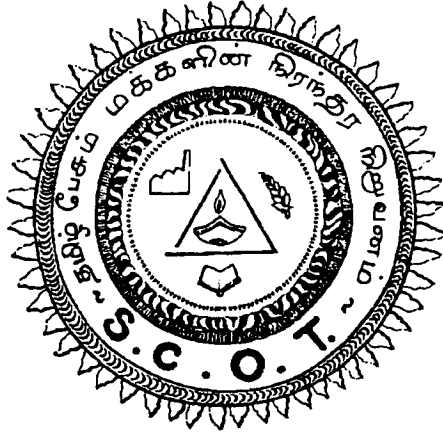


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STANDING COMMITTEE OF TAMIL SPEAKING PEOPLE

-lending a helping hand

S.C.O.T.

**20th ANNIVERSARY
NEWSLETTER**

APRIL 1997

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 274499

LENDING A HELPING HAND FOR 20 YEARS.....

The Standing Committee of Tamil Speaking People (SCOT) is probably one of the oldest organisations of Tamil expatriates in the United Kingdom. It was formed in 1977 and registered as a charity the following year. The main objective is to provide an organisational framework through which expatriate Tamils in the UK and elsewhere can help to improve the living standards and social conditions of Sri Lanka's Tamil speaking people. SCOT is also strongly committed to promoting human rights and we support moves towards establishing inter-racial justice and equality.

To do this, we work with international agencies and non-governmental organisations in Sri Lanka who are also addressing these problems at grass roots level. We continue to stimulate the attention of these international agencies to the development needs of Tamil areas and likewise to encourage local voluntary groups into activities which produce sustainable benefits to the community. This has not been an easy task to undertake against the background of violent upheavals in the area, particularly in the last fourteen years. Since 1983, therefore we have also been concerned with providing urgent relief assistance to thousands of displaced and dispossessed Tamils, particularly orphans and widows whose basic needs of food, clothing and shelter have had to be met. Sadly, this need is still there and growing.

SCOT is managed by a 29 member General Council annually elected from amongst its members. In the conduct of our affairs, we place great emphasis on transparency, and accountability opening our membership to any person who subscribes to our objectives. We have always provided members with audited accounts each year even though Charity Laws have only made this mandatory in recent years. Traditionally, the level of subscription has been left voluntary (with a minimum being £24/annum) to encourage the widest possible participation in our work.

SCOT is now actively seeking to involve the next generation of Tamils in its work. Details of how you can join are available from any member of the General Council whose names are listed below. This 20th Anniversary Newsletter is designed to provide an overview of our activities over the past two decades.

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President
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Secretary
Asst. Secretaries

Treasurer
Asst. Treasurer
Project Officer
Trustees

Past Presidents

Mr. T.V. Arumugam
Dr. N. Poobalasingham
Mr. K. Sanguhan
Miss K. Pathmaseni
Mrs. S. Arunachalam
Mr. M. Yogendran
Mr. N. Ariaratnam
Mr. A. Mahendra
Dr. S. Balakrishnan
Mr. A.J. Benedict
Dr. V. Satkunanayagam
Mr. N. Sidamparapillai
Dr. N. Sreeharan
Dr. K. Sivakumar
Mr. A. Sriharan

Members

Dr. S. Arunachalam
Dr. M. Chellepah
Mr. K. Gunaratnam
Dr. K. Jothilingham
Mr. N.S. Kandiah
Mr. C. Kathiresan
Dr. S. Navaratnam
Mr. P. Rajanayagam
Mr. P. Ratnajothe
Dr. T. Ratnavel
Mr. M. Rudran
Mr. T. Sangaralingham
Mrs. R. Sriharan
Mr. M. Thavendaraja
Dr. R. Thayaparan
Mr. S. R. Xavier

S.C.O.T. IN THE NINETIES & BEYOND

- A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF S.C.O.T.

Dear Friends,

in 1977 when the war in Sri Lanka on the scale we are currently witnessing was never envisaged, SCOT was formed with the primary objective of relieving poverty and working towards social upliftment of Tamil speaking people. In furtherance of the primary object SCOT aimed to assist in economic projects such as self-employment ventures, housing initiatives for the homeless, provision of relief to those who have suffered in situations of disaster, and the improvement of educational facilities for poor school children.

A further aim was to promote the recognition of human rights, inter-racial justice and equality; and within the UK its aims included promoting social and cultural awareness within the Tamil community and the promotion of inter-racial and inter-ethnic relations among the various communities living here.

Twenty years have gone by and its time to look back and reflect on how we have fared in meeting those aims. During this period we have disbursed over £1/4 million to good causes which have fallen within the scope of our aims. This is a considerable sum of money raised by a relatively small voluntary organisation and we are justifiably proud of our achievement. The range of projects supported fully reflect the aims of the founders: from funding a simple toilet for an orphanage to participating in housing projects; from chess sets for an Old Peoples Home to equipping hospices; from tea chests of clothes for orphans to University Scholarships; the list goes on.

Human rights issues have come within the purview of a separate Human Rights Council. This Council has been active in its role and over the years has among other activities, sent representatives to the sessions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva; has had discussions on human rights issues with the Sri Lankan High Commissioner on several occasions; held a meeting with the Sri Lankan Parliamentary Opposition leader (and former Prime Minister) and arranged for leading public figures to address SCOT meetings on various issues. SCOT being a 'broad church' our guest lecturers have covered the whole spectrum of political opinion!

Over the years SCOT has sponsored concerts and recitals in the UK by several world class artistes of the calibre of Mallika Sarabhai, Chitra Visveswaran, T.V. Sankaranarayanan and many others. This has served the dual purpose of raising funds for SCOT as well as giving an opportunity for the public to enjoy a cultural feast.

All activities of SCOT are open, transparent and fully accountable. Our meetings including those of our General Council, are open not just to members but to anyone who wishes to attend as observers. Our Annual Accounts have from the inception been audited by professional auditors even when it was not a requirement under the Charities Act. Office Bearers have been selected not by ballot but by consensus - the finest form of democratic conduct!

