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ALSO THE FORMER SECRETARY OF "EELAM LIBERATION FRONT".)

LADIES ,GENTLEMEN AND FRIENDS,

IT GIVES ME A RESOUNDING CONFIDENCE AND RESTORING FAITH TO SEE YOU ALL HERE TODAY AT THIS ASSEMBLY. MY INNERMOST BELIEF AND HOPE FOR A UNIFIED APPROACH BY US IS BEING REHABILITATED TODAY. I MEAN THE COLLECTIVE AND CO-ORDINATED ACTION BY TAMIL STUDENTS PRIMARILY AND PEOPLE AT LARGE.

IT IS NOT MY INTENSION TO GIVE YOU A NOTE ON MY BACKGROUND OR ABOUT MY PARENTS. BUT GENTLEMEN, I WILL FAIL IN MY DUTY IF I AVOID MENTIONING SOME OF THEM.

SURELY, MANY OF MY FRIENDS AND COMRADES WILL BE AWARE OF THOSE DAYS WHEN WE WERE BACK IN CEYLON AS STUDENTS AT JAFFNA HINDU COLLEGE, THIS WAS IN 1969. I AM A SERIOUS STUDENT IN WATCHING THE ACTIVITIES OF OUR FELLOW STUDENTS SINCE THEN.

AS THE SPEAKER WHO SPOKE BEFORE ME MENTIONED, IT WAS THE RESTRICTED OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE FOR US FOR FURTHER EDUCATION IN CEYLON THAT BROUGHT US HERE. I DO NOT WANT TO DUEL ON THOSE DETAILS AS THE PREVIOUS SPEAKER HAS ENUMERATED THEM.

BUT FRIENDS, IT IS DIFFICULT FOR SOME OF US TO FORGET THE FUNDAMENTAL CAUSE, WHICH IS NOTHING BUT POLITICAL THAT FORCED US TO COME IN SERCH OF MERE "O" LEVELS AND "A" LEVELS.

NOW YOU CAN APPRECIATE AS TO HOW THE STUDENTS WHO SHOULD BE PRIMARILY CONCERNED OF THEIR EDUCATION WERE FORCED TO THINK ABOUT THE POLITICAL DEPRIVATION THAT CASTIGATED ON THEM.

I AM SURE YOU WILL ALL IMAGINE AS TO HOW WE TAMILS STUDENTS WERE FORCED TO BE POLITICALLY CONCIIOUS AS WELL.

IT WAS IN THE WAKE OF OUR ARRIVAL HERE FOR HIGHER STUDIES, SOME OF OUR FELLOW STUDENTS WHO STAYED BACK HOME WERE TORTURED FOR POLITICAL PARTICIPATION.

IT IS NATURAL FOR US TO, NOT ONLY GET CONCERNED ABOUT THIS BUT TO GET ORGANISED OURSELVES TO GIVE THE MORAL SUPPORT TO THOSE INCAPACITATED IN SRI LANKA.

THIS IS IN EARLY 70'S AND MOST OF US WERE YOUNG, WE HARDLY REALISED OUR ROLE AS STUDENTS. BUT BECAUSE OUR CONCIIOUS FEELING FOR OUR FELLOW BROTHERS, WE WANTED TO ORGANISE SOMETHING.

I AM SURE NOT A SINGLE MEMBER OF THIS ASSEMBLY WILL DARE TO QUESTION ME IF I SAY THAT, THERE WAS NOT A SINGLE ORGANISATION THAT WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE TAMILS.

OFCOURSE FRIENDS, THERE WERE SOME "GOING CONCERNS" CONDUCTING AND PROMOTING MATRIMONIAL WELFARE AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES.

I WILL FAIL IN MY DUTY, IF I DO NOT ADMIT THE FACT, THAT THERE WERE IMPORTANT INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE REALLY CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEMS OF THE TAMILS.

TO WHOM WE OFTEN TURNED TO ADVISE NOW AND THEN.

BUT THERE WERE FEW OTHERS WHO FORMED THE FIRST ACTION COMMITTEE BACK IN LATE 50'S SOON AFTER THE 1958 RIOTS. BUT WHEN THE RIOTS WERE OVER AND THE SITUATION NORMALISED IN CEYLON, THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SO CALLED ACTION GROUP TOO PARALISED.

