing people and Tambimuttu says a list of another 200 documented cases will soon be compiled.

Privately, however, Christian clergymen, officials of the Batticaloa Trade Union Federation and committee members say they believe those who disappeared are dead.

A Tamil clergyman from Batticaloa's small Christian minority said, "They either died under torture in security forces' camps or in reprisals after guerrilla land mine attacks." People who live nearby "tell us they see smoke and smell the stink of corpses from the camps," said another clergyman. He said Sri Lankan security laws permit police to dispose of bodies without a post-mortem examination.

Ratnakara, chairman of the government-run media centre, dismissed the report as a fabrication.

The demonstration was jointly organised by Canadian Alert on Sri Lanka (CANSL), Eelam Tamil Association (Toronto), World Tamil movement of Toronto, Eelam Tamil Association (Montreal), World Tamil Movement of Montreal and Eelam Tamil Association of Ottawa.

MPs from all three parties, including Dan Heap and David Kilgour, spoke.

THE BETRAYERS OF OUR SOIL HAVE NO RIGHT TO CRITICIZE INDIA

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The great people who rebelled in the early 18th century against the British occupation of the Uva Province have been deprived of their land rights, and those lands -- which our great grand parents shed their blood to protect -- approximately 90,000 acres of land, have been handed over to Multinationals like 'Bookers International', 'Meta International' and the Dutch HVA for sugar cane cultivation. It is after the 'patriotic' Jayawardane took over the government that our people lost their land rights to foreigners.

'If we win the Local Government election, we will send 100,000 people to Middle East for jobs'. This was one of the election promises of the UNP during the local-government elections campaign. Sending our young workforce, our cultural values - our

sisters and mothers -- away to foreign countries, has been the 'patriotic' economic strategy of the present UNP government.

The whole nation including the unborn have been mortgaged to foreign loans by this 'patriotic' of the present government. The betrayers of our soil - the present UNP regime -- have no right to criticise the Indian involvement in the present conflict.

We are, however, most concerned about the truly democratic forces within our country. We are definitely aware that these forces are in a weak position and are unable to swim against the waves of 'Greater Sinhala Chauvinism', and a patriotism -- Anti-Indian, anti-Tamil -- which has diverted and divided our nation against our own sisters, brothers and neighbours.

Patriotism is determined by historical conditions. There's the 'patriotism' of Jayawardane, and there is our patriotism. We must resolutely oppose this 'patriotism' of Jayawardane's because it does not serve the interests of Sri Lankans. The genocidal war launched by the Jayawardane regime harms the people of Sri Lanka as well as the people of the world.

To save our motherland from this crisis, the struggle for justice and democracy by the democratic forces in our country is a pre-condition.

To save our paradise from these flames, we request all friends of the Sri Lankan people to put pressure on Sri Lankan Government to stop this genocidal war, to halt the current military solution to the conflict and to demand a political solution based on justice and democracy.

'CRIME OF GENOCIDE IS NO INTERNAL MATTER' - Australian MP

(The following are excerpts from a speech by MP Lewis Kent - on May 7, 1984 in the Australian Parliament. We reproduce it in the context of the UNP government's criticism of India's relief effort - Editors)

Mr Kent (Hotham): During Easter I attended an international conference in Madras hosted by the Chief Minister of the Tamil Nadu government...its purpose was to discuss the sad plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka. People of very diverse political opinion like my colleague the honourable member for Macarthur - (Mr Hollis), a Conservative member of Parliament from West Germany, A Canadian jurist, a Norwegian human rights activist and I, just to mention a few, assembled at short notice thousands of miles from our homelands in response to a call to oppose racial violence and to defend the human rights of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka.

There was no other reason or motive to abandon our Easter holidays with our families but to raise our voices against the genocide perpetrated on Tamils by the government of Sri Lanka. Both my colleague and I went to Madras to express Australia's horror and revulsion at the racial violence and the continuing persecution and killing of Tamils.

'We raised our voices against killings, unlawful imprisonment and torture of Tamils because these events have not held the attention of the Western media. Since July 1983, the Sri Lankan government has exposed the Tamil minority to continuous and organised racial violence. Hundreds of Tamils were killed and are still being killed.

Tamil property is being destroyed and hundreds of Tamils are being held in prisons without charge or trial. The security forces are being given a licence to kill as the government has brought in regulations to allow the police to dispose of bodies without any inquiry or inquest.

As late as March of this year the Sri Lankan armed forces opened fire on the civilian population, men, women and children, in the Jaffna district, killing 12 Tamils and wounding over 50 others. These events get very little mention in our media, but the killing of one white woman in London more than a fortnight ago is still headline news.