And what of the future? Peace must surely come to our troubled land, and when that great day comes the enormity of the needs for rehabilitation and reconstruction will dwarf the scale of relief efforts to date. This will pose major challenges to all concerned, including SCOT.

Meeting this challenge will stretch SCOT's resources and test its commitment as never before, and will require the dedicated efforts of all our members, particularly our second generation members on whom the mantle of continuing the work of SCOT will surely fall

T.V. Arumugan

SCOT - THE EARLY YEARS

Although SCOT was formally launched in 1977, to understand its ethos it is necessary to go even further back to 1974. On Thai Pongal Day of that year a group of Tamils set up the Pothikai Trust, to consider an expatriate response to the problems facing the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The inspiration for this move came from the late Dr. Arumugan, a lecturer at London's City University.

The ideas canvassed in the Pothikai Trust converged on a simple but constructive approach. It conceded that the eventual solution to the Tamil problem would be negotiated at the political level in which expatriate influence was bound to be minimal, but it recognised that any acceptable political framework could only be sustained through economic strength. It felt that over the years Tamils had come to rely too heavily on the employment and business opportunities outside their traditional homelands which made them vulnerable in a political structure which was weighted in favour of the Sinhala majority. To mitigate this disability and to support any future political structure it was necessary to mobilise the resources available *within* the community to a level which would restore the traditional homelands into

an economically viable entity.

It was against this background in 1977 that events in Sri Lanka set alarm bells ringing in the UK. Earlier in the year at the general elections the UNP returned to power with a landslide majority and the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) emerged as the leading party of opposition. In August, Sinhala mobs unleashed a spate of violence against Tamils living in traditional Sinhalese areas. Over a period of nearly two weeks several Tamil homes and businesses were destroyed resulting in an exodus which was unprecedented at the time. In response to these events in Sri Lanka, Pothikai Trust was persuaded to convene a public meeting which was held at the Merton Hall on Sunday 4 September 1977. Predictably, in a charged atmosphere it brought together several individuals and groups and the only link that bound them together at that time was the feeling of outraged at the predicament of the Tamils.

At this meeting it was decided that a permanent organisation should be set up to co-ordinate the expatriate response and the rather expansive title of 'Standing Committee of Tamil Speaking People' was

agreed. Although not realised at the time, it was an ambitious project to hold together the amorphous amalgam which the meeting generated.

Consequently, almost a whole year was spent in wrangling over objectives of the organisation. It was however a worthwhile exercise because of the opportunity it presented to settle on a focus for its work. Clearly, it was not feasible to pursue any organised activity with competing agendas. Matters came to ahead in November 1978 at the first Annual General Meeting. The election of office bearers turned into a lively contest. The issue at stake was whether SCOT could combine overt political activity with the overwhelming need for pushing ahead with its plans for relief assistance and rehabilitation programmes. The outcome of the elections reflected a clear mandate for concentrating SCOT's effort on the relief of 'poverty' - in the broadest sense of the word i.e. to act as a catalyst for changes in the Tamil community aimed at transforming its culture of dependence into the status of an economically viable entity. It is worth noting here that since then we have been spared the divisive annual ritual of contests for election of our office bearers. All matters

of importance, including selection of our office bearers has been decided by consensus.

With the question of core objectives resolved, SCOT consolidated its structure. Following changes to the constitution, it was registered as a charity in April 1979.

In the years between 1978 and 1983, SCOT set about its task - of influencing the direction and priorities of economic activity in the Tamil areas with great fervour. The need for trying out updated methods of cost effective agriculture was progressed through the TRRO in the settlements which they managed in the Kannaddy, Dollar, Kent and Nedunkerny farms; and with the Ghandiyam Society in the farms in the Vavuniya area to which displaced plantation workers had fled. Vocational training, particularly for the younger women was introduced through investment in knitting machines and typewriters in the Batticaloa and Trincomalee areas. A metal workshop was established at Gurukulam in Killinochchi to provide skills training and employment opportunities to young people in the areas. Feasibility studies to identify areas of economic activity which could benefit from funding inputs were commissioned from the Ootru organisation which was closely linked with the Jaffna University. These efforts might be regarded as modest, but as Carol Milford said "each hungry filled is pure gain; each family put on its feet is pure gain; each heretofore

unproductive acre producing food is pure gain - even if it went no further each act would be justified".

The central assumption of faith in the community's latent resources was vindicated by actual performance in the years that followed. Professor Paul Seabright, a Cambridge economist who visited Sri Lanka in the mid-eighties noted that in the period upto 1983, productivity in the Northeast of Sri Lanka, particularly in the key sectors of agriculture and fishing had reached an all-time high. He established that during this period 75% of the fish requirements of the whole country were sourced from the Tamil areas. Likewise, acreage and yield relating to minor food crops - onions, potatoes, chillies, ground nuts etc. recorded unprecedented growth.

But then came the pogrom of July 1983. Unlike previous attacks on Tamils and their property this was a premeditated, brutal and indeed primitive exercise to carve out territory on an ethnic basis. It strengthened the resolve for Tamil separation and triggered off the civil war which is still ongoing. Only future historians can assess whether this was the defining moment for the Tamils.

