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'MACABRE RITUAL' BEFORE BUDDHA STATUE

EYE WITNESS ACCOUNT OF PRISON MASSACRE

After the killings of the Tamil political detainees in the maximum security prison in Colombo on July 25, the blood soaked bodies were piled up in front of a statue of the Buddha in the jail court yard and, in a macabre ritual, the assailants offered the blood of the Tamil victims and the gouged eyes of Kuttimani and Jegan, two leaders of a Tamil Liberation Group, to the statue of Buddha, said K.Devanandan, one of the escapees from the Batticaloa Prison.

Mr.Devanandan, who along with others had made way to freedom, was speaking to some news reporters from an unknown location in South India when he gave an eye witness account of the details of the prison massacre of Tamil political detainees on July 25 and 27 in which 52 Tamils were brutally murdered within their prison cells.

He said that he was one of those who survived the prison massacre and flown to the Batticaloa prison during the height of the July anti-Tamil violence.

According to Devanandan, when his comrades broke open the Batticaloa jail on September 23 and freed the Tamil political detainees, Dr.S.A.Tharmalingam and Mr. Kovai Mahesan of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Front decided not to join the rest as they were too ill to undertake the long arduous journey to freedom. Mrs.Nirmala Nithianandan could not be rescued in the confusion created by the escape of non-political prisoners in the jail, though her husband, University lecturer Nithianandan made it to safety. Rev.Fr.Singarayer opted to stay back to attend on the sick in the jail. Giving the first eye-witness account of the Welikade massacres of July 25 and 27, Mr.Devanandan said that but for the intervention of a Muslim army commander, none of the Tamil political prisoners would have survived. The July 25 massacre was conducted at 2.30 p.m. When Colombo was under total curfew. Air force helicopters hovered over the jail when the killings took place inside, under the supervision of the deputy jail superintendent, aided and abetted by the army and security

guards. The July 27 killings were led by Sepala Ekanaike, undergoing life imprisonment for hijacking an Alitalia plane on its flight from Delhi to Bangkok in July last year. Sinhalese prisoners convicted on murder, rape and burglary charges were handpicked by the warders for the attack, after plying them with liquor, Mr.Devanandan said. They came out from their cells shouting "Kottiya Maranda Ona" (kill the tigers).

Another escaped detainee, Mr.S.Yogaraja, hardly 20, said the mob who went on the killing spree, hit him on the head with an iron rod. He fell unconscious. The marauders took him to be dead and moved on. He not only survived to be transferred to

the Batticaloa jail, but was among the escapees to reach the Tamil Nadu coast. He showed deep scars on his head. Ganapattipillai, one of the teenage prisoners in Welikade, was hidden by other prisoners in a cell. But a jailor dragged him out and chopped off his head, Mr.Yogaraja said sobbing.

After the killings ceased inside Welikade prison, the blood-soaked bodies were piled up in front of a statue of the Buddha in the jail court yard and, in a macabre ritual, the marauders offered the blood of the Tamil victims and the gouged eyes of the liberation tiger leaders Kuttimani and Jagan to the statue of the Prince of Ahimsa.

FARM MANAGER BURNT TO DEATH

MP FLEES TO INDIA

A Tamil Member of Parliament, Mr. T.Sivasithamparam, has fled to India fearing death at the hands of the Sri Lankan army. His farm manager was earlier beaten to death and burnt within the farm itself.

Mr. Sivasithamparam, who has represented the Vavuniya constituency for 23 years in Parliament fled to India in a fishing boat and reached Tamil Nadu coast on 5th October. He said that on 30th September the army attacked the Madukulam Farm which belonged to him. They beat up the employees in his presence, drove them away and took the Farm Manager, Mr.Nadarajah, beat him to death, brought the body to the farm and burnt it. The M.P. regretted that the Army did not permit even the dead man's wife to see the body before burning it.

On the same day a youth by the name of Mohan was taken to the Air Force Camp where he was beaten to death and later his body was burnt by Military personnel.

Mr.T.Sivasithamparam, who is a leading figure in the Tamil United Liberation Front said, "Nowhere in the civilised world have the authorities attacked a member of Parliament like this."

Though the army raided the MP's farm under the pretext of looking for "terrorists", none was found on his farm, said the MP.

The civilian administration in the Vavuniya District has been replaced by the armed forces. Rear Admiral Asoka de Silva, who was named chief Co-ordinating Officer following the July-August violence, was engaged in breaking up Tamil villages and settlements in Vavuniya and replacing them with Sinhalese brought from outside, the MP added. The authorities had decided to put him behind bars or dispose of him by killing him because he stood in the way of the dismantling of the Tamil settlements by the Military, the MP declared.

Following the anti-Tamil violence in August 1977 and again in August 1981, thousands of Tamil plantation workers fled the tea estates in the central highlands and they were rehabilitated at great expense in the Vavuniya district by voluntary organisations with the help of foreign relief and charitable agencies. Jungles which were previously uninhabitable were cleared at enormous cost and sacrifice. Today, the Tamil settlers who made this possible are being forcibly and violently driven out and replaced with Sinhalese. The Tamil settlers are being loaded into vehicles like cattle and taken away to unknown destinations. Whether they reach their destinations or are being "disposed of" on the way is a genuine fear entertained by those concerned.

TAMIL TIMES

THE ANTI-TAMIL WAR CONTINUES

The anti-Tamil "war" continues unabated. Even before the wounds inflicted upon the Tamil people in July-August this year have healed, the Sri Lankan security forces have gone on a rampage in the Batticaloa District following the jail break from the maximum security prison there. People have been killed and properties burnt. Under the pretext of a house to house search for the escaped 'prisoners', the Tamil people of Batticaloa are being subjected to violence, intimidation and humiliation by the security forces.

The Red Cross reported, as late as October 6, that 45,000 Tamil refugees are still languishing in makeshift camps. This number does not include those Tamils who had already been transported to the northern and eastern parts of the country where they are living with relatives or friends in over-crowded homes.

While the government and its foreign missions are spending millions of rupees in a vain attempt to tell the "TRUTH" to the world with "FACTS AND FIGURES" as to how reasonably the Tamils are treated in Sri Lanka, reports are continually emanating from there about the harassment, threats, indignities and demands for protection-money faced by Tamils returning to the south of the country. The article by Anne Abayasekera published in the Sri Lankan daily, 'Sun' (see page 9) shows what really happened in the dark days of

July-August and also the indignities and dangers faced by the Tamils today. Posters have been put up by the racist Sinhala Bala Mandalaya warning Sinhalese and Muslim businesses, house-owners and others not to let shops or houses to Tamils. Poison-pen letters have been widely circulated by the Sinhala Maha Sabha warning against Tamils and MUSLIMS being allowed to continue their businesses in 'the South' hereafter.

While the Tamils are in this plight, the "invasion" of the Batticaloa District by hordes of Sinhalese, supported by Government Ministers and MPs demonstrates that those who brought about the July-August massacres will not rest until the Tamil nation and its identity are destroyed, and Sri Lanka is a land only for the Sinhala-Buddhists. The presence of Buddhist monks among the invading hordes demonstrates the emerging theocratic character of the Sri Lankan political scene.

If the murder of over 2000 Tamils in cold blood, the destruction of over 5000 of their properties and business enterprises, the confiscation of all their "affected properties" under emergency laws, and the deliberate obstacles placed in the way of their attempt to return to their employment and properties, followed by an "invasion" and forcible occupation of vast tracts of Tamil areas by thousands of Sinhalese transported in state-owned vehicles, are not an attempt to commit genocide of the Tamil people, then what is?

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CONDEMNS SRI LANKA

While Amnesty International recognises that the Government faced serious problems of internal security it is concerned that the Sri Lanka Government had permitted its security forces to commit grave violations of human rights on members of the Tamil minority during the period of the recent communal violence, Amnesty International (AI) has said in a document titled "Amnesty International statement updating its human rights concerns in Sri Lanka July-September 1983."

The report goes on to say: "It recognises that the Sri Lanka Government is obliged to bring to justice those responsible for those violent criminal acts such as the killing of soldiers. Amnesty International also recognises that the authorities cannot be held responsible for those killings in the context of communal violence in which its security forces had no active or facilitating role and it welcomes the Governments stated assurances to the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities that all persons responsible for the killings and violence during July 1983 will be identified and brought before the courts regardless of

their position. However, at the same time, AI is gravely concerned about the killings of at least 37 unarmed Tamils in the Jaffna district by the security forces - killings - which have now been confirmed by the Government itself - in apparent retaliation for the deaths of the 13 soldiers.

The report says that since July 23 AI had on four occasions sent detailed communications to the Sri Lanka Government by telex and that these had all gone unanswered.

The report says that AI has obtained eyewitness accounts of some killings by the Army and has received reports that several bodies of civilians killed by the Army were taken away and presumably disposed of by the security forces.

On the matter of the prison deaths at Welikade the AI report says "Full details are not available from independent sources although international organisations have expressed doubts as to how the killings of detainees could take place without the complicity of prison officials especially since detainees were held in a special wing in conditions which the Superintendent of the prison had described as "maximum

security" and how killings could have been repeated after an interval of two days.

Referring to the Sri Lanka Government's reply to an earlier AI report in July this year the report says "The Government's reply failed to indicate that the evidence presented in AI's report would be investigated or that the Government would consider implementing the recommendations AI had submitted as a step towards preventing further human rights violations."

Some of the recommendations made by Amnesty International are:

- * Individuals arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act be immediately informed of the reasons for the arrest and of any charges against them.

- * The Government inform relatives immediately of their arrest and place of detention.

- * All detainees under the PTA be granted immediate and later regular access to lawyers and relatives.

- * Detainees to be produced before a magistrate in 24 hours as done normally and the magistrate be empowered to release or remand the suspect.

- * Specific rules for detention and inter-

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SRI LANKAN GOVT'S FRADULENT CLAIMS REBUTTED

The Sri Lankan Government received its worst shock when the United Nations' Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (U.N.S.C.P.D.P.M.) resolved recently that the U.N. Human Rights Commission should ask the Secretary-General of the U.N. to seek information from the Government of Sri Lanka and other sources on the recent incidents of communal violence and submit a report to the U.N. Human Rights Commission at its fortieth session.

Following the condemnation of Sri Lanka by the International Commission of Jurists and Amnesty International of a number of human rights violations, the UNSCPDPM's resolution, which was supported by ten countries, constitutes a severe blow to the already tarnished image of Sri Lanka.

Bruised and battered by adverse publicity, particularly following the July massacre of Tamils, the Government, through the State-controlled and servile media, has resorted to smear campaigns against international human rights bodies like A.I. which has been described as a Communist front organisation. The fact that A.I. was the Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1976 for its valuable service in its campaign against tyrants and torturers does not impress the Sri Lankan Government or its lackeys. Blind to the atrocities within Sri Lanka, they behave as if they are the victims of an international conspiracy hatched by a few expatriate Sri Lankan Tamils.

The counter-propaganda campaign by the Sri Lankan authorities through its foreign missions has been launched with full vigour. As in all such campaigns, the weapons used are fabrications of facts and distortions of the truth.

PRISON KILLINGS

For example, in a document prepared under the title "Background Note - Sri Lanka beyond Conflict", Ernest Corea, the Sri Lankan Ambassador in Washington, referring to the massacre of 52 Tamil detainees in the maximum security prison in Colombo, states:-

"From the Justice Minister downwards there was nothing but sorrow and remorse for the prison violence which resulted in the deaths of 52 proven or suspected terrorists. Two prison riots, one of them a mass escape attempt, caused the deaths".

The President and several other Ministers have spoken on a number of occasions on T.V. and other places from 28th July and spoken on every subject under the sun. Not once did any one of them condemn the perpetrators of this cowardly brutality.

If there was any prison riot, it was to kill the Tamil detainees. No one seems to have escaped as a result of this 'mass escape attempt'. Presumably the prison officers and the Army personnel who were guarding the prison foiled the "escape attempt" but could not prevent the massacre of the Tamil detainees in their own cells! Presumably they became momentarily blind too, for they told the so-called magisterial enquiry that they could not identify even one of the 500 rioting Sinhalese prisoners!

pursuance of their publicised political goal of achieving a separate State for Tamils and in response to State terrorism unleashed through the Army and Police the Tamil militants have killed 73 persons - 51 Tamils, 21 Sinhalese and 1 Muslim. These statistics given by Mr. Jayakoddy themselves demonstrate that the political violence engaged in by the "terrorists" is not racially motivated against the Sinhalese because almost two-thirds of those who suffered death were Tamils!

In this article, R. Ganeshan tears apart, point by point, the Sri Lankan government's case presented before the UN Sub-Commission on Human Rights on August 22 by the Sri Lankan Ambassador in Geneva, Mr. Tissa Jayakoddy.

STARTING POINT

Mr. Tissa Jayakoddy, Ambassador of Sri Lanka in Geneva, during his hatchet job for the Sri Lanka Government at the UNSCPDPM, said on 22nd August 1983 that **"any discussion of the events in Sri Lanka in July must have as its starting point the emergence and intensification of the Tamil separatist movement"** in 1976. So the separatist movement just emerged from nowhere! Nothing about the deprivation of citizenship rights for 1.2 million Tamils, Sinhala Only, Pogroms 1956, 1958 and 1961, suppression of the Gandhian-style Satyagraha staged by the Tamil parties and incarcerating its leaders, unilateral abrogation by Sinhala leaders of agreements entered into with Tamil leaders, etc. Are they not the causes for the separatist movement to emerge? Not according to Mr. Jayakoddy.

SPONTANEOUS FLARE-UP?

According to Mr. Jayakoddy, the ambush in which 13 soldiers were killed by militant Tamil youth **"sparked off a massive wave of communal unrest in Colombo, and in other parts of the country....there were spontaneous flare-ups of pent-up emotions"**. What happened to the stories put out by the Government about the invisible hands of "a foreign power with local connections" and certain local left partners which have been accused of fomenting and spreading the July violence? Mr. Jayakoddy is no fool, for he knew that such figments of imagination would be laughed out of court by those present in Geneva. So he put it all on **"a spontaneous flare-up of pent-up emotions"**. What are these "pent-up emotions"? The so-called terrorists had not gone berserk killing innocent Sinhalese, burning their houses or raping their women like the Tamils have suffered since 1956! Over a period of seven years, in

PENT-UP EMOTIONS?

If Mr. Jayakoddy can attribute the barbaric atrocities committed against the Tamil people to the "pent-up emotions" of the Sinhalese, what about the pent-up emotions of the Tamils who have not only suffered overt and covert forms of discrimination for the last three decades, but have also been subjected to frequent and repeated mass violence resulting in thousands of deaths, thousands of properties being burnt, their women being raped and the destruction of their temples? Because of their "pent-up emotions" the Tamils have not gone about burning and killing innocent Sinhalese people living in their midst! On the contrary, the Rev. Kadawadduwa Nandarama Nayake Thera, the incumbent of the Naga Vihare located in the centre of the Tamil community of Jaffna recently said, "No damage has been caused to the Naga Vihare, Jaffna. The rumours spread by certain elements that the temple was damaged were untrue. Contrary to rumours, no Sinhalese bakeries had been attacked". (Ceylon Daily News).

Mr. Jayakoddy also said, **"The incidents were neither prompted nor orchestrated by the government or its agents"**. What about the widespread campaign of posters, leaflets and books published by some Ministers and others connected with the government incidents the July incidents inciting the Sinhala people? What about those Ministers, Deputy Ministers, District Ministers, Govt. MPs and UNP trade union leaders who were seen mingling with the rioting Sinhala mobs during the first three days of violence? Did not the government know that the repeated announcement made over the radio and television about the killing of the 13 soldiers in Jaffna (despite the fact that there was a strict censorship of news) and the subsequent publicity given to the state funeral for the dead soldiers at Kanatte

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would inflame the feelings of the Sinhalese against the Tamils? Are not the police and the armed forces agents of the government? Is it not true that there is incontrovertible evidence that sections of the security forces also took part in the violence against the Tamils? Not even a thousand Jayakoddys can deny the collaboration of the security forces in the anti-Tamil violence in July. The government itself, through its President has confessed that the Navy broke ranks and went berserk attacking Tamils and their properties in Trincomalee. This is no less true in other parts of the country.

PATENTLY FALSE CLAIM

Mr. Jayakoddy claimed, "The government did everything to quell the disturbances as quickly as possible to stamp out disorder and restore normalcy... The strictest measures were enforced in the process of ending the violence. The Government of Sri Lanka deeply regrets that the events took place. It has vehemently condemned and condemns the communal violence regardless from where it comes." Every one of these claims is patently false:

- (a) The violence erupted during the night of July 24. For four days and nights, during and outside curfew hours, uncontrolled atrocities were committed before the President, for the first time on July 28, appeared on TV and addressed the nation. Neither the government nor the police and the army do anything to "stamp out disorder". Tourists' pictures shown on foreign television conclusively establish the fact that the burnings and killings continued in the very presence of the security forces and they took no action.
- (b) The President's first utterances after four days of terror did not condemn the violence nor its perpetrators. Up to now, neither he nor his Ministers have condemned the violence. He did not even express sympathy with the victims. On the first occasion he appeared on TV, he spoke to appease "the clamour and the natural request of the Sinhala people" and announced the ban on separatist organisations "to appease the natural desire and request of the Sinhala people".
- (c) In fact the President made two different speeches one in Sinhala and the other in English. Not that the English one was any better, but the Sinhala speech was worse. Whereas, in the English speech, he made reference to Sinhala and Tamil police and army personnel being killed by "terrorists", in the Sinhala speech, he falsely emphasised that the majority who were killed by "terrorists" were Sinhalese.
- (d) Neither the President nor his ministers called upon the security forces to enforce the law and deal with the goons and

arsonists who were roaming the streets unchecked, uncontrolled and unmolested causing death and destruction.

(e) Neither the President nor his Ministers called upon their party MPs or supporters to help in arresting the violence.

LEADERS & PROTECTORS WITHIN THE GOVT

Mr. Jayakoddy asserts, "The Government of Sri Lanka will leave no stone unturned to identify and bring before the courts all persons responsible for the killings, violence, destruction and devastation. Regardless of who they are, their status, their ideologies and political alignments, the full force of the law and the courts will be applied. There will be no exceptions".

The police started arresting looters only from July 30. By then 98 per cent of the damage and destruction had been completed.

Up to now there is absolutely no evidence that the government has taken or proposes to take any action to "identify and bring before the courts all persons responsible...". In any other country, incidents of much smaller scale would have been by now the subject of an impartial Commission of Inquiry. Although the government admitted that sections of the navy ran amuck in Trincomalee, there is no evidence up to now that any single one of them has been court-martialled. The Acting Commissioner of Prisons, the Superintendent of Prisons and other Prison Officers in whose presence the 52 Tamil political detainees were killed are still at their posts. Except for a few leaders of two small left parties who have been taken into custody as "scapegoats", the real organisers, financiers and the perpetrators of the "killings, destruction and devastation" are striding about the country as paragons of virtue and as saviours of the Sinhala Buddhists! The "full force of the law and the courts" will never be applied against them for they or at least their leaders and protectors constitute the innermost echelons of the government itself.

AN ABERRATION?

Mr. Jayakoddy would have the world believe that what happened to the Tamils at the end of July 1983 was "an aberration, a single episode of communal conflict, a tragic deviation from the normal course of peaceful life". People who sell their souls for a mess of pottage have no regard for truth and Mr. Jayakoddy would appear to be no exception.

"In May and June 1958, the Island of Ceylon, the peaceful tea garden, burst into flaming headlines in the world's press. 'Hundreds Killed in Race Riots', 'State of Emergency Declared', 'Dusk to Dawn Curfew',... '12,000 Removed to Safety', pro-

claimed the special correspondents who had been forced by the severity of censorship to sneak out of Ceylon and file their stories with a Madras dateline', thus the Editor of Ceylon Observer, Mr. Tarzie Vittachi, began his opening paragraph of his 125-page, "Story of the Ceylon Race Riots-Emergency 58". His book concluded by raising the question, "What are we left with? A nation in ruins, some grim lessons which we cannot afford to forget and a momentous question: Have the Sinhalese and the Tamils reached the parting of the ways?"

And even the present President, who has presided over five anti-Tamil pogroms in his six years of office, said of the August 1977 race riots, "I speak more in sorrow than in anger. Recent events throughout the Island, north, centre and south, show that religions we profess do not seem to influence for the good some of our people. I regret that some members of my party have spoken in Parliament and outside words that encouraged violence and the murders, rapes and arson that have been committed", (Sept. 4, 1977).

Not that Mr. Jayakoddy has not read Tarzie Vittachi in 1958 or his President's speech in 1977. Nor is it that he is unaware of the several racial pogroms committed against the Tamil people. Presumably he has even personally seen quite a few of them. So, why does he call the July 1983 violence "an aberration"? He is a diplomat and, therefore he is paid to lie on behalf of his government.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

On the question of human rights, Mr. Jayakoddy has really made the proverbial attempt of trying to conceal a whole pumpkin in a plate of rice. He said, "Sri Lanka has never shown a consistent pattern of violations of human rights over a period of time.... But in the last six years we have preserved and strengthened the democratic institutions, enshrined all fundamental rights in the Constitution, created a network of judicial procedures for the protection of the lives and rights of citizens within a democratic framework. We have committed ourselves to the scrupulous observance of a large number of international instruments relating to human rights".

Mr. Jayakoddy must be endowed with an unusually strong nerve to make this speech at Geneva from where the International Commission of Jurists, only last year, published an eighty page report and another smaller report recently documenting in detail the several violations of human rights by the Sri Lankan Government. In

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42 TAMIL DETAINEES FREED IN DARING COMMANDO-TYPE OPERATION

Forty two Tamil political detainees held in the maximum security prison at Batticaloa were rescued on the night of September 23 in a daring commando-type operation, which presumably was conceived in total secrecy and carried out with military precision with no casualties on either side.

Government sources conceded that this was the biggest and the most daring jailbreak in the history of the country. Benefiting from the confusion that resulted from this raid, over 200 ordinary criminal prisoners also escaped, some of whom have since been recaptured. None of the political detainees has been found.

The detainees held under the most draconian provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act were transferred to the Batticaloa prison from Colombo following the brutal murder of 52 Tamil detainees on 25th and 27th July.

According to reports in the Indian and Sri Lankan press, the operation was carried out by a Tamil Liberation Organisation. The raid on the Batticaloa jail would appear to have been a well-planned operation in which about 30 to 40 men in camouflaged military uniform stormed the maximum

security prison at 9 pm on 23rd September, trussed up the guards and broke into the jail. Within a few minutes they were out with 42 Tamil political detainees. Although the guards were tied up, they were not harmed.

It is learnt that some of the detainees refused to join the escaping party. These included Rev.Fr.Singarayer, Dr.S.A.Tharmalingam (78), President of TELF, Kovai Mahesan, Editor of the Tamil weekly 'Suthanthiran', and Mrs.Nirmala Nithianandan, a Tamil writer. However, her husband Dr.Nithianandan, a University Lecturer, escaped along with Rev.Fr.Sinnarasah, Rev. Sam Jeyatillekarajah and Dr.Jeyakularajah.

The large amount of matter received and the consequent delay in printing has made it necessary that the September/October issues of Tamil Times be combined into one. The next issue will be published in November 1983.

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particular, rather than commending the government on the "scrupulous observance... of international instruments", the ICJ found it guilty of violating the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. In respect of the use of the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act by the Lankan govt., the ICJ report said, "**The South African Terrorism Act has been called 'a piece of legislation which must shock the conscience of any lawyer'. Many of the provisions of the Sri Lankans Act are equally contrary to accepted principles of law. While a substantial number of the provisions of the Terrorism Act are clearly contrary to internationally accepted minimum standards for criminal procedure, they also appear to be contrary to the provisions of the Sri Lankan Constitution....**"

What the recently published 72 page 'Report of an Amnesty International Mission to Sri Lanka' documents is not about the "network of judicial procedures for the protection of lives and rights of all citizens" as Mr.Jayakoddy claims, but concerning the widespread use of:

- detention incommunicado for prolonged periods of 18 months at a time;
- torture and degrading and inhuman treatment of detainees;
- confessions extracted under torture;

(d) solitary confinement of detainees without access to lawyers or relatives.

The AI also has catalogued a number of disappearances and killings of persons taken into custody by the security forces. The recent massacre of the 52 Tamil detainees in prison establishes the fraudulent nature of the claims of Mr.Jayakoddy.