'Such neglect by the media allows the Sri Lanka government to plan and execute the genocide of 2 1/2 million Tamils in Sri Lanka virtually un-noticed by the rest of the world. Neither the West nor the East is willing to put pressure on President Jayawardane to stop the killings.

'The crime of genocide is not and cannot be an internal matter for the Sri Lankan government. The continuous violation of the human rights of a minority concerns us all; racial violence is a concern for humankind. Forty-five years ago the world stood by while Hitler was building the gas chambers to prepare his final solution to the Jewish problem. The world, both the West and the East, warned against fascism. It was concerned about persecution of the Jewish minority, but no one did anything about it and 6 million Jews perished. Today, 40 years later, the world displays the same latent racist ignorance about the persecution of 2 1/2 million Tamils in Sri Lanka.

It is true that our government has expressed its concern for the events that are taking place on that otherwise tranquil island. The action of the minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (Mr West) to speed up family reunions for Sri Lankans is also commendable.

However, immigration of Tamils is not the solution. Already there are more than 50,000 refugees even though the Tamils do not want to leave their homeland where they have lived for 3,000 years. Only the threat to their lives and property makes them flee and settle temporarily elsewhere. They do not want to abandon their homes and families. They are prepared to stay and fight for their dignity and for national self-determination.'

'Only take a spark for conflict to spread to tea plantations'

EXPORTING MORE TEA BUT EARNING LESS

COLOMBO, May 26 (IPS) -- Sri Lanka last year overtook India as the world's number one exporter of tea, but earned less than ever before from tea sales because of a continuing slump in world price for the commodity. Figures just released here put Sri Lanka's total tea exports in 1986 at 455 million pounds - 22 million more than the 1985 level.

India, traditionally the world's leading tea exporting nation, shipped out 244 million pounds in 1986. But despite the increase in export volume, industry figures show that the \$222 million Sri Lanka earned from exporting tea in 1986 was the lowest figure in recent years.

Tea earnings have been declining steadily since 1983 when earnings topped \$550 million. This had sunk to \$422 million by 1985. Tea trade officials here blamed the depressed prices on the over-production of previous years and the large stocks held by consumer countries.

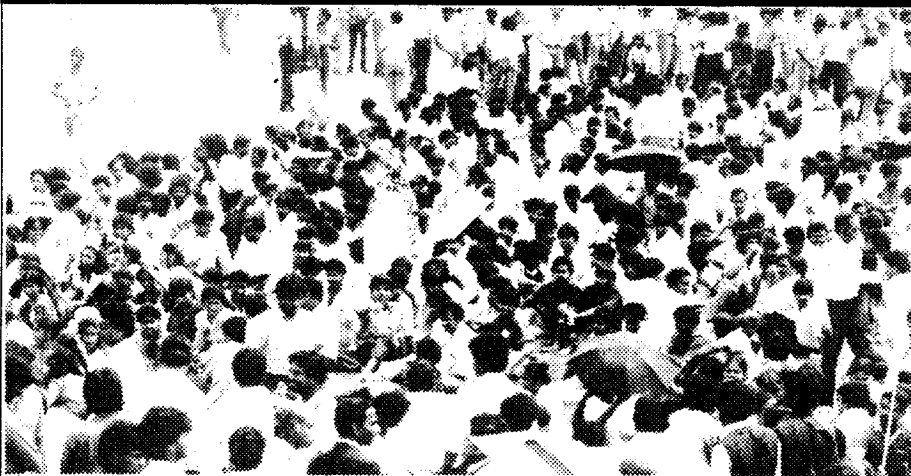
Tea prices collapsed in 1984, dropping by more than half over the previous year. It is only now limping back to more normal levels of about \$1.3 per kilogram -- but even this figure is ten cents below the cost of production in Sri Lanka's tea plantations, experts say.

The main reason for the increase in export volume of Sri Lankan tea is attributed to the steep growth in demand from Egypt and west Asian countries.

India, for its part, is exporting less because of growing domestic demand for the brew, which is said to be increasing at the rate of 44 million pounds a year to keep pace with the country's rising population.

The traditional tea-producing areas around Darjeeling in northeastern India

2500 RALLY IN OTTAWA AGAINST OFFENSIVE



have also been hit because of a violent agitation by Nepali-speaking Gurkhas for a separate hill state. In Sri Lanka itself, tea exports had been severely affected by reports early last year that Tamil separatists had poisoned consignments of the product meant for export.

