

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE BRITISH PEOPLE

4 February 1976

Dear Friends,

For 2,500 years the Tamils and Sinhalese of Ceylon were ruled by two separate kingdoms; the Tamils occupying the north and east, and the Sinhalese the south. Even under the first European invaders, the Portuguese, in the sixteenth century and the Dutch who succeeded them, the kingdoms remained separate, and not until the arrival of the British in the nineteenth century were these two kingdoms brought together for their administrative expediency. Thus there is no doubt that the coming together of Sinhalese and Tamils as 'one nation' of Ceylon is an artificial one, through which neither the Tamils nor the Sinhalese find themselves truly free.

Since independence, for the past twenty five years, even though the Tamils have made every effort to secure their political rights on the basis of equality with the Sinhalese in a united Ceylon, successive Sinhalese governments have denied the Tamils their fundamental rights and reduced them to the position of a subject people. This was made possible because the British at that time failed to provide sufficient constitutional safeguards for the minority Tamils in the 'ONE NATION' they created.

Using the loopholes in the constitution, the Sinhalese government have deprived the majority of Tamils in the plantation sector of their citizenship resulting in the denial of basic Human Rights, the right to employment and education and any social amenities available to other Ceylonese.

The Tamils in general are discriminated in the fields of education and employment. The traditional Tamil areas are deprived of any economic development. The Tamils have been made second class citizens in their own land.

Now, based on the mandate given to the Tamil leaders by the electorate, they are seeking to reconstitute the State of EALAM and return to Status Quo prior to British rule.

WE WANT YOUR SOLIDARITY AND SYMPATHY

Please help us to reconstitute the State of Ealam.

For further details, write to :

Joint Secretaries
EALAM TAMILS ASSOCIATION
919 Garratt Lane
London SW17

" In South Africa racism is skin deep - it destroys the existence and dignity of the coloured man

In Ceylon racism is soul deep - it destroys the dignity and identity of the TAMIL man "