DRIFT TO DICTATORSHIP

How has the government 'preserved and strengthened democratic political institutions'? By depriving opposition leaders of their civic rights; extending the life of Parliament elected for a period of six years for a further period of six years; banning opposition newspapers; by detaining without any charge opposition party office-bearers; by permitting street thugs to break up opposition party meetings; by the President obtaining undated letters of resignation from all government MPs to ensure that they do not fall out of line; by the repeated use of emergency rule and censorship of the press etc.

While the President and his Ministers within Sri Lanka, and the Jayakoddys and Ernest Coreas outside fraudulently engage in platitudinous phrasemongering about 'human right, fundamental rights' democracy judicial procedures' government's commitment to protect all citizens' etc, the sad truth is that the country is slowly but steadily drifting towards dictatorship.

TAMIL DETAINEES FREED FROM BATTICALOA JAIL

Varatharaja Perumal
Maheswara Rajah
S.Perinbarajah
S.Sivalingam
S.Srisankantharajah
S.Premamanthan
S.Koneswaran
V.Suntharalingam
G.Pathmanathan
T.Vijayakumar
V.Shanmuganathsivam
K.Thevanathan
T.Thadchanamoorthy
V.Maheswaran
P.Bhavanathan
S.Yogarajah
T.Maheswaran
V.Sivasubramaniam
Manikkam Rajan
Shanmugam Chanthrapalan
S.Ganeshalingam
S.Sritharan
Gnanasekaram
Antonippillai Alakiri
Augustine Paul
Rev.Fr.Sinnarasah
S.Jeyaprakash
S.Rajaji
T.Nithianathan
Rev. Fr. Jeyatillakarajah
Dr.Jeyakularajah
Arianantham David
Ramanathan
Thanga Mahenthiran
Vamatheran
Jeyakoddy
Gnanel
Paramatheva
T.Mariyanayagam
S.Nakuleswaran
S.Maheswaran
T.Jegatheesan

By kind courtesy of "EELA MULAK-KAM", Sept-Oct. 1983

ARMY RAMPAGE FOLLOWING JAIL-BREAK

Following the Batticaloa jail-break, the government clamped down a curfew covering the entire Batticaloa District and virtually sealed it off from the rest of the island as the security forces began a house to house search on a massive hunt for the escaped Tamil detainees. None of the escaped detainees nor those who freed them have yet been caught

True to their record of indiscipline and

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CASPER WEINBERGER'S MYSTERIOUS VISIT TO COLOMBO 'INDIA PERPLEXED' QUESTION RAISED IN LANKAN PARLIAMENT

The US Defence Secretary, Casper Weinberger's unannounced two hour stopover in Colombo on September 30 has perplexed India and disturbed political circles in Sri Lanka. It also has raised serious questions as to the military dimension of the US-Sri Lankan relationship and whether Sri Lanka is being drawn into playing a part in the US-Pakistan-China axis.

It is no secret that the US, for several years, has had negotiations with President Jayawardene's government for the leasing of the eastern port of Trincomalee for siting fuel storage tanks. Both in Sri Lanka and India, there is always the fear that Trincomalee will eventually become a US base. The visit of the US Defence Secretary and subsequent developments were raised in the Sri Lankan Parliament on October 6 by an Opposition MP, Mr. Sarath Muttetuwagama. He asked the Prime Minister whether the request from the US Embassy for a US Air Force aircraft to land in Colombo on the way from Bombay to the Maldivian capital, Male, on October 24 was in any way connected with Mr. Weinberger's visit. The MP also wanted to know why the aircraft needed refuelling on so short a flight and why a stopover for two whole days was necessary with the Sri Lankan Air Force providing security for the aircraft on an around-the-clock basis. What military equipment was the aircraft carrying, asked the MP? He had in his possession a note from the US Embassy addressed to the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister.

India, which wants the Indian ocean declared a Zone of Peace, has always been suspicious about US intentions in Sri Lanka, particularly in respect of the port of Trincomalee, one of the best natural harbours in the East. The mystery and the secrecy surrounding Mr. Weinberger's visit to Colombo have further strengthened Indian concern and suspicion.

No advance information was given about Mr. Weinberger's visit to Colombo.

The surprising part of it is that not only has the visit itself been kept secret until the last day, although it had been worked out well in advance, but also Mr. Weinberger has chosen to avoid Indian territory altogether while flying from Colombo to Karachi en route to Islamabad for talks with the Pakistan Government.

The U.S. Defence Secretary was initially scheduled to go to Pakistan after visiting China, which meant that he would probably take the much shorter direct route from Beijing to Islamabad across Tibet. But as it so happened he flew to Hong Kong for a

refuelling stop and then on to Colombo and Karachi before arriving in Islamabad making a detour of several thousand Kilometres.

Permission not asked

At no stage was the Indian Government asked for permission to overfly territory which meant making a circuitous trip over the Arabian Sea instead of flying straight over the sub-continent. The authorities concerned in Delhi are checking the time of departure of his aircraft from Colombo and its arrival in Karachi to find whether Mr. Weinberger had utilised the occasion to pay a brief visit to the Diego Garcia base before going to Pakistan.

Obviously, reflecting the Indian Government's concern, the Indian press have strongly reacted to the rather unusual secrecy surrounding the US Defence Secretary's stop-over in Colombo. The State

controlled media of Sri Lanka have reacted with its characteristic anti-Indian venom by accusing the Indian press for its 'blatantly hegemonistic tone' and of 'paranoia'.

There is no doubt that since 1977, Mr. Jayawardene, the President, has oriented Sri Lankan foreign and domestic policy towards the US on which he heavily depends for aid and loans for the Government's rather extravagant expenditure on grandiose schemes which hardly bring any relief to the ordinary people.

Political observers in Colombo note that it was not without substance that Mr. Jayawardene was nicknamed Yankie Dickie from the early 1950's. What is more worrying is whether he will take Sri Lanka into the lap of Uncle Sam thus raising the prospect of the Indian ocean and the countries around it becoming embroiled in the vortex of super-power confrontation.

MEMORIAL MEETING FOR MASSACRED MARTYRS

A largely attended gathering of Tamils and others paid homage to the memory of those who lost their lives in the recent holocaust in Sri Lanka at the Lewisham Concert Hall, Catford, London SE6 on Saturday September 17.

This meeting was organised by the Central British Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tamil Refugees and was presided over by Dr. P. Sathianathan, the Chairman of the Fund. A minute's silence was observed at the commencement of the meeting.

Dr. Sathianathan in his opening address gave a brief resume of the events which had occurred in Sri Lanka resulting in the terrible atrocities and emphasised the need of the Tamils abroad to do something purposeful and tangible to alleviate the human suffering that was being endured by the Tamils at this time.

Referring to the existence of several small organisations among the Tamils, Dr. Sathianathan said that although that was not the best situation, the mere existence of such organisations can also serve a good purpose. He likened these small organisations to tributaries and it was the confluence of these tributaries that created a mighty river. He therefore exhorted all the Tamils to organise themselves in one organisation or another and contribute their mite either in the form of financial support or physical help or both so that the results of their efforts may accrue to the benefit of the

disadvantaged and suffering people way back at home.

Mr. K. Vaikunthavasan of the Tamil Co-ordinating Committee in the course of his speech urged that in the present situation four essential steps will have to be taken, one of which was that a case against the Sri Lanka government to be filed in the International Court of Justice, even though there appears to be no jurisdiction to do so. Among the other speakers were Dr. Subramaniam, Messrs Kanagasundaram, S. Maharasingam, A.R. Aseerwatham and Rajah. It was also announced that the Tamil United Liberation Front (England Branch) was invited but was not represented.

IMAGE OF SRI LANKAN CIVILISATION

A poster, 17" by 22", illustrating the recent atrocities in Sri Lanka has been published by the General Union of Eelam Students.

Those wishing to obtain a copy, please send £1.20 (including postage) to:

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THE COMMUNAL VIOLENCE 1983

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

You have heard the government's version.

Now listen to the truth

N.Sanmugathan

The communal holocaust of July 1983 will go down in the History of Sri Lanka as its blackest hour. Overnight, men turned worse than beasts and descended to the level that they could burn and loot and kill fellow human beings and even cremate some of them on the road side on the sole ground that they belonged to a different race and spoke a different language. Obviously, the lofty preachings of Buddhism for over 2500 years have had no effect: The destruction was both systematic and well planned. The death toll reached up to nearly 2000. Even Plantation workers of Indian Tamil origin were attacked and line rooms destroyed. The value of property damaged has to be calculated in billions of rupees. Many Tamils stood with only the clothes they wore while their life's labour and savings had gone up in flames. The worst atrocity was the killing in cold blood of 53 Tamil prisoners inside Jail. It is a crime which Sri Lanka will never live down.

Why did this happen? To suggest that the killing of the 13 soldiers in Jaffna was the cause is to beg the question. That was not the cause. That, itself, was a result of the failure to solve the problem of the Tamil minorities. It was just an excuse just as the killing of an Israeli diplomat in June 1982 was merely an excuse for the Israeli invasion of Lebanon which had been well planned in advance for the purpose of driving the Palestinians from Lebanon.

It is time for people to understand that when men, Sinhala or Tamil, put on a uniform and acquire the licence to kill, they, themselves, stood the risk of being killed. This has nothing particularly to do with their race. The armed forces are the main form of the repressive state machinery which the government maintains to repress both the Sinhalese and the Tamil people. The same Sinhala soldier who is today killing a Tamil in the north and getting shot at in return, will, tomorrow, when ordered, gun down a Sinhalese - as, indeed, he did in 1971! A soldier, therefore, cannot be looked upon as a Sinhala or a Tamil. He is a killer in uniform and must, at any time, face death. The Tigers only killed those State security forces who came to repress and kill them. They have not killed innocent or unarmed civilians Sinhalese. Besides the northern Tigers have not killed only Sinhalese. According to government's own propaganda, they have up to date killed 11 politicians, 13 informants and 16 civilians - making a total of 40 - all of whom are Tamils. Another 50 police and army officers have been killed. Of these,

several are Tamil policemen, like Inspector Bastiampillai. The reason why more Sinhalese are killed in the army is because there are virtually no Tamils in the army.

Further, no civilian Sinhala life or property was attacked in the North during this period. This is something that Tamils can be proud of.

What was the necessity for any form of retaliation? In Britain for nearly a century, the Irish Republican Army is waging a Guerilla war of liberation against the British. Recently, the I.R.A. killed Lord Louis Mountbatten, the uncle of the British Queen. Was even a single Irishman in England hurt in retaliation? I am not trying to argue that Christianity has a better influence on people than Buddhism. But it is time we saw things in their correct perspective.

Some argue that the violence against the Tamils was a natural reaction to the cry for a separate state of Eelam. If that were so, why were the poor plantation workers of Indian Tamil origin attacked? They or their leaders have never asked for a separate state. On the other hand, the overwhelming majority of them had voted for J.R. at the presidential elections while it was their vote that saved the referendum for the U.N.P. Then, why attack them?

In 1956 and 1958, there was no cry for separatism. But there was communal violence in both years- only less frenzied than that of 1983. No, we have to look for the reason else where.

Running like a thread through the entire fabric of Sri Lankan politics has been a consistent campaign against the Tamils which has been orchestrated from high quarters. It is true that prior to the Donoughmore era, Sinhala and Tamil leaders like Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, E.W.Perera, etc, worked together in pursuit of more reforms from the British. But as the British colonialists granted more reforms, the two leaderships failed to agree about how to divide the spoils.

The apple of discord proved to be a Tamil Seat for the Western Province demanded by the Tamil leaders and opposed by the Sinhala Leaders on the ground that it amounted to communal representation. That led to the parting of the ways and the Ponnambalam brothers resigned from the Ceylon National Congress and virtually quit active politics.

The Donoughmore Constitution which introduced adult franchise and territorial representation paved the way for Sinhalese majority rule or what was called the tyranny of the majority. That was one of the

reasons why Ramanathan opposed adult franchise because he correctly foresaw what would happen. In a homogeneous society, adult franchise and territorial representation are ideal. But, when the picture is complicated by the presence of racial and religious minorities, adult franchise and territorial representation would ultimately bring about the subjection of the minority to the majority.

The only alternative would have been a healthy left movement which would have cut across racial, linguistic or caste barriers and concentrated on economic issues which were common to all. But this development did not take place although an attempt was made in this direction by the left parties.

The formation of the Pan-Sinhala Board of Ministers, excluding any representatives of the minority, by D.S.Senayake in 1935; the rejection of the Tamil demands by the Soulbury Commission; the 1948 Citizenship Acts which deprived the Indian Tamils of Citizenship and the right to vote; the passing of the Sinhala only Act in 1957; further acts such as standardisation of marks and job appointments through chits from government M.P.s; the more recent sending of a virtual army of occupation to the North and East and the harassment and repression of the Tamil people - all these have combined to convince the minorities that they would be submerged by the majority.

That was why they thought that their demands could not be realised inside a unitary state and therefore put forward the extreme demand for a separate state. It was a cry born out of frustration and despair.

There is talk of ethnic imbalance in government service, professions, trade, business, etc. It is true that in the 19th century the Tamils had a head start as far as education was concerned because of the excellent educational facilities provided by the American Missionaries who landed in Vaddukoddai as early as 1816. But the Tamils did not invite them. If they used the opportunity, studied hard and advanced, it was on merit. But that is past history.

If there was in fact an ethnic imbalance in Trade and Business, what prevented the Sinhala bourgeoisie which has dominated every government since 1948 to set right this imbalance by legal and constitutional methods? Did they need a pogrom to do this?

The in-built anti-Tamil trend in Sri Lanka politics has of late been developed by

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JUDGES DISGRACED AGAIN

Strange things happen in Sri Lanka, but stranger things happen under President J.R. Jayewardene's Government. The country was without a Supreme Court or a Court of Appeal for a week in September. All judges had "ceased to hold office" beginning September 8! Reason? They had 'failed' to take the oath under the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution before the President. The amendment required them, within one month of the passing of the amendment, to take the oath against "separation" of the country. The news that the country was without a

Supreme Court sent shock waves throughout the island as such a situation had never arisen before. Legal circles were outraged because the highest members of the judiciary had never been disgraced or humiliated in this manner at any time in the country's history.

Following tradition, all the judges of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal had taken their oaths before each other. But the government backed with a ruling from the Attorney General insisted that they should have taken the oaths before the President. By failing to do so, the

government declared that the judges had "ceased to hold office".

The judges were to be subjected to more ignominy and humiliation. They were locked out and police were posted to prevent them from entering their chambers. They, including the Chief Justice, were even denied the right to remove their own papers from their chambers. Their official cars were withdrawn and the police protection given to guard their residences was also promptly withdrawn.

The farcical impasse continued until the judges were compelled to go before their Lord & Master, Mr.J.R.Jayewardene, the Executive President of Sri Lanka, and humbly take their oaths. All the judges were promptly "re-appointed" after the President had taught them a lesson by making it clear to them as to who the real boss of the country was and what their fate would have been! Before re-appointing them, the President presumably told them not to be foolish as to give any judgements which would embarrass him or his government.

Although the judges were re-appointed, according to a government decision, they were not to be paid for the period during which they were "deemed to have ceased to hold their posts".

While the President and his government would appear to have enjoyed the sadistic pleasure of humiliating the judges, the contention that they had "ceased to hold office" during the interim period has raised a hornet's nest. What happens to the cases they had heard before and which were pending at the time they ceased to be judges? What is the position of any case which any one of them had heard during the period after they had "ceased" to hold office and before they were re-appointed? Have all these cases got to be heard afresh is the question that is being currently debated in legal circles.

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Sinhala extreme chauvinists to demand the eradication of the economic base of the Tamils in the South. That was what sought to be achieved by the recent communal violence. They have almost succeeded.

Who were responsible for this holocaust? There can be no question but that the forces behind the government were responsible for it. In every area, eye witnesses identified the looters and arsonists and murderers as supporters of the government no matter who else may have joined in later.

The active participation of the armed forces or at best their indifference or inaction during the communal violence has been commented upon by all - including foreign correspondents who were eye witnesses; and have been accepted both by the President and Minister Thondaman. No body is likely to forget the spectacle of lorry loads of armed troops gaily waving to the looters who waved greetings back. In fact, there is no doubt that if stern action had been taken by the armed forces on the first day, the violence could have been halted and contained. The army was clearly on the side of the looters and the arsonists and the government was either unwilling or unable to order stern action. It took a week before a looter was shot. The government stands charged with inaction and inability to provide for the security of its Tamil citizens. Its inability to protect its Tamil prisoners inside Jail was unworthy of any government.

It was precisely to distract public attention from these obvious facts that the government proscribed three left parties on the ground that they were party to the violence and arrested several of their leaders. It also came out with the lie that a foreign hand was behind the disturbances. But it had to disown this nonsense soon.

Fortunately for the people of Sri Lanka, the super powers, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., seem to have come to a tacit understanding not to interfere in Sri Lanka and leave it to India to mediate. This was what trimmed the sails of the government and

brought them down to earth. Otherwise, they would have bartered away Trincomalee for U.S. and western armed help.

A lot of talk has been going on about correspondents attempts to tarnish the fair name of Sri Lanka: But, who was it who did the tarnishing? Was it the Sinhala chauvinistic goon who set fire to Tamil property and killed Tamils or the correspondent who reported them? Is there a humane way of reporting the murder in cold blood of 53 Tamil prisoners in Jail? Can highly paid public relations firms remove the blood and gore in Welikada Jail? The irony is that people are not finding fault with the perpetrators of the worst horrors in our history but picking holes about the way it was reported.

But the communal problem has to be solved. The T.U.L.F. leader has said that if a reasonable alternative like federalism is offered, they could go back to the people and obtain a fresh mandate. It is mulish to insist that the T.U.L.F. must drop the demand of Eelam before talks could start. The government should also withdraw the Prevention of Terrorism Act, release all those arrested under it, offer a general amnesty and withdraw the army from the North and East.

It should grant citizenship to all Indian Tamils who are stateless and give land to those who have decided to settle in the North and East. In the case of those who wish to return to India, their right to go to the country of their choice must be respected.

Sri Lanka is sliding down the road to racism and fascism. We are already listening to the theories of the master-race as preached by Hitler. We are even to have our own version of Hitler's storm troopers. The unofficial goon squads are soon to be made official and given military training. That is the meaning of the talk of National Service and the permanent institution of the Home Guard. All opposition will be silenced. Fascism would have crept in on us even before we know it unless the progressive movement reads the symptoms aright and takes counter-action in time.

AMIR TO LOSE CIVIC RIGHTS?

An orchestrated campaign against the TULF leader, Mr.A.Amirthalingam, is being carried on by sections of the ruling United National Party.

The statements and interviews given by Mr.Amirthalingam during his recent visits abroad would appear to have irked a few of the government party MPs. By denying him his civic rights, they expect to shut him up and also prevent him from going abroad by seizing his passport.

The Deputy Minister of Education, Mr.A.M.R.B.Attanayake, recently urged in Parliament that Mr.Amirthalingam be stripped of his civic rights, as others had been (a reference to the deprivation of civic rights of the former Prime Minister, Mrs.S.Bandaranaike), since he "only wanted to destroy the majority race and appear a hero in the eyes of the world".

TELLING IT LIKE IT IS

By Anne Abavasekara

Wrong impressions can be created, for instance, by the omission of facts and the refusal to call a spade a spade. There has been constant reference to 'race riots' and to 'ethnic violence' which suggests that there was inter-communal strife. We had two telephone calls, one from Canada and one from America, from relatives who thought the Sinhalese were being attacked by the Tamils. We had some difficulty in convincing them that we were in no danger, that it was Tamils in the south who were under attack.

There was no need for exaggeration. What actually happened here was horrendous enough.

Yet there has been a noticeable reluctance on the part of some to admit that the refugee camps were filled with Tamil people because it was their homes that had been so deliberately destroyed. To walk down some lanes in Wellawatte and other places gives one the feeling.

I went to see a friend in Ratnakara Place, Dehiwela, and felt a crushing weight on my heart as I saw the devastation there. So most people feel after an air raid which leaves only blackened ruins and rubble where human homes had once been.

The sense of desolation is overwhelming, particularly if one knew the people who had occupied those homes. I wonder whether any politicians have even walked down these devastated residential areas. And what about the toll of human lives? We are ready enough to lament the death of the 269 passengers on that ill-fated Korean plane. It is some consolation that at least their end was mercifully swift, over in one stroke. Do we shed any tears for our own dead, the Tamil people in our midst who were battered to death or burnt alive? I came face to face last week with a young friend whose elderly father, caught alone and defenceless on his property in Kalutara, was beaten to death. I met a man whose 21-year-old nephew was dragged out of his father's home in Deraniyagala by a mob, beaten up and set fire to. I've spoken with the relatives of an elderly couple in Bandarawela who were killed. I listened to an eye-witness's account of how two 'teen-age boys were pulled out of a factory opposite his house in Ratmalana and beaten to death with iron rods.

Many people on the road saw the two victims dragged out of the church of the open door in Dehiwela where they were hiding, beaten and then thrown still half-alive into a burning car.

These are not statistics - they were human beings of flesh and blood like ours, dear to their families and friends.

And what of the present? We are being asked to believe that everything is now under control and back to normal. An

attempt is being made to sell the old story of this being 'Paradise Isle' once more. Yet daily I meet enough non-Tamil Sri Lankans who now feel fearful inside their own homes and are nervous when a passing stranger seems to scrutinise their houses. As one person expressed it, "We learned that there is no safe place-not the prisons, not the hospitals, not the churches and certainly not our homes!"

What has been done to alleviate the natural fears of the Tamils in our midst, or to reassure them that no repetition will be permitted of the horrors of July?

Let's not try to pretend that things are as they were before July 25. A young Tamil intern of our acquaintance went back to his hospital 30 miles from Colombo. After the first day he returned home and sent in his resignation. The open animosity of the minor staff was more than he could take. Another young man we know was a steward at a 5 - star hotel in Colombo. He returned to work to be greeted with cries of 'here comes the 'kottiya'. His widowed mother is in despair because he refused to go to work any more. A widowed mother and her daughter fled to Jaffna and then returned at the girl's insistence. Within 24 hours of their entering their home in Bambalapitiya, men appeared to demand protection money and they have again vacated their home in terror.

Another middle-aged couple returned to their home in Wellawatte so that the man could resume duties on the 15th. After he left the house, a thug walked in and said to the wife: "So you have shamelessly come back, eh? Let me see what you have brought?" All they had was a single suitcase containing some clothes and money. He walked off with that.

Why aren't people reporting these crimes to the police? Because they are too afraid, and also because they have too little confidence in the Police any more.

Has anyone given a thought to the traumatic experiences of little children who were confronted by the fiendish mobs who came to destroy their homes and take away their toys? I met a tiny tot who said: "Wicked men took my Jennie-doll away". Her elder brother of seven won't talk, won't come out of the room in the house in which they now are, and is terrified of strangers.

There was happy, confident Suhaniya aged 7. She attended school in Colombo from an aunt's house. The mob came at night and they fled to another relative's home where she was told she would be safe. Within half an hour they had to run for their lives from there and were taken in by good Sinhala people, but Suhaniya was now frantic for news of her parents and their home back in Kuliypitiya. Her parents and

little brother were safe, but their home and everything it contained had been reduced to ashes.

Today Suhaniya is a frightened, insecure little girl who clings to her parents. There are many, many more children all over the country who now have nightmares, who have begun to wet their beds and who shrink back in terror at the approach of a stranger. Do we in Sri Lanka have the courage and the honesty to tell it like it is? Terrorism in the North must be stamped out and one presumes that is what the army is deployed there for. By all means let us give the full facts about the situation there and about terrorist outrages but let's not confuse that issue with the barbarism of the mobs who had a field day in Colombo and in several other parts of the Island. The most moving article I read in all the weeks since July 25 was written by Prof. Mahinda Palihawadana and published in the 'Weekend'. I cannot but quote from his concluding paragraphs: "Let us honestly face the facts. The horrors of July will be an eternal reminder of our failure to listen to the Buddha. We failed to protect our citizens when hooligans attacked. Institutions vital at such a time failed to function properly. Events have revealed for all to see, how thin is the veneer of our piety. Not only the murders, but the sheer nature and extent of the attendant cruelties, permit no 'white-washing'. Instead of trying to project a false image, let us see ourselves in our true image".