Strict tests were imposed on Sri Lankan tea by importing countries, as tea prices in the Colombo auctions fell. "It took a whole year for normalcy to return and Colombo prices slumped to their lowest," according to a commodity report by a local exporting firm. Poison threats combined with the price drop were too much for the smaller tea plantations to bear. Six estates in the island's tea-growing hills were reported to have gone bankrupt last year.

Tea pickers in Sri Lanka's plantations are mainly the descendants of Tamils that the British brought from southern India. Although the plantation Tamils and their leaders do not support the demands by members of Tamil separatist guerrilla groups fighting for an independent homeland in the Sri Lanka's northeast, they have often been the targets of communal violence.

LANKAN GARMENTS' EARNINGS SOAR BUT WORKERS UNDERPAID

Mallika Wanigasundara - Depthnews

Sri Lanka's garment industry is so lucrative that its export earnings are second only to that of tea. Yet manufacturers are saying no to wage increases for their workers, who are so poorly paid that they very much qualify for government aid to the impoverished...

The biggest plantation trade union is the Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC) led by S. Thondaman -- the only Tamil minister in India's cabinet. Thondaman has used his leverage to win concessions from the government for the plantation workers. "The ethnic mixture of the plantations is highly volatile, and it would only take a spark for the present conflict to spread to the tea-growing areas," says a knowledgeable analyst here.

WOMEN AND THE NATIONAL CONFLICT

THE STORY OF SHANTHINI

(This is a true story originally written in Sinhala by a Sinhala woman who left Sri Lanka for political reasons, shortly after this incident took place)

On the day before Deepavali, the Hindu religious festival day, in November 1985, at about three o'clock in the afternoon, government security forces encircled a village called Kovilgama at Kantalai in the district of Trincomalee. Saying they were hunting the 'Tigers', they conducted house to house searches

The youth of the village involved in their everyday work were made to line up in queues and were severely assaulted by the Security Forces, who shouted obscenities at them while examining their National Identity Cards.

The women of the village, including two sisters -- one, M.Rajeswari age 26, a volunteer teacher at the *Kantalai Tamil School*, and the other, her younger sister M. Shanthini age 20, a student, were preparing sweets for the Deepavali celebration, the next day.

The sisters watched in fear the terrible scene of the government security forces in action.

Suddenly some security personnel jumped through their front door, shouting "Are there any Tigers, here?"

One officer pointed Shanthini out and shouted "Woman, get over here" and pulled Shanthini to the back of the house. Another officer followed them.

"Hey woman, want to marry me?" the officer broke the silence, gesturing threateningly at Shanthini.

"Agree to marry him, he's a good man" the other officer added.

"Hey woman, what's your address?"
"M.Shanthini, Kovilgama, Kantalai"

"We'll be back, O.K.?" they told Shanthini as they left. Be ready to celebrate the festival."

Shanthini must have thought 'it would be better if Deepavali did not happen at this time.'

"Thangachi, the soldiers have gone but we have to be very careful" elder sister Rajeswari calmed her younger sister. (Thangachi means, younger sister)

"Careful...?," Shanthini cried, "What can we do? I'm scared. We can't go to Trincomalee. Our brother's house there was also burnt by thugs. They also don't have a place to live and they've been displaced. We've narrowly survived so far but problems are arising here too."

Many youth had been disappearing and this had spread fear throughout the village of Kovilgama. At sunset, mothers with infants at their breasts hide in the surrounding forest for their safety. They do not sleep the whole night because they don't know when the security forces will show up. They are not in a position to take their babies to a doctor if one suddenly falls sick.

Long before sunset the village of 'Kovilgama' falls asleep.

At Midnight, before the dawn of the 'Deepavali' day, the sound of an old woman crying aloud - as if she were dying - shook the village of 'Kovilgama'. The whole village was in shock. People noticed a jeep in front of Shanthini's house. Security personnel kicked the front door in with their boots and entered the house.

The people in the house were taken by surprise, not knowing what to do, they stood immobile like stones. Even so, it was not difficult for them to identify the security personnel as the men who'd been there earlier, in the afternoon.

"Who's this bastard?" A security officer pointed at one of Shanthini's relatives, a Mr. Shanmugarajah.

"He's my husband" Shanthini's elder sister replied.

A security officer stepped in front of her, and tore her necklace off and put it into his pocket.

"Oh my god!.....that's my *thali*, give it to me" the elder sister cried. (The *Thali* is a holy ornament worn by a Hindu woman. It is put around her neck by her husband on their wedding day and isn't removed under any circumstances until her husband dies.)

"Shout up, whore..... your mouth's too big.", the government security officer responded. "You! Do you have an identity card?" he asked Shanmugarajah.

