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REPEAT OF JULY 1983 FEARED

There are fears of a repetition of the July 1983 island-wide anti-Tamil (violence in the wake of acts of violence committed against Tamils and their property) in various parts of Sri Lanka. As we go to press reports of killing and arson in many parts of Sri Lanka are pouring in.

Many Sinhalese civilians were killed on May 14 in an attack allegedly by a Tamil group, still unidentified, in the city of Anuradhapura in the north-central province of Sri Lanka. Foreign journalists in Sri Lanka have reported that this attack on Sinhala citizens was carried out in retaliation for the massacre of over 100 Tamils at Valvettiturai in northern Jaffna.

The attack on Sinhala civilians has already been denounced by Tamil liberation groups and the London-based Human Rights Council of the Standing Committee of Tamils.

In the wake of the Anuradhapura incidents, many Tamils have been killed and their property set on fire in Anuradhapura and its suburbs. A Hindu temple and scores of homes have been destroyed. At Madawachchiya, the railway stationmaster Selvarajah, was clubbed to death. In Vavuniya, several shops were set on fire and the security forces, in an indiscriminate attack on Ajantha Hotel, went on a shooting spree and killed several Tamils. The Colombo-Batticaloa train was attacked at Kekkirawa on May 15 and it is reported that several Tamils were hacked or clubbed to death.

There were sporadic incidents in other parts of the country too. At Bandarawela in the central province Tamils were violently attacked and several shops were set ablaze. Attacks on Tamils have been reported from Kurunegala, Puttalam, Chilaw, Gampaha, Tissamaharama, and Akkaraipathu. Eighteen Tamils were shot and killed by police commandos in Akkaraipathu.

Massacre on Ferry

Forty-eight Tamils, including many women and children, were killed on May 15 when naval personnel in two boats attacked passengers on a ferry with guns and knives. About 30 more were injured and many were feared missing.

The ferry was carrying passengers between Delft and Nainativu, two islands off Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka. The injured are presently being treated in the Jaffna Hospital.

As usual, the Minister of National Security, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, has denied that the security forces were involved in the massacre. However, those who spoke to the survivors are convinced that the assailants were Sinhalese naval personnel who carried automatic weapons.

30 TAMILS BLASTED WITH EXPLOSIVES

The brutality of the Sri Lankan security forces reached a new high when 30 Tamil youths, the majority of whom were between 14-17, were herded into a building which was blown up with explosives killing them instantly. A few who escaped the blast and attempted to run were gunned down as they ran. This gruesome massacre occurred on May 9 within a community centre building in Oorani, a village 16 miles from the northern Tamil city of Jaffna.

In the wake of the death of some army men in a land-mine explosion, at Karaveddi, the security forces went on a rampage killing scores of Tamils, including women and children, in the adjoining villages of Polikandy, Tikkam, Udupidy and Valvettiturai. Hundreds of houses were set ablaze rendering thousands of families homeless. Several dead bodies were seen strewn on the streets, lanes and in front of houses days after the shooting spree. People were afraid to remove

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ILLUSIONS SHATTERED

The Sri Lankan state-controlled media have commenced another campaign of anti-Indian hysteria. The apparent reason for this latest outburst against India would appear to be the speech made by the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr A.K. Khan in the Rajya Sabha.

Any illusions entertained by the Sri Lankan leaders about a change in the Indian stance on the Tamil issue in the wake of Romesh Bhandari's recent visit to Colombo must have been shattered by the clear and forthright position adopted by Mr Khan, thus provoking the characteristic infantile reaction of the Sri Lankan leaders and the media.

Calling for the withdrawal of troops from the Tamil areas, Mr Khan described the happenings in Sri Lanka as 'deplorable, brutal, barbaric, cruel and inhuman'. Declaring that the Tamil people should enjoy equal rights with the Sinhalese, he said that the problems faced by Sri Lanka Tamils should be treated as a matter of concern for the whole Indian nation and not that of Tamil Nadu only.

The Sri Lankan government's last minute move to boycott the South Asian Regional Co-operation group which opened on May 10 in Bhutan is thought to be in protest against the speech by Mr Khan. This is an act of political truancy that would hurt Sri Lanka more than the other six countries.

SRI LANKA'S ALLERGY

The Sri Lankan government is always afflicted with an allergy for truth. The arrest of PTI correspondent Krishna Anand by the Sri Lankan authorities is a typical manifestation of this condition. The ban on all foreign journalists and diplomats from visiting Tamil areas is indicative of their fear that the

truth of the atrocities committed by the security forces would be revealed. The government's note issued at the end of March to all foreign missions in Colombo that visiting journalists should apply for visas was also a product of this phobia.

During the height of the July 1983 anti-Tamil violence, the correspondent who transmitted the news about the Sri Lanka government's request for military assistance from the US, UK, Pakistan and Bangladesh was promptly expelled. Subsequently, Dr David Selbourne, 'The Guardian's special correspondent, was unceremoniously trundled out of his hotel and taken to the airport to be put on a plane bound for London.

Mr Anand had not reported anything new or unknown to political observers. President Jayawardene during recent interviews has lamented that his pleas for military assistance have been turned down because of India's objection. On more than one occasion he has accused India of attempting to bully Sri Lanka. His emissaries have gone around western capitals seeking arms to effect a military solution to the ethnic problem. In this context, what was his motive in referring to the presence of British troops in Central America, Cyprus, Sinai, Lebanon, etc? What did he imply when he remarked that 'Britain meets her responsibilities in the defence of freedom throughout the world'?

No one with an iota of intelligence will doubt that Mr Jayawardene was making a desperate plea for British troops.

POLICE & THE PRELATE

The Sri Lankan security forces, including the police, have deservedly earned the notoriety of being the 'most indisciplined in the world'.

If Mr Rudra Rajasingham could not control his men during his tenure as Inspector

General of Police, at least he had the sense to give some sound advice to his uncontrollable men on his retirement. In his farewell speech, the retiring IGP advised his men to refrain from misusing their power and authority and to ensure that innocent members of the public are not harassed or assaulted. He observed that the image of the police service had been tarnished by such actions which should be deplored and condemned at all times. 'This must stop if the police are to win the confidence of the public,' he appealed.

In marked contrast, the Buddhist Mahanayake (Archbishop) of Asgiriya, Ven Palipana Sri Chanananda, 'hailed the services of the police and the security forces in the north' who 'were engaged in the task of protecting the motherland'. This he did when the new IGP, Mr Herbert Weerasinghe, paid a courtesy call on the prelate on his elevation to his high office. The prelate told the new IGP that 'the head of the police should act in such a way that he could win the confidence and support of his subordinate officers.'

It does not matter to the Mahanayake that hundreds of Tamils are indiscriminately killed at a time by the security forces; he does not care if Tamil women are raped; and it is not his concern if Tamil homes and property are looted and burned. The Mahanayake apparently believes that all these criminal acts are part of the process of protecting his 'motherland'.

MORE TAMILS KILLED

At Anaicoddai in Jaffna five Tamils were killed by the security forces on May 15. Thirty-one Tamil youths were killed and burnt by police commandos in Thambiluvil in Batticaloa on May 17. On the same day, 16 plantation Tamils who had fled to Vavuniya during the 1977 violence and settled down there, were killed. An army corporal who was on a shooting spree in a refugee camp in Anuradhapura killed six Tamils and injured 16 before he was overpowered by his superior officer.

RAJIV APPOINTS ADVISORY BODY ON TAMIL ISSUE

'In view of the prevailing situation, I shall convey to the President, Mr Jayawardene, our distress and anxiety and the need to arrive at a speedy and viable solution of the problem on a political basis acceptable to all parties concerned. In view of the gravity of the situation, I am setting up a special advisory group to continue efforts for resolving the problem,' stated Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi when he addressed the Indian Parliament on April 25.