By courtesy of "THE SUN" 24/9/83

GUARD OF INDIAN MISSION IN COLOMBO ASSAULTED

A security guard going for duty at the Indian High Commissioners residence in Sri Lanka was waylaid by unknown assailants here on the evening of September 25. Mr.A.K. Suin, who was assaulted, ran to the safety of India House, a short distance away. Dishevelled, visibly shaken and writhing in obvious pain, he was rushed to the hospital for first aid.

In what appeared to be a pre-meditated move, four men waited for Mr.Suin, two on bicycles and the others under a tree, near the High Commissioner's home. Growing suspicious, the Indian employee tried to dodge but was overpowered by the dagger-wielding men.

"I have taken up the matter with the Sri Lankan Foreign office," said Mr.S.J.S. Chhatwal, the High Commissioner, without comment.

This is the third case of assault involving officials of the High Commission in the past five weeks, long after the July-August violence in Sri Lanka. The other incidents involved a driver of the mission, Mr.R.Viswambharan and an official, Mr.P.K.Ravindran.

CONFISCATION OF TAMIL PROPERTY UNDER EMERGENCY LAW

A MOVE TO DESTROY TAMILS ECONOMICALLY

S.T.ARASAN

Rehabilitation of Property and Industries Authority (REPIA), set up under the Emergency (Rehabilitation of Property, Business or Industries) Regulation of 1983, has the stated aim of carrying out "repair, restoration and rehabilitation" of "affected property" which includes residential buildings, commercial houses, wholesale premises, stores, retail shops, restaurants and industrial establishments of all kinds.

REPIA is vested with powers to "acquire in any manner and hold, take or give, lease or hire, mortgage, pledge, sell or otherwise dispose of any movable or immovable property....clear and redevelop....possess, control.....affected property vested in the State...".

A significant omission is that affected property is not defined. Affected property is not defined in the Regulations either as damaged property or as those affected by the Sinhalese riots of May, June and July 1983. REPIA's jurisdiction is not restricted to any geographical area. It is, therefore, open to the Government to treat any kind of property belonging to any Tamil or other person or institution associated with Tamils or others showing sympathy to the Tamils as affected property. This law is abominable and deliberately pernicious. The role of REPIA should be looked at in the light of the sinister intentions evident from the statements of the Government's Ministers of Finance, Industries, Trade and Plantations and other Ministers and the Sinhalese chauvinists in the United National Party whose declared aim is "dislodging the Tamils from their disproportionate influence over large sectors of Sri Lanka's economy". The feelings of the Sinhalese Ministers are also evident from their statements - sometimes subtle, sometimes explicit - such as coming from Mr. Ronnie de Mel (Minister of Finance), who sees the "only solution" to the Tamil problem to be "to restore the rights of the Sinhalese majority", and from Mr. Athulathmudali (Minister of Trade), who is in the process of "reorganising foodstuff wholesale business centred in the Pettah commercial district of Colombo" - and who insists that "it is no longer in my interest to allow one community (Tamils) to dominate the wholesale trade in any commodity". Then there is Mr. Cyril Mathew (Minister of Industries), with his oft-quoted theory of "Diabolical Conspiracy of the Tamils", who is now generally believed to have engineered the systematic destruction of all industrial buildings and assets belonging to the Tamils and having the "operation complete", executed by hired goons and his followers in the U.N.P Trade Unions.

The Sinhalese Chauvinists in the South of the country have succeeded in their diabolical plot: the destruction of the economic base of the Tamils and preventing them from re-establishing even their shattered bases if and when they recovered from the shock of the disaster inflicted on them by marauding mobs and murderers.

THE SINHALA PLAN

In understanding the Sinhalese plan to weaken the Tamil economy and expropriation of business and property belonging to Tamils, the last six-year period merits scrutiny. There is a very significant difference between the several racial riots prior to 1977 and those organised since the U.N.P. captured power in that year. The pre-1977 era witnessed rioters attacking Tamil politicians, processions and Tamil officers, but damage to properties was minimal. Arson was limited to the odd throwing of petrol bombs at street boutiques and looting generally carried out by hoodlums and urchins, not always attributable to Sinhalese miscreants. There was no visible threat during those riots to the economic base of the Tamils. Also, the Government law and order machinery was generally available and active to contain the magnitude of outbursts, prevent wanton damage and to help the victims. Since 1977, however, in every 'riot' the Government's Sinhalese army, navy and police personnel were either present during the attacks, witnessing the killings and destruction of property without taking any effective steps to reduce the impact, or actually engineering and executing the arson, looting, etc. And this, often when they were in their service uniforms, and at other times in their 'civil' dress. The more daring deeds and destruction are carried out during nights and curfew times when the Tamils people dare not come out of their homes and the attackers have a free-for-all. There have been several occasions when the army and police pleaded ignorance of serious arson and destruction. There were other times when it became public knowledge that armed services were responsible for the misdeeds; the President and his Cabinet would admit "army/police excesses" but yet take no meaningful action against the perpetrators or prevent future occurrence. So much so, since 1979, it is not clear to the innocent people whether these 'riots' endorsed or executed by the Sinhalese armed forces were battles carried out at their discretion or were engineered according to a master plan approved by the President and his Sinhalese ministers -

an undeclared war with deliberate and cowardly attacks on the Tamils economic base.

THOUSANDS KILLED

Thousands of Tamils have been killed since 1977 by the Sinhalese police, army, navy, air force and thugs. But more important, from the Sinhalese vantage point, economic resources belonging to the Tamils have been plundered and destroyed. Even here the value of the losses cannot be measured in terms of replacement cost of the physical infrastructure and resources subjected to destruction. The Tamil owners of the institutions destroyed have been deprived of their economic activities and livelihood for years to come. **By repetitive destruction Tamil entrepreneurs are also prevented from re-establishing their economic base.**

It is in this light one should look at the most recent riots of May/July 1983. In the pogrom of August 1977 the line rooms (residences) of Tamil plantation workers were burnt, their possessions looted, and the Vavuniya town was burnt by Police personnel during curfew hours. Nearly 100 Hindu temples all over the island were destroyed. Several million rupees worth of business, residential and personal properties were lost. In the June/August 1981 attacks, the largest markets in the North and Eastern Provinces were burnt and so were parts of the town of Jaffna and shops in Chunnakam, the second largest market in the Northern Province. On June 1st 1982, Police personnel set fire to the Jaffna Public Library with 100,000 volumes of rare books, and desecrated temples and revered statues.

BURNING OR KANTHARMADAM

The May/July 1983 attacks started on May 18 with the burning down of almost the entire hamlet in Kantharmadam - more than 60 houses were destroyed, and setting fire to the Jaffna bazaar for the second time within two years. Again, on 1st June, Army/Police burnt down the New Bazaar in Vavuniya and destroyed property belonging to the Gandhiam Society. June 1983 witnessed the worst attacks in Trincomalee, the natural harbour town in the Eastern Province. Hundreds of houses (214), shops (24), temples (8) and a Christian ashram were burnt and destroyed, mostly during curfew hours, allegedly with active participation by Police/Army/Navy personnel.

The July 1983 attacks on property were carried out systematically and completely

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so as to make it economically difficult for the Tamil owners to re-establish themselves and impossible to return to their homes and businesses because the physical facilities and resources had been totally destroyed. Here lies the crux of the master plan-destruction of the economic base and infrastructure so that Tamils will find no possibility of returning to re-establish in any part of the country, particularly outside the Northern Province.

In this context it should also be recalled that when the President announced the banning of 'separatist' political parties he confirmed that by legislation property would be confiscated and persons would be debarred from practising their trade or profession. The Tamil cry for separation has been strong for more than ten years and J.R. had made several 'deals' with the T.U.L.F. during and after the 1977 parliamentary election. Even if one could find the not so easy justification for coming down so hard on separatism so late in the day, there is no reason to think in terms of confiscation of property except to undermine the economic power of Tamils. Taking over the economic assets of Tamils had always been in the minds of the U.N.P. Sinhalese ministers as the sure way of weakening the Tamils. Whatever wealth was not destroyed it was planned to have it confiscated under the guise of punishment for anybody sympathising with the Tamil clamour for separation as the only solution against Sinhalese hatred, dehumanization, mayhem and murder.

REPIA legislation is the final effort to close any let-out for Tamils who yet have the will and confidence to re-establish themselves. Every affected property, industry or business shall with immediate effect vest absolutely in the State....and REPIA has the power to decide what is an "affected property" - not necessarily damaged or destroyed or had been subject to attack during the riots. "Where any question arises as to whether any property, industry or business is an affected property, such question shall be decided by REPIA by a declaration in writing and such declaration shall be final and conclusive and shall not be called in question in any court in any proceedings whatsoever".

SINISTER MOVE

The initial reaction of the public was to accept the Government's stated intention that the legislation was to protect the interests of Tamil victims of the riots, against unscrupulous Sinhalese who would be out to illegally occupy the damaged and deserted properties or to conclude distress sales to the disadvantage of the victims. Subsequently, the legislation was interpreted as a sinister move to prevent the victims from making claims against the Government for compensation - a kind of

blackmail where anybody who seeks compensation will be exposed to the risk of the property being declared as an "affected property", and taken over by REPIA for "repairs, restoration and rehabilitation", and for dealing with it as deemed fit.

The most intriguing aspect of all this is that the owner of a property or a business entrepreneur has no voice in deciding whether this property should be deemed to be damaged or considered an affected property for whatever reason. The owner has no freedom to repair the premises himself by using his own or borrowed funds. Neither has he the freedom to determine how the repairs and rehabilitation are to be carried out on property which legally belongs to him.

REPIA might not have the resources now or even in the near future to properly repair or restore riot damage estimated in billions of rupees. The budget situation is so precarious that it is not feasible for the Government to allocate more than a token amount of, say, Rs.100 million for REPIA's activities. Mr. Ronnie de Mel, the Finance Minister, is on record as having appealed to the local banks for "donations towards the reconstruction of businesses and homes which were damaged or destroyed during the riots". When addressing the bankers the Minister had stated that "the country's short-term need to rebuild factories, shops and houses totalled an estimated Rs.3 billion to Rs.4 billion". It is not known what pledges were made by the banks but is most unlikely that the private banks - Commercial, Hatton National, Grindlays and Chartered would contribute more than Rs.2 million each. Thus, the money available for its rehabilitation work cannot exceed Rs.125 million, which is only 3-4% of the short-term need as estimated by the Minister. This would mean that REPIA cannot undertake restoration of all the damaged or destroyed properties. Even assuming that only 50% of the 'affected' are salvageable industries, businesses and houses, and the remaining 50% divested, funds put in by REPIA for rehabilitation would not cover even 10% in most cases. Government's intention, however, is that in exchange for REPIA injecting funds for reparation of damage it will take a share in the equity and appoint directors.

FOLLOWING MALAYSIAN EXAMPLE.

In theory, and in response to queries from foreign governments and the international business community, the President and his ministers state that former owners will be free to buy back Government shares 'in time'. But some ministers do not disguise their redistributive intentions. They are talking about following Malaysia's example of writing preferences for the majority community into commercial law. Thus, the Trade Minister's efforts at reorganising the rice wholesaling trade to break the

Tamil grip, and declared objective of re-developing ravaged city centres, such as the Pettah commercial complex for reallocation not necessarily to the former occupants but to make room for new Sinhalese entrants are all of a piece with the cherished goal of 'Sinhalesing' trade and industry. Using REPIA to inject a small proportion of the repair cost and insisting on a Government share in the equity and control of Tamil-owned businesses is being supported naively by Mr. Rasaputram whose logic flows as follows: "Companies in Tamil hands might otherwise be hostage to another wave of communal attacks. So it is better to make Tamil family firms to go public" (Sinhala public? State public?). From these manoeuvres it will become clear to all thinking people that REPIA is the ingenious device engineered by the Sinhala chauvinists to take over successful Tamil-owned industries and businesses, to be eventually passed on to yet-to-be-found Sinhalese 'entrepreneurs', or for the Government to continue as unsolicited new partners in Tamil enterprises.

The Government's stake is stated to be temporary, but if the alternative is returning control to the Tamils, the Government might decide to hold on to the businesses they ruined by making them inefficient State enterprises. Whatever might become of these industries and businesses, the main policy objective of the President and his ministers would have been achieved - destroying the economic base of the Tamils, clipping their economic power and starving them out. Will REPIA be the last vehicle for the delegitimisation of the Tamils, Greater humiliation and annihilation must follow. But how soon?

The author gratefully acknowledges the use of the following articles:

The Economist 20-26 August 1983

- (i) *In Gandhi we trust*
- (ii) *The Wages of Envy*

Financial Times 10 August 1983

Sri Lanka appeals to Banks for Reconstruction Aid.

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SRI LANKA'S ABUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

BY ORVILLE H. SCHELL

While world attention has focused on violent conflict in Sri Lanka between the mainly Buddhist Sinhalese majority and largely Hindu Tamil minority, insufficient attention has been paid to the Government's civil rights record. Yet it is precisely at a time when the Government has sought a return to the rule of law and a reduction in ethnic conflict, in a country often cited as a model of third-world democratic development, that a demonstration of its respect for rights would take on heightened importance.

Much news coverage has focused on violence used by small Tamil extremist separatist groups, which have carried out several attacks in the past. One claimed responsibility for the ambush of 13 soldiers in July that triggered the recent indiscriminate, widespread reprisals against the Tamils and led to violence that resulted in more than 300 deaths. Such Tamil killings, and those by the Sinhalese, have been widely and rightly condemned.

The Government has repeatedly denied that its security forces violate fundamental rights. However, as head of an Amnesty International fact-finding mission in January 1982, I received first-hand evidence that incommunicado detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act was widespread, and that the army and police regularly tortured political suspects and carried out political killings in June 1981, similar to those recently confirmed by President J.R. Jayawardene. I believe that recent killings by security authorities follow a pattern previously set.

President Jayawardene confirmed on Aug. 7 that the armed forces had killed at least 20 innocent Tamils in the north, saying that the army had withheld information from him about these excesses. The Tamils, including an 83-year-old teacher, apparently were slain in retaliation by the army, immediately after the killing of the 13 soldiers. The authorities are understood to have waived the usual requirement of holding an inquest.

The Government must bear full responsibility for these breaches of the right to life and other violations of human rights, especially in light of the wide powers that in recent years it has given to the security forces, which apparently have interpreted them as a licence to act with impunity. The 1979 Prevention of Terrorism Act, for example, allows people to be held incommunicado for up to 18 months without trial, thus creating classical conditions for torture. Most recently, emergency regulation 15A permits the army and police to bury or cremate dead bodies without inquest procedures or a post-mortem.

When Amnesty International visited, it

learned that prisoners were held incommunicado for long periods and in some cases in solitary confinement for more than eight months. Torture during this period was said to include hanging victims upside down from hooks, beating them with metal bars and driving needles under toenails and fingernails.

Amnesty also investigated the death of Tamils apparently shot or beaten to death by security forces in June 1981 after the shooting of two police officers. Two young Tamils rounded up at the time told us they were taken to lonely spots, shot by a police officer and left to die. Although one is now handicapped, both somehow survived. Before being shot, one said, he was told by the officer: "You people are shooting Sinhalese so we are shooting Tamils." It is regrettable that the Government did not institute an independent investigation to establish responsibility for these killings and take measures against those responsible. Instead, one police official involved was promoted and emergency legislation was introduced, facilitating further killings.

Clearly, the Government faces serious in-

ternal security problems. It has a responsibility to bring to trial those responsible for violent acts. In addition, it has a responsibility under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Sri Lanka is a party, to make sure that torture and political killings are never used - even in a national emergency.

There is still hope that the Government of Sri Lanka will respect the tradition of upholding the rule of law. Unless it upholds its own laws, and international human rights commitments as well, it is highly unlikely that there can be any real solution to Sri Lanka's problems. Now, with calm apparently restored, the Government could conduct a full review of past events and take steps to protect human rights such as ending incommunicado detention and creating independent machinery to investigate reports of torture and political killings, with published findings and proceedings against those held responsible. Those who care about democracy in Sri Lanka should urge the Government to do so.

Orville H. Schell, former president of the New York City Bar Association, is chairman of the Americas Watch Committee.

By kind courtesy of THE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 1983.

UK BLACK TRADE UNIONISTS CONDEMN LANKAN ATROCITIES

The Black Trade Unionists Solidarity Movement (BTUSM) in a strongly worded letter to President Jayawardene of Sri Lanka, has condemned the Sri Lankan Government for the continuing campaign of murder, looting and rape of Tamils. The BTUSM, quoting eye-witness accounts of rape, burnings and lootings, states that Sri Lankan Government Ministers have been taking an active part in these atrocities and have personally led and transported gangs of armed thugs. The BTUSM has called on the Sri Lankan President to:

1. Issue a declaration that all atrocities against Tamils would be severely punished.
2. Set up a Human Rights Inquiry conducted by International persons of repute.
3. Pay compensation to Tamils who have lost homes and possessions.
4. Give equal opportunities to Tamils in Education and Government employment.
5. Teach the Tamil language and culture in all schools and respect Tamil feast days by making them National Holidays.

The BTUSM has also stated that it would make representations to the British Government to stop the request for arms and riot equipment that has been made by the Sri Lankan Government.

In a letter to the Foreign Secretary the BTUSM urged him to use his influence to get the Sri Lankan Government to set up an International Inquiry into the situation facing Tamils.

SRI LANKA RELIEF FUND

A "Sri Lanka Relief Fund" has been set up in accordance with the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs Indira Gandhi's announcement in Parliament on 12 August 1983. At the time of the announcement the Prime Minister had appealed to all Indian citizens, including those living abroad, to contribute generously to the fund.

Those wishing to contribute to this fund can send payments directly to any Branch of the State of Bank of India in U.K. (whose receipt will be valid for claiming exemption from income-tax, contributions to the fund being exempt from Income-tax under Section 80 G of the Income-tax Act, 1961) or through India House, Aldwych, London.

Contd from page 5

brutality, the Sri Lankan security forces unleashed a reign of terror in Batticaloa. Several houses were burnt down and many were killed or injured. The government reluctantly admitted killing in error an innocent Tamil man.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL LABELLED 'COMMUNIST'

The state-controlled Sri Lankan media have, of late, been full of malicious propaganda against Amnesty International. Banner headlines accuse AI of being a 'communist front' organisation.

This propaganda campaign follows a detailed report recently released by AI concerning the gross violations of human rights in Sri Lanka and the widespread prevalence of detention incommunicado, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of detainees, killings and disappearance of persons taken into custody by the security forces. AI also had protested to the overnforces. AI also had protested to the Government of Sri Lanka about the role of the security forces in the July-August violence and the killing of political detainees in prison.

UNCIVILISED

A certain amount of boorishness must be expected from any government that makes allies of racials and religious fanatics. But the Sri Lankan government must take the cake for a display of bad temper over the coverage of Sri Lankan events by the Indian media. It has threatened not only to deport Indian correspondents reporting on Sri Lanka in an objective manner but not to the taste of the authorities but gone further and said the correspondents whose newspapers take a critical attitude to Sri Lankan activities will be prevented from carrying out their work. If President Jayewardene or any of his colleagues think that this will cow down Indian newspapers, they will soon find out how mistaken they are. The Indian media cannot be easily blackmailed like the Sri Lankan press which is government-owned.

The panicky manner in which the Sri Lankan government reacted to the attack on Tamil-speaking Sri Lankans by the army and para-military forces is revealed by the report filed by an American journalist that President Jayewardene sought military assistance from the United States and Britain. The Sri Lankan government

Quoting from a little heard of Scottish publication, 'Approaches', the Sri Lankan press alleges that "Amnesty International has in fact every evidence of being one of the most effective, i.e., clearly disguised, communist front organisations yet to emerge". Ignoring the record of the AI as the most leading civil rights organisation in the world and the fact that it had stoutly campaigned for observance of human and political rights of all peoples and published reports concerning violations of such rights in all parts of the world including the Soviet Union and other communist countries, the Sri Lankan media give publicity to the malevolent allegation that while AI "claims to be an instrument for the defence of human rights, it is the most effective means of serving communism's strategic purposes."

promptly expelled the journalist. When an Indian journalist belonging to a sister newspaper from Delhi reported that Sri Lanka was being ruled by a cabal of three cynical racial religious bigots, his visa was cancelled. And now more threats are made for the future. The Sri Lankan government, like the South African racist regime, thinks it can hush up ugly happenings by muzzling the press. South Africa has not succeeded. Neither will Sri Lanka.

President Jayewardene seems to have lost a sense of balance out of fear that India may invade Sri Lanka. This childish nonsense has prompted him to seek foreign intervention. This has moved him to take action against journalists covering political events in his country. He should apply himself to healing the injuries suffered by the Tamil-speaking people and discourage racist propaganda and religious exclusivism. That is what any civilised country is expected to do under the circumstances. Instead, he seems to be accusing everybody else for the eruption of ethnic violence. He cannot divert public attention from the seamy side of his administration.

(By kind courtesy of HINDUSTAN TIMES, Editorial, 29.9.83).

at the attacks on the Tamils of Sri Lanka. What concerns us as trade unionists is that the burning and looting was conducted by the State forces with the help of right wing racist thugs and that the Government has permitted the army and police to dispose of the dead bodies without an inquest. These actions are clearly aimed at the rights of the trade unionists and working people in Sri Lanka. We call on the NEC to give every assistance and publicity to the right of the Tamil people to self determination and to raise the matter in the TUC.

A copy of this resolution is to be sent to the Sri Lanka High Commission in London."

'GUARDIAN' ATTACKED

The internationally respected English daily, the GUARDIAN, has suddenly fallen foul of the Sri Lankan authorities and more notably of the chauvinist sections of the Sinhalese living in the UK. The reason is not far to seek. The Guardian gave a reasonable amount of coverage to the atrocities committed against the Tamils of Sri Lanka in July-August this year.

To the Sinhalese, or for that matter all Sri Lankans, the liberal-minded Guardian was THE NEWSPAPER until such time as it started reporting about the ugly side of the so-called 'Isle of Paradise'. The fact that all the reports filed by Guardian correspondents from Colombo passed through the government's censor did not matter to them.

The Sri Lankan media have given wide publicity to the smear campaign against the Guardian. Although the paper published an apology for publishing a wrong photograph along with one of Dr. David Selbourne's articles which he wrote for it after he was expelled by the Sri Lankan government, the servile Lankan press have gone to town on the Guardian's 'fabrication'.

What is surprising is the reaction of the Sinhalese living in the UK. Did they except that the killing, burning and the maiming of Tamils in their thousands should be covered-up? Hushing up such atrocities is the usual practice of the state-controlled press in Sri Lanka. They should not expect the same conduct from the Guardian which is an independent paper. They should at least be happy that what appeared in the Guardian did not even constitute five per cent of the horrors the Tamils faced from their compatriots in Sri Lanka.

JOBS...JOBS....

Those under 50 years of age and qualified in the following fields and interested in working in countries in the Caribbean area are requested to write with personal details:

- (a) Medical Doctors,
- (b) Dentists
- (c) Management Consultants
- (d) Accountants
- (e) Applied & Pure Scientists
- (f) Industrial Engineers
- (g) Irrigation & Drainage Engineers
- (h) Agricultural Engineers
- (i) Rice/Coconut/Sugar technicians
- (j) Maths & Science Teachers for O & A Levels.

Please enclose stamped self-addressed envelope when writing.

**TAMIL RESCUE APPEAL
P.O. BOX. 208,
LONDON WC1N 3QN**

NALGO PROTESTS AGAINST ATTACK ON TAMILS.

The Greater London Council and Inner London Education Authority Branch of the National Association of Local Government Officers unanimously passed a resolution at its meeting held on August 4 expressing its indignation at the attacks upon the Tamil people of Sri Lanka.

The following is the full text of the resolution:

"This meeting of the GLC & ILEA Branch of NALGO wishes to express its indignation

THE TAMIL

I was born in Jaffna - That's up North,
A quiet, peaceful place,
I had three brothers, I was fourth,
I'm of the Tamil race.

I went to school, and I worked hard,
I had a thirst for knowledge,
My destiny? It was ill-starred,
Just a boy at Hindu College.

The school was good, I studied well,
No effort did I shirk,
I had to win, the truth to tell,
My old father could not work.

They said to me 'Get your degree
Then you can earn some money'.
I believed them then, but now you see:
The whole idea seems funny.

I had no chance to get a place,
Though I had passed the test!
You see I'm of the Tamil race,
And not like all the rest.

I was too young to understand,
I could not face defeat,
After all, this was my land,
And my family had to eat.

My brothers said 'Let's take up arms
Then we can put things right.
Give up work and leave our farms,
We'll stand and make a fight!'