"Yes sir, I have one." Shanmugarajah replied and stepped forward to show him his identity card. He noticed that his sisters-in-law, Rajeswari and Shanthini were then pulled into a room by the officers.

"We have to get a statement from these two; they have to come with us." the security officer said coming out of the room. "Get in to the jeep." Both young women were pulled towards the jeep.

"Sir, we cannot let these young women go at this time of the night. We will bring them in the morning" Shanmugarajah begged the officers in order to save his wife's sisters.

"Is that so?, then you can also join us." Shanmugarajah and another relative were pushed into the jeep. With four civilians the jeep started to move. A few yards away, two more youth were taken in.

The jeep sped off and then slowed down, the headlights were turned off and then driven furtively past the paddy fields which are deserted at night.

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THE RURAL WOMAN OF SRI LANKA

-Some Of Her Problems-

E.M.Bandara Menike - President,
Progressive Women's Front

49.5% of the total population in our country is female. 73.03% of them live in the villages. The government's statistics say that only 26% of our labour force is female. This however includes only those who are in registered employment. Does this mean that most of our women don't work?

WOMAN WORK JUST AS HARD

Most of the employment available in the rural areas is in rice cultivation. In addition, one can work in other forms of agriculture and in some small industries. When we look at the

number of women in these areas, we see the extent to which the rural women are engaged in work.

70% of the rural female population is engaged in agricultural work in contrast to a figure of 60% for the men. Women are involved in many other types of employment connected with village life as well. These are easily identifiable as jobs carrying very low wages.

Percentages of women in such areas of work are as follows:

90% as tea pluckers;
48% as cinnamon labourers
82% as labourers in the spinning/weaving/dyeing industry

71% as labourers in coir industry
72% as labourers in 'beedi' (locally-made cigarette) industry

These women work at these jobs while at the same time doing their round of household work such as cooking, caring for children and the sick, washing clothes and house cleaning.

LOW WAGES

Already we can see that women are engaged in two types of work: that is household work and work that brings in a cash income. The work in the household is performed without pay.

Although the women in the plantation sector have recently won their right to

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SAGA OF WOMEN RUBBER TAPPERS

by Sumika Perera

About 45 women work on a rubber plantation called 'x' in the Kurunegala district. They all face immense problems and rely entirely on their wages to survive. Most of them support families and have husbands who are most of the time out of work. In this area men can only find work as unskilled labourers on a seasonal and casual basis.

These women must work, be thrifty, care for their children and their elderly parents and preserve peace at home.

Some of the women clear the bush away from the foot of the trees. Even though a recent struggle ensured equal work for women plantation workers, in reality, it is sometimes hard to get because of various tricks adopted by the Management. For example, a woman should clear the roots of 100 trees a day. This is a literally impossible task. When she cannot meet the target, she is recorded to have worked for only half a day.

When one is tapping the trees for rubber milk, a small damage brings a fine of Rs. 20.00. The daily wage is Rs. 23.93. If she damages two trees in

one day, she loses not only her days wage but forfeits part of her next day's earnings.

One woman had a large wound in her foot. She dropped her knife on it while tapping rubber and it cut her. She had to stay away from work for 17 days due to the injury. But nobody paid her any compensation. The bosses only care about their trees; the lives of the plantation workers could crumble away under those very trees and the bosses could care less.

Another woman was stung by a poisonous snake while at work.

She was unable to work for sixteen days and she was only paid Rs. 16.50 to help her to buy herself some medicine.

Recently, on TV we saw a programme describing various moves to better the lives of plantation workers. They said that if workers are not healthy and happy, their work also suffers. There were doctors and nurses also speaking on that topic. They showed us some creches. They were well equipped. Creche mothers fed children rice. The children had beds to rest on, with

sheets, pillows and even mosquito nets.

But this is not the truth. Most plantation workers live in line rooms. They are lucky if it doesn't rain. After working the whole day, they come back to this gloomy little room where they must cook, eat and sleep. There are no toilets and the drains around are full to overflowing.

These women are indeed an unhappy lot. Their bosses do all they can to cut back on their wages. When it rains, the women have no work. They only go through all this suffering because they must keep their families alive. Even though they pay Rs.2/- every month towards a union membership, in actual fact the union has not done much towards improving their daily living conditions.

The Tamil women who work on these plantations (most of the plantation workers in Sri Lanka are Tamil-speaking people) are burdened with yet another oppression - that of their nationality. They live in a permanent state of fear, not knowing when they will become victims of attack, afraid to even speak.

FOR RURAL WOMEN: FIRST STEP TOWARDS LIBERATION, IS PARTICIPATION IN PRODUCTION TO ACHIEVE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

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equal pay, after a long struggle, rural women workers in many other areas of employment are yet to win this right.