The PM made the announcement following a meeting he had had with a Tamil Nadu All-Party delegation which urged him to take urgent initiatives on the Sri Lankan Tamil issue.

The Special Advisory Board will be headed by the Union Home Minister, S.B. Chavan, G. Parthasarathy, Chairman Policy Planning Committee, M.K. Alan Khan, Minister of State for External Affairs, P.K. Kant, Secretary to the Cabinet and Romesh Bhandari, Secretary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Political circles in New Delhi observe that the appointment of such a high-powered Committee indicates the importance Rajiv Gandhi attaches to the Sri Lankan Tamil issue.

SRI LANKA ARRESTS INDIAN JOURNALIST

Krishnan Anand, the Colombo correspondent of the Press Trust of India, was taken into custody by the Sri Lankan authorities for alleged 'misreporting' of a speech by President Junius Jayawardene at a banquet he gave for the British Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, during her recent visit to Sri Lanka. He was arrested under Sri Lanka's draconian Emergency Regulations which have become almost a part of the permanent statutes of the country.

'The decision to act against Mr Anand reflects the tension between Sri Lanka and India on the Tamil issue and a growing campaign against foreign correspondents in general,' reported Eric Silver, the New Delhi correspondent of 'The Guardian' (London, 9.5.85).

Released on bail

Mr Anand was released on bail pending formal charges after being kept overnight in the Colombo Welikade jail. His arrest besides resulting in relations between India and Sri Lanka taking a nosedive, caused a major parliamentary uproar between government and opposition MPs.

The alleged 'misreporting' by Mr Anand was in reference to President Jayawardene urging the UK Minister

to assist him with British troops. In his speech at the banquet on 13th April, the President said: 'Your country keeps troops stationed in some parts of Central America to sustain democracy. You have troops in Cyprus, in the South Atlantic, in the Sudan, and Beirut. You have loaned some to 35 foreign countries. In the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean too your navies are on duty across the world.' And then turning dramatically to Mrs Thatcher, the President said, 'Madam, I salute you.'

The implication and the intended purpose of these comments are too obvious for any reporter to interpret them as a request for British troops by the President.

The fact that Mr Anand had been released on bail, although it would have been open to the Sri Lankan authorities to keep him in custody for 90 days under the Emergency Regulations, would indicate that Sri Lanka would not take the risk of confrontation with India by sentencing him to prison. Political observers in Colombo feel that his arrest was the action of a spiteful President and that it was intended to instil fear in other foreign journalists.

SAME LEAGUE AS HITLER'S SS

Recently, the world, and particularly Europe, was celebrating the 40th anniversary of VE Day, the day on which the German Nazis were finally routed and forced to surrender. People were reminded of the horrors committed by Hitler's dreaded SS against the Jewish community.

Even as Presidents and Prime Ministers were promising that never again should the world witness a repetition of such dreadful deeds the Sri Lankan Sinhala security forces were continuing their genocidal violence against the Tamils.

The Sri Lankan security forces have certainly qualified to be in the same league as Hitler's SS when they shepherded 30 Tamils into a building and blew it up with explosives killing those inside instantly. This unprecedented brutality was enacted on May 9 in the village of Oorani in the north of Sri Lanka. Only the previous day, 15 Tamils including the priest of the Murukandy Hindu temple were gunned down inside the temple by the army.

The international community is gradually beginning to realise how brutal

the Sri Lankan regime is. J.R. Jayawardene, Lalith Athulathmudali and company will sooner rather than later be called upon to answer for these crimes against humanity.

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the bodies for cremation or burial for fear of army attack.

● Karainagar: Over 2,000 residents of Karainagar and adjoining villages have fled to other places due to army atrocities following the attack on the naval base at Karainagar; a majority of the displaced are now living in schools and temples in Chulipuram and Ponnalai. Many have gone to live with friends in distant places. Hundreds of shops and homes in Karainagar have been destroyed.

● Hindu priest killed: On May 9, a coach travelling from Colombo to Jaffna was hijacked by a gang of army men at Vavuniya and having subjected the passengers to violence and looted their valuables, forced the coach to be driven to Murukandy. There they entered the Murukandy Hindu temple, shot and killed 15 Tamil worshippers

DMK STARTS PROTEST MARCHES ON TAMIL ISSUE

Month-long protest marches organised by the Dravida Munetra Kazhaham (DMK) in support of the Tamils of Sri Lanka and urging the New Delhi government to take immediate and adequate steps to safeguard them, commenced in Madras on April 29 with a mass demonstration in which thousands of volunteers took part.

Series of demonstrations

The Madras march is the first of a series of demonstrations planned by the DMK over the Tamil issue. It was staged in defiance of a ban imposed by the government resulting in the arrest of nearly 2,000 demonstrators.

Several thousands participated in the demonstrations held by the DMK in Trichinopoly on April 30. The next march is scheduled to be held in Dharmapuri on May 3 and thereafter, in various parts of Tamil Nadu. The marches will be accompanied by mass meetings and end with a planned state-wide hartal.

VIOLENCE IN EAST SRI LANKA PLANNED AND INSTIGATED

That the violence which broke out in the eastern province of Sri Lanka during the second week of April, was premeditated, organised and instigated by 'outside elements' is now beyond doubt. The claim of the Minister of National Security, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, that the so-called Muslim-Tamil clashes were a spontaneous outcome of Muslim anger against Tamil militants is no longer accepted or believed, even among some sections of the government. In fact, his dubious role in this whole episode is being gradually exposed by opposition circles and even by some of his Cabinet colleagues. There is also clear evidence that the SAS-trained police commandos of the Special Task Force which operates under his control were directly involved in the violence.

Several days before the violence broke out, leaflets were dropped from helicopters, deliberately intended to incite the Muslims against the Tamils. They contained false accounts of 'terrorist' attacks on Muslims and demands of 'ransom' from Muslim businessmen. Outsiders not living in the area were observed organising hartals and protests in Akkaraipattu and nearby towns against alleged 'terrorist' attacks and these were given wide coverage in state-owned newspapers, radio and television.

Peace and harmony

That the violence and tension was being fomented between the two Tamil speaking communities, Tamils and Muslims, who have lived together in mixed and adjacent villages for centuries in peace and harmony, did not go unobserved. In this regard, the speech made by ex-MP for Muthur, Mr A.L. Majeed on April 12 at the opening of a Muslim Cultural Centre at Kinniya in the eastern province is quite significant. Making special mention of the fact that the Tamils and Muslims had lived happily in the eastern province for hundreds of years, Mr Majeed said:

'I wish to bring to your notice that certain sinister forces and self-interested parties are trying to bring about a violent clash between the Tamils and the Muslims. Therefore, Muslims should be vigilant.'

'We learn that certain fake politicians are doing their damndest to provoke a violent ethnic conflict between the Tamils and the Muslims in

the Eastern province which will only result in the loss of life and property. Such a conflict will also further weaken the position of the Muslims. We must see through the motives of these politicians instead of shifting the blame on the Tamils.'

Who were the 'self-interested parties' and 'fake politicians' with questionable motives and bent on bringing about 'violent clashes between the Tamils and the Muslims'? Mr Qadri Ismail, a well-informed journalist on Muslim affairs writing in the 'Island' (28.4.85) has hinted that goondas and agents provocateur were responsible for the unaccountable but widely publicised incidents of alleged extortion of money by 'terrorists' from Muslim traders which occurred during the weeks immediately preceding the outbreak of violence. No sooner than these incidents occurred, Mr Athulathmudali was there to put the blame on 'Tamil terrorists'.