I pleaded with them not to go,
Said 'Force is never good!'
One said 'But we must strike a blow'
They had not understood:
They'd done no harm, but someone told,
They were taken by the police!
It killed my mother, she was so old,
A merciful release.

There was no charge! They let them go,
But they'd been badly thrashed,
The eldest died a month ago,
All his inside was smashed.

So now I see what I must do!
They'll feel my wild reaction,
I'll arm myself and others too!
And lead a rebel faction.

We will fight and we will kill,
To see justice in this land,
And if we die, that is God's will,

So a campaign we have planned.

We'll put things right! We've had enough!
We'll show we are one nation,
Life will be hard, but we are tough,
This is my true vocation!

You think it wrong? Perhaps you're right,
Maybe it is an error!
We listened once, but now we'll fight!
They'll feel the Tamil Terror!

So now the country's plunged in war!
And the fields will run bright red!
The rule of the gun, is that the law?
If you don't agree you're dead?

Let's stop and think, Let's hesitate,
Out of evil can't come good!
Can we still talk? It's not too late,
Why drench the land in blood?

It's wrong to kill! And this vow I'll fulfil,
Forget the things that are done!
Is it possible still for men of good will,
To lead a united Ceylon? *

* This was composed in May 1978; a
united Ceylon may have been possible at
that time but certainly not after what
happened in May 1981 and thereafter.
The author is an Englishman who taught
in Sri Lanka.

INDIAN TAX CONCESSIONS TO SRI LANKAN MIGRANTS

The Government of India has relaxed income-tax regulations to those migrating from Sri Lanka since April this year with money not exceeding Rs.200,000. The migrants will be exempted from producing documentary evidence in support of their claim for the transfer of money from Sri Lanka if they fulfil two conditions.

The first condition is that the concerned person should have had sufficient resources in Sri Lanka to which the money brought by him to India could be reasonably attributed.

Secondly, he should inform the concerned income-tax officer within two months of his arrival in India about the funds brought over by him and all his family members and the date of their introduction in the accounts books.

This concessional treatment, however, does not apply to cases where the amount brought into India exceeds Rs.200,000 or where the person concerned had some sources of income either in India or in any other country other than Sri Lanka prior to migration or where he was assessed as resident in India either for assessment year preceding the year of migration or for earlier years.

In such cases the person concerned will be required to produce adequate evidence to reasonably satisfy the income-tax officer that he had sufficient resources in Sri Lanka to cover such amounts.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes has issued necessary instructions in this regard.

The Sri Lanka Government took a stern step towards an Indian newspaper, the Stateman of New Delhi, by conveying to it, that "as a consequence of the reporting, indulged in by its correspondent Mr. Sam Rajappa, he is not welcome in Sri Lanka and will not be issued a visa to enter Sri Lanka in future.

TALKS POSTPONED

At the request of President Jayawardene, the anticipated visit to Sri Lanka in mid-September of Mr.G.Parthasarathy, the Indian Prime Minister's special envoy, to resume negotiations with the government on the question of solving the Tamil problem was put off.

In a letter sent to Mrs Indira Gandhi, the President thanked her for the interest she had taken and the good offices extended to help resolve the Tamil problem and considered the sending of her special envoy as a helpful gesture. The President is said to have hinted that he needed more time to create the right atmosphere for further discussions.

Political observers note that the initial acceptance of the 'good offices' of the

Indian PM was designed only to buy time. Now that the hardliners like Cyril Mathew and the Buddhist clergy are becoming more strident in their anti-Indian outbursts, the stage is being prepared to completely scuttle the negotiations.

In the meantime, the Sri Lankan media is full of anti-Indian venom. The Minister of Trade and Shipping, Mr.Lalith Athulathmudali, who is widely believed to be one of the aspirants to Jayawardene's mantle on his demise, has become openly critical about "Indian interference". At a recent meeting he said, "We welcome friendship, assistance and concern but please do not poke your finger into our soup for too many cooks can spoil the broth, rendering it unfit for consumption."

PANKULAM COLONISED

Three hundred Sinhalese brought from clean outside the Eastern Province have now colonised the village of Pankulam in the Trincomalee District. This is said to have taken place under the lead given by the Minister of Industries, Mr.Cyril Mathew. Readers will recall that in May this year, the Sri Lankan security forces burnt down the huts of Tamil refugees who had settled in this area following the racial violence of 1977 and again of 1981. On this occasion many of the settlers were violently attacked and some even killed.

Two hundred unskilled Sinhalese have also been given jobs in the Port Cargo Corporation which is under the Minister of Trade and Shipping, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali. These handpicked men will work in the Port of Trincomalee.

'NAGA VIHARE NOT DAMAGED' SAYS MONK

Contrary to the false propaganda put out by Sinhala racists in the south of Sri Lanka and those living abroad, no Buddhist Temple or property belonging to the Sinhalese living or trading in the Jaffna district has been attacked.

A statement issued by the incumbent priest of Naga Vihare in Jaffna, Ven. Kada-wadduwa Nandarama Nayake Thera, said: "No damage has been caused to the Naga Vihare, Jaffna.

The rumours spread by certain elements that the temple was damaged are untrue. Contrary to rumours, none of the Sinhalese bakeries in Jaffna had been attacked. They were closed. The difference today in Jaffna is that there are not Sinhalese people. They could go there and live without fear".

Meanwhile the Sinhalese working in the Jaffna District, who were, rather intriguingly at that time, evacuated before the outbreak of racial violence on July 25, have returned to their posts.

The Sinhalese staff comprising 200 workers and several executives of the Cement Factory at Kankasanturai in Jaffna district have already been transported back there by a special train.

REFUGEES LIVE IN APPALLING CONDITIONS

The Red Cross announced (6.10.83) that there are still over 45,000 Tamil refugees living in make-shift camps. The fact that there are so many refugees even after two-and-a-half months of the outbreak of violence and that they are living in appalling conditions reveals the callousness of the government of Sri Lanka.

A report from Colombo by Vilma Wimaladasa published in the 'Daily Telegraph' (UK) states that the Tamil refugees are "still languishing in refugee camps, afflicted by a sense of helplessness and wondering how they can be resettled and live a normal life".

"Most of the refugees are 'stateless' persons of Indian origin and did not have a place to go to after the violence. Some officials in charge of them are said to be sympathetic and trying to help while others are entangled in red-tape and/or shockingly callous".

"Refugees say they have benefited only marginally from relief assistance. Part of the aid sent to them seems to have gone astray, and they live under numerous difficulties. For instance, an Air Force hangar

at Ratmalana, 10 miles south of Colombo, where refugees are housed is open on two sides, letting in rain and cold.

Poorest of the poor

At the airport Ratmalana camp there are 10 lavatories for 2,000 or more refugees. Temporary latrines installed have been unapproachable due to the stench.

The people in these camps were the poorest of the poor, and many say they do not want to live in Sri Lanka any longer. They fear more racial riots and want to go to India.

In the north, too, there are about 45,000 people who have jobs in the south but have not returned there."

SACKED MINISTER BECOMES NEW SPEAKER

Mr.M.A.Bakeer Markar, the Speaker of Sri Lanka's Parliament, was virtually removed from office when he was asked to submit his resignation from the Speakership. He has been replaced by Mr.E.L.Senanyake, MP for Kandy.

Two reasons are being attributed to the removal of Mr.Markar. The first is that it represents a surrender to the demand of Cyril Mathew's Sinhala Sangvidhanaya and the Sinhala Bala Mandalaya, the basic policy of both being that all important positions in the country should be held only by Sinhala-Buddhists. The second

Mr.Cyril Mathew when he, as Speaker, did not allow him to have his own way in Parliament during debates.

Besides the removal of Mr.Markar, the appointment of Mr.E.L.Senanayake in his place has raised eyebrows in the country. He was dismissed only recently from his Cabinet post of Minister of Agriculture following a scandal concerning a contract for the import of fertilizer.

A Cabinet sub-committee found him culpable and he was asked to resign. The elevation of such a person to the high office of Speaker when only a short while ago he had to quit Ministerial office in such questionable circumstances is scandalous in the extreme.

TULF MPs TO LOSE SEATS.

Following the decision of the Members of Parliament belonging to the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) not to take the "oath against separation" under the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution, it is learnt that they will not return to attend Parliament and will thereby forfeit their seats. A Member of Parliament who fails to attend Parliament for three consecutive months without leave ceases to be a MP. Mr.R.Sambandan, MP for Trincomalee, has already vacated his seat under this rule.

For the first time in the country's history since representative government was introduced, there will be no representation in Parliament for the substantial Tamil minority.

NO LOCAL GOVT IN NORTH & EAST.

Most of the Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Councillors of local bodies in the Northern and Eastern provinces in Sri Lanka have ceased to hold office following their refusal or failure to take the "oath against separation" under the recently enacted Sixth Amendment to the Constitution.

TAMIL PUBLIC SERVANTS TO RETIRE AT 45

The Sri Lankan government has decided to permit public servants displaced by the recent racial violence to retire at 45 years or those who had put in 20 years service. Of the many Tamil public servants who had to find refuge in the northern and eastern provinces, many have not returned to their posts. And those who had returned found it almost impossible to obtain accommodation.

Incidentally, posters have been put up in various parts of the country, allegedly by the Sinhala Sangvidhanaya, calling upon the Sinhalese, Muslims and other non-Tamils not to provide accommodation or rent out rooms to Tamils if and when they returned.

The cabinet has announced the following decisions taken in respect of Tamil public servants:

- All public servants displaced by recent events will be regarded as having been on leave with pay in August.
- Those who still have no accommodation or no prospects of finding accommodation immediately, will be considered to be on leave in September as well.
- Heads of departments will be asked to identify persons whom they urgently need and will be asked to find accommodation for them.
- Departments will be asked to fill vacancies in the north and east, using the services of displaced officers.
- All corporations will be expected to follow government departments and will be asked to fix dates for the compulsory return of displaced officers to work.
- The government will take up similar arrangements with the private sector for the return of private sector employees to work.
- Arrangements will also be made to enable medical students displaced by the disturbances to sit the final MBBS examination in Jaffna.

TAMIL ARTS RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Stylized art forms should not always remain totally detached from contemporary social life. From their exalted position the fine arts are uniquely placed to reach all minds. The challenge presented by the current Tamil situation has been taken up by our artistes.

Marrying the traditional art forms of Bharatha Natyam and Carnatic music to contemporary themes, more specifically to the current situation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, a captivating and thought provoking programme was presented on 29th September 83 at Merton Civic Hall, Wimbledon. Raji Radhakrishnan's narrative in dance 'Thanga Thamil Eelam' was embellished with patriotic songs by Prema Ganeshan and Savithri Allirajah expertly accompanied by Rudrani Balakrishnan (violin) and Chatterjee (tabla). The instructive aspect of the fine arts that deepen the emotional involvement and boost the morale, burst through the gloom and despondency brought on by the recent mayhem in Sri Lanka. The proceeds will be used by the Campaign for the Defence of Tamil Rights to publicise and enlighten the policy makers of all countries about the plight of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

The undoubted talents of Raji Radhakrishnan as a Bharatha Natyam dancer made the story of Eelam a touching epic. Her lithe, energetic and faultlessly competent performance at the young age of 12 augurs well for the future. The pose she adopted to portray Eelam (the geographical configuration of the North and East of the island of Ceylon) deserves to be adopted as the logo for Eelam. Mr. T.P. Radhakrishnan, the totally dedicated Tamilian, must be a proud father.

R T P



LAMENT OF A REFUGEE

It occurred to me thrice, in '58, '77 and '83,

The incidents in each of these years Escalating in intensity, that I became A member of the "Boat People" on each occasion.

I shall soon be applying for a season ticket On Lalith's boats for, 'twill come in handy When I am dislodged again, and not killed.

I'm no prophet of doom but that 'twill happen again

Is on the cards, assurances and promises notwithstanding

I was a refugee in the land of my birth in 1958 - In Ceylon.

They say we came from India, so what? For the Sinhalese too claim they came from there

Tho' at different times and from different parts:

I'm proud to be a Ceylonese; I was born so and so shall I remain

The 'Sri Lankan' nationality was foisted on me:

I would find myself a stranger in India No less than a son from the Ruhuna For we have no connections there I have nowhere to go for I have lost my house and all -

I became a refugee in the land of my birth in 1977 - in Sri Lanka.

My heart bleeds to hear the stark tragedies, The harrowing tales of violence, arson and loot

Also of the 'Belsen' at Welikada and massacre of innocents

While in 'Protective Custody' which would shame any Government!

O God, all these from the Land of the Triple Gem:

The initials J.R. I had opined Stood for Justice and Righteousness But what a travesty of both we have had In the last week of July

And I am a refugee again in the land of my birth in 1983 - In the "Paradise" Island of Sri Lanka.

Now they are all "earning merit" by doling out Relief, mostly from friendly countries, While persuading and legislating for us to

O, MY GOD, NO!

A TAMIL REFUGEE

CANADIAN CHURCHMAN ACCUSES SRI LANKA

'Tamil killings are genocide'

By DAVID OVED Staff Writer

The government of Sri Lanka is practising genocide on its Tamil minority, former United Church moderator Robert McClure told 100 demonstrators in front of City Hall yesterday.

"It's a terrific amount of persecution for such little cause other than racial," he said. The Tamils are being attacked for who they are rather than anything they've done, he said.

"The Tamils in Sri Lanka did not mount an armed revolt," he noted.

"We say to the government of Sri Lanka that your conduct and your attitude towards the Tamils people in Sri Lanka is not acceptable to us Canadians," McClure told the protesters, nearly all from Metro's 600 member Tamil community.

McClure, moderator from 1968-71, has

considerable experience in Asia and said that the communal conflict between the majority (75%) Sinhalese and the minority (25%) Tamils is based on the latter group's economic success.

During the demonstration, Anusha Aruliah, 8, a Grade 2 student at Oakridge Jr. Public School, Scarborough, recounted one of Aesop's Fables about the wolf who preferred a half-full belly in the wide to a full bowl and chains.

"When you exchange freedom for security, you will eventually end up with neither," Anusha said, apparently alluding to the Tamil independence movement.

In a unanimous show of hands, the demonstrators approved a proposal that Canada raise at the UN the issue of the recent massacres of at least 300 Tamils. *By courtesy of THE TORONTO SUN, 10.8.83*

TAMIL NEIGHBOURHOOD GATHERING

On the 4th of September, some Tamils living in North London met at St. Peter's Hall, Lyonsdown Road, New Barnet.

At this inaugural meeting forty families were present. Their objective was to build up a close knit social group which would cater to their cultural needs. These first volunteers decided that an all-out effort should be made to contact all the Tamils living in and around North London with a view to foster Tamil consciousness and to teach Tamil to the young and not-so-young. This is a very commendable project and well worth emulating by Tamils living in other areas. Such a meeting could be a mini-forum where they could exchange views, plan social events, help one another, especially new comers to the locality and last but not least, sponsor and foster projects in Sri Lanka.

The next meeting of this group is at the same venue on the 23rd October, at 3.30 p.m.

It is proposed to set up similar neighbourhood gatherings in other parts of Greater London in the near future.

TRA & CDTR MERGE

The Tamil Rescue Appeal and the Campaign for the Defence of Tamil Rights have merged following a joint meeting of members of both organisations held at TRA's office in Holborn on October 8.

Considering the proliferation of organisations among expatriate Tamils, the merger of these two groups is welcome.

P.O. BOX 208, London WC1N 3QN

Telephone: 01-405 5978

KOBBEKADUWA DIES

Mr. Hector Kobbekaduwa, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party's Presidential candidate in the October 1982 elections, died recently following a heart attack.

SCOT CLOTHES FOR TAMIL REFUGEES.

One of the immediate needs of the refugees is clothes. We have been advised that the requirements of clothes are as follows:

- Shirts
- Sarees
- Childrens' Summer Clothes
- Light Weight Trousers

If you or your friends have any of the above items which you can spare, please parcel and mark them appropriately and have them delivered to the nearest of the collection points which are detailed below. Due to the urgency of the need we propose to despatch them by 31 October 1983. Please therefore have the clothes delivered before that date:-

- Mr.V.Selladurai, 35 Chadacre Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex. (Tel. 01-550 7439)
- Mr.R.Mahadevan Avaril, 62 Blakes Lane, New Malden, Surrey. (Tel. 01-949 1944)
- Mr.R.Sivanithy, 181 Torbay Road, Harrow, Middx. (Tel. 01-422 8984)
- Mr.T.Kulathungam, 98 Westway, Shirley, Croydon, Surrey. (Tel. 01-777 5552)
- Mr.R.Rudra, 323 Great North Way, Finchley, London, N.W.4. (Tel. 01-203 3554)
- Mr.S.Thambirajah, 28 Chester Road, Forest Gate, London, E.7. (Tel. 01-471 2530)
- Dr.K.Sivakumar, 26 Langdon Shaw, Sidcup, Kent- (Tel. 01-300 2701)

EELAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

This campaign has been formed to:

- * Highlight the oppression of the Tamil speaking people in Sri Lanka.
- * Mobilise the widest possible support for the national liberation struggle for EELAM (an independent state in the traditional homelands of the Tamil people)

We demand:

- Self determination for the Tamil-speaking people of Sri Lanka
- Repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act
- Release of all political prisoners
- Withdrawal of troops from the Tamil homelands
- The freedom of all political parties and individuals to express and campaign for their political viewpoints without persecution
- The dismantling of artificial and state-aided, racist colonisation schemes in the Tamil homelands
- The establishment of an independent international inquiry into the recent anti-Tamil pogroms.

What you can do to help

- * Get your organisation to adopt a resolution to support the campaign demands
 - * Join our campaign and help our work
 - * Send a donation to our campaign and help us to distribute our literature
 - * Write a letter of protest to The High Commissioner for Sri Lanka, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London W2
- EELAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN, P.O. BOX 318, LONDON NW1 8HS.

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class disappears. From those elements can be created a society, based on the fair and equal distribution of wealth, that can lift its head a foot higher. It must not be based, as at present, on greed and the squandering of wealth by multinational companies and international banks. When the Minister replies, will he deal with my three points? Will he arrange for publication of lists showing the wages that British firms pay to Sri Lankan workers? Will he end the collaboration between British and Sri Lankan security forces? Will he cancel the state visit by J.R.Jayewardene in October?

TAMIL TIMES

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ANTI-TAMIL VIOLENCE IN SRI LANKA "DELIBERATELY PLANNED"

Q. By all accounts, the Tamils in Sri Lanka are facing the grimmest crisis they have faced in the island in modern times. What is your analysis of the overall situation? How does this differ from the earlier riots in which also the Tamils were the target?

A. Mr. Amirthalingam: I think, there is one fundamental difference in that the latest riots have been more systematically organised and the armed forces have played a decisive role in the attacks on Tamils and their property. That gives one the impression that it has been planned by somebody in authority who could have combined the action of the armed forces along with that of groups of civilians who were acting in a very organised way. I get the impression that this was a deliberately planned campaign to beat the Tamils down into total submission and drive them out of the Sinhala areas, destroy their economic base by destroying their industries and also cow down the Tamils in the Tamil majority areas. This was a three-pronged attack.

Q. Many, other than leaders of TULF, have pinpointed the army's active participation. This is a very significant new factor in the attack. Would you say that, or was this foreshadowed by earlier happenings?

Rampage

A. There were earlier incidents where some individual members of the armed forces had shot down, killed or gone on rampage, but I think, here all the three sections of the armed forces, the army, the navy and the air force, played a part in the latest violence. And, this has happened in all parts of the country.

In Jaffna the army personnel shot and killed at least 51 civilians on July 24 and 25. It was a killing of the most brutal type because in certain places students were lined up and shot and killed. In certain places, they were just pumping bullets at passing vehicles crowded with people and people in those vehicles died. In certain places they shot and killed people in their beds - a university lecturer by name Kalaparameswaran and his aged father-in-law were killed while they were sleeping in their house, and even women were shot and killed this way. That happened in Jaffna.

In Trincomalee, the navy personnel had gone on a planned rampage and within six hours, from 9.30 in the night to 3.30 in the early hours of the morning, 150 navy personnel destroyed every Tamil-owned business establishment in Trincomalee town.

Thugs in forefront

In Colombo, in Badulla and other places where thugs had gone and tried to loot and were repulsed by people, the army



IN A WIDE-RANGING INTERVIEW, MR. APPAPILLAI AMIRTHALINGAM, TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT LEADER, ANALYSES THE RECENT HAPPENINGS IN SRI LANKA AND TRACES THE ROOTS OF THE PRESENT CRISIS.

intervened and shot and killed everybody who resisted the thugs. This happened in Badulla where in one place, in front of a business place called Yogam Stores, 14 people who resisted - one Sundaram and his four sons and others, people of Indian origin, who had done well in business —were shot and killed and tyres were burnt beyond recognition by the army. And, in Colombo also, they did the same thing in a place called Sea Street; where there was resistance to the thugs the army had gone to the scene and shot and killed the people. So one gets the impression that they were acting on definite instruction, putting the thugs in the forefront; if they failed or if they were repulsed, the army was to go on the scene and kill.

Q. One gets the impression that Trincomalee, if not the focus of attack, was one of the major focal points of attack. Why single out Trincomalee?

Attacks in Trincomalee

A. I think the attack on the Tamils in Trincomalee started long before the violence in the rest of the country broke out. It started shortly after the urban council elections took place on May 18 and the attacks started on June 3. It was started by the army and the police, and the hoodlums were drawn in whenever it was necessary. And in certain instances, the navy personnel acted directly; in certain places they had gone for some sort of investigation, ahead of the thugs, and made sure that there was no likelihood of any resistance,

arrested any young fellow who could offer resistance. Then immediately, hard on their heels, thugs followed and set fire to houses.

I think this is definitely connected to the attempt to hand over some interests in Trincomalee to the Americans. Mr. Cyril Mathew is the Minister in-charge of the petroleum corporation and he is the one who is interested in this matter. We have definite evidence that one of his Assistant Secretaries was present and had discussions with the army and police personnel at the height of the troubles in Trincomalee.

Religion as cover

There was also an attempt to destroy Hindu temples in Trincomalee because Mr. Cyril Mathew has been trying to make Trincomalee a Sinhala area, using Buddhism as an instrument. Under the pretext that they have discovered Buddhist ruins in various places, using the funds of Government industrial corporations, they have put up Buddhist centres in various parts of Trincomalee district. So this is a multi-pronged attack using religion, armed forces and racist elements to dislodge Tamil elements and make it a predominantly Sinhala area so that there may be no resistance to their move to enable the Americans to get a foothold there.

Q. There is a version put out by Mr. Jayewardene to the effect that the riots were really related to a revolutionary conspiracy to destabilise the UNP Govern-

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ent and its experiment and to install a leftist regime, perhaps a militarist solution. What kind of credibility would you give that?

More right-wing

A. I don't think that there could be any truth in this story. I think the forces that organised all this violence and carried it out were sources very close to the Government, and it was more right-wing than left-wing. I think the attempt to ban the Communist Party and the hint at certain dark forces being in the background are only an attempt to please the western countries and win their sympathy at a time when a great deal of public feeling has been created against the atrocities, particularly incidents like the killing of prisoners. So they wanted to make out that certain left forces were in the background.

But I will not discount the possibility of some contact between these forces of the UNP and certain sections of the JVP (Janata Vimukthi Peramuna) in this matter. But the other left wing parties could not have had any hand in it.

Q. There has been an attempt, initially, to depict Mr. Jayewardene as the "best bet" of the minority Tamils and those who wanted a negotiated settlement. You have already dealt with the points of difference, if any, between the UNP and the SLFP. Would you like to add anything on this particular point, how he could raise himself as somebody who had a soft corner for you?

Promise & performance

A. Mr. Jayewardene's record in the past was not that of a man who would do justice to the minorities. In 1957, when Bandaranaike entered into a pact with my late leader, Chelvanayagam, Mr Jayewardene was the man who led the march to Kandy and created the feeling which ultimately resulted in the abrogation of the pact and also the subsequent riots against the Tamils in 1958.

But I should say that we all expected that in 1977 when he came to power with such a large majority and in an unassailable position, with the SLFP almost totally destroyed and in a shambles, we thought that Mr. Jayewardene will be able to work out a solution to the Tamils problem and it was in that belief that we started negotiations with him even after the riots of 1977.

But I should say one thing, on paper he conceded quite a lot of our rights, certain rights of the Tamil language were included in the 1978 Constitution, he gave a promise about granting citizenship rights to the plantation Tamils, the stateless persons; then, he introduced the District Development Councils.