LOW LEVEL OF FACILITIES

The two types of work mentioned above are not being performed by women under very easy conditions. Facilities such as electricity, tapborne water, easy transport systems that are available in the cities are not so easy to come by in the villages. The village woman must carry her water and firewood over long distances each day.

She must pound her paddy into rice and her rice into flour by hand, or else carry it to a mill which could be quite a distance away. Common facilities such as creches, community kitchens or laundries, which would do a great deal to ease the burden of women, are not to be found in our cities, let alone our villages.

Pre-schools are also the exception rather than the rule. What facilities are available are also usually denied to women. Even among relatively well-off families, the preference is to spend money on some item such as a motorcycle or TV which are visible symbols of wealth and social status rather than on something which would make the woman's lot a little easier - for example, a washing machine or a gas cooker.

TIME SPENT ON THE ROAD

Looking after the health needs of her family is also considered to be the responsibility of the woman. When a child is sick, it is most often the mother who takes the child to the clinic. In the villages, generally, there is no clinic close by. The nearest medical post is quite likely to be miles away. The mother carrying a sick child has to face all the difficulties of transport problems. Since men usually

ride bicycles, it would be easier for them to undertake this task. But it falls to the woman's lot unquestioned. And since village women usually do not ride bicycles, they must seek the help of the erratic public transport system.

Buses are often crowded and infrequent. The stronger push their way. Here too, the women suffer injustice. How often do we see the faces of commuters turn sour when a woman carrying a small child gets on to a bus. And how much time has she spent waiting for this particular bus? In fact, now some private buses refuse to take on woman with children as passengers.

THE FATE OF GIRLS

Most parents in rural areas must spend heavily if they are to educate their children, due to the prohibitive costs of books and educational equipment. This adds on to the very high cost of living. The tendency then is to halt the education of girls before that of boys. The girls are kept back at home in order to help out in the household.

Thousands of the girls who work in rich and middle-class homes as domestics come from among this group of rural girls who are drop-outs from school at an early age. Once their education comes to a standstill, the next pre-occupation is to get them married. Is this an easy task?

Most men, as well as their families, look into the dowry of a young woman as a pre-condition to choosing her as a bride. How many young women in our country suffer untold oppression because of their inability to marry due to a lack of dowry? And how many more continue to suffer even after marriage when the in-laws taunt her with her lack of wealth and possessions?

A LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM

Young girls engaged in household work under their parents are trained to 'serve' their husbands later on. They begin to think, while they are still young, that their duty is to be an 'obedient' wife. The accepted 'good' wife should be able to bear, with patience, whatever hardships she has to suffer at the hands of her husband without reacting against it. She should sacrifice all her rights and abilities for the well-being of the family.

As a result, she feels that it is wrong of her to utter a single word of protest even when she is regularly beaten up by her drunken husband. The rural housewives have to bear many forms of harassment and oppression because they do not have the means of living independently.

This is why we believe that 'The first step towards women's liberation is her participation in the process of production in order to achieve economic independence.' For the rural woman in our country, it is still a long way to go, to achieve a proper awareness of their oppression and a even longer way to go before their day of liberation dawns.

SECOND-CLASS MEMBERS IN ORGANISATIONS

Rural women have not yet learned to organise against their oppression and exploitation. There are many reasons for this, including the way in which women themselves have been socialised to think and behave in a certain way, the social environment that contributes to this situation and the dual burdens that women have to shoulder every day.

In our villages, you can see people coming forward to form various organisations which answer their needs. Peasants' organisations are particularly

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**SRI LANKAN CRISIS:
Constitutional and Political
Options**

Excerpts from the Statement of
A.J.WILSON

Professor of Political Science
University of New Brunswick, Canada
Before the Hearings on Sri Lanka on
March 12, 1987,
by the Sub-Committee on Asian and
Pacific Affairs, Committee on Foreign
Affairs,
Congress of the United States

1. Politically the situation in Sri Lanka is both fluid and highly explosive. Repression may for a while maintain the peace and quiet of the graveyard. But there will be a repetition of the Shah, Marcos, Duvalier, Chiang Kai-Shek and those of their kind. President Jayawardene belongs to the same genre. Besides, his age does not permit him to crack the whip whenever necessary.

From ministers down to the humblest public servant, everybody knows that he is a lame duck President who has barely 18 or 19 months to go and that the succession lies elsewhere. It will not necessarily be Lalith Athulathmudali who will succeed. Neither the public nor the officer class trusts him. The "dark horse" in American politics is an appropriate application to the confused situation in Sri Lanka.