Mr Ismail in the 'Island' wrote 'Karaitivu, a Tamil town surrounded by Muslim villages, was where the whole thing began. The casualties there were 11 dead, 40 hospitalised, 12,000 homeless and millions of rupees worth of damage. The question most people are asking today is how the Muslims, who lost whatever small arms they possessed due to recently passed emergency regulations, could have wreaked such violence.' (The rest of his comments on this point had been censored.) From Karaitivu, the violence spread to other areas — Akkaraipattu, Eravur, Kathankudy, Valaichenai, Kalavanchchikudy and Batticaloa itself.

The security operation in Batticaloa district was totally in the hands of the SAS-trained police commandos of the Special Task Force (STF). The intriguing question is how did the violence continue to spread almost unchecked in spite of the heavy presence of the STF. Eyewitness accounts have confirmed that the STF itself participated in the attacks on Tamils and Tamil property. In one single incident alone, 27 Tamils were killed in Karaitivu on April 17, all attributed to the STF.

There is also evidence that certain persons in civilian dress were in possession of automatic weapons and incendiary devices which they used with deadly effect undeterred by the STF. When the BBC correspondent asked a senior officer as to why he was not taking action to prevent attacks, the

officer was reported to have replied: 'We have no orders to shoot at Muslims'. While the Muslims also suffered serious damage, it has been established that it was the Tamils, even in areas where they were in a substantial majority, who suffered most.

To what extent Mr Athulathmudali and the government knew about or were responsible for the arming of the attacking gangs is a question that has been raised by political observers in Sri Lanka, particularly in the context of Mr Athulathmudali's assertion in an interview with the 'Island' (29.4.85) that 'a strong case had been made to arm the Muslims to protect themselves from terrorist attacks'. This view was echoed by his Cabinet colleague, Mr M.H. Mohamed, Minister of Transport, at a press conference in London on April 30, when he said that 'the Sri Lankan government must release arms to Muslim civilians in villages to enable them to defend themselves against Tamil militants' ('New Life', 3.5.85). The Sri Lankan government would appear to be over-eager and ever ready to distribute arms to any section of the population so long as they are directed and used against Tamils! The Tamils have been subjected to repeated violent pogroms since 1956 and at least on six occasions since the present government came to power in 1977, but such enthusiasm for arming the Tamils for self-protection was singularly non-existent on all those occasions.

Allowed to spread

Another factor which has given rise to widespread speculation is that there were powerful forces within the government which did want the violence in the east to continue. Sceptics of the government's intentions ask as to how it was possible to contain the anti-Tamil violence in July 1983 which was described as having reached the proportions of a holocaust in eight to ten days, and why on this occasion the violence which was confined to particular areas, was allowed to spread and continue for over three weeks without any serious government attempt to control it. They see the hands of sinister forces within the government itself in this obvious lack of action on the part of the government. Mrs Bandaranaike, the former Prime Minister, observed: 'The government does not want to quell the violence. They thrive on it.'

Two Tamil Cabinet Ministers were confident as to who were responsible for the violence. Mr S. Thondaman, the Minister of Rural Industries, was categorical that outsiders from other areas went into the east in buses and jeeps to start the violence. He also accused the police commandos of involvement. He and the secretary of the Ceylon Workers Congress, Mr Sellasamy, met the President on April 23, placed the evidence they had before him, expressed their concern and requested immediate action. Mr K.W. Devanayagam, the Minister of Home Affairs and representing a constituency affected by the violence, stated that an outside force was helping to sustain the violence in the eastern province. The violence was continuing in an unusual sense and that it was an indicator of the involvement of an outside force ('Island', 26.4.85). Although they were Cabinet Ministers, the statements of Mr Thondaman and Mr Devanayagam were severely censored from publications.

Following representations made by Mr Devanayagam and other MPs from the eastern province, the Cabinet at its meeting on 25.4.85 decided to withdraw the police commandos of the STF and let the regular police force and the army handle the situation. Implicit in this decision was the acceptance of the allegations made against the STF. The Cabinet's decision was announced by its spokesman, Anandatissa de Alwis, and it was given wide publicity. However, the following day, Mr Athulathmudali totally contradicted the previous announcement and declared that the police commandos would continue to be in charge. Despite his

knowledge of serious allegations of involvement made against the police commandos, why did Mr Athulathmudali insist upon their continued operation in the violence-affected areas?

The excuse given by Mr Athulathmudali that the violence in the east was a retaliation to the alleged shooting of three Muslims in a mosque in Mannar was summarily rejected by Mrs Bandaranaike. Making short shrift of the Minister's wild allegations that 'Tamil militants trained by the PLO are exterminating Muslims', she asked, 'Do you think that the "terrorists" have anything to gain from shooting Muslims in mosques?' and said: 'If they ever achieve Eelam . . . they have to live together with the Muslims. Don't misinterpret this to mean that I am trying to defend the "terrorists". Certainly not. What I am trying to do is to look at their actions from a realistic point of view. The whole issue gives cause for grave suspicions. Why should the "terrorists" attack Muslims? Some say certain Ministers are involved, some say the Mossad and even the Commandos.'

The former Minister of Education in Mrs Bandaranaike's Cabinet, Dr Badiuddin Mahumud, was more assertive and said: 'Some outsiders are in this game to keep the Muslims and Tamils divided. We have our suspicions of Mossad. They are the mischief-makers. The Israelis have always been enemies of Islam. They will always make trouble to damage Islam.' ('Island', 28.4.85). Although he did not identify by name the reference to 'foreign elements' by Mr Devanayagam, it is believed to be directed at the Mossad.

BATTICALOA UNIVERSITY'S NEW HEAD

Professor K.D. Arudpiragasam has been appointed Director of the Batticaloa University by the University Grants Commission.

He was one of three nominees recommended by the Board of Management of the Batticaloa University. Prof. Arudpiragam is Professor of Zoology of the Colombo University and an Associate Director of the Institute of Fundamental Studies. He is also Acting Chairman of the National Aquatic Resources Development Agency and a Specialist in Aquaculture.

JAFFNA M.C. TO MOVE

Documents, files and other valuable items are being shifted from the 50-year-old Jaffna Municipality Building (Town Hall) to another three-storeyed building in Stanley Road on the orders of Mr C.V.K. Sivagnanam, the Commissioner. This move has been necessitated by the damage caused to the Municipality Building during the recent attack on the Jaffna Police Headquarters by Tamil militants.

BISHOPS WANT MINISTRY

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Sri Lanka decided at its last meeting to request the Government to create a Ministry of Christian Affairs, with a Minister who is a Christian and a Director working directly under him.

Already in existence are two ministries, one for Muslim Affairs and the other for Hindu Affairs.

WITHDRAW TROOPS SAYS INDIA

Describing what is happening to Tamils in Sri Lanka as 'deplorable, brutal, barbaric, cruel and inhuman', the Indian government has called for the withdrawal of Sri Lankan troops from Tamil areas.

Intervening in a debate in the Rajya Sabha on May 3 on the Sri Lankan ethnic problem, the Indian Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr Khushed Alam Khan, said that India had impressed upon the government of Sri Lanka the need to be conducive to resumption of discussion and dialogue for a political settlement of the ethnic issues. As a first step towards attaining this, the Sri Lankan government should withdraw its troops and replace them with the ordinary police force.

The Minister said India has made it clear that all privileges enjoyed by the Sinhalese should be shared by the Tamils too. The Indian government's

displeasure and unhappiness over the intrusion of foreign powers has also been conveyed to Sri Lanka, the Minister added.