Actually, in the implementation of all these things, one has to say that the record is very, very unsatisfactory. Not one syllable of the Tamil language rights embodied in

the Constitution was implemented though five years had passed and no attempt was made to register as citizens the stateless persons. And, though the DDCs were introduced, nothing was done to make them function effectively.

Paper rights

That is why we came to the conclusion that apart from certain paper rights and paper safeguards, in fact there was no improvement; on the contrary there was a deterioration in the position of the Tamil people under his Government. Particularly in matters of employment his record is worse than that of the governments of the past. After 1977, in the public and semi-public sector, there has been a decrease in the number of Tamils employed. We have challenged the Government to show that anything more than five per cent of the posts have been given to Tamils whereas the Tamil population is over 20 per cent. So his record leaves quite a lot to be desired in the matter of action.

And, with regard to colonisation which was one of the matters which the UNP itself accepted as a deep-seated grievance of the Tamil people, though he propounded the principle that the ethnic ratio in any district, particularly in the northern and eastern provinces should not be altered by colonisation. In fact under various industrial projects by employment being given to Sinhalese from outside the area, there has been a definite attempt to increase the Sinhala content of the population in Tamil districts like Trincomalee. So in none of the matters affecting us has he been helpful.

Tamils in army & police

In 1981, we made certain representations and he gave us a definite undertaking that in the police and the armed forces a larger percentage of Tamils will be given a place. Even the International Commission of Jurists in their report on the 1981 riots had indicated that one of the reasons why the police and the armed forces in the Tamil areas acted in this way was that they were predominantly Sinhala. In fact, the police are 95 per cent Sinhala and the armed forces are 99 per cent, Sinhala. Mr Jayewardene agreed that Tamils should be given representation in the police and the armed forces in proportion to their numbers in the population. But he did nothing about it for the last two years.

Q. Mr. Jayewardene has said that the police chief is a Tamil and the next Chief Secretary is going to be a Tamil and a number of Deputy Inspectors-General are Tamils....

A. That is true; in fact, the first Inspector-General of Police was Mr. Ana Seneviratne, his relative. Then, when he wanted to make his nephew the army commander, Mr. Seneviratne was asked to retire because they could not possibly have both, one in charge of the police and the other in

charge of the army. And the next man in the list according to seniority, Mr. Rudra Rajasingam, was made the IGP.

But the presence of a few Tamils in the higher ranks of the police is actually an accident of history; they were people recruited in the good old days and they have by efflux of time come to this position. But when these people retire which is due very soon, there will be hardly any Tamil to take their place.

Actually, some of the DIGs themselves were attacked during the recent riots. A DIG by the name of Mr. Vamadevan had his house razed to the ground in Colombo; he had to run away to save himself; he has now retired from service and gone away; this is the sort of thing that is happening. So they are ineffective even if they are there because all the people lower down are Sinhalese and they never carry out the orders of the Tamil officers.

Q. Could you trace for us the origin and growth of the Eelam movement in a political sense? What were the efforts made by the TULF, or the Tamils as a community before the TULF was formed (in 1976) to have your social, political and economic grievances redressed? And what was the response to these efforts from various governments?

Elimination of Tamil elements

A. The Sinhala leaders have tried to create an impression that the Tamils have never been cooperative; that they obstructed even the independence struggle. But it is a historical fact that the Ceylon National Congress itself was formed by a Tamil and the first President was Ponnambalam Arunachalam, who was a Tamil and the Tamils were in the forefront of the freedom movement. But once independence was granted the Sinhalese who got power into their hands on the basis that they were the majority, used that power to almost eliminate the Tamil elements altogether.

The first target was the weaker section of the Tamils, the plantation Tamils. They introduced citizenship laws which made the plantation Tamils stateless persons, deprived them of their franchise and deprived the Tamils of nearly half of the representation that they had in Parliament at the time of independence.

Then, they also started another attack by a systematic planned colonisation of the traditional Tamil areas, similar to what Israel is seeking to do in occupied Palestine, in such a way as to make the Tamils a minority in their own homelands. In times of crisis, in times of communal violence, the Tamils become the target of attack in their own traditional homelands and they have been chased out of some of those parts in the eastern provinces.

Sinhala-only Act

Then, the third thing that happened was,

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having weakened the Tamils position politically and having made Sinhala representation in Parliament predominant even beyond the numbers that their population warranted - the Sinhalese who at that time formed 65 per cent of the population got 85 per cent of the representation in Parliament after the Citizenship Act.

So using this majority, they passed the Sinhala-only Act, whereas before independence, in 1944, they had accepted the position that Sinhala and Tamil shall be the official languages of Ceylon. It was also calculated to drive Tamils out of the public services in which they said, they held a predominant position during British rule. So we started an agitation in a non-violent way against this Sinhala-only Act and the deprivation of Tamils of their legitimate place. In response to our agitation, Prime Minister Bandaranaike entered into a pact with the late Chelvanayagam guaranteeing the use of Tamil as a language for correspondence with Government in all parts of the country, to make Tamil the language of administration in the northern and eastern provinces, to establish regional councils and grant a fair measure of autonomy for the Tamils to look after their own affairs in their territory and to ensure that there was no planned colonisation of Tamil areas by Sinhalese.

But the moment Bandaranaike did this, Mr. Jayewardene led the march to Kandy and spearheaded the movement to get the pact abrogated. The Buddhist priests also joined in it and Bandaranaike ultimately succumbed to the pressure and abrogated the pact. In the wake of the abrogation, unprecedented communal violence was let loose on Tamils all over the country which resulted in thousands being dislodged from their homes, taken to refugee camps and by ships to places in the northern and eastern parts and settled there.

Incidentally, I may mention, an attempt is being made today to say that the violence now is because we are demanding Tamil Eelam, we are demanding a separate State, but in 1956, 1958 and even in 1961, we were subjected to violence when it was not even dreamt of by anybody that we should ask for a separate State. So this demand for a separate State cannot possibly be said to be the cause of the violence.

Then, again, after the 1960 March elections, when neither of the Sinhala parties had an absolute majority they wanted our support. We said we will support any one of the parties which would grant us the same rights that were granted under the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayagam pact. The SLFP agreed to do that and we supported them. The UNP-Government was defeated; in three months we had another election, the SLFP came to power, but they did not honour the promise they gave us, went

back on it.

Non-violent struggle

Actually they went a step further and introduced the law to make Sinhala the language of the courts as well and they tried to make Sinhala the language of administration even in predominantly Tamil areas like Jaffna, Batticaloa, Trincomalee and Mannar. So we had a non-violent struggle, we had a satyagraha campaign and for two months we paralysed the administration. They let loose the army, ill-treated the people and arrested all the leaders and locked them up.

In 1965, the UNP needed our support to form the Government. Dudley Senanayake and Mr. Jayewardene entered into a pact with Chelvanayagam, again undertaking to establish district councils as a measure of autonomy, to stop Sinhala colonisation of our areas and to grant the use of the Tamil language in those areas introduced certain regulations to provide for the use of the Tamil language but to date, those regulations have remained a dead letter. When the UNP tried to do something, the SLFP opposed it and when the SLFP tried to do something the UNP opposed it and all our efforts to come to terms with successive Sinhalese governments failed. Then, in 1970, Mrs. Bandaranaike came to power and set up a constituent assembly to draft a new constitution, a republican constitution.

We put forward certain demands, we did not ask for separation or any such thing. We asked for a federal form of government and presented a draft constitution. The Government did not even consider it; they just rejected it off hand. We asked that at least the Tamil language regulations which had been adopted by the UNP Government earlier be included in the constitution. The reply we got was there was a specific provision in the Constitution by which, they said any regulation will not be regarded as part of the Constitution. They specifically saw to it that it was excluded from the ambit of the Constitution.

It was in this situation that all the Tamil parties got together - the Federal Party the ALL-Ceylon Tamil Congress, the Ceylon Workers Congress of Mr. Thondaman and various other smaller Tamil groups - and formed the Tamil United Front.

Six-point programme

Even the Tamil United Front never asked for separation at that time, we merely put forward a six-point programme. We asked for justiciable fundamental rights, we asked for the rights of the Tamil language, we asked for decentralisation and autonomy and we asked that the State be made a secular State, not giving the foremost place to Buddhism.

The Government of Mrs. Bandaranaike did not even acknowledge receipt of our letter putting forward these demands. And in this situation, while we were agitating on

the basis of these demands, in 1974, the police ran amuck at the World Tamil Research Conference without any provocation. At a meeting where 50,000 people assembled and a professor from Tiruchi was speaking on Tamil language, the Sinhala police came on the scene, used teargas and batons and even fired shots. Nine people were killed at that meeting.

It was after that the Tamil people came to the decision that they no longer could live with the Sinhalese and if they could not have even a cultural meeting without having to pay the price of nine people being killed, then they will have to assert their right to be free and independent which they felt they were historically entitled to demand. Before the Portuguese conquered Sri Lanka, we had three kingdoms - a Tamil kingdom in the northern and eastern provinces and two Sinhala kingdoms. It was the British who unified the country for the first time. Though we made common cause with the Sinhalese we were reduced to the position of a completely subject race without our language rights, rights of our religion, rights of employment and rights of even education.

Beginning of youth violence

That was another feature that came to the fore in 1971. they introduced standardisation in admission to universities, media-wise standardisation. Thereby they could reduce the percentage of Tamil students who got admission to medical, engineering and such science based courses from about 45-46 in 1970 to about 15-16 in 1974-75. This caused a tremendous amount of feeling among the Tamil youth. This, coupled with the police violence, was the beginning of youth violence among the Tamil students. Actually the massacre in Jaffna was regarded as a challenge to the manhood of the Tamils by the youth and they started hunting the policemen who were responsible for it. They equated it with the Jalianwalabagh massacre in India which caused a great upsurge of feeling and gave rise to violent movements in Punjab like the one led by Bhagat Singh and youth movements of that type. Similarly a youth movement emerged in Sri Lanka; it started in Jaffna and spread to the other Tamil areas.

Mandate for TULF

It was in this situation that in 1976, at the first convention of the Tamil United Front we decided that we will have as our objective the setting up of an independent Tamil State and we changed the name of the Tamil United Front to the Tamil United Liberation Front; this is how we came to this decision. And then, in the 1977 election, we asked for a mandate from the Tamil people to work towards that objective and out of 19 Tamil electorates in the northern and eastern provinces. The Tamil people returned us in 18 electorates with a

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DEMAND FOR EELAM-CULMINATION OF YEARS OF OPPRESSION

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preponderant majority and we got a mandate to work towards that objective.

Q. You have had various rounds of talks with the President and there have been experiments like the Development Councils which have been portrayed as a partial response to your demands...

A. Though we got a mandate for an independent State, right from the start we indicated that we cannot go back on the mandate we got, but if a reasonable alternative which will meet the grievances that gave rise to this demand for a separate State could be worked out, we are willing to place this alternative before our people and then try and work it.

In fact, in the 1977 election, the UNP itself accepted that it was the grievance that the Tamil people had about their language rights, colonisation; employment, education and economic development of the Tamil areas, that had driven them to demand a separate State. They gave an undertaking that if they came to power they would have an all-party conference and work out a solution, but the UNP failed to do that.

DDCs Ineffective

We tried to press them many a time when ever the Government called us for talks we went and talked to them and tried our best to work out a solution. We were never intransigent and we did not try to say that we will not compromise. Though we had our problems we tried our best to peacefully work out a solution.

The Government accepted some of these things and started the District Development Councils but it failed to make them effective and I should say, there was so much of resistance on the part of the Government, both at the political and bureaucratic levels to the working of the DDCs that they have proved to be the most ineffective instrument of decentralisation. We have got just the empty shell of an organisation and not the substance of decentralisation.

It is in this situation, coupled with repeated violence against Tamils after this Government came to power- we were attacked in 1977, 1979, 1981 and the biggest and the most destructive attack came in 1983 - we decided at our convention at Mannar that we will not have any more talks with Mr. Jayewardene, that we will resign our seats in Parliament because we were elected for six years, and will launch a non-violent struggle to get the Prevention of Terrorism Act repealed, to get the army withdrawn from our areas and to get the Government's promises relating to decentralisation of power implemented. That was the decision we took.

Q. Apart from the TULF there are other groups, the most prominent among them

being "the Tigers". The Sri Lanka Government invariably refers to their activity as terrorism. In some other quarters they are regarded as immature, politically; others regard them as patriots. How do you see the rise of such groups in the historical sense?

Misguided

A. As I said in the course of my remarks earlier, it started as a result of frustration among the Tamil student population arising from the standardisation in admission to universities. It was given an impetus by the police violence at the World Tamil Research conference and the first targets of youth attack were the policemen who were responsible for the killings at the conference. Then, some of the young men who were responsible for it were arrested and tortured by the police. Then the policemen who tortured became the target of attack, and in this way it started working in a vicious circle and it escalated. Thereafter these groups got better organised in the face of continued police and army violence against Tamil people and Tamil youth.

REHABILITATION AND GUARANTEED LIFE AND PROPERTY ARE THE IMMEDIATE TASKS

I will not regard them as terrorists. I do not agree with their methods. I do not approve of the method of violence and in fact we think that in certain instances they are counter-productive and are not in the best interest of our people. But I will not deny the fact that we appreciate the spirit of sacrifice of these young men who had laid down their lives, and their courage.

We have tried our best to wean them from the path they have chosen and they have themselves reacted against us in certain instances when we tried to work out peaceful solutions with the Government. But in spite of everything, I will not agree with any branding of them as anti-social or terrorist elements. They may be misguided but they are genuinely, in their own misguided way, working towards what they believe is in the best interest of the Tamil people.

Q. There is an impression that the section of Tamils of which you are the political leader has been somewhat standoffish or distant from the problems of the other stream, namely, Indian Tamils, and their longstanding attempts to get their grievances settled. Is this a valid, or even a partly valid, impression?

Unifying Tamils

A. The Tamils in Sri Lanka, as Tamils in other parts of the world, have their own differences of caste and region. In the past politicians used those differences and even among the indigenous Tamils-

the Jaffna Tamils and the Batticaloa Tamils, had their differences in the past. I think since our movement led by Chelvanayagam came to the forefront, we have tried our best to get over these differences and unify the Tamil people in Sri Lanka as one nation.

At the time the Tamils of Indian origin were politically attacked by the citizenship laws, Chelvanayagam broke away from the Tamil Congress which at that time had joined the Government and opposed that bill and formed the Federal Party. I was a student at that time and that was the beginning of my entry into politics; I was a founder member with Chelvanayagam of the Federal Party in 1949 and from that time, even in fighting those citizenship laws in courts right up to the Privy Council and giving full support to the Ceylon Indian Congress which later became the Ceylon Workers Congress, the Federal Party and the leaders of the party fully made common cause with the Tamils of Indian origin.

Understanding with CWC

The core of the TULF was the Federal Party

and the main leader was Chelvanayagam. When we formed the Tamil United Front, the main organisation of the plantation Tamils, the CWC was with us, and in 1977, when we fought the elections, our president was Mr. Thondaman of the CWC, so that it is absolutely wrong to say that the TULF had left the plantation Tamils out of the reckoning. Even today, though Mr. Thondaman is with the Government and the CWC is cooperating with the Government, in matters of common interest affecting the Tamil people we have always worked with an understanding.

It is only few businessmen and people of that class even from the Ceylon Tamils community who feel that our political activities caused problems for them. So, self-interest makes them think that if the TULF or the militants keep quiet they will have peace and they can carry on with their business and make money, and that is all they are interested in. But apart from them I do not think the TULF has ever ceased to voice the grievances and fight to redress the grievances of the plantation Tamils. In fact, after every spate of violence, when Tamils of Indian origin in the plantation areas were dislodged and had to move to the northern and eastern provinces, the TULF and the organisations working in conjunction with the TULF provided for their accommodation, looked after them and rehabilitated them. After the 1977

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riots and after the 1981 riots we provided for over 50,000 people from the plantation districts who migrated to our areas and no one can say that they have not been looked after in any way.

Q. What is your current assessment of the approach of the Ceylon Workers Congress, in particular its leader Mr. Thondaman who is in the Government - a rather tricky situation? How has he reacted to this crisis in which both the sections of the people (Tamils) have been attacked?

Unhappy position

A. Mr. Thondaman is in a very unhappy position, he is a member of the Government. But he had to look on when the very people whom he represents were being attacked by the armed forces of the Government. This happened in 1981 as well as in 1983. But he and his organisation seem to think that because he is in the Government at least certain safeguards could be obtained for these people which he will not be able to get if he threw up the portfolio and got out of the Government. This seems to be their thinking. I may not agree with him but I understand and sympathise with their point of view.

Their position is slightly different from that of the TULF because we represent people from the northern and eastern provinces where we are in a majority; though we are also being attacked by armed forces there are no Sinhala thugs to attack us except in Trincomalee with the connivance of the armed forces. And so, if the armed forces are withdrawn we are masters in our territory. But this is not the situation in the plantation districts. So Mr. Thondaman is anxious to work out certain safeguards for the people living there.

We have been working with an understanding of the differences in the problems of each other and the different handling that the two problems needed. But on common matters we have stood together always.

When the vote of no-confidence against me was brought in Parliament, Mr. Thondaman refused to vote for it and he made a fairly strong speech. Even on the occasion of the recent Sixth Amendment, though the censored versions that were published here gave a different picture, Mr. Thondaman had not minced his words and had told the Government in a pointed way that the TULF was always prepared to work out a solution with the Government and that it was the Government which failed to carry out its promise, failed to control its armed forces and failed to safeguard the lives and property of the Tamils.

Common interest

Though I do not agree with his being a member of the Government, I think I understand the reasons and we are able to work together in the common interest of the

total Tamil population without creating any bitterness or animosity between the two groups and organisations. I think, Mr. Thondaman is also reconsidering his position within the Government. He has put forward certain demands arising from the recent situation, and of course, as usual Mr. Jayewardene has said that he can do those things; This is his normal *modus operandi* - if any problem is put to Mr. Jayewardene, his answer is: "I don't see any difficulty, we can do that." But it is never done.

So Mr. Thondaman also has put certain matters before Mr. Jayewardene. It may be that if those things are not carried out he may reconsider his decision. Whatever it may be, I feel, in the larger interest of the Tamil people, we have to work with an understanding and this is what we are trying to do.

Q. Mr. Amirthalingam, regarding the question of what is to be done on an immediate basis in the context of the current tragedy and the intense feeling that has been generated, do you see any way of normalising relations between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamils in the period ahead?

Normalisation difficult

A. I think, immediately it may be difficult. Feelings are very very hard on both sides and particularly among the Tamil people there is a very strong feeling that they have had the worst treatment possible in their history. So if anything is to be done immediately I think, measures for rehabilitation have to be undertaken in a big way and security of life and property has to be ensured and along with it measures for a long term solution have to be undertaken. These three matters have to be undertaken in the order that I mentioned.

I say rehabilitation because quite a large number of people who lived in Colombo and other places have no place to stay. People who lived comfortably in houses of their own have been completely dehousing and those houses cannot be repaired for them to get back to live. This is the situation in which we are placed so that it is not easy to make them forget this scar and I do not get the feeling that the Government is setting about in the correct way in trying to rehabilitate the Tamil people who have been affected.

The Government seems to be giving priority to rehabilitation of the Sinhala workers who lost their employment as a result of the factories of the Tamils and Indians having been damaged. They have had a conference and the Labour Minister has called upon the Tamil proprietors who have lost everything to pay the wages of the Sinhala employees. You can just imagine the heartless way they are setting about it and the Government. I think, is seeking to take over these factories and rebuild them with the Government having

a hand even in the management in order to ensure that all those employees and all those Sinhala people regained their positions.

Expropriation

In fact in quite a number of factories, the employees themselves were the people who attacked. Some of the Tamil businessmen and proprietors involved have told me that some of their own personal employees attacked. One person who was a trader- he used to distribute biscuits and other things all over- had got them loaded into his vehicle and when he got a report that these were being attacked he locked them up and took the key. The driver of the vehicle had gone there, broken open the vehicle and taken it and gone away, and then was looking for the proprietor to kill him so that his ownership may become absolute. This sort of thing has happened in several places.

So, the Government is seeking to ensure that these same elements get back into these factories and business places. The Government should rethink its whole policy; otherwise this rehabilitation will become only expropriation of the property of Tamils and handing it over to the Sinhala elements who were responsible for all the violence.

Q. In this connection how do you see the law which enables the Government to take over the damaged property?

Hostile moves

A. I am not aware of the exact details of the law. But from what I can gather from the interviews given by the competent authority in Colombo over the radio, it seems to be calculated to achieve two or three purposes which are not in the interest of the Tamil people and of the proprietors. In Sri Lanka, insurance is fully a State monopoly. These business houses and factories are insured with the State insurance corporation. So all that the Government is trying to do is to get the insurance money and rebuild them, thereby the proprietors will not get even the insurance money into their hands. Some of them may want to take the insurance money and invest it in some other ventures because they may not have any faith in their ability to carry on. The Government is seeking effectively to block them from doing this which I think is not fair.

Some of the proprietors have told me that they do not want to restart the industries in the same place; they want to start them again in places where they are sure there would be security for them, if possible in the Tamil areas. The Government wants to prevent them from doing it by vesting the property in the Government and the Government itself taking a hand in the restoration. These are moves which are actually antagonistic and hostile to the interest of the Tamil people and the Tamil proprietors.

Q. What is your estimate of the number of

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people who are displaced, the number of people who have moved away from their places of work?

A. I think it is over a 1,00,000. I think, already about 40,000 people have gone to the north. Smaller numbers have gone to Trincomalee, Batticaloa and other places. A certain number of displaced persons have been sent to the plantation areas which were not affected, where the concentration of Tamil population is such that Sinhala hoodlums would not venture to attack. A certain number had no place to go and they are yet in the refugee camps in Colombo. At one stage the Sri Lanka government said that about 1,35,000 people were in the refugee camps.

Apart from this, there were a number of people who did not go to the refugee camps; they went to the houses of some friends there were Sinhala friends. Muslim friends, to whose houses these Tamil people went because of the conditions in the refugee camps. Each camp had about 10,000 people. These camps were mostly school buildings, so the toilet and other facilities meant for 1,000 students had to be used by 10,000 people. And men, women and children were crowded like that - people who were used to comforts. Some of them went into big hotels - Oberoi, Holiday Inn and so on.

At one stage some of the hotels did not take in Tamils; they said their own employees may give them trouble, so they did not want to take them. People with means went to stay in places like that but even they have no place to go back to because their houses have been destroyed. If you take all these people into consideration it will be in the region of about 1,50,000 people who were dislodged from their residences and their work places.

Complaints about relief

Q. Apart from this task of rehabilitation there is a question of immediate relief. There have been reports here that the relief being made available to Sri Lanka from India and elsewhere is not being properly channeled to the victims. At least in certain specific instances there have been complaints. Have you had any authoritative information on this?

In fact I have not been able to check on the way the large sums of money, items of food, drugs, clothes and various other articles received from all over the world have been used. Some part of it may have been used for feeding the refugees in the camps in Colombo, but once they were shipped to Jaffna and other places the relief did not ever reach those people. In fact I told the Government of India that whatever relief India sent the disbursement should be supervised by the High Commissioner for India. It should earmark the financial assistance it is giving for specific purposes.

First priority, I said, should be given to

immediate relief to families where the breadwinners have been killed. There are a large number of Tamil families like that; maybe that whole families have been destroyed but there are a number of families where the breadwinners, the husbands had been killed and the wife and children are left in the lurch.

In a number of middle class families where the husband, was employed somewhere, he was killed and the family has no means of living. People like that should be given immediate relief. In the past, my experience was the Government gave a few rupees as dole - sometimes Rs.20 or Rs.30. These days a family can never live with that money. Some substantial relief must be given to such families.

Rebuilding homes

Then there are a number of people whose

homes have been destroyed. They may today go and live in Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa with some relatives or friends. How long can they live with them? Some things has to be done to build their homes for them where they could live in security and without being dependent on somebody else.

In an emergency a relative may be able to house them but if they continue to live there they become unwanted guests and are subjected to humiliation. These are matters in which I do not think the Government of Sri Lanka is setting about properly. It seems to be concentrating on the restoration of the factories, reemployment of the Sinhalese who lost their jobs and then only they may be giving a few items of food to the others.