2. To prove my point that the political situation is completely confused, two persons of importance at least have fled the country.

a) Sri Lanka's former Ambassador in Washington, Ernest Corea, a close relative of President Junius Jayawardene and to all intents and purposes his Minister for Foreign Affairs even though A.C.S. Hameed kept in name the title, has chosen to leave his post. When I inquired of him (Ernest Corea) the reason for his sudden decision, he stated that the present incumbent (President Jayawardene) will remain in office for only another two years and he would not like to serve under his successor. My own guess is that the incumbent will unsuccessfully obtain an

extension but there will be a popular uprising as with the Shah and Marcos. Ernest Corea is intelligent enough to know the consequences for him. He maintained his landed immigrant status in Canada and is now special aide to Ivan Head, the President of the International Development Research Corporation in Canada.

b) Sri Lanka's Secretary of Plan Implementation, Wickrema Weerasooria has similar status in Australia. His sister is married to Gamini Dissanayake, one of the contenders for the presidential succession. Wickrema Weerasooria was my student at the University of Ceylon. He had told me that if he found the political situation in Sri Lanka becoming intolerable, he would flee to Australia. To my amazement he has done exactly this. Today he is Sri Lanka's High Commissioner in Australia.

c) The military officers in charge of operations in North Sri Lanka have indicated to visiting foreign journalists and foreign academics that the most they (the military) could do is to contain the insurgent situation. They are convinced that despite the surfeit of weaponry and the training provided by foreign military advisors (Israeli and Pakistan) and the mercenaries employed (British and American), their troops do not have the will to fight. Their emphasis is on the political solution which is fast becoming a mirage. The mirage is due to the deep divisions within the cabinet. The President and the Prime Minister are openly at odds. The ministers take sides. Most of them have no confidence in a President who has no confidence in them, having earlier demanded and obtained undated letters of resignation of all members of Parliament belonging to the ruling party.

d) To add to the confusion, the Commissioner of Elections in his report to Parliament has underscored the fact that the referendum to extend the term of Parliament was conducted in manners which were illegal and unconstitutional. In effect the Commissioner of Elections has

virtually accused the government of cheating at the referendum in order to secure an extension of Parliament's term by another six years. This kind of activity on the part of a friend and ally of the United States will not promote the latter's interests, long term or even short term. The situation is reaching proportions similar to those under Ferdinand Marcos.

There will sooner than later be a popular uprising which will sweep away President Jayawardene and his government. Under such circumstances, the best courses that might be adopted are:

i. The suspension of all aid to Sri Lanka until proper constitutional government is restored.

ii. The Aid Ceylon Consortium should also be advised to avoid good money chasing after bad money. The United States cannot be expected to impose a democratic order on Sri Lanka. But suspension of support can compel the Jayawardene government to reform itself, if not for its own sake, at least for the sake of those of its allies who have provided it with sustenance during the past years.

iii. The United States should be aware of the problems that will result when Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike becomes Executive President of Sri Lanka. Mrs. Bandaranaike will obtain the office in the event of (a) a free and fair election or (b) as a result of a popular uprising as in the Philippines. The foreign policy of Mrs. Bandaranaike will definitely be distanced from the West. The U.S. facilities in Sri Lanka will be terminated. The U.S. will then have to prepare itself for alternative ways of achieving its foreign policy objectives.

iv. This is where the Tamil Problem in Sri Lanka poses a significant question. There are number of ways in which the Tamil problem can be handled by the major powers without the problem being neglected and become a further load on the international system:

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RURAL GROUPS: MEN ARE ALWAYS IN CHARGE!

Continued from Page 12 •
 common. But it is always men who are in leadership positions. It is forgotten that peasant women too have a right to form their own organisations. Some who speak proudly about the ways in which urban women workers are organised and struggle for their rights, are the same ones who scoff at the idea of organising peasant women.

Although women are members of various committees and organisations at the village level, it is taken for granted that holding office and decision-making positions are reserved for men. At a recent programme on rural health, in which we too participated, a medical doctor directly opposed women being admitted to the Committee. He said, "Isn't it true that women have not participated in making decisions all through history?"

Women too have internalised this way of thinking; feeling that they are not capable of holding responsibility.

SOCIAL TABOOS

Women in the villages rarely get the opportunity to read newspapers. Many who read the papers also tend to restrict themselves to articles and news-items specifically directed to women - fashion designs, recipes etc. They feel it is sufficient to complete their knowledge in these fields alone! If a woman who is keen to read spend an hour or two at the village boutique reading the papers, the villagers would say she is idle, neglecting her work at home. Such women are laughed at or humiliated.