Mr Khan said the problem of the Tamils should be treated as a matter of concern for the Indian nation as a whole and not that of Tamil Nadu.

The Minister denied allegations that there was any shift in the government's policy on Sri Lanka, and that G. Parthasarathy, Chairman, Policy Planning Committee had been sidetracked.

Referring to the orchestrated 'Muslim-Tamil clashes' in the Eastern province of Sri Lanka, Mr Khan said that the Muslims must not forget that the Tamils were fighting for the Muslims too.

There was an immediate hostile reaction in Sri Lanka to Mr Khan's speech in the Rajya Sabha. The para-

noid state-controlled press and government politicians immediately gave vent to their characteristic anti-Indian hysteria. Sri Lankan newspapers reported that the Cabinet demanded an apology from Mr Khan.

The Indian External Affairs ministry responded by summoning the Sri Lankan Deputy High Commissioner in New Delhi and conveying the Indian government's displeasure at irresponsible accusations made by certain Sri Lankan Ministers and reaffirmed that what Mr Khan said in his speech represented the factual situation in Sri Lanka.

Dr Badiuddin Mahmud, a former Cabinet Minister, rejecting the accusations made against Mr Khan, said that the Muslims of Sri Lanka need not be perturbed about the statements by Mr Khan and added that the statement was factual and accurate.

TAMIL NADU ALL-PARTY DELEGATION SAYS WITHDRAW ARMY FROM TAMIL AREAS

An All-Party delegation under the leadership of the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran, met Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on April 23, and urged him to take fresh, active initiatives to protect the interests of the Tamils of Sri Lanka. They also urged him to mobilise international opinion against the genocidal violence directed at the Tamils.

The following are extracts from the memorandum presented to the Prime Minister by the All-Party delegation

'Over the years, the Sri Lanka Tamils have been systematically stripped of their citizenship and linguistic rights by the government. The opportunities to pursue their rightful education, vocation and government employment have been ruthlessly curtailed. A stage has come now where even their very existence is being threatened. The acts of violence against the innocent and hapless Tamils that were perpetrated by groups of individuals have grown into a situation of organised and uncontrolled violence by the army and the police. It is in this situation that they are leaving their ancient homeland and their means of living and pouring into India as penniless refugees day after day.

Nearly 20,000 persons have come as destitute refugees in the last three months. From July 1983, nearly 90,000 refugees have landed in India.

'With a view to stopping any further exodus of such refugees into India and to enable even the present ones to go back to their homes with safety and honour, this delegation requests that the government of India insist that the Sri Lankan army and commando forces of the police be immediately withdrawn from the Tamils' homelands; that the colonisation of these Tamil areas by Sinhalese civilians who have been armed, trained and aided by the government should be stopped forthwith; that the various prohibitions imposed on the fishermen of Sri Lanka like prohibited fishing zones and prohibited timings for fishing in the western, northern and eastern waters be removed.

Organised violence

'As a result of the direct actions taken by the Sri Lankan government during the last 35 years, the minority Tamils have had their civil and political rights forcibly taken away. Even then the Tamils have always resorted to a non-violent approach to get back these rights for a long time. Despite

this, the direct and indirect acts of violence by the Sri Lankan army and police against the Tamils have continued unabated and these are the basic causes for the emergence of militancy on the part of the Tamils in their struggle to save their honour and protect their lives. Even though the Sri Lankan army had indulged in untold atrocities it must be remembered that not even a single Sinhalese citizen has been harmed by the Tamils.

'It is therefore, not proper to equate the opposition of the Sri Lankan Tamils with the violence unleashed by the army and the police of a nation on their hapless citizens. The attempts of the Sri Lankan government to camouflage organised or connived violence and dub the Tamils fighting to save their lives and honour as 'terrorists' should be exposed to the people of the various countries and their governments. The all-party delegation would, therefore, plead with the Prime Minister that all diplomatic and other steps be taken and send, if necessary, a high-powered delegation, to mobilise international opinion against the genocide in Sri Lanka.

'The government of India has from the days of the Nehru-Kotlawala agreement, Sirimavo-Sastri agreement or the Indira Gandhi-Sirimavo Katchathivu agreement, sought to maintain and improve the friendly relationship between the two countries.

'Despite all this, the government of Sri Lanka has always been launching tirades against India and taking the assistance of countries like Israel to give its police and armed forces train-

ing in commando warfare and openly seeking the help of foreign armies to be stationed in Sri Lanka in a manner calculated to cause great danger to the safety and security of India and impairing the peace prevailing in the Indian Ocean.

Summit urged

'Instead of seeking a military solution to the problem, the Sri Lankan government should earnestly come forward to withdraw its army from the areas inhabited by Tamils, and seek a viable political solution assuring safety and legitimate rights to the Tamils as full and equal citizens so that people of Sri Lanka can live together in peace and harmony. The all-party delegation hopes and trusts that towards finding such a political solution acceptable to the Sri Lankan Tamils, the Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, would take all steps including his meeting with the Sri Lankan President, Mr J.R. Jayawardene, immediately on a time-bound programme as, otherwise, any further delay could be detrimental to the interests of both the countries.'

Besides the Chief Minister, the Electricity Minister and the Finance Minister, Mr V.R. Nedunchezian, the delegation comprised Mr O. Subramaniam (Cong-I), Mr M. Kalyanasundaram (CPI), Mr N. Sankariah (CPI-M), Mr Kumari Anandan (GKNC), Mr Abdus Samad (Muslim League), Mr K. Tamilarasan (Republican Party of India), and Mr S. Andi Thevar (All-India Forward Bloc). The State Chief Secretary, Mr T.V. Antony, was also present at the meeting.

ATTACK ON SINHALA CIVILIANS

CONDEMNED

The attack on May 14 in which many Sinhalese civilians died is morally indefensible, counter-productive and will not be condoned by the mass of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka, the London-based Human Rights Council of Standing Committee of Tamils (SCOT) said in a press statement. The following is the full text of the press release dated May 15, issued by the Secretary of HRC(SCOT):

'The reported attack and killing of many Sinhalese civilians carried out allegedly by a Tamil group in the city of Anuradhapura on May 14 is deplorable and will not be condoned by the mass of Sri Lankan Tamils. In carrying out this attack, the group concerned has descended to the same level as the Sri Lankan security forces

which have been engaged in mass killing of Tamil civilians. It is to be noted that hitherto Tamil militant groups have confined their attack on the forces of the state, and the present action seems to be an aberration.

While we deplore and express our sense of revulsion to the killing of civilians, whether they be Tamils or Sinhalese, we must emphasise that the entire responsibility for the spiral of escalating violence and counter-violence should fairly and squarely be placed on the Sri Lankan government. There was an ever-present danger that retaliation of this sort was bound to occur because of the unmitigated terror to which the Tamil people in gener-

al have been subjected to in the recent past.

We have definite information that the security forces shot and killed, without any provocation, fifteen Tamils while they were worshipping in the sacred Hindu temple at Murukandy in northern Sri Lanka on May 9. The officiating Hindu priest was one of the victims during this slaughter carried out in broad daylight. On the following day, on May 10, over 100 Tamil civilians were indiscriminately killed near the village of Point Pedro in the northern Jaffna district. On this occasion about 30 Tamil youth, aged 14 to 17, were herded into a building housing the community centre at Oorani and the building was blown up with explosives, and another 20 Tamil boys were lined up and shot at point-blank range.