INDIA'S RIGHTFUL ROLE

IN A SITUATION WHERE THE ARMED FORCES AND THE POLICE, IN CHARGE OF PRESERVING LAW AND ORDER, BECOME PARTIES TO VIOLENCE AND ATTACKS ON THE PEOPLE, INTERVENTION BY A CLOSE AND FRIENDLY NEIGHBOUR LIKE INDIA IS INEVITABLE.

Q. In relation to security you mentioned that in Jaffna if the armed forces are withdrawn you are capable of taking care of your own security because you are the masters of your own areas there. But overall, taking into account also the other streams of Indian Tamils, what is the specific problem?

A. I think the Government has to follow certain courses of action. One, as far as the Tamil areas, the northern and eastern provinces are concerned, the armed forces, must be withdrawn and two, a sufficient number of Tamil policemen should be posted in these areas to maintain law and order, and three, if the number of policemen is not sufficient to maintain law and order, a system of home guards, as we suggested in 1981 and as the Government agreed, should be started immediately and the home guards should not be unarmed. The helpless young men who may be chased out by the thugs and who will not be able to stand against them should be given some sort of training and some sort of arms to safeguard the lives and property of people.

I think Mr. Thondaman has made a suggestion that some sort of training to the youth on each of the estates should be given so that they may act as guards of the estates. I understand that it is only now that information has reached Colombo that a number of estate lines have been totally destroyed. I met somebody who came from Colombo on Monday - a man in a very knowledgeable position - he told me that even Mr. Thondaman did not get a full report. It is only two days ago that he got

the report that in most of the estate areas, the lines have been destroyed.

THE HINDU has also reported that in the conference on assessment of the damage done...they are now saying that extensive damage has been caused in the tea areas also. Till I came to India, I thought most of the tea areas have not suffered much ravage.

Training to Tamil youth

In these areas effective organisation and training to the Tamil youth should be given so that they may ensure the security of the life and property of the Tamil people in the plantation districts. In these two ways I think the security of our people can be ensured both in the northern and eastern provinces and in the plantation districts. Even in the plantation areas there is no necessity for the army to go there. They should see that the armed forces are kept out of the areas.

Q. What about the Tamils in Colombo?

A. There they should make the police and the people in charge of law and order in Colombo representative of all sections of the people. In Colombo it had never happened in the past, they were able to safeguard life and property to a large extent. But this time because of the active role played by the armed forces, in the attack and the organised manner in which bands of thugs were let loose with the support of the armed forces. Colombo has suffered. So, they should radically alter the composition of the police and the armed forces. This is one of the things that has to be done.

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Q. What in your opinion is India's locus standi in the present crisis faced by Tamils and other people of Indian origin? We ask this particularly in view of the fact that earlier there have been suggestions of "India's interference" in Sri Lanka's internal affairs. Before the current attack started there was a statement by Mr. Hameed (Foreign Minister) and others to that effect. How do you see that in the new situation?

India's responsibility

A. I feel that India being the closest neighbour to Sri Lanka with very close ties - cultural, religious, linguistic, racial and in every other way - will have to play a significant part in the present situation, in the restoration of normality in Sri Lanka. Dislocation of conditions in Sri Lanka will endanger peace in the zone and will definitely endanger the security of India itself. There is also another factor that has to be taken into consideration. In the recent happenings, a good section of the affected people are either of Indian origin who have not yet acquired Sri Lanka citizenship or some of them are even citizens of India, and Indian capital has been destroyed so that India has every right to intervene. Apart from all that, on grounds of preservation of human rights and to stop genocide, India has to intervene. I do not agree with the argument that India is interfering in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka. I think, Rajaji said at one stage, "when my neighbour and his wife are living happily my interference in their family will be obnoxious and will not be tolerated but if my neighbour is trying to throttle his wife and kill her I have a duty to intervene and stop the murder."

I think India is in the same position as far as conditions in Sri Lanka are concerned. No one who values the right of every individual and every ethnic group to the human rights which are guaranteed by the U.N. Charter will blame India for trying to play a hand in stopping this violence.

Particularly in the situation when the armed forces and the police who have to maintain law and order become parties to the attack, interference of a third party becomes inevitable. It can take the form of a United Nations peace keeping force or a peace keeping force of a friendly country. In 1971 when Mrs. Bandaranaike was in a similar situation she made an appeal and got India to send forces to safeguard certain strategic points like the airport, the harbour and various other places.

Actually when this trouble started and we knew that the armed forces were playing a part in the whole attack, all of us sent telegrams to President Jayewardene that he should either get a U.N. force or get assistance from a friendly country - the friendly country we had in mind was the closest neighbour which is just 29 km across the sea. If Mr. Jayewardene had

made that request on July 25 or 26 when we asked for it, things in Sri Lanka would not have gone this far and normality could have been restored very much earlier. So, merely because the Government of Jayewardene was reluctant to do that India cannot shirk its responsibility.

Q. How do you assess the role of the people and the Government of India in relation to this responsibility which you just highlighted?

Positive response

A. I think, the Government of India and the Prime Minister have set about it in the least obtrusive way possible. Mrs. Gandhi has merely offered her good offices to bring about a solution to these problems and quite correctly she has pinpointed two aspects where action has to be taken. One is the security of life and property of the Tamil people and the other a long-term solution. Even in the third matter that I mentioned, rehabilitation, the Government of India and the Prime Minister have offered substantial help and they have launched a fund. So on all these three matters requiring attention, the Indian Government has responded positively. It is now I think, the duty of the Sri Lanka Government to make use of the good offices of India in bringing about a satisfactory state of affairs in respect of all these three aspects of the problem. It is in this context that I welcomed the statement of Mrs. Bandaranaike, the counterpart of President Jayewardene in the opposition, welcoming India's interest and her advice to Mr. Jayewardene to accept its good offices, and so Mr. Jayewardene cannot find an excuse and say that the Opposition Sinhala party will rouse the Sinhalese against him if he accepts the good offices of India.

Therefore, it is incumbent and obligatory on President Jayewardene to make use of the good offices in all these three matters and see that justice is done to Tamils and normality is restored in the country.

Tamil Nadu problem

Q. In this connection as for the people's response, Mr. Jayewardene has openly said in an interview that it is mainly a Tamil Nadu problem, that there is a lot of pressure from Tamil Nadu on the Government of India, and perhaps the rest of the nation. How do you react to this?

A. I do not agree with that at all because I have had the advantage of meeting parliamentarians, members of organisations and men in public life throughout India I should say right from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, India has been deeply moved by the atrocities perpetrated against the Tamil people and the Indian people in Sri Lanka during the last one month. So it is wrong for Mr. Jayewardene to try to divide the Tamil Nadu Government and the Tamil Nadu people from the rest of India.

I met leaders of every political party ranging

from right to left. They are all of one view that India has to play a part. This in my view, is the unanimous opinion of all sections of India. Tamil Nadu is naturally more concerned because of the closer ties they had with the people affected. In fact quite a number of people killed are people affected are from Tamil Nadu or at least have relatives in Tamil Nadu. To that extent their agitation is much greater which is natural.

A wedge

When Pakistan was trying to ride roughshod over the aspirations of East Bengal, West Bengal was in the forefront of the agitation. That did not mean that the whole of India did not take an interest in the matter. I think the situation is quite similar in Sri Lanka. Mr. Jayewardene is trying to drive a wedge between Tamil Nadu and the rest of the country and he can never succeed.

Q. We have noted that parallel with the anti-Tamil action there has been an anti-Indian campaign. How have your people reacted to that even before the current troubles started? How do the Tamils of both streams see the response from the Sri Lanka government to India's role?

A. Whatever the reaction on the part of the Sri Lanka Government may be, the Tamil people look upon India's taking an interest as the only ray of hope in this otherwise bleak situation and I am confident that all sections of Tamil opinion will respond positively to the Indian initiative and the outcome of the initiative.

Q. If enlightened Indian and international pressure prevails with Mr. Jayewardene on the need to negotiate seriously and urgently with the Tamils and their political leaders do you foresee any problem he might face within his Government, within his party or from other political parties or from the armed forces which might block the process?

Chavinistic forces

A. My experience so far has been that if Mr. Jayewardene wanted to do something and if he was definitely committed to this something, he could and he would do it. The chavinistic forces in his own party which have surfaced today I think, have deliberately been built up by him and his colleagues for political purposes. If there is a definite change of heart and a desire to work out a solution and particularly in the context of Mrs. Bandaranaike's reported statement. I do not think that he will have any serious problem.

Q. You have expressed the view that India's role has brought about a "qualitative change" in the situation. What exactly do you mean when you refer to a qualitative change?

A. As I have said our bitter experience has been not with this Government alone but even with earlier governments starting

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from Bandaranaike. Whenever we agitate and feelings run high they give promises and enter into agreements and then tear them up and forget about them. Mr. Jayewardene during the last six years, has been acting in the same way, never implementing any promise given so that we have got tired of the talks and negotiations.

In fact, our continuing the negotiations has created a rift in our own ranks with the younger sections losing faith in the leadership and adopting extreme actions which they might not have otherwise done if the whole movement has been kept intact. So we decided at our last convention at Mannar that we will have no more negotiations with President Jayewardene and his Government, we will carry on a non violent agitation struggle for our rights which we hoped would first of all unite our people and also bring sufficient pressure on the Government to pay heed to our demands.

Mediation

It was in that situation that this holocaust occurred and India took an interest. When India offered its good offices we felt that India's good offices meant not merely bringing us to the negotiating table but playing a mediatory role throughout and also ensuring the implementation of whatever solution was worked out at the negotiating table. And we further felt that India has to have a continuing interest in this problem and if the negotiations at its initiative, failed due to the reluctance or intransigence, of the Sri Lanka Government India had a further duty to safeguard the lives and legitimate rights of the Tamil and Indian people in Sri Lanka. This is the only way of ensuring justice and fair play in Sri Lanka.

Peace keeping force

From his experience in Trincomalee apart from the matters that I have mentioned about Tamil policemen in this area and withdrawal of the armed forces and arming of our own home guards in our areas. Mr. Sampanthan thinks that in areas like Trincomalee a peace keeping force, either international or Indian will have to be maintained if the security of life and property of our people is to be ensured. This is his point of view and I think it was born out of the bitter experience in Trincomalee and I agree with that.

A substantial change in the composition of the security forces or in the quality of the security forces is not something that can be achieved in a short period of time. It all depends on how devoted the Government is towards achieving that. In that situation security of life and property can be assured in many parts of the country only if there is an international peace keeping force. Even in Colombo, Kandy and in the plantation areas this may be a necessity.

Q. In relation to the recent economic experiment or course Mr. Jayewardene

has taken, the IMF and the World Bank have expressed concern over the situation in Sri Lanka. How do you assess the course Mr. Jayewardene has been pursuing?

Economy in poor shape

A. We have been very critical of the economic policy of the Jayewardene Government though some of the Tamil people made full use of it. I think our assessment of the impact of it on the total population whether it be Sinhalese or Tamil, is that it has not been too beneficial. The economy of the country, in spite of the tall talk of the Government is in a very parlous state. As mentioned in the Sri Lanka Parliament at one time, one Indian rupee was equivalent to 89 Sri Lanka cents, today one Indian rupee is equivalent to 224 Sri Lanka cents. I am not one who is very much enamoured of the role of the IMF or the World Bank in these matters. But I should say that some of the Ministers of the Government who are directly concerned with this policy also have had a hand in the recent communal violence because they got perturbed at the use Tamil and Indian entrepreneurs had made of the opportunity offered.

Business rivalry

I have reports that one of the key Ministers at a conference with the Sinhala Merchants Chamber two weeks before the holocaust found fault with them for allowing a major part of the import and export trade in the hands of Tamils and Indians. Even these elements, the Sinhala industrialists and businessmen, out of rivalry with the Tamil industrialists and businessmen, have taken a hand in the attacks and the Government is to blame.

Q. There is a feeling among the Sinhala people that economically they are in a disadvantageous position compared with the Tamils and the ordinary Sinhala people think that they had a bad deal. How would you react to this?

A. Apart from a few Tamil capitalists making use of this Government's policy and making good due to their own enterprise and their own business acumen and may be their international and foreign contacts the bulk of the Tamil people are actually worse off than the Sinhalese. Unemployment among the Tamil people is much greater than among the Sinhalese because their employment in the public and semi public sector, that is in the Government service and in the State corporations had been reduced to a minimum it has been reduced to almost five per cent of the total.

Sinhalese jealous

Of course, that has made a large number of our youth migrate all over the world. I think that has been the characteristic of the Tamils from the distant past. So the Sinhala people may be jealous about it. But as far as the Government's action and policies

are concerned, the vast majority of the Tamil people have suffered and not benefited and even from the point of the benefits given to workers, the Tamil plantation workers have been the hardest hit of the working class. Even in respect of the allowances and salary increases given to other sections of the workers, only a niggardly fraction has been given to the plantation workers.

Q. What is your experience with the freedom of expression in Sri Lanka periodically the role of the press in relation to the free dissemination of information and how do you see the trends, maybe a point of comparison with India?

State-owned press

A. I think, India has almost complete freedom of the press and there are such a large number of newspapers, competing with one another and supporting various points of view that India should be considered a model in this respect. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned the majority of the newspapers are State-owned. The Lake House group and the Times group, that is the Daily Mirror and the Lanka Deepa, are both owned by the State.

Then the Gunasena group is fully on the side of the Government. As far as the Tamil problem is concerned their attitude is worse than that of the Government newspapers, they are more rabid and they later to the more chauvinistic tastes among the Sinhalese. In fact they had been the hardest against India in the comments they made. There is a fourth group that has recently come up- the Island group; it is too early to say whether it will survive, and how long it will survive the death of its proprietor. The only independent Tamil newspaper is Veerakesari and when a holocaust like this occurred even the Veerakesari had to close down. They were attacked, their employees were attacked. They even went to the extent of robbing money and they damaged their equipment. Even if they had printed, they were unable to distribute them outside Colombo. So, we really have no means of even running a proper newspaper of our own.

Q. What has been your experience with the censor from time to time, and in the recent attacks? How do the people respond to it?

A. Censorship only gives rise to wild rumours and rumours become authentic stories; they never believe the newspapers. That is the situation they have created. The rest of the mass media, the radio and the television, is State-owned. They project only one point of view. Whatever we say is twisted and destroyed.

In fact censorship has even been used to escalate communal violence. I get the impression that the Government wanted

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TAMIL ISSUE RAISED IN UK PARLIAMENT

The problem facing the Tamil people of Sri Lanka was raised for the first time in the history of the UK Parliament by Mr. Dave Nellist, Labour MP for Coventry South-East, on 25th July, 1983. The following are extracts from his speech:

Mr. Dave Nellist (Coventry, South-East): Since submitting this subject for the ballot on 20 July, just a few days ago, the position in Sri Lanka has worsened dramatically for the workers and peasants there. In the early edition of *The Times* today appears a report from Reuter's correspondent in Colombo which begins: "The Sri Lankan Government imposed a 15-hour curfew on Colombo and several other parts of the country yesterday...Witnesses said shops and houses belonging to minority Tamils were the targets of attacks. A pall of black smoke hung over Colombo as several shops went up in flames."

According to the UPI correspondent - who, with Reuter's correspondent, seems to be the only source of news, and that heavily censored, coming out of Colombo - black clouds of smoke could be seen miles from the centre of the city.

Over the weekend we heard of the killing of 13 soldiers outside Jaffna. Owing to censorship, it is not clear what happened, but reports reaching London speak of between 15 and 50 people being killed by troops who got out of control. Given the security forces' previous record, vandalism, and the recent army mutiny, the reports must be considered carefully.

Unconfirmed reports that I have received today gave details of events in Jaffna in recent days. On 21 and 22 July, army personnel kidnapped three Tamil girls. Unconfirmed reports that I have received today gave details of events in Jaffna in recent days. On 21 and 22 July, army personnel kidnapped three Tamil girls, whose whereabouts are not known. An unconfirmed report alleges rape and says that one of the girls has committed suicide. On 23 July bombs were thrown into an army truck and 13 soldiers were killed. On 23 and 24 July the army went on a rampage in Jaffna and shot people at random. Seventeen are said to have been shot, including six schoolchildren and a man aged 83. In all, there are reports of at least 30 deaths. On 24 July that army section was returned to barracks.

Furthermore, it is reported that the Government have advised the Sinhalese to leave the Tamil areas. If that is true, it is a measure designed not to lower tension, but an invitation to the Sinhalese racists to begin attacks on the 50 per cent of Tamils who live in the southern part of Sri Lanka in the Sinhalese areas.

The curfew that has been imposed in the capital of Colombo from 2 pm to 5 am is a

belated gesture by the Government after their supporters had began racist attacks on the Tamils.

Over the weekend and during the latter part of last week, a series of reports indicated a sharp decline in democracy in Sri Lanka. On 21 July *The Guardian* reported:

"Colombo (censored). The Government, using emergency powers, yesterday imposed press censorship on news of guerrilla activities. News of matters prejudicial to national security, preservation of public order, the maintenance of essential supplies, incitement to civil commotion, and operations of the police and armed services will also be censored."

On the 22 July, the Sri Lanka high commissioner in New Delhi was called to the Indian Foreign Ministry. the report continues:

"He was told that India was unhappy about Colombo's recent emergency regulation which permitted the disposal of bodies without inquests following action by security forces."

The report of 23 July tells us:

"The Sri Lankan President, Julius Jayawardene, invoking emergency powers, yesterday removed the heads and senior administrative officers of the country's universities in an attempt to crack down on student unrest."

In at least one university the entire Tamil student population has now been expelled. All this has happened since the original reason for a request for this debate. the request was prompted by reports in the *Daily Telegraph* about official links between Sri Lanka and the British police. On 12 July, Ian Ward in Colombo reported:

"The President indicated he was looking to Britain for expertise on, among other things, establishing an effective intelligence network against local terrorists. He saw the British problems in Belfast as somewhat parallel to the ones he was facing. Pointing out that his Government had been in touch with Whitehall for some time on this subject, the Sri Lankan leader added, 'They are our old friends. We trust them'."

That was confirmed by *The Economist* on Saturday when an article appeared that stated:

"President Junius Jayawardene of Sri Lanka told your correspondent on July 17th that he has asked Britain for 'expertise and assistance' to deal with the growing violence by Tamils...The request to the former colonial power, even though Britain is a place with which western minded Mr. Jayawardene is on the friendliest terms...This week, whilst awaiting a message from Britain, he called a conference of the parliamentary parties (which was boycotted by the opposition) to discuss security, and banned Sri Lankan newspapers from publishing anything more about Tamil violence."

The present president of Sri Lanka, JR Jayawardene, began his activities as a self-appointed defender of the Sinhalese Buddhists. As early as May 1944, JR moved on the State Council, which existed

as a form of limited self rule, that the Sinhala language be made the medium of instruction in all schools and compulsory subject in all public examinations. It was after independence in the mid 1950s that the inter communal violence began to develop seriously. JR himself did nothing to lower the tension. On the contrary, the Sri Lankan *Tribune* of 30 August 1957 reported JR as saying:

"the time has come for the whole Sinhalese race... to fight without quarter to save their birthright. I will lead the disobedience campaign"

In 1970 a Popular Front Government were elected in Sri Lanka. Despite the popular support that had at first, they were unable to solve the problems facing Sri Lanka because of its heterogeneous class composition and inadequate programme. The disillusionment caused by the Popular Front Government - in particular, the failure of the old workers' parties, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party and the Communist party of Sri Lanka - resulted in a sweeping victory for JR and his United National party in 1977.

JR's victory was immediately followed by communal rioting. More than 200 died, and 10,000 Tamils were forced to move away from the predominantly Sinhala areas. Ostensibly appealing for calm, JR spoke to the nation on 28th July 1977 saying:

"it is our duty to safeguard the Buddha Sasana. We will not spare any effort to protect, and further the cause of Sasana...The UNP Government intends...establishing a just society based on the teachings of Buddha.

If we examine the record of the Sri Lankan authorities in recent years, we see that it is not easy to decide who the real terrorists are. Furthermore, the record raises the question of what control this Parliament has over the international activities of the British security services. If we look at the predominantly Tamil district of Sri Lanka, we can see that the real turning point took place in the period between May and June 1981. the *The Financial Times*, which is not an anti-UNP journal, after the events, reported:

"the police and army personnel - mainly comprising Sinhalese officers - have for the first time abandoned their neutrality. In some cases, they lead attacks on Tamil communities. It is officially admitted that they went 'on the rampage' in the Tamil capital of Jaffna in June."

In Jaffna, in May and June 1981, eight Tamils were murdered, including the private clerk of one of the Tamil Opposition Members of Parliament, and 11 Tamil Members, including the Leader of the Opposition, were arrested on the day of the district development council elections.

The security forces attacked the homes of two Tamil Opposition Members and burnt down the Jaffna library - which was one of Asia's leading libraries with a collection of 97,000 books, many of which were rare - and many buildings and homes. Since then, there has been mounting opposition

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in the Tamil areas to the UNP Government and growing demands for self-rule. Tragically, due to the defeats that the opponents to the UNP rule have suffered, many Tamil youths have turned to guerrilla activities as a solution to the increasing racist attacks on them by the security forces.

Last year, JR held an early presidential election to secure re-election before the economic bubble burst. He secured re-election because some sections of the population were still enjoying the fruits of economic growth, the main Opposition party's lack of credibility and the abstention of many Tamil voters. Having won the election, the President held a referendum on whether general elections should be postponed until 1989, and he was left with a two thirds majority in Parliament. Amid many accusations of intimidation, a low turnout and impersonation, including even that of JR's main opponent in the presidential election, the UNP won the referendum. With that majority the UNP is moving against all opposition in all parts of the island. Early in June, after the Supreme Court had given an Opposition leader compensation for illegal arrest, detention and degrading treatment, thugs attacked the homes of the three Supreme Court judges concerned. No arrests were made, but the thugs arrived and departed in state-owned buses.

That has not been the only example of the semi-official condonement and harassment of the courts. Earlier this year, after a senior Buddhist monk had a police officer convicted of violating his-the monk's - fundamental rights during the referendum campaign, a Cabinet Minister announced that the Government would pay the fine and the policeman was promoted to superintendent. The police officers involved in the later Supreme Court case were also promoted, on the day after the court judgment.

At the same time the UNP Government gave new powers to the police to deal with the circumstances. By 4 June the new regulation No. 15a was signed. It gave senior police officers the power to take "all such measures as may be necessary for the taking possession and burial or cremation of any dead body, and to determine, in his discretion the persons who may be permitted to be present at.... any such burial or cremation."

Given the many cases of torture and murder which have been reported by Amnesty International, it is clear that regulation has only increased fear of the police and army in Tamil areas. After the disturbances of the past few days, how many more people will be buried as a result of that regulation? Will the Government condemn those anti-democratic powers?

How do the Government respond to this statement in *The Guardian* on 7 July;

"An emergency regulation, recently promulgated under the Public Security Act, now permits police to bury or cremate bodies without inquiry or post mortem. President Jayewardene has announced that it 'provides the forces with no announced that it 'provides the forces with more muscle'; it ensures that security personnel will in no way be harassed by the law in the event of being compelled to use their fire power. Civil rights lawyers describe it as a 'licence to kill' Tamil suspects"?

How will the Government comment on the new Prevention of Terrorism Act with "its unconstitutional retroactive provisions, permits prolonged detention incommunicado - up to 18 months - without explanation, for arrest, charge or trial and is thus an invitation to physical attack and torture"?

Another report in *The Guardian* on 6 July states:

"Sri Lanka has been under almost continuous emergency rule since the early 1970s. But since the referendum of December 22, 1982, which extended the life of the Sri Lankan 'long parliament' to August 4, 1989 - an unprecedented 12-year session - the concentration of powers in the hands of President Jayewardene has created a situation in which the army's authority is clearly growing and democratic safeguards in Parliament, the courts, and the press are becoming more fragile."

Confessions are admissible in evidence, despite being obtained by suspending a person from a beam with both hands tied, with a bagful of burnt chilli tubers tied over the head, chilli powders smeared all over the person, including the genitals, iron bar in the rectum, thin metal rod down the penis and lying on a bench being beaten on back and soles of feet with chillies stuck up the nose. Contrast that with an election address of 17 September 1982 from Jayewardene when he promised:

"An important contribution we have made was the enactment of a democratic Constitution that guarantees that the people of this country can live without fear and harassment, to conduct their affairs in accordance with the laws of the country and their fundamental rights."

What is the future for working people and peasants in a country where such promises are made during an election campaign but where the reality is torture, murder, beatings, disappearances, rampage, burnings, lootings and a tremendous decline in any decent democratic rights?