Those women who wish to keep the company of friends are looked upon as gossips. In some houses, it is taboo for the girls in the family to talk to visitors, or to be even seen around the elders. Once we met a girl of 24 years who had never sat down together with her brothers. And some of her brothers had even gone to University!

Apart from workplaces, the temple is the place where women can meet each other freely. For most women, the only break in the monotony of their lives comes when she can visit the fair,

or some religious ceremony. At these occasions, we sometimes see a Jathaka story (a story about the Buddha) being enacted; sometimes they too tend to reinforce the inferior status of women. There are many ways in which religion is also used to justify the second-class treatment of women in our society.

One of the customs that prevail in farming communities is that of ceremonially offering a meal cooked with the first rice after a harvest, to the God. It is generally believed that no women should come to the spot where the ceremony is being conducted. It is with the woman's hands that the plant of rice is nurtured from its infancy. So why is she excluded at this stage? This discrimination only serves to marginalise the woman's position in society.

We should organise ourselves to struggle against all these forms of oppression. Yet this is no easy task. Women's organisations must confront innumerable obstacles on this path. Women activists must face the limitations imposed upon them by our social traditions that are especially strong in the rural areas. We should learn to voice our opposition to such traditions not diametrically but in a gradual way, so as not to alienate ourselves from the women we want to reach.

In Moneragala, for example, a woman activist who was engaged in building Peasant Women's Committees had to waste many precious hours waiting for buses; she asked a male comrade for a 'lift' on his motorcycle. Even this was viewed as going contrary to our 'moral traditions'. The fact that such backward ideas prevail in most of our villages makes our task even more difficult.

So sisters, we should go forward to tomorrow with even more determination than today, to organise women towards building a society which will be fair and just to women, where every form of discrimination will be eradicated and where the daily tasks of women, who are one half of our strength, will be lifted from her weary shoulders.

The Political Prisoner

Spend no tears
 Say no prayers
 for the man in
 the concrete cage
 True, no glimmer
 of light beckons
 at the end end
 the long corridor
 of his "future"
 Even a whisper
 of a trial never
 reaches his ear
 True, no visitor
 calls at his moss-
 lined cell to tell
 him the time and
 integer of year
 Only the gaoler
 bringing his meagre
 ration of mildewed
 biscuits and piss-
 like tea that start
 up painfully again
 his festering ulcer
 Still, say no prayer
 Spend no tears
 for this comrade in
 the concrete cage
 He has his honour
 But for you and I
 who daily stroll
 under the sun with
 fear-locked tongues
 You and I who have
 doubly pawned
 our lives for lies
 You and I
 who bicker at
 the government
 yet pay our taxes
 rant against
 the censor yet
 subscribe to the
 national newspaper
 For you and I, mister
 who walk these
 city's barren streets
 in a midday stupor
 save your prayers
 and shed your tears
 for you and I
 walk without honour

Cecil Rajendra
 -Malaysia-
 (Lanka Guardian)

STORY OF SHANTHINI

• Continued from Page 10 •

The next morning, Deepavali day, the unclothed bodies of the two young women and the bodies of four young men were found at the 9th mile post of the Kantalai - Seruvila road. When the whole village came to know of the tragedy, large numbers of people went to identify the bodies. The people who saw the young women's bodies could not bring themselves to look at the young men's bodies, because they were overcome with grief.

The young women's breasts were bitten in several places. There were several small wounds to their necks, faces and chests. There were clear marks indicating that they were raped and because of the assault the heads of these young women's were battered. The other four men had been shot to death.

The following day the electronic media and the 'national' newspapers reported, "The village of Uksrigama located at the Kantalai - Seruvila road was attacked by terrorists. Several dead bodies were found. The dead bodies have been taken to the Trincomalee government hospital mortuary."

But, the villagers (Sinhala-speaking people) of 'Uksrigama' were not aware of the 'terrorist' attack at their village - and they are still denying the news reports.

The people of the Village of Kovilgama know the facts, of the coldblooded massacre of six people from their village.

But why is the state spreading such naked lies? What's the purposes of spreading these types of lies? Is it possible to solve our national question when the security forces are terrorising innocent civilians in the name of eliminating 'terrorism'? Innocent civilians are always the target of the security forces.

In the first issue of Sri Lanka A Paradise In Flames, page 23 column 3 under main organisations in the North and East, we published EROS as Eelam Revoutionary Organisation of Students. It should have read Eelam Revolutionary Organisation. We apologise to our readers.

CORRECTIONS FOR ISSUE #1

On page 24 column 3 paragraph we stated : "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 are also aware that friends of the Sri Lankan people use the words 'ethnic conflict'. We apologise for any misunderstanding, we did not mean any harm to you.