During the last three months, over 90,000 Tamils have abandoned their homes in northern Sri Lanka and fled to South India to escape from military terror. Boatloads of fleeing Tamils have been shot and killed by the Sri Lankan navy which claimed that they were 'terrorists'. Hard-core convicted Sinhalese criminal elements serving long prison sentences have been set free by the government, provided with arms and planted in predominantly Tamil areas to assist the army in terrorising Tamils and driving them away from their homes. Scores of Tamil women have been raped at gunpoint. In this situation, there was always the possibility that certain persons or groups might impulsively resort to sectarian attacks on civilians in sheer desperation. Whatever the provocation, such attacks are not only indefensible but also counter-productive. Such actions do not add credit to the Tamil struggle against tyranny and oppression.

The government which promptly released the details of the attack upon civilians in Anuradhapura and allowed foreign journalists to visit there has consistently prevented them from going into Tamil areas of the north and east in a deliberate attempt to conceal the continuing atrocities committed by the army.

We take this opportunity to call upon all Sinhalese concerned with human rights to condemn and call for an end to the continuing atrocities by the security forces against innocent Tamil civilians in the same way as we have expressed our condemnation of the attack on Sinhalese civilians. In a multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural country like Sri Lanka, there must be a recognition that all people have equal rights and are entitled to equal protection under the law and this is a pre-requisite for the restoration of peace and justice in the country.

MIRJE CALLS FOR

FIGHT AGAINST SINHALA CHAUVINISM

The Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality of Sri Lanka, in a May Day message, has called upon the working people and their representative organisations to fight the insidious inroads of Sinhala chauvinism, to refuse to be manipulated by the ruling classes and to press for a just political solution to the ethnic conflict, a solution that will enable all persons of all ethnic groups to live in equality and in enjoyment of their individual and group identities.'

The following are extracts from the MIRJE May Day message:

'May Day is being celebrated this year in a situation of worsening crisis for the people of this country.

'The ethnic conflict is no nearer a solution. The hopes of a political solution that were held out last year with the commencement of the All-Party Conference have been totally nullified. The Conference ended abruptly with no solution and no promise of continued negotiation. President Jayawardene and his Government, instead of pursuing negotiations with the representatives of the Tamil people for a political solution that will include a degree of devolution; that would satisfy their just aspirations, have opted to follow a policy of military retaliation. Civilian Tamils have been subjected to reprisals by the security forces of the state in the course of their operations against the militants; the many atrocities at Mannar and Jaffna perpetrated by the security forces, in which hundreds of innocent men, women and children have been killed are but one of the dreadful results of present Government policy.

'The government has also chosen to mobilise the broad masses of Sinhala

people under the banner of chauvinism, claiming their support for a 'war' to preserve the integrity of the State, but is in reality an effort to preserve and extend the hegemony of the Sinhala people over all other ethnic groups living in this country. Under the cloak of this 'war', the ruling classes have also begun to repress all opposition ranging from workers and peasants to women and students.

'Today, ethnic consciousness has reached unprecedented heights among most Sinhala people. The working people, peasants and workers not only share in this consciousness, they are also being manipulated by the ruling classes on the basis of this consciousness. One of the conspicuous examples of such manipulations is the attempt to persuade Sinhala peasants to settle down in the traditional Tamil areas, thus seeking to deny to the Tamils their right to a homeland. The recent conflicts in Batticaloa between Tamils and Muslims is another example of the deepening ethnic cleavages which are tearing apart the fabric of our society.

'In this context, the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality would like to recall the working people of this country, particularly the working class, to their glorious history of class solidarity, surmounting all distinctions of caste, ethnic or religious in their consciousness as a class. The MIRJE calls upon them and their representative organisations to fight the insidious inroads of Sinhala chauvinism, to refuse to be manipulated by the ruling classes and to press for a just political solution to the ethnic conflict, a solution that will enable all persons of all ethnic groups to live in equality and in the enjoyment of their individual and group identities.'

EMERGENCY COMMITTEE ON SRI LANKA

The 1985 Nobel Peace Prize winner, Bishop Desmond Tutu, and Mayor Andrew Young, former US representative at the United Nations and now Mayor of Atlanta, Georgia, are among those concerned in new international moves planned to focus attention on world problems related to ethnic conflict. The first initiative is the creation of an International Emergency Committee on Sri Lanka.

SIFEC (Standing International Forum on Ethnic Conflict, Development and Human Rights) has been established by the Norwegian Peace Research Institute (PRIC), the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), and the United Nations University -

Collegio de Mexico. Theo van Boven, former Director of the UN Human Rights Division, will be chairman of the Forum and ex officio member of the International Committee on Sri Lanka. Ben Whitaker, British Director of Minority Rights Group, is a member of the Steering Committee of the organisation, and Martin Ennals, former Secretary General of Amnesty International, will become Secretary General.

Specialist members of the Sri Lanka Committee include Dame Judith Hart MP, former Minister of Overseas Development, Senator Missen of Australia, Buyong Nasutian, a distinguished

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'DON'T SUPPORT SRI LANKA REGIME' TULF APPEALS TO UK GOVERNMENT

'We earnestly appeal to Her Majesty's government not to lend support, either directly or indirectly, to the Sri Lankan government to effect its evil design to exterminate the Tamils of Sri Lanka', states an appeal made to the British Prime Minister by 17 former Members of Parliament belonging to the Tami United Liberation Front (TULF).

Expressing 'profound anguish and great disappointment' at the British government's decision 'to sell arms with credit facilities in respect of such sale to the Sri Lankan government,' the TULF letter, dated March 1, states that 'these arms will be primarily used against the helpless innocent Tami civilians in Sri Lanka'.

The TULF appeal, recalling the repeated violent attacks upon the Tamils since 1956, states: 'The years 1977 to 1985 have been the blackest period which witnessed an accelerated process of nearly three decades of systematic annihilation of the Tamil people. The dismal racist record of the present government in power in Sri Lanka shows pogrom after pogrom in 1977, 1981, 1983, 1984 and 1985.'

Pointing out the passive attitude of the Sri Lankan government and its leaders to the mass killings, plunder, pillage and destruction in July 1983, and the failure of the government to even institute an investigation into those incidents, the TULF letter adds that the pattern of attack upon Tamils since 1984 had changed in that the 'killings, rape, arson, looting and such other crimes against the Tamils were now being perpetrated by the security forces, with the knowledge and connivance of the State'. The letter quotes the latest report of the Amnesty International which stated: 'The situation of the Sri Lankan Tamils continues to present a grim tale of denial of basic human rights as this vulnerable minority is subjected daily to the risk of arbitrary arrest, torture and even being killed by members of the Sri Lankan security forces.'

Arms to kill Tamils

Detailing the several incidents of rampages and indiscriminate mass killings of Tamil civilians, including Christian priests, and the flight of thousands of Tamil families to South India to escape terror at the hands of 'the most indisciplined army in the world', the TULF letter dealing directly with arms purchases in Britain states: 'We wish to emphasise to Her Majesty's Government that the arms, proposed to be purchased from Great

Britain, are to be placed in the hands of this thoroughly indisciplined army to intensify their killing of innocent Tamil civilians.

'The declared policy of the government as per statement by Ministry of National Security (which is already being implemented on a large scale) to arm the Sinhalese civilians, most of whom are criminals and convicts planted in the Tamil areas under an ostensible programme of rehabilitation, portends further threat to the security of our people. Every prospective victim of such brutality has a right to appeal to the conscience of Governments that propose to sell arms for these wanton killings. We do so in the full hope that our appeal will strike a responsive chord with Her Majesty's Government with a proud history of fighting for an upholding democracy, freedom, dignity of human life and liberty.'