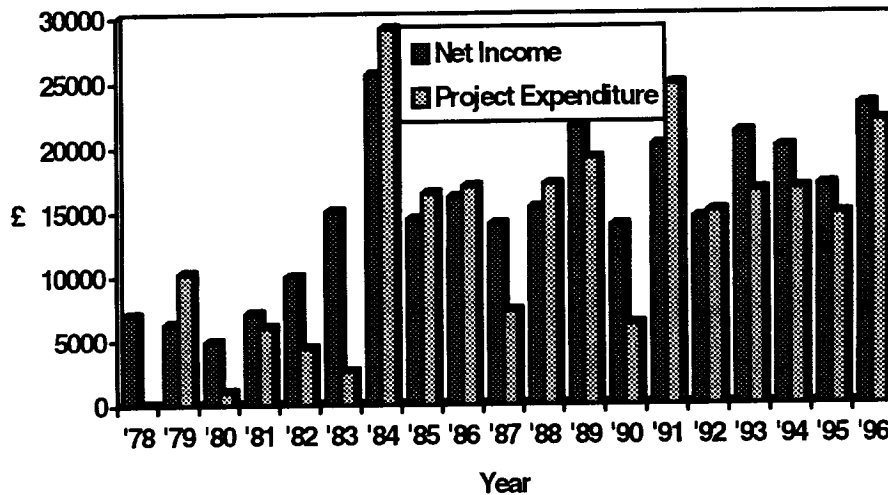
Despite this setback, which involved switching funds to support relief assistance, SCOT pursued its wider objectives notably funding research through the ITDG to develop the prototype of the cycle trailer as a cost effective method of rural transport, support for the

Long Institute in Killinochchi for a vocational training centre, and several medium term projects with Oxfam etc. However as more of our people continued to be displaced and dispossessed relief assistance remains a priority.

A note on the earlier years of SCOT would not be complete without an acknowledgement of the enormous contributions to it by colleagues who are not with us anymore. Foremost among these is our founder president Dr. Arumugan. It was largely his vision and incisive leadership that shaped SCOT in its early years and sustains it to this day. Dr. Sripathmanathan had even before SCOT was formed, stirred the conscience of the British public through his collaboration in a television documentary on the plight of the plantation workers in Sri Lanka. Dr. Charles Kanagasundaram's contribution was summed in an obituary in the British Medical Journal - "He did much for his own country (as Vicechairman of SCOT) for the economic betterment of the underprivileged Tamils in Sri Lanka".. Mr. R. Mahadeva, our general secretary in the early eighties brought to SCOT his abiding interest in appropriate technology and the practical know-how which proved invaluable in the formulation of rehabilitation strategy. These people have determined the character of SCOT today.

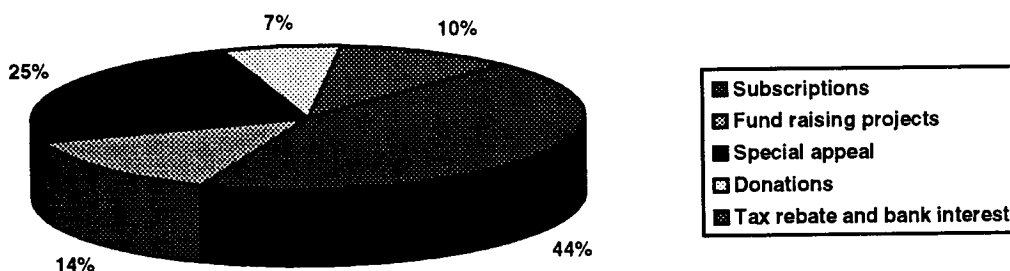
OUR PERFORMANCE OVER TWENTY YEARS.....

SCOT'S NET INCOME AND PROJECT EXPENDITURE:
1978-1996



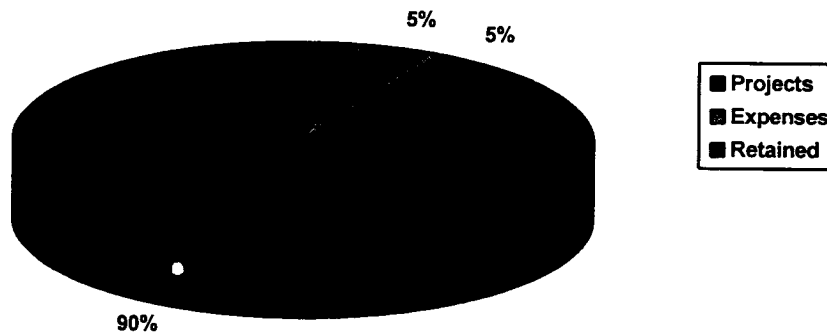
- Over twenty years SCOT has raised £286,976 for relief and rehabilitation work.
- SCOT has spent £246,327 on relief and rehabilitation projects in the past two decades - that's 86% of our income.
- The peaks in project expenditure and income were in 1984 and 1996. This reflects the emergency work carried out in the wake of the July 1983 pogrom and the November 1995 Jaffna exodus.

SCOT'S SOURCE OF FUNDS -
1995/96



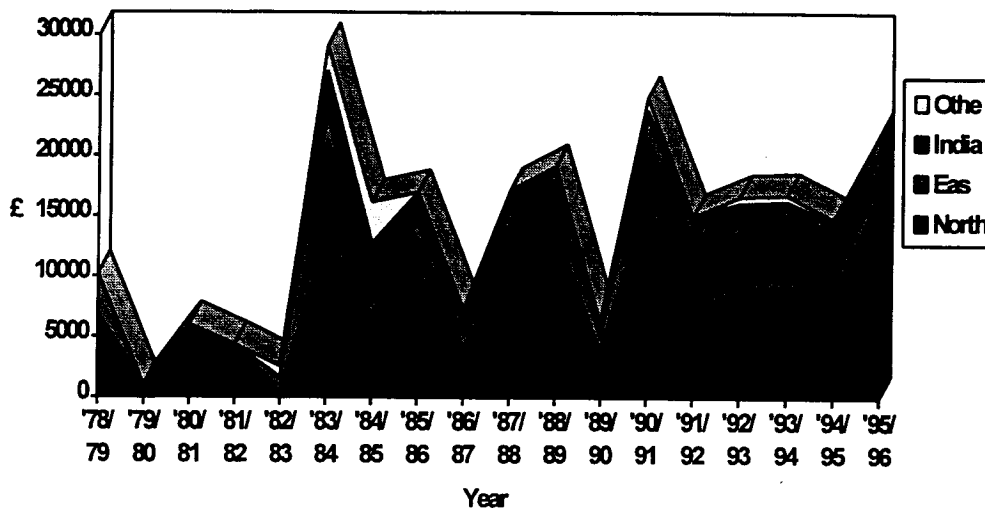
- A quarter of our 1995/96 funds came from our special appeal made following the November 1996 Jaffna exodus.
- Our Tax rebate income stems from Deeds of Covenant executed by many of our members to ensure that the tax component of their contribution accrues to SCOT.