Women are the most oppressed in our society because of social status and nationality. Are we going to keep silent after shedding tears for our sisters facing sexual oppression? Or are we going to organize ourselves and struggle to demolish all forms of oppression? Sisters, what's your answer?

The bodies found were:

M. Rajeswari, age 26, volunteer teacher

M. Shanthini, age 20, student

K. Shanmugarajah, age 35, father of 4 children, worker at Irrigation Department, Kantalal

N. Thevarajah, Age 28
N. Ratnasingam, Age 30
N. Kugendrarajah

WILSON PREDICTS NEW UPRISING IN SRI LANKA

• Wilson, Continued from Page 13 •

a. The military solution that the Sri Lanka government seeks has to be ruled out despite Israeli and Pakistani assistance. For this the culture of Sinhalese society should be comprehended. As we have suggested the military itself realises that a military solution is out of the question.

The Sinhalese soldier, usually the son of peasants and/or rural folk does not realise the implications of going to the battlefield despite all the incentives offered. The notion dies hard that soldiery is another term for policing and maintaining law and order. The peasant soldier does not realise that he will be engaged in an actual war.

For another, armaments and the trade in it have become a source of income for ministers in the Jayawardene government as well as for top level bureaucrats. What in fact is happening is that weaponry from the United States, Israel, Pakistan and other friendly powers is being traded with the Tamil guerilla movement. The situation is on a parallel with Chiang Kai-Shek and his officers. Military support is therefore counter-productive, if not definitely hostile to U.S. interests.

b) Given this state of affairs, the U.S. have still a few options available to it. The Jayawardene government will eventually be overthrown by a combination of student protest, labour unrest and ethnic rebellion. If ethnic rebellion is stilled, the Jayawardene government will have to handle a less onerous task dealing with students and labour with whom compromises and settlements are more likely to work. The Tamil rebellion on the other hand will provide a catalyst for the other forces of protest. It will also bring about the economic ruin of the country in that tourism, foreign investments and exploitation of the free trade zone will cease to attract foreign interest.

(Courtesy Tamil Times April 1987)

VOLUME I NUMBER 02

SRI LANKA

A PARADISE IN FLAMES

Welcome to the second issue of Sri Lanka, A Paradise In Flames. This issue focusses on the latest military offensive in the North, the massive death and destruction that ensued, and the controversial Indian relief effort. This issue also highlights the situation of 73% of Sri Lankan women, their lives and livelihood, and the daily violence women face in the rural areas.

We thank those people who have sent us their subscriptions, money and other material support. We hope to publish monthly so we need your continuing financial support and your criticism and other literary contributions.

The need for a publication that focusses on the situation in Sri Lanka in its entirety, grows daily. One correspondent in this issue notes the extreme measures the Sri Lankan insisted on to prevent news of the horror visited on the Jaffna people recently. Both the International Red Cross and journalists were prevented from entering the affected areas.

The constant air attacks and shelling in Jaffna was also responsible for bombing of the Saturday Review offices and printing press, which were located in a residential area. While most news in Sri Lanka is controlled by the state, the SR published weekly English coverage of the North and East, despite the persecution of its editors. From these ashes we hope many more independent news-agencies like SR will rise, which will strive to tell the truth about our country. We hope to do our share.

Political Parties Registered Under the Election Ordinance

- CPSL Communist Party - Sri Lanka
- CWC Ceylon Workers' Congress
- DWC Democratic Workers' Congress
- FP Federal Party
- JVP Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front)
- LSSP Lanka Sama Samaja Party (Lanka Equal Society Party)
- MEP Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (People's United Front)
- NSSP Nava Sama Samaja Party (New Equal Society Party)
- SLFP Sri Lanka Freedom Party
- SLMP Sri Lanka Mahajana Pakshaya (Sri Lanka People's Party)
- TC Tamil Congress
- TULF Tamil United Liberation Front
- UNP United National Party

Main Organisations in North and East

- EROS Eelam Revolutionary Organisation
- EPRLF Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front
- LTTE Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
- NLFT National Liberation Front of Tamil Eelam
- PLOT People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam
- TELO Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation

Selected List Of Journals On Sri Lanka:

Kantha Maga, Journal of the Progressive Women's Front, is published in Sinhala and English, and focusses on rural women. Write: Sumika Perera, PWF, Ibbagamuwa, Kurumegala, 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. Write: Kantha Handa, 1 Jayakontha Lane, Colombo 5, Sri Lanka.

Saturday Review is an English weekly from Jaffna. Offices bombed recently. (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\$45.00) 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.

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