Sri Lanka, which is promoted in the press and on television as the jewel of the tourist resorts, has many resources in its raw materials and the cultural level of its people. For example Sri Lanka's literacy rate is 87 percent. However, as the World Bank explained,

"Far from going forward, society in Sri Lanka is going backwards."

Sri Lanka does not face such problems alone; they face the entire underdeveloped world.

I place before the Minister some questions for him to answer. Will he give a guarantee that the Government will publish a list of British firms which have subsidiaries in Sri

Lanka, and what wage rates they pay? Can we see whether the Brooke Bonds or the Unilevers, or any other firm exploits the plantation workers? How many pence a day in wages are British profits being based on?

Will the Minister confirm the reports in the *The Economist* and in the *Daily Telegraph* of the spoken words of the President of Sri Lanka, saying to British correspondents that he is asking the Minister and his Department for close collaboration between the security forces and the police in this country and their counterparts in Sri Lanka?

Will the Minister give a guarantee that, given the state of the decline of democratic rights in Sri Lanka- the torture, the murder, the lootings, the beatings, the rampages of the army and of the police - collaboration between British security services and the police and Jayewardene's police will cease? When he replies, will he give a precise answer as to what response he has made to requests from the Sri Lankan Government in the last 10 or 12 days for explicit help from the security and police services of this country?

In the light of all the evidence that I have produced, will the Minister guarantee that the official state visit of President J.R. Jayewardene, scheduled for October this year will be cancelled? For Britain to offer the hand of friendship in the form of a state visit to the president of a country where torture and censorship are prevalent, or to offer conditional or unconditional support to Sri Lanka's policies, is not just a slap in the face but a disgraceful insult to the families of the workers and peasants of the country who have lost friends and relatives in the past few days.

I reiterate my own implacable opposition to the terrorist tactics, to the oppression to the disgraceful human rights record in Sri Lanka. The way forward is to support the glorious traditions of the Sri Lankan working class in its fight for independence and decent living standards. The working people in that country must be united.

I stand four square behind the rights of minorities to self-determination. They must have their right. I believe that the future lies in co-operation and in bringing together people of all castes, creeds, colours and religions. Only then can the working class and its allies go forward in the development of Socialism.

My message to British workers is that we owe a debt and responsibility to working people internationally. We must extend the hand of solidarity in their time of need

and link our organisations with those of the working class in Sri Lanka. We must break the bonds of capitalism and imperialism that jointly tie us down and work together for a society throughout the Asian subcontinent, Europe and the world in which the division by caste, poverty and

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LETTERS

NO LONGER "SRI LANKANS", ONLY SINHALESE & TAMILS

Most papers have referred to clashes between the Sinhalese and Tamils.

There were no clashes between the two communities. One community, the Tamils have been attacked. Almost no civilian Sinhalese were killed by Tamils, except perhaps one or two killed in self-defence. The so-called terrorists, who wish to describe themselves 'freedom fighters', have not killed civilian Sinhalese. They have shot at the forces of law and order - the Police and the Army. More Tamil police officers than Sinhalese have been killed. In the case of the army, most of those killed were Sinhalese because the Army is made up of more than 95 per cent Sinhalese. The youth have killed civilian Tamil politicians who they thought were collaborating with the Government.

Most papers have referred to us as Tamils of Indian origin or Tamil immigrants.

We are indigenous Tamils, just as indigenous as the Sinhalese, and both are of Indian origin. It is still not conclusively established as to who came first - we may have been there (when Sri Lanka was probably geographically part of India) when their forefathers came from India.

It is said by some Sinhalese gentlemen that we are only 11% of the population and are asking for a separate state. The Tamil speaking people are more than 25% - including Indian Tamils and Muslims (why this community should be referred to by religion and others by race or language, no-one knows).

It has not been brought out that at first we did not ask for separation, but only for federation. Two nations which are separate linguistically and culturally, which had separate kingdoms brought together under foreign domination and the majority of whom occupy distinct and contiguous areas can only unite by federating with each other. The Tamils asked for federation for 30 years. In fact, a respected politician who had been a Cabinet Minister and who wanted separation during that period was defeated by the Federal Party candidate very decisively. The Tamils were even prepared to accept something less than federation, evidenced by the fact that separate agreements were signed at different times with the two major political parties who admittedly represented the Sinhalese - the U.N.P. and the S.L.F.P. But the agreement signed with the S.L.F.P. was torn up due to agitation against it by the U.N.P. and the agreement signed with the U.N.P. was not honoured because of agitation against it by the S.L.F.P.

The Sinhalese parties talk of the mandate given to them by the Sinhalese and do not seem to worry about the mandate given to

the Tamil parties by the Tamils. In a homogeneous society the views of the majority must prevail. In a heterogeneous society the minority view counts and the majority view of each homogenous section must prevail.

It was only in desperation that the Tamils eventually asked for separation in 1976. However, agitation by the youth did not start immediately because the U.N.P. which had over 80% of seats, had accepted in their election manifesto of July 1977 that there were some genuine grievances of the Tamils, and promised to solve them by holding a round table conference of all parties. This they failed to do.

FRUSTRATION

It was only after waiting in frustration for some years that the youth started attacking the forces of the Government. And it was only after the youth started attacking that the Government started talking to the elected representatives of the Tamils, and on paper gave a few concessions. The concessions - not equal rights - were not implemented in the main and in practice very little changed.

Some articles in newspapers talked about District Councils which gave some measure of autonomy.

These were toothless councils with almost no powers. In any case, these will not work so long as the District Minister who is the executive head is a Sinhalese and a member of the Government party, and not an elected representative of the area covered by the council.

Tamil as a national language in the practical sense is only observed in the breach.

Entrance to universities is still not based purely on merit, 35 years after all backward areas were given special concessions. Even now a formula is applied under which a Tamil student is more adversely affected than his Sinhalese counterpart.

UNCONTROLLABLE FORCES OF LAW & ORDER.

The forces of law and order are entitled to shoot at and kill "terrorists". Those who indulge in the use of violence as a political weapon should be prepared to be killed. By the same logic, those who join the Army have an occupational hazard of being killed. Before the most recent pogrom most of the material damage was done by the forces of "law and order" to public and private property to the tune of millions of dollars - arson, looting, etc. The Government has no excuse for the uncontrolled behaviour of its forces of law and order. These forces behaved like an army of occupation; harassing and assaulting, raping, torturing and killing innocent people, arrest-

ing them without evidence and incarcerating anyone whom they fancied as potential terrorists, and naturally these actions have swelled the ranks of the "terrorists". The Government then passed laws to facilitate these activities of the forces of law and order. They could arrest anyone and they could kill anyone and dispose of their bodies without the need of an inquiry or producing the body to relatives.

During the recent pogrom it was admitted by the Government that the armed forces looked on, encouraged and did not take action. What was not admitted was that in many instances they were the perpetrators, that quite a lot of the activity took place during the curfew hours, and that despite all that happened, armed forces only shot and killed 15 looters.

When the 13 soldiers died why did the Government try to organise a funeral with full military honours?

Any sensible Government would have not published the facts.

The reaction or action of the Sinhalese was supposed to be a spontaneous one due to the killing of the soldiers.

Soldiers were killed not because they were Sinhalese, but because they were agents of the Government. In any case, certain news reports stated that the soldiers had raped some girls, two of whom committed suicide, and that is why they were attacked. If the attack by the Sinhalese was a spontaneous reaction, how come they had the names and addresses of Tamil houses and businesses - as admitted by the Government - and were sophisticated enough to only loot, but not burn, houses owned by Sinhalese and occupied by Tamils?

Why is it that no member of the Government came on T.V. or radio and try to calm the feelings and appeal for peace?

When they did come on television, every one of them, including the President, did not talk as Ministers or President of the whole country. They talked only as representatives of the Sinhalese people. An analysis of their speeches will show this. They spoke of what the Sinhalese people wanted, what they would permit and not permit, etc. Not what the whole of Sri Lanka wants or what the Tamils want.

INTELLECTUAL PROSTITUTION

They talk of federalism as division of the country.

This is purely intellectual prostitution. It is the only way diverse societies can be united in one Government. There are probably more federal states than unitary states - India, Pakistan, Australia, Malaysia, Canada, United States, U.S.S.R., China, Germany, Switzerland, Nigeria, Spain, France, United Kingdom, etc. Why should the Government say they would be prepared to talk only if a unitary Government is accepted by the T.U.L.F. ? Are all the countries quoted above divided?

The President himself has said that there

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THE MARTYRDOM OF THE TAMILS

The latest mass attack on the Tamils by the Sinhalese security forces and the Sinhalese mobs on licensed rampage—licensed by politicians who include, most notably, President Jayewardene—was conducted according to the law of Ceylon's political jungle; where, as I wrote in my 1982 articles in *The Illustrated Weekly of India*, the Sinhalese Lion and the Tamil Tiger "stalk each other" in Sri Lanka's tranquil tropic shade; in the upcountry tea plantations, too, and in the arid scrub of the northern Tamil homelands.

What we have seen—and this time, fortunately, the whole world has seen it, too, though at great cost in Tamil lives and possessions—is first, and at the basest level, the bloodlust of racism.

It is a racism which is deep-rooted, exacerbated by British colonial destruction of the political ecology of the island and fomented by sly Buddhist priests and opportunist politicians. Worse, the immediate local desire for revenge for the July 23 Jaffna Tiger ambush (itself a reprisal for the earlier kidnap and rape of Tamil girls by the "security" forces) was lost in the roars of a volatile Sinhalese populace, always quick to be aroused to violence; particularly when trained to do so—as it has been for decades now in Sri Lanka—by disreputable Sinhalese communalists who have proved themselves swift and ready—with public transport, lists of Tamil addresses and cans of kerosene—to set the beast of prey on to attack its quarry with bush-knives and firebrands.

Several of these communalists—Premadasa, the Prime Minister; Cyril Mathew, the Enoch Powell of Sri Lanka; and others—are well known in Colombo to have their own private armies of hoodlums to do their bidding.

To speak of them as Machiavellians is to do them too great an honour. These are low-level and shallow

DAVID SELBOURNE

Selbourne has threatened defamation proceedings against the Ministry of Defence in the Colombo courts for being described as "a sympathiser of the International Marxist Group", another reason for his being declared a prohibited person in Sri Lanka.

Here is another Selbourne exclusive tracing the course of events in the emerald isle, where promises made to the Tamils remain unfulfilled and where President Jayewardene's position is itself now threatened.

men, as I know from my 1982 conversations with President Jayewardene and others, whom I will not name here, since even I hope for their eventual redemption from evil.

They are cynical without cunning, dallying and dabbling for 30 years with Tamil political aspiration, without the slightest real intention of reaching a settlement with it; presiding over an economically bankrupt regime, mortgaged to the hilt to the IMF, as Jayewardene himself admitted to me—and, when I published it in *The Illustrated Weekly* last year, he had me put on a list of "prohibited persons" by the Ministry of Defence; many of them crooks, the worst of them with a thin veneer of "Western" sophistication.

My readers will understand me best if I say it is just like India, only more so.

Take the cynicism of Junius Richard Jayewardene, for example. After the recent round of massacres of Tamils had already begun, massacres supervised and protected by the local security forces—and, it is worth noting, they began in June in Trincomalee, long before the Tiger ambush, not in July in Colombo—he told the London *Daily Telegraph's* Ian Ward that he "did not care about the lives of the Jaffna Tamils". The "terrorists"—that is, the sons of the Tamil people who, as a last desper-

ate resort, have taken to arms, not merely to advance their claims to political separation, but to defend their own community from the "security forces"—would be "wiped out" to the last man.

Now, for the leader of the nation in a country like Sri Lanka, a volcano of fears and emotions, to announce publicly that he is unconcerned about the physical well-being of hundreds of thousands of citizens of the minority is an *incitement to violence*; and, if he says it to *The Daily Telegraph*, you can imagine what he says to his followers and hirelings.

Worse, a man like Jayewardene knew, and knows very well, that it was an incitement; worse again, remained silent while his security forces and the mobs whom they lead looted, pillaged, burned and murdered—waiting days before calling on them to desist; and, worse still (more cynically step by step), then blamed his own army for promoting and provoking violence, for keeping him uninformed, the very man who sits at the centre of the Sinhalese mob, who is constitutional head of the armed forces and whose close relative, Maj-Gen Tissa Weeratunge, is chief of the Sri Lankan army.

Could there be anything worse? Oh yes, many things, above all the massacre of innocents, or the beating to death in his cell in Colombo's Welikade prison—where his family naively believed he would be at least safe from mob violence—of the Gandhian leader, Dr S. Rajasundaram. His selfless and brave rehabilitation work among Tamil plantation refugees from earlier upcountry violence in 1979, whom he had helped

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To have been expelled from such a state is a great honour. Yet it is blood on my face, and your face, too, reader; for we are all citizens of Jaffna in one way or another.

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to settle in the Vavuniya district on state lands, was a great human achievement.

It included the teaching of over 10,000 refugee children in 350 pre-schools, well-digging, road-building and the provision and the distribution of medical and food supplies—supported by Christian Aid, the World Council of Churches, Novib, Oxfam and Bread for the World—to the village settlements, as they struggled towards self-sufficiency.

A man I am proud to remember as a friend, Dr Rajasundaram was arrested in April, tortured—uncharged and untried—his orphanage buildings set on fire by the local security forces, his offices ransacked, the vehicles which took milk-powder and Triplosa to the children

criminalising Tamil political representation and to damage Sri Lanka in the eyes of its customers, bankers and investors (even if they are themselves leeches) is not even in the Sinhalese interest. Machiavelli's Prince was at least a man who acted with prudence as well as cunning; and at least gained his own ends rather than destroying them by his stratagems. Instead, the future relation between Tamils and Sinhalese is now governed by new and disastrous factors.

First, what has been gained by the Tamil Tigers—who, even before the recent pogrom, were supported, not by the "Russians", but by millions of Tamils the world over—is new levels of community support of every kind for their national struggle. In the past, whatever they lacked in

of state he is helping to pilot will end up—if not at the bottom of the Indian Ocean—unless heed is taken.)

Instead, the misguided proscription of the TULF—many of whose leaders had forfeited public influence among the Tamils and lost it to the Tigers, precisely because they were seeking a political compromise with the Sinhalese—together with continuous physical attack on the Tamil population has undermined what little political obligation to the Sri Lankan state remained among them. Moreover, to make Tamil fears and Tamil aspirations *illegal* further guarantees the development of the separatist movement and puts a premium on violence; while ensuring the ultimate replacement of TULF moderates, like Amirthalingam, by much more extreme Tamil nationalists, some of them deeply chauvinist themselves, with whom political settlement will be much more difficult for the Sinhalese to achieve in the future.

But these are not really, or not yet, arguments which can persuade the Sinhalese, who are still bent on gradual national suicide. It is a kind of Buddhist hara-kiri. Their plans, cynical and even vicious, are quite different. They are, I am afraid, to continue by terrorisation and expropriation to force the Tamils back into their own Northern ghetto and into a showdown of increasingly open violence, which the Sinhalese believe—rightly—that the Tamils could never win.

Open violence, because the Sri Lankan army is not capable, as Maj-Gen Weeratunge himself unwisely told me, of defeating the Tigers' hit-and-run tactics. However undisciplined (despite its officers' clipped accents and bristling Sandhurst moustaches), it is nevertheless well enough organised to sack, loot and assault the *unarmed* Tamil population—with the full knowledge and connivance of its higher ranks—in the only kind of struggle a mob army is capable of waging.

Second, since the Sinhalese have never been, and are not now, serious about genuine political concessions to the Tamils ("After all, they are only 11 per cent of the population") and will not countenance separation, partition or even federation, the TULF's deeply embarrassing desire for compromise has had to be continuously thwarted by Sinhalese politicians. In consequence, the TULF has first been undermined and now been banned altogether. (There is nothing inconsistent about Sinhalese *realpolitik*.)

Indeed, Jayewardene is well aware that his own policies have helped create the Tiger movement; but, having accomplished the murder of its

President Jayewardene is well aware that his own policies have helped create the Tiger movement; but, having accomplished the murder of its cadres held in custody, he and his advisers believe, wrongly, that they can now eliminate the supposedly demoralised cause of Tamil separation entirely.

of the settlement villages gutted—all this I saw myself in June—and finally, in July, they killed him. It is today's reward in Sri Lanka for a man who deserved a Nobel Prize for his work for the most needy and downtrodden of the world's workers, who had fled from the hell of the estate line-rooms. They said he "harboured terrorists"; but, if he did, then the whole of Jaffna is guilty also.

However, in President Jayewardene's case, I will select just one more small item from the infancy of his political conduct. Asked why no inquests had been held after the reprisal massacre of perhaps as many as 100 Jaffna citizens by soldiers on July 23 and 24, President Jayewardene replied: "I didn't know until a couple of days ago. It's too late now."

Too late? How too late? Why too late? Can it ever be too late for the truth, for justice? And this is the *dharma* Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, neither *dharma*, nor democratic, nor socialist, nor really a republic either. More a dictatorial fiefdom, with a violent struggle for the succession already under way, a struggle which has been pushed ahead by the 77-year-old Jayewardene's disastrous misgovernment of the island.

Machiavellianism is the wrong term for it all, as I said earlier, because to wreck the economy further in pursuit of racial vendetta, to delegitimise the whole polity by

strength and numbers—both of which will have increased considerably in the last weeks, despite or because of the murders in detention of their leaders, like Kuttimani and Jegan—was made up for in the fevered imaginations of the Sinhalese; as I wrote earlier in this journal, every striped shadow had become a Tiger. In the period to follow, for better or worse, many more striped shadows will in fact be Tigers.

Second, there is a deeper and more awesome point for Sri Lanka's future. Every state has a legal and moral obligation to protect its citizen's lives and possessions. If it cannot or does not choose to do so—as in the case of Sri Lanka's Tamils—then for those citizens the state's legitimacy, in effect, ceases to exist.

The mere demand in itself (now foolishly made illegal under an amendment to the nation's Constitution) for a greater degree of self-determination on the part of a section of the citizenry can never justify the withdrawal from them of the ordinary protections of the law and the Constitution—particularly when the overwhelming majority of these citizens have not taken up arms, and do not intend to take up arms, against that state. (Perhaps my old friend, Lalith Athulathmudali, ex-President of the Oxford Union, a lawyer and Minister of Shipping and Trade in Jayewardene's Cabinet, may care to consider where the ship

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cadres held in custody, he and his advisers believe, wrongly, that they can now eliminate the supposedly demoralised cause of Tamil separation entirely.

Finally, the officially sanctioned punishment of the civilian Tamil population (which will continue indefinitely in outbreaks of racial violence as long as there are Tamils left on the island) is unlikely to lead to India's direct intervention. However tempting to Mrs Gandhi would be the recovery of her battered political fortunes in Andhra and Karnataka by being proclaimed in Madras the triumphant saviour of the Sri Lankan Tamils, India cannot really intervene decisively as long as there are more than a million Indian Tamil hostages in the upcountry plantations. They could, and would, begin to be put to the sword, at whatever cost—and it would be a huge one to the Sri Lankan economy—as soon as the first reports reached Colombo of an Indian landing on the beaches of Jaffna.

As it is, there have been brutal attacks and killings in the recent violence, not only in Colombo, Kandy and Trinco, but also in the estate areas—as always. But it is the line-rooms, with their cargoes of helpless plantation slaves, which would burn if the Indians invaded; particularly since so many other potential Tamil scapegoats have now been driven out of Colombo.

So that, in the immediate future, the herding of Tamils into an increasingly isolated and vulnerable Jaffna, Sinhalese physical attack and Tiger reprisal, the Sinhalese colonisation of Tamil lands in the east and the expulsion of earlier plantation refugees settled on the borders of the Northern region in Vavuniya will continue. They will continue, even though wiser Sinhalese are now deeply anxious in private about how to come to terms with legitimate Tamil demands for their own means of self-government and self-defence.

Indeed, a few hours before my own expulsion from Sri Lanka on June 24 for "violation of journalistic ethics", Sirimavo Bandaranaike made plain to me in a long conversation, her own recognition of the seriousness of the Tamil struggle and of the need to find a political solution to it.

Moreover, despite seeming Sinhalese unity of purpose in the denial of Tamil demands the ruling UNP is itself a battlefield. With deep factional divisions in its ranks made sharper under the pressure of the separatist movement and with obvious dissarray in the army—where Mrs Bandaranaike's SLFP still has strong support—the anxiety of the Buddhist establishment to find an adequate successor to Jayewardene

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who can guarantee their political and cultural hegemony in the island is growing.

Indeed, the struggle over the succession has been intensifying throughout this year; Jayewardene's own chosen heir-apparent, Upali Wijewardene, has already "disappeared" in a plane crash.

The only light relief to come will be the continued use, and misuse, of the "red scare" about "Naxalites", "Russians", "Marxists" and so on; Sveh paranoia about "foreign hands" is familiar to students of the Indian subcontinent. But, for the rest, the martyrdom of the Tamils will continue, as the Sinhalese

search for a "final solution" to the "Tamil problem"; and the corruption of the whole discredited Sri Lankan political system will continue with it.

In Jaffna—I was told by a highly placed source in June—soldiers can sometimes be seen standing at the roadside, especially at busy crossings, hitting out at passers-by; who wipe the blood from their faces and walk or cycle on without murmur, "as if they had become normal".

To have been expelled from such a state is a great honour. Yet it is blood on my face, and your face, too, reader; for we are all, come to think of it, citizens of Jaffna in one way or another.

TAMIL TIMES - AN APPEAL

◦ *Subscribers and readers of TAMIL TIMES are well aware of the problems of the Tamil speaking people of Sri Lanka, particularly after the recent wave of violence that swept the country like a tornado.*

◦ *The SATURDAY REVIEW and SUTHANTHIRAN, the papers we have heavily relied upon for information have been banned by the government. Today, there is no other paper to highlight the plight of the Tamils and speak on their behalf except for the Tamil Times.*

◦ *The Sri Lankan state-controlled press is biased and anti-Tamil in its coverage of news and information.*

◦ *In this context, the regular and, if finances permit, more frequent publication of TAMIL TIMES is of crucial importance. For this purpose, more suitable arrangements in regard to printing, news gathering, circulation and editorial work have to be made.*

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TESTING TIME FOR TAMILS OF SRI LANKA

"A HOUSE DIVIDED WILL NOT STAND"

SIVA SINGHAM

The recent events have had a profound effect on every Tamil who traces his roots to that unhappy country wherever he may be at this moment. Wherever he may be, he is certainly more secure than any Tamil now in Sri Lanka. But, it is a time to suppress one's emotions, a time to reflect. Reflection must lead to resolution: resolution to action.

Successive Sri Lankan Governments have shown themselves incapable or unwilling to secure the livelihood, property and lives of the Tamil speaking peoples. Elements within these Governments have been actively involved with the mobs which have sought, at periodic intervals, to terrorise the Tamil population in the South: more recently these elements have set up the security forces to carry out the same objective in the Tamil homelands of the North. The Sinhala politicians have consistently used the Tamils as whipping boys in their power struggles: it is a depressing but inescapable fact that their Governments cannot be relied upon to guarantee the fundamental rights of the Tamils or indeed any other minority in Sri Lanka. By using the security forces to extend the terrorism upon the Tamils the present Government has only succeeded in creating a new Frankenstein force in Sri Lanka, the threat of military dictatorship. The forces have tasted power without accountability; they will not forget its sweetness.

The Tamil-Speaking Peoples are not a nation of terrorists. The Sinhala politicians are seeking, with all the resources of the State at their command, to spread abroad a picture of the Tamils as latter day invaders, greedy for more than their share of the land and of the economy, and willing to indulge in mindless killing and destruction to achieve their ends. This false propaganda exploits emotive arguments aimed to strike a sympathetic response in a country to which terrorism and separation are anathema. We must counter this false propaganda with the truth: we must expose the true terrorists in the South who parade around with cans of petrol setting alight innocent civilians; we must expose the true separatists who would drive the Tamils into the North and East and would create a slave state in reality whilst denying to these peoples their right to self-determination.

This is a testing time for the Tamil Speaking Peoples of Sri Lanka.

This is a moment to draw breath and to think clearly and rationally: an opportunity to broaden our horizons, to eliminate once and for all the narrow vision which has afflicted a community riven by selfish-

ness, jealousy and egoism. For too long have we cynically accepted the inevitability and permanence of these factors in our society.