SCOT'S USE OF FUNDS -
1995/96



- In 1995/96, only 5% of our funds were spent on administration - a pattern which has existed throughout the history of SCOT.
- SCOT has no paid officers and its members and office bearers work for SCOT entirely on a voluntary basis.

SCOT PROJECT EXPENDITURE BY REGION:
1978-1996



- Over the past twenty years, 60% of SCOT's project expenditure has gone to the north of Sri Lanka, 29% to the east, 7% to India and 4% to projects elsewhere.
- Expenditure in India has been to assist with Sri Lankan Tamil refugees who fled to South India.
- 'Other' expenditure includes helping with funding for projects with plantation workers in Sri Lanka's hill country and human rights campaigning work.

20 YEARS OF RELIEF AND REHABILITATION

During the last twenty years the application of funds towards SCOT's core objectives have largely been determined by the situation on the ground. During times of major upheavals in which there was displacement of people and destruction of property - funds naturally flowed into efforts of immediate relief to those affected. In relatively stable periods we have sought to engage international and local voluntary organisations in medium term rehabilitation projects.

Our work can be divided into a number of categories:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years - Agricultural Settlements. • Rapid Response in emergencies • Housing Projects • Orphanages and Support for Widows | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocational and Skills Training • Education - Scholarships and Schools • Health Services • Support for Refugees in Tamil Nadu |
|---|---|

• The Early Years - Agricultural Settlements

In the early years SCOT concentrated its efforts on strengthening the farming settlements in the Wannai area to which many of the displaced, particularly from the plantation areas fled. After the communal upheaval of 1977, SCOT:

- ◇ met the entire cost of settling 25 families on the Kannadi farm run by the TRRO (£2500).
- ◇ was associated in bringing under cultivation, 60 acres in the Kallaru farm, close to Cheddikulam also managed by the TRRO (£2000).

- ◇ set up an Agricultural Training centre in Palamoddais farm run by the Ghandiyam Society - £1000.
- ◇ assisted the Oddisuddan farms and the Dollar Farm in Nedunkerny which were managed by the Citizens Committees of Jaffna - with water pumps and contributed towards the purchase of a tractor (£2500).

• Rapid response in emergencies

SCOT has worked with a range of international agencies to provide relief in response to emergencies. Some of these agencies are:



Clothes distribution at Polikandy Kandekaranam Temple

Between December and March 1998 the Quakers mounted a massive relief programme and supported a number of local organisations engaged in various projects. SCOT made a contribution of £2000 which was utilised for the provision of essential food and medical supplies.

- ◇ **Oxfam** - Oxfam was one of the first international agencies to undertake relief assistance for victims of the 1983 pogrom. Through our contact with Jeff Alderson, then field director based in Bangalore, we were able to reach out to the victims. SCOT contributed £8000 towards Oxfam's own input of approximately £60,000 in 1983 alone. Jeff Alderson made an extensive tour of these affected areas and established links with local voluntary organisations. Jim Howard flew out to Sri Lanka to set up a project to ensure clean water supplies to refugee camps. Jeff was also able to see at first hand the arrival of refugees into Tamil Nadu and galvanise local support groups to deal with their problems. Our association with Oxfam has continued over the years. In 1991/92 we donated £2000 to supplement Oxfam's own relief assistance for Muslim refugees displaced from the Mannar District. Our grant helped to provide basic facilities for about 50,000 refugees housed in 60 camps in the Puttalam District. In 1993/94 we donated £1000 to Oxfam for a project to support three schools for children in the Clapenburg refugee camps in the Trincomalee area which housed over 1000 children.
- ◇ **Quakers** - In 1987/88 in collaboration with the Quakers consortium we provided emergency assistance to the displaced in the Vavuniya and Jaffna Districts.
- ◇ **British Red Cross** - In 1995/96 following the large scale evacuation from Jaffna there was a need for emergency relief assistance to thousands of displaced people. We channelled £2000 via the British Red Cross to provide emergency assistance in several refugee camps.
- ◇ **CAFOD (Catholic Association for Overseas Development)** - Following the recent mass exodus from the Jaffna area and the Governmental restrictions on funds going to these areas from abroad we sought the help of Organisations which were able to carry out relief work. We donated £2000 to CAFOD to provide emergency relief assistance.
- ◇ **Indian Prime Ministers Relief Fund 1984** - Following the large scale influx of refugees into India in 1983/84 the then Prime Minister of India, Smt. Indira Gandhi set up an emergency relief fund. SCOT donated a sum of £3342 towards this. Two of our past Presidents, the late Dr. Arumugam and Dr. Navaratnam met her and made representations on behalf of the Tamil Community.
- ◇ **Saturday Review Relief Fund** - In October 1985 there was a large scale movement of refugees into the Jaffna District from Mannar and Vavuniya and

from the Eastern Province. Official figures, no doubt an underestimate, revealed that there were nineteen thousand refugees housed in thirteen camps scattered in the Jaffna District. The Government Agent lamented "It has become necessary to seek the helping hand of non-governmental agencies to look after the welfare of displaced persons effectively". The Saturday Review set up an emergency fund and within two weeks of receiving their request SCOT responded by telegraphic transfer sending £3000. In its 21st December 1985 issue the Saturday Review acknowledged our donation as the highest contribution received to that date and published an article under the caption "SCOT's grand gesture" SCOT sent a further donation of £2000 to support the refugee relief work carried out by the Saturday Review.