Safeguards eliminated

'We the Tamils of Sri Lanka have a special claim to make this appeal. We were an independent separate unit under the Portuguese and under the Dutch. We remained so till 1833, when for administrative convenience, we and the Sinhalese were unified by Her Majesty's Government. When power was to pass into Sri Lankan hands, Her Majesty's Commission headed by Lord Soulbury appreciated the fears and apprehensions of our people and made provision for safeguards in Order-in-Council, granting dominion status to Sri Lanka (then Ceylon). By Article 29 of what came to be known as the Soulbury Constitution the Parliament could not pass laws that bestowed a privilege or imposed a disability on one community which was not so bestowed or imposed on other communities. The other safeguard was to demarcate electorates on the basis of area and population which was aimed to give additional representation to the minorities. These safeguards proved to be meagre and insufficient to prevent gross discrimination against the Tamils, as was later sadly acknowledged by Lord Soulbury himself. But even these safeguards were done away with in new Constitutions promulgated in 1972 and 1978, in the making of which the Tamils played no part.

'One section of us Tamils, who work in the plantations were brought to Sri Lanka by British planters to be employed on their coffee, tea and rubber estates. The prosperity of Sri Lanka was built up on the blood and sweat of these Tamils who were brought across

SAUDIS RETALIATE OVER ISRAELI LINK

Saudi Arabia is withholding \$50 million in aid for a Sri Lankan development project as part of a concerted Arab strategy to persuade President Jayawardene to think again about resuming relations with Israel.

Government sources said in Colombo that the money was promised in 1981, when the President paid an official visit to Saudi Arabia, but Riyadh withdrew the offer when Sri Lanka allowed Israel to open an interest section in the US embassy last year in return for Israeli help in fighting Tamil separatist insurgents. The Saudi investment was earmarked for 'downstream development' of the £1 billion Mahaweli project, which Mrs Thatcher visited recently to open the Victoria dam, built with £133 million of British money.

Saudi Arabia's contribution due this year, was to have paid for the construction of irrigation channels and for resettling farmers in partnership with Canada and the World Bank. This consortium is now marking time.

The Saudi embargo has fuelled a campaign in the Foreign Ministry and among some government politicians to expel the two Israeli diplomats who opened what amounts to an independent mission in Colombo last summer. But President Jayawardene is standing firm. He said during a visit to Pakistan last week that the Israelis, the only people in the world who had helped Sri Lanka against the Tamils, would stay.

from South India. Even today they earn 60 per cent of the Export earnings of the island. Her Majesty's Government left them as equal citizens. But in the first year of independence, they were stripped of their citizenship and voting rights. With one stroke of the pen, thousands of them became stateless. These persons, the poorest of the poor, the Cinderellas of Sri Lanka, were also helpless victims of the tyranny directed against the Tamils.

'The problems of the Tamils is a political problem, and all governments have urged the Sri Lankan government to find a political solution. But the Sri Lankan government has chosen to find a military solution which must inevitably result in the total annihilation - the genocide of the Tamil people.

'Therefore, we earnestly appeal to Her Majesty's Government not to lend support, either directly or indirectly, to the Sri Lankan Government to effectuate its evil design to exterminate the Tamils of Sri Lanka.'

BRITISH MEPS CALL FOR END TO 'FURTHER REPRESSION OF TAMILS'

Over 20 British Members of the European Parliament recently sent a letter to President Jayawardene expressing their concern 'at the appalling persecution of the Tamil population'.

The MEPs state that 'the destruction of property, ill-treatment, persecution and shooting of members of the Tamil population in general' could not be justified and call for direct intervention by the President of Sri Lanka 'to prevent further repression of the Tamil population.'

The signatories to the letter, who are all MEPs, include Richard Balfe, Barbara Castle, Christine Crawley, Bob Cryer, Michael Elliott, A. Falconer, Stephen Hughes, Alf Lomas, Tom Megahy, David Morris, Stanley Newens, Llewellyn Smith, Ken Stewart and Norman West. Following is the text of the letter dated 14 January 1985 sent to the Sri Lankan President:

'We are writing to you to express the very deep concern which is widely felt in Europe at the appalling persecution of the Tamil population, reports of which are regularly transmitted to Europe. We have never supported the demand for secession, and deplore acts of individual terrorism carried out by a very small minority of the Tamil population; but this can in no way justify the destruction of property, ill-treatment, persecution and shooting of members of the Tamil population in general.'

'Reports now coming in would seem to indicate that economic life in many Tamil areas is almost at a standstill, with the result that many members of the population are faced with the greatest hardships, including starvation.'

'We must earnestly appeal to you to intervene directly to prevent further repression of the Tamil population, and believe that it is of vital importance for the standing of Sri Lanka in the world at large that the Government should express its opposition to what is occurring in the strongest possible terms.'

'We are very sad indeed that we should feel obliged to write to you in this way, as we have long considered ourselves to be friends of the Sri Lankan people as a whole.'

BRITISH CONNECTION IN SRI LANKA TORTURES

Shyam Bhatia, writing from Colombo in 'The Observer', (London, 14.4.85), has commented 'that an elite squad of British-trained commandos has engaged in systematic torture and harassment' of suspects belonging to the Tamil community.

'The Special Task Force of police commandos was created last year and trained by British experts, who are former members of the Special Air Services (SAS).' This team of ex-SAS men was hired from a Channel Island-based company.

The return throws light on the case of 23-year-old Mahendra Kesivapillai who was subjected to severe torture after he was taken into custody. The following are excerpts from the report:

'On the eve of Mrs Thatcher's visit, a 23-year-old man described from his hospital bed how he was arrested by police commandos and accused of being a terrorist. He was tortured for two months before being released without explanation and dumped at the local hospital.'

Mahendra Kesivapillai, a second-year science student from Jaffna University, told me nails were driven into his heels to force him to confess. Chilli powder was rubbed into sensitive parts of his body and he was hung by his handcuffed wrists for up to eight hours a day in his prison cell. Doctors say he will never be able to use his arms again because crucial nerves have been 'ripped apart'.

First detailed account

Kesivapillai's is the first detailed account of police commando torture, which has been suspected but never before substantiated. Stories of army atrocities are legion, but the commandos were set up as an alternative force to 'win hearts and minds' in the troubled northern and eastern provinces.

Kesivapillai said he was filling in a form at a government office in Batticaloa government office last January when four commandos burst in and told him he was under arrest.

'They handcuffed and blindfolded me and pushed me out of the door. I know I screamed at least once, because they smashed a rifle butt into my left foot. I could hear my bones breaking.'

'First, I was taken to a camp called Kalanavichi, then to another camp of theirs called Kalladi. Every day, between 8 and 4.30, they would hang me by my hands. One day they slit my left wrist with a razor blade, packed it with chilli powder and bandaged it.'

Another time they hammered nails into my heels. They would say: "Tell us where are the terrorists." They even threatened to burn me with a metal rod.'

Doctors at Batticaloa hospital, where Kesivapillai has been a patient since last month, say he has been subjected to unbelievable cruelty. There are burn marks, they say, on his buttocks and arms. Two bones in his arms, the radius and ulna, have been so badly damaged after being ripped apart that he will never recover the use of his arms.'

Kesivapillai thinks he was released because he managed to smuggle out a letter to his father, a retired teacher, telling him where he was.

A soft-spoken, slightly built young man, he told me he was concerned that he will be a burden to his parents for the rest of their lives.

Kesivapillai's horrifying experience is not the only example of commando brutality, according to the local citizens' action committee. Prince Casinader, headmaster of a Batticaloa school and chairman of the action committee, said there were other cases of young men picked up by unmarked commando vans and taken to unknown destinations.

'When you ring commando headquarters, they pretend they don't know what you are talking about.' Last month, unable to trace three of his missing schoolchildren, he went in desperation to the local mortuary. 'I saw three horribly mangled bodies with bashed-in skulls. I don't know who they were, poor wretches, but they were not my boys.'