Cont.....

I AM SURE IT IS NOT NECESSARY FOR ME TO EXPLAIN AND ENLIGHTEN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SIMPLE WELFARE FUNCTIONS AND THE ROLE OF STUDENTS FOR THEIR OWN RIGHTS. YOU ARE ALL AWARE OF THE MOUNTING SCHOOL FEES, EVERY YEAR. IT IS A STUDENT BODY WHICH CAN AIR THIS VIEW ON BEHALF OF THE STUDENTS. AND SINCE IS THE PROBLEM OF THE STUDENTS, IT IS NO LONGER LIMITED TO THE TAMILS.

IT IS PART OF THE STRUGGLE OF GENERAL STUDENTS NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE; THEY MAY BE ARABS, AFRICANS, PAKISTANIS, OR ENGLISH.

IT IS A JOINT STRUGGLE AND WE MUST HAVE SOLIDARITY. IT IS BECAUSE OF THIS SOLIDARITY THAT WE HAVE ESTABLISHED, WE HAD SPEAKERS FROM OTHER NATIONALITIES AS WELL.

THAT IS WHY WE NEED THIS CONGRESS AND A STUDENT BODY.

IF SOME VESTED INTEREST THAT OPERATE "GOING CONCERNS" OBJECT TO THIS, IT IS I BELIEF BECAUSE THE INCAPACITY TO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE. I AM SURE THIS CONGRESS WILL ENABLE THEM TO UNDERSTAND OUR POINT OF VIEW.

WE ARE STUDENTS AND OUR ROLE "WHETHER IN THE COMMUNITY LIFE; OR POLITICAL LIFE OF OUR COMMUNITY" IT WILL BE A SUPPORTING ROLE AS STUDENTS.

BUT AS THE PRESIDENT OF THIS SESSION QUOTED JOHN. F. KENNEDY IN HIS ADDRESS "TODAYS STUDENTS ARE TOMORROWS LEADERS".

WE ARE DETERMINED TO CREATE LEADERS, BUT NOT THE LEADERSHIP.

IN THAT CONTEXT THIS CONGRESS, YOU WILL AGREE WITH ME HAVE HELPED ENORMOUSLY TO UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE PROBLEMS OF THE TAMILS IN THE CORRECT PERSPECTIVE.

FINALLY, I WOULD SPELL OUT MY VIEW NOT ONLY AS A STUDENT, BUT AS A TAMILIAN TO THE PROBLEMS AFFECTING OUR PEOPLE BACK HOME.

THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE SEMINAR YESTERDAY ON "SOCIO-POLITICAL EMANCIPATION OF TAMILS IN SRI LANKA" WILL NO DOUBT HAVE COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT "EELAM IS THE ANSWER TO THEIR PROBLEMS".

SO IT IS NOTHING BUT PROPER FOR US NOT ONLY IDENTIFYING OURSELVES WITH THAT CAUSE, BUT IT HAS BECOME NECESSARY TO PROMOTE AND PROJECT THE EELAM CHARACTER IN THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE.

BECAUSE AS HIGHLIGHTED IN THE SEMINAR THE PEOPLE OF EELAM- THE EELAVAR COM- PRAISE OF NOT ONLY WORKERS FROM UPCOUNTRY, PEASANTS FROM THE NORTH AND EAST, BUT COM- PRAISES OF IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS SECTS; CHRISTIANS, MUSLIMS, AND HINDUS, WHO ALL SPEAK TAMIL AND LIVE IN TAMILIAN WAY.

IN ORDER TO AVOID SECTARIANISING AND FACTIONALISING BASED ON BOTH SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS GROUPS INTERNALLY, LET US BUILD THE TOTALITY OF ONE NATION OF PEOPLE AS EELAVAR AND EELAM.

IT IS IN THIS CONTEXT I PROPOSE AND CALL UPON THE ORGANISERS OF THIS CON- GRESS AND THE STUDENTS TO RESOLVE THE NAME OF OUR STUDENT BODY AS "GENERAL UNION OF EELAM STUDENTS" IN U.K, EUROPE, U.S.A, AND CANADA.

THANK YOU.