- ◇ **Sarada Sevashram (Point Pedro)** - This Ashram is run by Swami Chidrupananda and serves the poor and needy in the Vadamarachi District. The centre was founded in 1969 and though based in Point Pedro under the leadership of the Swami has been able to carry out a number of relief and rehabilitation projects in a wide area. SCOT has had a long standing relationship with the Ashram and continues to collaborate closely with it. Over the last ten years SCOT has donated nearly £10000 via the Ashram for relief and rehabilitation work. In July 1992 the Swami was able to visit the UK and was a guest of honour at one of our fund raising events and also addressed the General Council. We are very grateful to Swamiji for making it possible for SCOT to contribute towards much needed relief work in the affected areas.
- ◇ **CRONE (Catholic Relief Organisation For North East)** - June 1990 saw a grave crisis in the North and East in which an estimated 900,000 people displaced in the first six weeks of the ethnic war, and 1,600 civilians died. It was also estimated that nearly 100,000 had braved the seas and fled to South India. The Jaffna peninsula and areas in the East were completely cut off. It was in this desperate situation that SCOT was able to establish links with CRONE through the good offices of the Human Development Centre in Colombo. CRONE, headed by Bishop Kingsley
- Swamipillai included Bishops of Mannar, Batticaloa and Trincomalee. In all, SCOT's contribution amounted to £12,000 which was utilised for food and medical supplies to the displaced people.
- ◇ **Trincomalee District** - Over the last ten years for emergency assistance alone SCOT has been able to provide nearly £10,000 for the Trincomalee District with the help of a number of non-governmental organisations. It is worthy of note that the total expenditure for the Eastern Province since the inception of SCOT amounts to nearly £72,000 pounds which is about 30% of our total project expenditure. We have been fortunate to have links with several organisations in the Trincomalee District, namely TDDA Trincomalee District Development Association, TDYMHA, Trincomalee District Young Men's Hindu Association and TDWA, Trincomalee District Welfare Association. We are particularly grateful to Mr. Sivapathasundaram for his tireless work and close collaboration with SCOT.
- ◇ **Durga Devi Devasthanam (Tellipallai)** - Miss Thangammah Appacuddi, the founder of the Devasthanam has been instrumental in providing large scale assistance to displaced people in the North. SCOT has been able to offer some assistance to the very valuable work that she has carried out. We provided £1,500 in 1990 as emergency assistance.
- ◇ **Ramakrishna Mission Batticaloa** - The year 1985 saw a major eruption of violence between the Tamil and Muslim communities in the Eastern Province especially around the Karaitivu area. Following a request from the Mission for emergency assistance SCOT responded immediately with a telegraphic transfer of £1000. In 1990 we provided £1000 which was followed by a further £1000 in 1991 for emergency assistance to displaced people in the Eastern Province. This is additional to assistance offered to other projects via the Mission which is detailed separately in this Newsletter.
- ◇ **Hindu Council Of Sri Lanka** - Following the recent crisis in the Jaffna District, we provided the Hindu Council grants totalling £4000 which were used to provide

emergency assistance to the displaced people in the North.

• Housing Projects

- ◇ **EHED Housing Project Trincomalee** - In 1983/84 EHED (Eastern Human Economic Development), a Roman Catholic voluntary organisation based in Trincomalee set up a project to settle 35 families who had been displaced both in 1977 and 1983 following the communal disturbances. In collaboration with an expatriate group in Botswana who contributed £3600 SCOT was able to fund the total cost of the project which amounted to £6414.



children in the Jesuit Refugee Service Orphanage

- ◇ **Iyakachai Housing Scheme** - SCOT contributed £7526 for this housing scheme set up by Refugee Rehabilitation Fund in Jaffna.
- ◇ **Trocaire (Catholic Agency For World Development)** - This organisation based in Dublin, Ireland, was interested in funding several development projects in Sri Lanka. Through one of our members we made contact with Trocaire and appraised them of the need for housing projects in addition to emergency aid to the fishing community in the North. Trocaire invested £18,000 to settle one hundred families in Arokainagar.
- ◇ **TRRO (Tamil Refugees Rehabilitation Organisation)** - TRRO based in Jaffna made an appeal for assistance to provide abode and relief assistance in the

Mullaitivu area in 1984/85. SCOT funded the entire cost of £5016 for this project.

- ◇ **Ramakrishna Mission Batticaloa** - In 1985 SCOT provided £2016 for housing projects in the Karativu area in the Eastern province and for an extension of the Boys Home in Batticaloa.
- ◇ **Jesuit Refugee Service (Batticaloa)** - In

1992 SCOT provided £1000 for a housing project for displaced sanitary workers in Navatkudah.

- ◇ **Hindu Samaya Abhivritti Sabha (Trincomalee)** - This organisation headed by Swami Tamtradeva is involved in supporting several projects in the Eastern province. SCOT was able to provide £2000 for various projects. This included reconstruction of damaged houses in the Linga Nagar area in Trincomalee.

• Orphanages & Support For Widows

- ◇ **Sri Shanmuga Trust (Trincomalee)** - This is an organisation with which we have collaborated closely over several

years. It has a record of successfully running a number of orphanages in the Trincomalee area. Between 1983 and 1990 SCOT has donated nearly £4000 to various projects relating to the homes run by the Trust. In 1994 we sent a further sum of £500 towards maintenance costs of a Boys Home.