The commandos also use tactics that were first made popular by the Army in the war against terrorism. They burn the homes of families suspected of harbouring terrorists. Last month after a mine killed seven members of a police patrol outside Batticaloa, commandos surrounded the three nearby villages of Koduwannadu, Tamnavelli and Kayankuda, where they set fire to 27 homes.

EVEN FRIENDS AGAINST!

Even the Sri Lankan regime's good friends, the Reagan administration of the US, have come out publicly against the government's plans to settle specially armed Sinhalese in the Tamil provinces of north and east Sri Lanka.

Testifying before the sub-committee of the US House of Representatives, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Robert Peck said:

'The government (of Sri Lanka) has announced its intention to arm and

settle large numbers of Sinhalese in districts of the eastern and northern provinces outside the Jaffna peninsula itself. These districts currently have relatively sparse populations with

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POLICE STATION ATTACKED

A group of about 10 men stormed the Nikaweretiya police station, only 50 miles north of Colombo, shot dead a policeman, disrupted the communication system and ran off with a large quantity of arms and ammunition. The raiders broke open the nearby branch of the state-owned Peoples Bank and got away with over Rs 6 million in cash and gold jewellery, setting fire to a petrol filling station before they vanished.

This pre-dawn attack occurred on April 26 and took the government by surprise as this was the first time that a police station so close to the capital city of Colombo was raided. The government blamed the Tamil militants for these incidents. However, Nikaweretiya being a predominantly Sinhalese town and surrounded by Sinhala villages, independent observers felt that the attack could not have been mounted without a link with some Sinhala militant group.

New element

The observers believe that if, as alleged, the Tamil militants were responsible for the raid, it introduced a new element into the struggle between the militants and the state — the militants being confident and strong enough to mount daring raids in predominantly Sinhala areas.

It is believed that the attackers took away 12 rifles, 24 shot guns and a sub-machine gun, besides a large quantity of ammunition. They had evidently got the key to the bank from the police station.

HYPOCRISY OF SRI LANKAN P.M.

Mr T.R. Janarthanam, Member of the Legislative Council of Tamil Nadu, has accused the Sri Lankan Prime Minister, Mr R. Premadasa, of hypocrisy for misusing the name of the famous Indian Emperor, Asoka.

Asoka accepted the Buddhist principles of Ahimsa and universal peace after realising the futility of war and violence. But the so-called followers of the Buddha and Asoka in Sri Lanka have resorted to brutal violence without even provocation. Since 1956, almost annually, they have killed and injured several hundreds of Tamils. Therefore, Prime Minister Premadasa had no right to speak about Asoka. On the other hand, Tamil kings of old who invaded Sri Lanka had nurtured and preserved Buddhism, Mr Janarthanam added.

MANNAR POLICE STATION DESTROYED

The police station in the north-western town of Mannar was reduced to rubble and razed to the ground when a Tamil militant group made a daring attack on this fortified station with mortars and rockets.

The attack was mounted by an estimated 100 Tamil militants belonging to the LTTE. Several police officers are believed to have died in the course of the raid and the militants are reported to have got away with a large quantity of weapons and ammunition.

NAVAL BASE ATTACKED

A group of Tamil militants belonging to the EPRLF launched an attack on the Sri Lankan main naval base at Karainagar about 15 miles from the northern provincial capital of Jaffna.

The Tamil militants would appear to have attacked from boats with rockets and mortars. The navy responded with heavy artillery fire to repulse the attack. Reports indicate casualties on both sides.

Simultaneous with the attack on the naval base, the militants launched attacks on the Gurunagar army camp and the old Dutch Fort in Jaffna where troops are stationed, presumably as a diversionary move to prevent the army coming to the rescue of their naval colleagues.

BOMB EXPLOSION NEAR ARMY HEADQUARTERS

A huge explosion was triggered off near the Sri Lankan Army Headquarters complex in Colombo while officers inside were hosting a party for visiting high-ranking military officers from Pakistan. The bomb blast occurred at about 8.30pm on April 20.

Windows of several buildings including tourist hotels were shattered by the explosion which caused gaping holes in them and injured two persons. The loud explosion resulted in panic and confusion in the city.

Widespread consternation

The Army Headquarters are situated in Baladhaksha Mawatte near the former Parliament building and many tourist five-star hotels and government offices. Alan MacDonald of the BBC, reporting from Colombo said the fact that the Tamil militants could strike so close to the seat of power had caused widespread consternation in the city.

SRI LANKA'S DEBT BURDEN

According to the World Bank's latest projection, Sri Lanka's growing burden of debt service payment will increase to US \$275,000,000 in 1987.

Since the Jayawardene regime came to power and its increasing reliance of massive foreign borrowing, public and private debt servicing burden has been spiralling upwards at a phenomenal rate. Public and private debt servicing for the year 1983 was \$168.5 million; the estimated figure for 1984 is \$201.4 million and by the year 1987 it would reach \$275.6 million. If the ethnic conflict is not resolved soon and the government continues with its increased militarisation plans, this figure would certainly increase further.

J.R. SEEKS PLACE IN HISTORY

The present premises of the Chinese Embassy at Dharmapala Mawatha, Colombo 7, may soon become the venue of a new Jayawardene Museum, which is planned to be started soon.

As is known, these premises were originally the home of the Jayawardene family and were sold to the Chinese Embassy nearly two decades ago. The Chinese Embassy, it is learnt, intends to erect a new embassy at Sri Jayawardenepura on land allocated to it by the government. The work is likely to be undertaken by Chinese construction teams which will shortly come to Sri Lanka in connection with the building of the new premises for the Supreme Court.

Negotiations have already started to re-acquire the Dharmapala Mawatha premises once the Chinese Embassy shifts to its new site at Sri Jayawardenepura.

The proposed new museum will it is learnt, be devoted not only to the life and political career of President J.R. Jayawardene, but also to those of his forebears — especially his father and uncle to whom the President so often refers in public speeches.

Political commentators have often remarked how anxious President Jayawardene seems to be to ensure that all steps are taken while he is in office to guarantee his place in history.

Circles close to the President have expressed the hope that China will also assist in the renovatory work for the new museum, thus repeating for the Jayawardenes what they did for the Bandaranaiques with the B.M.I.C.H.

BLOOD AND SOIL

In ancient times, especially in the Middle East, when people were conquered, they were taken as slaves, either to the lands of their conquerors, or to some other territory, and some other people were settled in their land, thus destroying the link between 'blood and soil'. The bible is full of such instances. One of the earliest examples was the capture of Samaria (721BC) and the transportation of their people. It happened again when Babylon captured Judea, and finally, when the Roman general Titus captured Jerusalem in 70 AD and forbade any Jew to possess a copy of the Torah or to circumcise his children upon pain of death, and the Jews had, in order to practise their religion, to disperse over the rest of the Mediterranean world.

It is a strange thing that we in Sri Lanka should attempt the same kind of technique in solving the present 'ethnic' problem on perhaps the advice of those who were the earliest victims of it. In the name of Democracy we are proposing to settle Sinhalese in the areas hitherto occupied by the Tamils, and Tamils are to be settled in Sinhalese areas. How a person in fertile Ruhuna will be persuaded to settle in arid Valvettithurai is beyond our comprehension; but what is more incomprehensible is that these ideas should be propagated by responsible people.

Possibilities presented!