Our suffering is a cleansing flame which must be used to cauterise all that is ignoble in our thoughts and attitudes: for too long have these deficiencies shackled us to the ground when we should be soaring above the clouds.

It is incomprehensible that a community under siege, its property destroyed and under physical threat of a final kind, should be so divided: perhaps history makes the spectacle of so many minute organisations in this country comprehensible to the Tamils themselves: it is bewildering to an outsider who is forced to question the credentials of the Tamil claim for justice when he is confronted by group after group, denigrating each other and each claiming a unique right to fight a cause which is rapidly being lost in its native land.

A house divided will not stand.

So, my first request, as a non-political moderate without any track record of service in the Tamil cause, is for unity amongst the Tamil-Speaking People in this country. We have not the financial muscle of that other example of a community under siege, the Jews; but I hope we have proved to have some of its mental strength; we must prove in the days to come that we can match its indomitable courage, its dogged determination not to yield in adversity.

I call upon the numerous organisations now working in this country to come together and pledge themselves to sink their identities and form one united body, a Conference of Tamil-Speaking Peoples which will exert all their collective energy to overcoming the suffering and hardship of our brethren in Sri Lanka; to ensuring, for these suffering peoples, security and prosperity in the years to come.

Several of these groups have struggled against heavy odds over the years to build viable structures: they will naturally be loath to lose their carefully built identities. I would ask them to reflect on their objectives and their achievements. Would they say, in all honesty, that they have achieved all they aimed for? Would they not have a better chance of doing so under one umbrella where no one points the finger of calumny or derision at his neighbour but all work together to maximise the utilisation of our limited resources?

A loose federation of the splinter groups is not enough. We must have one organisation which speaks with one voice. It

must command the respect of world opinion, international organisations and national governments. The Ruling Council will be representative of respected and mature Tamil opinion, of our women-folk, and of our youth. The elected representatives of our people in Sri Lanka must be members of the Conference. Democratic consultation at the grass roots must be a prerequisite for major decisions: few stray individuals should not be allowed to sway the Council into actions which do not reflect the majority view.

Some of the present groups have been set up with specific objectives; the identity of these objectives need not be lost in the unified Conference. I envisage a Secretariat with divisions for planning, information, construction, rehabilitation, and so on. The present groups will form the nuclei for these divisions.

Consonant with this unification we should work towards organising this same unity in the US, India, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Malaysia, Africa and all the places where Sri Lankan Tamils have sought to build new homes away from the approaching holocaust in their homeland. The National Conferences in the various countries will be integrated in a World Conference of Tamil-Speaking Peoples which will eventually have a Secretariat and a structure reflecting the structure of the national bodies. The frail individual reeds must be bound into a cohesive strong ark to set afloat the highest aspirations of the Tamil-Speaking People. Unity must be the first objective and its importance cannot be overstressed. We must have the enthusiasm and strength to set aside cynicism, to transform our individuality from a weakness into our strength, to combine the rich diversity of talents amongst our people into a powerful tool for the furtherance of our aspirations.

A word of warning is necessary. We should not think in terms of grandiose Conference Centres and other exhibitions of conspicuous consumption: they will be costly monuments to our egoism: they will represent the waste of valuable and scarce resources which could have been better used where they are sorely needed. The organisation should be simple and informal, at least until such time as it develops significantly: the need for using paid full-time workers will come later.

Having set unity as our first goal, we identify the next. This is clearly a definition of our objectives in a charter which will polarise our struggle and will serve

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as a touchstone to revive the flagging of our enthusiasm in the years to come (for, let there be no doubt about this, the struggle will be long, hard and often dispiriting). The Charter must be all embracing. It should provide for:

Freedom from tyranny and repression: the elimination of discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, caste and the other divisive elements in our society. This is the first of the fundamental rights which will draw and keep us together; we should not only protect these freedoms from outside attacks but also eliminate threats to them from within our own society. The scavenger is as precious as the Jaffna Tamil descended from the ancient kings, the "Indian" Tamil is the equal of the indigenous Tamil: the Tamil-speaking Muslim is our brother in adversity, we want him to remain so in prosperity. No one is a traitor because he chooses to earn his livelihood within the Sinhalese community.

- A Master Plan to develop the traditional homelands of the Tamils in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka: this will cover the construction of a proper infra-structure, the provision of centres of industry and agriculture, the provision of opportunities for investment and employment, and the establishment of self-contained communities sustained by and sustaining the centres of productivity. Those of us with expertise in the appropriate fields will assist in designing the Plan.

- Educational opportunities for our able young people at secondary school, university and research levels: these will cover the total spectrum of our community's needs under the Master Plan and will provide for scholarships abroad as well as centres of professional and technical education in the Tamil area.

- A commitment on the part of all Tamils abroad as well as in Sri Lanka to channel a fixed proportion, say 5% of all earnings, into a massive Central Fund to generate the income necessary to further the objectives of the Conference. The investment and management of these funds will be entrusted to a board of trustees of proven ability and probity.

- A commitment on the part of all Tamils abroad as well as in Sri Lanka to devote one holiday in every cycle of say four years to voluntary community and development work in the homelands.

- A world-wide campaign to obtain a commitment and a guarantee that the property and lives of the Tamil-Speaking Peoples in Sri Lanka will be held inviolate and that the persecution of the last 35 years will cease: alternatively, or in addition, a commitment on the part of friendly Governments and/or international organisations that they will intervene positively if there is a recurrence of mob

violence. This commitment is essential to the success of the Master Plan: it must be emphasised to the world that if such a commitment is not forthcoming our threatened community will have no option but to resort to its own measures for self-protection with all the consequences this would entail.

There would be secondary objectives:

- to assist towards the maintenance and development of the Tamil language, culture and way of life;

- to meet the social needs of the community by providing facilities for gatherings, entertainment, the arts, travel and so on: the special needs of younger members should be met;

- to publicise world-wide in an effective and adequate way our progress in meeting the set objectives, and our needs for assistance: the existing newspaper could well be part of the machinery of this communication system.

I have deliberately avoided references to political objectives and the means necessary to attain these objectives in this paper for a number of reasons:

- time is not with us: any political solution will take time to achieve, whatever the means employed: our needs are immediate, the machinery outlined above must be set up now;

- world opinion is now on our side: we must channel this sympathy before it fades away; we must not prejudice its survival and its growth by hasty action: we need funds on an international, national, local and individual level and we can reach these now: we may not find aid so readily forthcoming in the future, at least not until the next pogrom;

- the objectives dealt with in this letter are basic and acceptable to every Tamil in Sri Lanka and outside: a political objective is not necessary for their achievement, nor will their pursuit interfere with such an objective.

This is not the appropriate place to discuss the detailed structure of the World Conference and its National Units. However, I would like to refer to some matters which are of relevance to any plea for future action.

Our community is not unique in world history as a target for repression. I believe that a serious study of the way in which other groups and communities have set about solving problems akin to ours should be carried out. The Kurds, the Armenians, the Irish, the Jews, to mention a few, have valuable lessons for us: so too have religious sects which have within relatively short periods become well organised and financially viable. We must identify those ingredients which will guarantee our own success.

I would like to refer to another matter which many may find unpalatable at the present time. I refer to the majority of the

Sinhalese other than the politicians and the mobs: many of these have worked without thought of personal danger to seek out and succour the Tamils who suffered at the hands of the mobs. Many of them have expressed their shame that the persecution has happened. Let us say to all these friends: we appreciate your help; we value your friendship. Your politicians will never permit our peaceful coexistence in the South: we will continue to be subjected to mob fury in ever shortening cycles; this is no way to live. Please help us to develop our traditional areas and to create security and prosperity for our peoples. Please ask your politicians to withdraw the marauding army terror from the North and to permit the people in that zone to live without fear of looting, rape, assault and arson. If licences are required to develop the Northern and Eastern areas please assist us to obtain these. We are citizens of one country: please ask your Government to match investment whether by a Sinhalese or a Tamil rupee for rupee: we will build a secure and prosperous Sri Lanka together. The enrichment of any part of Sri Lanka must enrich the whole: the destruction of any part will likewise diminish that whole. Let us work together: the alternative is mutual destruction where we will be easy prey to one or other of the power blocs.

The plan of action proposed above calls for a considerable commitment of time, effort and money from all Tamils in Sri Lanka as well as abroad. Are we capable of rising to this challenge? If we do not, the alternative is certain oblivion for the Tamil-Speaking People in Sri Lanka; the destruction of all those special facets which make up the distinctive Tamil society, culture and community in that country. Those of us who have made homes outside Sri Lanka will no longer have a focus of identity: our Tamil identity will certainly be lost in a few generations. We must look to the lessons of history: advanced civilizations and cultures have succumbed to those less developed but which have been more aggressive: they die through war or simply through social and cultural disintegration. We must not let this happen to us.

We must mobilise the support of all Tamils, the cultured and compassionate Sinhalese and the rest of the world. We must inform and convince. Each of us is an advocate of the common cause. If each Tamil in this country is able to enlighten 50 people comprising his circle of friends and acquaintances, whether at his work-place, place of worship, his local pub or elsewhere, the number of people aware of the true facts and sympathetic to our cause will form a multitude.

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is much enmity between the two communities.

There is no one in the country on either side who talks of Sri Lankans. They only talk about Sinhalese and Tamils - from the highest in the land to the lowest. The fact that during times of communal troubles the Government itself sends Tamils from the South to the Tamil areas and Sinhalese from the North to Sinhalese areas is a tacit admission that there are these two separate areas where the two communities feel safe - except that the Tamils no longer feel safe in their areas because of the acts of the "army of occupation".

R. Myluaganan

NOT A WORD OF SYMPATHY

May I use the columns of your newspaper to draw readers' attention to one significant omission on the part of the Sinhalese to the violence in Sri Lanka seems to be one of condoning the atrocities perpetrated on the Tamils. Not one letter of sympathy or condolence has appeared in any of the daily newspapers. Surely there must be some at least who realise the untold sufferings of the Tamils and the destruction

Contd from page 33

Lobbying may be a nasty word but necessary now: we must pay particular attention to persons who can contribute significantly to our objectives; if they are friends that will be all the more helpful. The International organisations, the legislatures of the East and the West, of Japan and Africa, must all be alerted to the threat now hanging over the Tamil-Speaking Peoples of Sri Lanka.

I will conclude with a personal view. I believe that the steps formulated in this paper can and must be taken irrespective of the shape of any political struggle. A planned programme for development of the traditional homelands in the North and East of Sri Lanka, using our own international organisation, should be carried out together with a campaign to obtain international guarantees of our fundamental rights which should include the protection of property and people from the security forces as well as the mobs.

I believe that an extreme political struggle will sacrifice at least a generation without a guarantee of success: we have only to consider the struggles for freedom around the world to realize this truth.

I have a dream of our homelands transformed from virgin jungle and arid plains to flourishing farmlands and industrial belt by the turn of this century. Have we the courage and determination to translate this dream into reality?

I do not wish to visit a Vietnam or Lebanon on our motherland.

I wish for dignity with prosperity and security: not for dignity in a wasteland

of hundreds of homes and business houses. There must be some who have seen or heard that some of their Tamil friends have been the victims of this massacre; yet is it not surprising that not one voice of protest has come from one Sinhalese living abroad? Does not their silence indicate that they condone such violence? Have they all lost their sense of brotherly love?

Where has the meaning of the words in the National Anthem, which translated mean, 'we shall live as children of one mother' gone now? Were they only mere words in the first flush of Independence?

S.S.MANIAM (MISS)

CROYDON, SURREY.

WHY NOT SPONSOR A VILLAGE?

Dear Editor,

With the recent outburst of violence, many Tamils, especially those who depended on a sole breadwinner, have lost everything either by the death of the provider or by destruction of the little they owned. We have all heard of the massive losses incurred by many living in the villages and hamlets of the northern and eastern provinces.

The Tamils abroad lead a comparatively better standard of life than their compatriots back home. It is worthwhile if those of us outside Sri Lanka can join together in groups, like those in Harrow or in Wimbledon, for example, and sponsor a village or district back home. In the missionary era, groups like these in various parts of the UK and of the USA adopted villages and helped to build schools, hospitals, etc. We could help in a variety of ways, e.g. paying for children orphaned by these outbreaks of violence to obtain higher education, if necessary in India, building libraries or medical centres, starting arts and crafts centres, etc.

It would be good if readers of Tamil Times could respond positively to these ideas.

Mrs. R. Arul

Bromley, Kent.

SINHALA BRAVERY OR BUDDHIST WAY OF JUSTICE

Some Sinhalese claim that the recent violence was due to the killing of 13 soldiers in the north by the tigers. Fair enough. But didn't the army soon after, stop a bus load of old people, children and women and kill them at point blank range. Isn't that revenge enough? Oh! No! instead they took off their uniforms, went down south, called on their illiterate brothers, who can unfortunately be found two for a penny in that part of the Island, and went hunting. Innocent children, women and old people were killed and properties burnt. In true Sinhala brave fashion 200 Sinhalese attack one Tamil family. Recently in Ams-

terdam 200 Sinhalese burnt down a Dutch family's house because they had two Tamil boarders. My God! Do you Sinhalese need 200 of your kind to sort out 2 Tamils? Is this Sinhala bravery or is it the Buddhist way of justice.

Some of the Sinhalese soliders were trained by the crack British SAS and some by the Israeli army. Both are well known for their efficiency and competence. Yet these people cannot catch a small band of tigers. In English they have a saying 'you can take a donkey to the water hole but you cannot make it drink'.

The Tigers never laid a hand on the innocent Sinhalese who lived up in the North. If I were a Sinhalese I will crawl into a shoe box and stay there for the rest of my life. In the late 19th century, when Saudi Arabia was a poverty stricken desert peninsula and when the tribes used to raid each other's tents, they would never lay a hand on women and children. To touch or harm them would be haram, a shameful thing. I don't know the solution to the problem in that beautiful Island of ours but I say one thing to my Tamil brothers, don't walk in front of a Sinhalese if you can help it, or else you may end up dead.

To you Muslim friends a word of warning. they got us today and they will come for you tomorrow.

A Reader.
London SW9.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

Dear Sir,

This is an hour of disaster for the Tamils; but also an hour of opportunity. Three decades of political violence, one decade of military violence, and now unprecedented mob violence supported by the politics and security forces! Enough is enough! The silver lining on this cloud is that Tamils will return to the North and East (and those able will go abroad) to build up the future state - whether within a federal set-up or independently.

The Tamils in Colombo in a sense were holding the North and East hostage. Now the North and East will feel more free, and gladly welcome all who return from their southern captivity. They went there, partly because all the opportunities were in the South, due to the official neglect of the North and East, and the political appropriations for the South of all resources, foreign aid, jobs, educational opportunities, etc. Sri Lanka as we knew it is no more, just as Ceylon as the British knew it is no more. The expatriate Tamils have to organise themselves to build up the North and East, if a future state is to be viable. Eelam, when it appears, will be bigger than 20 to 30 naions which are already in the United Nations, and it will have a more literate

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IN REMEMBRANCE

T.J. RAJARATNAM (JAYAM)



Retired High Court Judge, born 23.1.1919. Called to rest 15.9.1981. Not a day do we forget you, in our hearts you are always there as we loved you so, we miss you. Sadly missed and lovingly remembered always by daughter Renuka, Son-law Sriharn, grand-daughter Jayanthi, 50, Coningsby Road, London W.5.

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population than more than half the nations in the UN.

Some people, including religious dignitaries, still speak of the 'privileges enjoyed by the Tamils'. They do not see the political violence of the majority during the last three decades, a political violence which has now become military violence, both of which transforming into mob violence. The counter-violence from the North is a feeble cry from the heart of the youth who cannot stand such combined exploitation of Tamil resources, labour and know-how.

C. Arulanantham

London SE6

STOP FACTIONAL FIGHTING

Dear Sir,

In the wake of the recent pogrom directed against the Tamils of Sri Lanka, Tamils in every walk of life all over the world have made attempts to organise assistance to their stricken brethren. More than ever the Tamils have begun to rally behind their youth who have over the years made enormous sacrifice to resist oppression and maintain our honour. There is unprecedented unity among the Tamils on that one score. That unity has to be harnessed towards the achievement of our objectives. A resistance movement is nothing without mass support from the people. This support, the youth will acknowledge, has been enormous in recent times. The greatest danger to that support, would come from factional fighting among the youth. Worse still is killing each other to the delight of our oppressor.

The people would lose heart; indifference and apathy would soon return.

It is not necessary that all Tamils should operate as one group or one party. This would be unrealistic and unworkable. But so long as their perceived objective is that of emancipating their people from tyranny they should concentrate all their efforts

ANTI-TAMIL VIOLENCE, JULY 1983

It is essential, for several reasons, to collect data concerning the atrocities committed against the Tamil people of Sri Lanka.

It is important that every detail, including the nature of the incident, the people or property affected, the place where it occurred, the number and type of people who perpetrated the crime, whether the security forces were involved, any deaths or injuries caused and all other relevant circumstances surrounding the incidents are recorded. There are a large number of expatriate Tamils who possess details of the atrocities to which their kith and kin or their friends were subjected.

All those who are in possession of such information are kindly requested to send it to the address given below. All information given will be treated in the strictest confidence. Under no circumstances will it be used for any purpose whatsoever without the express permission of the person who supplied the information.

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this violence because they published the story about the shooting of the 13 soldiers in Jaffna. On the very next day when over 50 people were shot and killed in Jaffna by the soldiers, no story was ever published in the newspapers or put out over radio or television so that the Sinhala people were goaded on to further action to avenge the death of these soldiers because they were kept in the dark about this.

Q. Would you like to elaborate on the long-term political solution you have in mind?

A. As I have said, we have got a mandate and we have put that forward and, as I explained earlier, we arrived at that abjective through a long process of broken promises, humiliation and attacks and being treated as a subject race. It is not open to us to go back on that mandate and unilaterally give it up and ask for something else. President Jayawardene's statement that if we want to get another mandate he will hold by-elections is absolute nonsense because we have placed a definite policy and the people had supported that. If we are to give that up and go before the people we should be able to place something before them.

Acceptable solution

If at the negotiating table, through India's good offices, we arrive at a solution which is acceptable to us and which we can recommend to our people as capable of removing the grievances under which they have been suffering, we will certainly go back to our people. As an honest political party we will not go back on the mandate they gave but ask the people to accept it and thereby get their democratic ratification of the action we have taken. This is what I have been saying. I think reasonable people can see that we cannot do anything else short of political chicanery.

If an alternative that is acceptable to us and which is acceptable to our people and, as I said which is capable of removing the grievances which gave rise to all these and which is capable of meeting the aspirations of our people is worked out, they will certainly accept it. I think the Tamil people are reasonable, and particularly with the Indian interest coming in, they will be assured that there will be a continuing certainty of that being carried out; therefore, we can persuade them to accept it.

G. Muthuthambi
Wimbledon, London SW 20.

NO LOCAL GOVT IN TAMIL AREAS

All Municipal and Urban Councils in which the TULF obtained a majority at the local authority elections are now facing a serious crisis. These councils have become defunct because of recent political developments.

A series of amendments to the Local Authorities Elections Ordinance, Local Authorities Special Provisions Law and consequential amendments to the Municipal Councils Ordinance and Urban Councils Ordinance are being contemplated by the Local Government Department to remedy the situation.

The present state of affairs ensued as a result of the TULF members refusing to take the oath disavowing separatism under the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution. The Jaffna, Batticaloa Municipal Councils and the Chavakachcheri, Valvettithurai, Point Pedro, Vavuniya and Trincomalee Urban Councils are those facing the crisis at present. Matters are also complicated in the cases of Jaffna, Valvettithurai, Point Pedro and Chavakachcheri as these councils were defunct on 31.8.1983 following a prolonged absence of three months by the elected members. All elected members refused to assume office because of threats by militant groups.

Although rate-payers in these local authorities are yet to feel the pinch as the basic amenities are being provided, these councils

are facing a problem in procuring materials and maintaining services.

Since tender formalities are required for any purchases or project costing more than Rs.1,500 approval of purchases and tenders have come to a standstill. No new works are being initiated. In addition, the drawing up of budgets for the forthcoming year are paralysed as the present laws require a large period of time for council approval.

The dissolution of these councils and the appointment of Special Commissioners and Special Officers are not possible as these councils are now defunct and therefore cannot be dissolved.

The problem is more acute in the case of Urban Councils than the Municipal Councils as the present laws provide for the executive powers of the Mayor to be vested in the Commissioner in case of a vacancy while it is not possible in the case of Urban Councils.

Contd from page 2

rogation be introduced to prevent occurrence of torture.

* Regular medical examinations be conducted on suspects.

* Government reviews existing legal remedies to protect Sri Lankan citizens from torture.

* Government establishes independent

investigative machinery to investigate complaints of police and army brutality and torture.

* Government translate into its national languages, publish, distribute and include in the training of armed and police forces the UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials. The Code specifies that "No law enforcement official may inflict, instigate or tolerate any act of torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment."

APPADURAI - NAVAM -

Mr. J.N.Appadurai-Navam passed away in Colombo on 9th July.

Educated at Jaffna College, Navam graduated privately and joined the Social Services Department where he became an Assistant Director. He retired early and joined International Voluntary Service where his interest and devotion to the social services were perhaps even better recognised than in his native country. He travelled a good deal with the I.V.S. and continued to help that institution from Colombo even after giving up full-time work. He also found the time and energy to work for the Church in Ceylon. In fact, he continued doing all this to his dying day. He leaves behind his wife, Rubina nee Hensman, and four daughters.

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DISTRICT MINISTER RESIGNS IN PROTEST

SINHALA "INVASION" OF BATTICALOA

A mass Sinhala "invasion" of Tamil villages in the Batticaloa District is under way under the direct supervision of Mr. Nelson, MP for Polonnaruwa and District Minister for Trincomalee, with active support from government agencies. The indigenous Tamil villagers have been driven out and over 20,000 Sinhalese have been 'settled' in these areas within a matter of weeks. 'Invaders' are increasing daily.

Sinhalese from Polonnaruwa, Kotmale and other parts of the island have been transported in lorries belonging to the Mahaveli Development Authority. Food provisions, vegetables and other necessities for the "invaders" are also being transported in state-owned vehicles.

Mr. Abdul Majeed, District Minister for Batticaloa and MP for Muthur has resigned in protest following his failure to halt the

Pathmanathan, MP for Pottuvil (sister of the late M.P., Mr. Kanagaratnam) has been

The "Invasion" began in earnest led by Mr. Nelson, on September 4. First 750 Sinhalese 'invaded' the village of Vadamunai, and chased away the villagers with the full support of the security forces. The attempt by the Assistant Government Agent of the area to persuade them to leave was a total failure.

During the following days, more and more intruders arrived and occupied the villages of Vadamunai, Madavanai, Kallichchi, Kiran and other nearby areas after forcibly driving away the Tamil inhabitants. Fearing violence, thousands of Tamils from adjoining villages also have evacuated their homes and area now living as refugees in Batticaloa.

Efforts are being made by some government ministers and state institutions to make this illegal occupation permanent. The tents supplied by some foreign countries and international relief agencies to help the Tamil refugees, the victims of the July violence, are now used to provide shelter for the "invading" Sinhalese. Over 3000 tents have been set up and it is learnt arrangements are being made to build more permanent accommodation. Temporary police stations, a number of retail shops and other facilities are being set up to serve the "invaders". Food provisions and other necessary items are being transported in bulk in vehicles belonging to the Mahaveli Development Authority. Buddhist vihares headed by monks are springing up like mushrooms.

It is reported that the pleas of Mr. K.W. Devanayagam, Minister of Home Affairs and MP for Kalkudah, requesting that the "invaders" be removed, have been ignored. The 'invasion' continues with more and

more arriving daily in coaches and lorries. Much in evidence among the "invading" hordes are Buddhist monks belonging to Cyril Mathew's Sinhala Sangvidanaya.

The fact that facilities of the Mahaveli Development Authority are being generously made available for this "invasion" suggests that it enjoys the full backing of

Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, the Minister in charge of the Mahaveli project.

Besides the prospect of losing their own lands, the Tamil people in the affected areas in particular and the Batticaloa District as a whole are fearful of the danger the 'invading force', with the assistance of the security forces, will mount a violent attack upon defenceless Tamils in the area.

THE FURY OF
RACIAL HATRED

Two State-owned buses filled with petrol were used to burn down the Muthu Mariamman Hindu Temple at Matale, Sri Lanka, on 28th July 1983 by Sinhalese mobs.