- ◇ **Vipulananda Children's Home (Akkaraipattu)** - This is an institution in the Eastern province which has provided succour to a number of orphans. Our initial donation was used to set up a small dairy in the home in order to ensure longer term help. We sent a further donation in 1995 of £1000 for this orphanage.
- ◇ **Poorani Women's Centre (Uduvil)** - Although the main centre is based in Uduvil, it has a network of 23 other women's centres throughout the North. These units were formed and run by women who had survived the very volatile conditions in the area. SCOT donated £1000 in 1990/91.
- ◇ **Durgavevi Thevasthanam (Tellipallai)** - This institute headed by Miss Thangammah Appuccuddy developed from modest origins in 1982 with a home for 9 destitute girls to an institute which was able to provide accommodation for over 100 girls and had its self contained library, sewing centre, study hall etc. SCOT has supported this institute on many occasions and our contributions total more £4750. The indiscriminate bombing by the military has caused damage even to this home for young children. SCOT remains grateful to Miss Appuccuddy for her willingness to work closely with us.
- ◇ **Managayarkarasi Mahalir Illam (Batticaloa)** - This organisation has been running a women's institute in the Eastern province and SCOT was able to provide in 1993/94 a sum of £1000 which was followed by a further donation of £1000 in 1995/96.
- ◇ **Dryzone Development Association** - In 1994/95 SCOT provided £2000 to this approved charity. It was estimated that there were nearly four thousand widows as a result of the ethnic conflict in the East. The project was designed by the DDA to help these women, many with children,

into traditional self employment such as rice pounding, and basket work.

- ◇ **Support To Other Homes:** **Gnasanbandar Illam (Urumpirai), Anbu Illam (Trincomalee), Maheswara Illam (Manipay), Manickavasagar Boys Home (Santhively), Assisi Boys Home (Batticaloa), Longs Institute (Kilinochchi)** - These are some of the other beneficiaries from SCOT funds totalling £7000.

• Vocational & Skills Training

- ◇ **Knitting Machines** - This was one of our early projects in 1979 actioned through the TRRO. SCOT provided £2500 for the purchase of 20 knitting machines and ancillary equipment. Though originally sent to Batticaloa these had to be moved later to Jaffna.
- ◇ **Metal Workshop (Gurukulam Kilinochchi)** - This project was founded by SCOT in 1980/81 followed by further support in 1982/83 totalling in all £7000 for the setting up of a vocational training institute in welding and metal work. This institute was later named after the late Mr R Mahadeva who was General Secretary of SCOT in 1983.
- ◇ **Peoples Welfare Organisation (Kopay)** - In 1988 we supported the PWO to set up a training centre. We donated £2200 for the purchase of typewriters and sewing machines for the job training centre.
- ◇ **Vadamarachy Steno Club (Jaffna)** - In 1989 a sum of £1000 was sent to support training of underprivileged youth in typing skills. The project was under the aegis of the Assistant Government Agent of that area.
- ◇ **Longs Institute (Killinochchi)** - In 1992 and later in 1994 we supported the institute with a donation of £2300 for the setting up of a tailoring school.

◇ **Nava Uthayam (Jaffna) Training In Bicycle Maintenance** - With the severe curtailment of fuel supplies bicycles became the main source of transport in the Peninsula. Nava Uthayam a development organisation in the North set up a training course for 30 young men over periods of two to three months. In addition they provided a comprehensive tool kit to enable those trained to set up their own workshop. SCOT donated a sum of £1000 towards this project.

◇ **Cycle Trailers Project With ITDG** - SCOT funded research by the ITDG (Intermediate Technology Development Group) to design the prototype of a vehicle appropriate for rural transport. SCOT donated a sum of £1050 in 1988/89 and three cycle trailers were despatched by ITDG.

• Education - Scholarships & Schools

◇ **Plantation Workers Education Trust** - In 1986 SCOT donated a sum of £2500 to the Plantation Workers Education Trust.

◇ **Jaffna Public Library** - SCOT launched a special appeal for the restoration of the Public Library in Jaffna and in 1986 donated a sum of £2000 towards this.

◇ **Father Bastion, Education Trust** - Father Bastion a parish priest in Vankalai died under tragic circumstances in 1985. The scheme had been launched to assist poor and needy children with their school requirements. SCOT was able to donate a sum of £1000 in 1988 towards this project via the St. Xavier Seminary.

◇ **Dr. Arumugam Memorial Scholarship** - SCOT up this scholarship fund in 1989/90 for needy students attending the University of Jaffna and donated a sum of £3000. The scholarship is still continuing and is administered by the Vice Chancellor's office. The scholarship was set up in memory of our founder President Dr. K. Arumugam.

◇ **Eastern University Scholarships - Dr. R. Sri Pathmanathan Memorial** - On lines similar to the one in Jaffna, SCOT set up a scholarship fund in the Eastern University in memory of one of our former Vice Presidents the late Dr. Sri Pathmanathan. SCOT donated a sum of £2000 towards this scholarship.

◇ **Further scholarships** for needy students are currently being set up with these Universities.

• Health Services

◇ **Cardiac Resuscitation Equipment For Jaffna Hospital** - In 1981/82 SCOT donated £2900 towards this project to provide equipment for the cardiac unit in the Jaffna General Hospital, serving a very large area and developing into a major teaching hospital. This project was further enhanced by donations from well-wishers in the USA and Canada.

◇ **Further Support To Jaffna Hospital** - In 1987/98 SCOT donated £5500 to the Jaffna Hospital for the purchase of electronic suction apparatus and nebuliser units. There was a further donation of £1200 in 1992/93 for the purchase of emergency drugs. The North England Tamils Society donated £600 to this project and this was supplemented by SCOT. We gratefully acknowledge the contribution made by NETS towards this project. In 1994/95 SCOT was able to supply an oxygen concentrator to the Jaffna General Hospital. Oxygen concentrators were considered a very useful addition to hospitals in developing countries in view of the paucity of regular supplies. NETS made a donation of £500 towards this project. We are also grateful to an anonymous donor who contributed £1000 towards this project. Over the last twenty years SCOT has donated over £12,000 for various projects to the Jaffna General Hospital. We gratefully acknowledge the collaborative work by Dr. S. Sivakumaran, Consultant Physician.

◇ **Primary Health Care** - In collaboration with OXFAM SCOT has funded two important projects in this area. In 1989 SCOT donated £2250 towards a Primary

Health Care Unit organised by Oxfam this was followed in 1990 with a further donation of £2000 towards training and equipping rural health assistants. This project was carried out in the Kilinochchi Area.

- ◇ **Cancer Hospital Tellipallai** - SCOT donated a sum of £3750 between 1986 and 1989. The funds were used to support the Cancer Hospice in Tellipallai. We also contributed towards the building of a shrine room which has been dedicated to SCOT. We gratefully acknowledge the work done in relation to this project by the late Mr. Krishnarajah Consultant Surgeon, Jaffna Hospital, and Dr. Jeganathan.
- ◇ **Jaipur Foot Programme** - Through the help of the Friend in Need Society, Colombo, and financial assistance from NORAD, the Mothers Front set up a workshop to make and fit artificial limbs in Jaffna in July 1987. Between 1988 and 1995, SCOT had donated over £2500 towards this programme.

• Support for Refugees In Tamil Nadu

- ◇ **OFFER (The Organisation For Elam Refugee Rehabilitation)** - This organisation was set up in 1984 to assist Sri Lankan Tamil refugees who fled to Tamil Nadu. Under their stewardship of Mr S.C. Chandrahasan OFFER is carrying out extremely valuable work in Tamil Nadu. Between 1984 and 1993 SCOT has contributed nearly £4000 to OFFER. Apart from financial assistance when members visit India they see first hand the excellent work carried out by OFFER and provide whatever support they can.
- ◇ **Medical Unit For The Service Of Tamils** - This was again one of the first Organisations to provide help to displaced Tamils in India. During the setting up of this Organisation, SCOT provided £1000 towards costs.



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CAMPAIGNING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Prior to the outbreak of the island-wide anti-Tamil violence in July 1983, SCOT has been concentrating on work relating to relief and rehabilitation, and generally raising awareness of the plight of the people in the North East of the island. The violent events of July 1983 and the escalation of the conflict in the succeeding years produced a new situation in which literally tens of thousands of people were displaced. Many more fled the country seeking refuge in foreign lands.

Gross violations of human rights became a common feature as the armed conflict intensified and the Government appeared to be seeking a military solution. Atrocities and excesses committed by the security forces became a routine phenomenon. People in the North East, particularly the young, were taken into custody in their thousands to be detained in specially created detention camps in the south. SCOT realised the need to deal with the issue of human rights abuses committed against the people of the North East. It became imperative that the international community concerned with human rights, were alerted to the situation in Sri Lanka.

At a special General Meeting of SCOT on 20 May 1984, a resolution was adopted which committed SCOT "to campaign against violations of human rights and the Prevention Of Terrorism Act". SCOT formed a Human Rights Council as a sub-committee of the General Council.

In the mid-1980's, there were very few Tamils abroad who were working on issues of human rights violations, and even fewer international organisations, and governments aware of human rights abuses in Sri Lanka. SCOT while continuing its relief and rehabilitation work, also began publicising human rights abuses. It established direct contacts with independent grass roots organisations like citizen's committees and other voluntary bodies then operating in North East Sri Lanka to obtain details of hundreds of incidents of atrocities committed by the security forces including torture, arbitrary detentions, and extra-

judicial killings. The information documented by the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka (CRM) and the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice & Equality (MIRJE) located in Colombo proved invaluable to SCOT.

After 1984, one of SCOT's past presidents undertook to attend various events across Europe to broaden the understanding of the situation. Liaising with organisations like Amnesty International, International Commission of Jurists and International Alert, and contributing to their own publications became part of SCOT's work during these years. He also attended the session of the United Nation's Commission on Human Rights in Geneva twice each year.

Two publications ("Sri Lanka: Arrest, Detention & Torture" and "Sri Lanka: Extra-Judicial & Arbitrary Killings") by P. Rajanayagam and produced by SCOT and the Tamil Information Centre stand testimony to SCOT's human rights work, and the inspiration given by the late Mr. K. Kandasamy, the founder of the Tamil Information Centre. It is perhaps not just coincidental that the first condemnatory resolution against Sri Lanka by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was adopted during its session in February 1987 when these publications were distributed among delegates.

Believing that human rights are universal and indivisible, SCOT did not flinch from condemning the human rights abuses within the Tamil community, which included assassinations of politicians, academics and human rights workers. As human rights abuses are likely to continue so long as the armed conflict persists, in recent years SCOT has sought to establish contacts with the Government and the LTTE to promote resumption of negotiations to end the war. SCOT is convinced that promoting human rights is inextricably linked to effective relief and rehabilitation and also to the just settlement the ethnic conflict on the island.

SCOT'S SUPPORT FOR TAMIL CULTURE IN THE UK

Promoting cultural activities has been one of the objectives of SCOT from its inception. When we look back over the last twenty years of cultural support from SCOT, two things stand out. Firstly how SCOT has made it possible for the expatriate community and their children to witness performances of high quality from internationally renowned artists. Secondly, SCOT has played host to countless events featuring eminent

T.V. SANKARANARAYANAN
BREATHTAKING VOCALIST



artists and teachers from within the UK expatriate community. They in turn encouraged their students to take leading roles in the performances.

SCOT's contribution has not been solely through cultural events organised for fund raising. Most of our bi-annual lunches designed to draw together members and well-wishers socially, have also featured performances from budding artists from the younger generation, often as a prelude to their first major public performance, their arangetram, or as a post-arangetram event, a samparpanam for a good cause.

SCOT has been able to host performances covering the full range of Tamil arts. We have had:

- Bharatha Natyam solo performances by world renowned artists such as *Swranamuki*, *Shobana Jeyasingh*, and *Kamala Laxman*, and *Chitra Visweswaran*.
- Dance Dramas from for example *Lakshmi Arts Centre*, *MADRAS (Lakshmi Ganeshan)* featuring many young children and solo performances by senior students.
- Vocal recitals by esteemed artists like *Seerkali Govindarajan*. *O.S. Thiagarajan* and *T.V. Sankaranarayanan*.
- Instrumental recitals have also taken place, these include Veena (*S. Balachander*), Violin, Flute, and even Nadahaswaran.

SCOT'S GUESTS & VISITORS'

SCOT has had the privilege of hosting a number of distinguished guests at lunches, and other meetings for its Members.

Just some of the names of these visitors are:

- ◆ Mr. N. Manicka Iddaikadar - former Permanent Secretary
 - ◆ Professor S. Arasatnam - University of New England, Australia
 - ◆ Professor C.J. Eliezer -
 - ◆ Mr. Kumar Rupasinghe - International Alert
- ◆ Dr. Pakiasothy Saravanamuttu - University of Sussex
 - ◆ Mr. Sivasithamparam - Leader TULF
 - ◆ Mr. Vasudeva Nannayakkaram - Member of Parliament
 - ◆ Mr. Jeff Alderson - OXFAM
- ◆ Professor Paul Seabright - Churchill College, University of Cambridge
 - ◆ Mr. M. Ramamuthy - Quakers International
 - ◆ Ms. Mary McCollum, CAFOD

"The greatest poverty of all is the poverty of self help. the Tamil people must be made to 'look within' and generate most of their activities by their own endeavour. to all exiles out of Sri Lanka who are prepared to walk this road however hard it may be to help the many that we left behind, our message is that our resolve and commitment must be more determined than ever, so that these poor helpless people do not become exiles in the land of their birth".

- Dr. Arumugan, founder President of SCOT, Newsletter November 1979

OUR PARTNERS ...THEIR THANKS

On the occasion of our 20th anniversary, it is perhaps understandable that SCOT would sing its own praises. However, it is even more gratifying when our partners - the organisations and individuals working with Tamil communities in need - give us their appreciation for the funds we have contributed and the good work to which the money is put. Here are just a few examples of the letters of support which we receive.

"Congratulations to SCOT on the occasion of their 20th Anniversary. Thank you for your support in our various ventures such as at Linga Nagar, Kaluthavalai Orphanage, Santkiveli Orphanage, Pachanoor and Valaichenai Refugees Vocational Training, Tamilavil Tirunavukaras Orphanage etc. Wish you all the best in the future."

**Swami Tantradeva, President,
Hindu Samaya Abhivrihi Sacha,
Trincomalee (March 1997)**

"We are pleased to inform you that the [Mason Training at Pachchanoor Refugee Camp] will be inaugurated tomorrow at Mathur. May I request you to be so good as to convey our gratitude to SCOT who had been kind enough to fund this project through you. I am sure that this Training Programme will be of immense value to the refugees who could seek self employment, on completion of training."

**S. Sivapathasundaram, Honorary
General Secretary, Trincomalee
District Young Men's Hindu
Association (Feb. 1997)**

"We are pleased with the contacts made by Oxfam with SCOT over the recent terrible events in Sri Lanka ... May I thank your Committee for the very substantial Contribution of £6000 for relief work in Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa."

**Brian Walker, Director General,
Oxfam (August 1983)**

"Thank you very much for your cheque for £2,000. We are most grateful for this help towards the cost of medical supplies which will help us in our work in the Vavuniya and Jaffna areas."

**Claude Julien-Waring, Quaker
Peace & Service (March 1988)**

"It is very heartening to read that the expatriate population is thinking and planning for the day when this country will once again have a normal way of life. I wish more people would approach to problem with the same maturity and foresight."

**Arjuna Hulugalle - , well well-
wisher from Colombo (June
1986)**

SCOT -a future with young people....

So what of the future? The changing political and human rights situation continue to require a response from expatriate members of the Tamil community. But that Tamil community here in the UK is itself changing.

Young Tamils' friends and partners are likely to include far fewer Tamils than those of their parents, and their sentimental attachment to an island in the Indian Ocean is much more limited than that of the first generation.

Britain's young Tamil community is largely British born and educated, and their futures are within Britain's increasingly multi-racial community.

But there remains a latent interest in issues, culture and identity that stems from being Tamil and originating from Sri Lanka. There exists a resource of skills and energy that can be tapped - and more bluntly a source of funds that can be attracted for relief and rehabilitation projects in the Tamil homelands.

The question is how best to seize on this 'community within a community'. In SCOT we have experimented with this issue and over recent years sought to interest second generation Tamils in the work which we are doing. Two successful events served to attract an interested and interesting crowd and raise funds for SCOT funded projects.

'Soul On Sunday' was a lunchtime event held at an international restaurant in Central London with the accompaniment of Andrew Wood Mitchell - a rising soul music singer.

'Sariana Funky' was evening 'gig' at which Ray Gaskins a US jazz saxophonist and performer played with his complete band at a wine bar in Central London. The crowd was mixed groups of twenty and thirtysomething Sri Lankan Tamils and their friends, the events 'broke the mould' of dinner dances in Council Town Halls, and mixed music with a message about SCOT and our work.

THE TRICK IS OF COURSE TO CAPITALISE ON THIS INTEREST AND THESE SUCCESSES. THAT'S NOT AS SIMPLE AS IT MAY SEEM. YOUNGER TAMILS INVOLVED IN ORGANISING TEND TO BE AT THE PEAK OF THEIR CAREER ADVANCEMENT, HAVE GROWING FAMILY COMMITMENTS AND HAVE A SOCIAL CIRCLE WELL BEYOND THAT OF THE SRI LANKAN TAMIL COMMUNITY. BUT IF THERE IS A COMMITMENT TO CONTINUING SCOT'S WORK WELL INTO THE NEXT CENTURY - AND THIS DOCUMENT REFLECTS THAT THERE IS - SCOT WILL CONTINUE AND WILL CHANGE TO BE MORE RELEVANT, SENSITIVE AND RESPONSIVE TO ITS NEW EXISTING AND POTENTIAL UK MEMBERS.

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