The mind rests at the international possibilities this idea presents. One way for Indira Gandhi to have solved the problem of the Akali Sikhs would have been to forcibly settle them in Travancore and to have transported the people of Andhra Pradesh to the Punjab. One way for the United Nations to solve the problem of South Africa would be to transport white South Africans back to Holland or Germany and settle the Ethiopians there. Despite the legacy of Cromwell it is a solution that Margaret Thatcher would do well to consider as a solution to the Irish Question.

Democracy, the rule of the majority, was never meant to be a device for the suppression of minorities. A political minority gained its distinctiveness by living in a contiguous area, speaking its own language and practising its own religion and culture. The right to cultural self-determination is a human right, and it is wrong for anyone to attempt to remove it, especially for those who have signed the convention on Human Rights. It is one thing to

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MINISTER SPELLS OUT PLANS FOR SINHALA COLONISATION

The unlimited capacity of the Sri Lankan government for duplicity and deceit becomes more apparent when its representatives abroad attempt to lie even before world forums like the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. From the President downwards, the leaders of the Sri Lankan government have publicly proclaimed that the northern and eastern Tamil areas of Sri Lanka would be colonised by Sinhalese who would not only be provided with land, housing, money and other facilities but also with military training in the use of weapons. This course of action, they have said, is being adopted to once and for all demolish the claim of the north and east of Sri Lanka to the traditional homelands of the Tamil people. In fact, many Sinhalese, particularly hard-core criminals serving long prison sentences, have been released, armed and sent to settle in areas of Mullaitivu, Trincomalee and Vavuniya.

However, such a policy of open crude racial domination over a minority cannot be justified before international forums. Many delegates from non-governmental organisations attacked this policy of state-aided Sinhalese colonisation of Tamil areas at the recently held sessions of the Human Rights Commission of the UN, as one aimed at destroying the national identity of the Tamil people. They also denounced the government's programme to train and arm the Sinhalese settlers in Tamil areas as one of deliberate incitement to civil war.

Travesty of the truth!

The President's brother, Mr H.W. Jayawardene, QC, who headed the Sri Lankan delegation denied that the government was colonising Tamil areas with Sinhalese. He said: 'Large tracts of land remained arid scrub jungle due to a lack of adequate water resources. The Sri Lankan government commenced a programme of constructing dams and reservoirs to supply water to these hitherto unirrigable lands . . . These scrub jungles were not the traditional homelands of any particular ethnic groups. They were the haunts of wild animals and a few nomadic tribes which hunted them.' He skirted the question of arming Sinhalese settlers. What a travesty of the truth! The lands in the Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee and Mullaitivu districts which have been earmarked for settlement by Sinhalese are not covered by any

'programme of constructing dams and reservoirs'! While the Sri Lankan government and its representatives abroad have to lie about their crude and naked design to undermine the numerical strength of the Tamils in the north and east and thereby achieve total Sinhala domination over the whole country, they have no such inhibitions within the country.

Training in arms

The Minister of National Security, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, recently inaugurated a youth recruitment scheme for the development of agricultural lands which are not covered by the Mahaveli programme. He did not mince his words in his explanation of the purpose of this recruitment scheme and the form of training to be provided. In his speech ('Island', April 19), he said: 'All recruits would be given a thorough training in the use of arms.' He said also: 'All thinly populated areas of the country (not scrub jungle haunted by wild animals) would be settled by the newly recruited agricultural settlers so that the terrorists would not be able to carry out their training in lonely and isolated areas.'

The Minister pointed out that 'the agricultural settlement scheme was the most meaningful step taken so far in the anti-terrorist strategy and the pioneer settlers under the scheme would go down in history as heroes'. He described the recruits as 'not only farmers but also soldiers'. A sum of Rs40,000 would be given to each Sinhalese family for building houses. Explaining the project as a multi-purpose one, he said that while the land was being developed, Tamil terrorist activity would be suppressed and defeated. That was the only way that the government could win the war, he declared.

Mr Athulathmudali should not be faulted for not telling the truth on this occasion. He has spelt out the government plan in detail. Sinhala settlements in Tamil areas would virtually become anti-Tamil bases, the settlers trained in the use of arms and provided with weapons. This is the strategy to wipe out the concept of traditional Tamil homelands and alter wholesale the demographic character and composition of the Tamil areas. If the Tamil people there show any resistance not only will they have to contend with the combined forces of the state but also with an army of well-trained and well-armed Sinhala 'settlers'.

POINT OF VIEW

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE

The fierceness of the raging ethnic fire in Sri Lanka today, sparks of which have flown to neighbouring India, involving her and also putting her in a delicate position vis-a-vis the Sinhala-Tamil conflict in this once blessed and peaceful country now fallen on evil days, has rightly caused louder voices to be heard from Sri Lanka's concerned citizens comprising religious and social organisations, citizens' committees, trade unionists, newspaper editors, and a few unbiased enlightened individuals with sensible suggestions as to how best this devastating fire could be doused. All of them favour a negotiated settlement and the powers-that-be are themselves not averse to this suggestion except that the government as the chief fire-extinguishing agent seems inflexible in its resolve to pursue its own plan to deal a death-blow to the militants before resorting to negotiations.

Vengeance — not wisdom

This determination smacks more of vengeance than of wisdom, whereas at least a simultaneous two-pronged approach by negotiation and by armed force has some sense. The rationale behind the thinking that negotiations must precede force or go together is that Tamil youth militancy was born out of frustration — at the failure of democratic methods such as parliamentary and extra-parliamentary pressures including satyagraha and other non-violent demonstrations, which only yielded the bitter fruits of

by J.K. RETNANANDAM, JAFFNA

more discrimination and disabilities interspersed by thuggery, but riots and mob-violence of the vilest type — and that, therefore, militancy is only a manifestation of a deep-seated grievance, the symptom of a disease and not the root cause.

The cure of the disease is what has to be sought and not the illusive disappearance of the symptom, which can result in a passing false facade of peace being presented while leaving underneath embers of bitterness to burst into flames at the first whiff of dissatisfaction. In fact, if the disease — the long-standing grievances of the Tamils — is cured, there is every likelihood of the automatic dropping off of hostilities, or failing that summit of expectation, there would be at least accrue that spiritual merit of having done the utmost in the cause of peace.

Furthermore, the action of putting off negotiations until military action is over cannot find favour in any quarter since it is inhibited by the fear that terms of settlement offered from a position of strength are less likely to be more generous than those extended under pressure. The militant youth will be the last to be carried away by promise of a just settlement.

The Tamil people have enough experience of the broken promises, the torn pacts, the dishonoured agreements, so much so that the militancy now begun is not likely to subside unless softened by sincere efforts at

reconciliation and lured by attractive inducements. For that matter, even some feeble attempts at these processes may prove responsive, but certainly not emotional outbursts and impetuous actions. 'Emotion is a fire' said the Buddha, and passion is an enemy that clouds 'right understanding' which is the first element in the eight-fold path to salvation — whether in this world or in the worlds to come. A classic example of the failure of enforcing conformity could be seen from how the voluntary teaching of Sinhala in the Northern Province in the forties as a useful and healthy measure for fostering harmony was discontinued when it was forced by law in 1956, from which point of time began the deterioration in race relations.

Ignoble roles

Just consider whether some of the acts that are being indulged in are indications of any desire to bring about understanding, peace, or harmony. How can the government's propaganda machinery now go about repudiating its commitments? It is now being propagated that the Tamils have no grievances and that if there are any they are exaggerated. The fact that the existence of grievances was acknowledged by the various governments from 1956 as evidenced by many agreements, the chief of them being the B.C. pact and Dudley Chelva agreement — which, however, were later abrogated.

This part of the lapses and the ignoble roles of the various governments so lucidly set out by senior politician Mr S.D. Bandaranaike in his article entitled 'Ethnic Formula' in the CDN of 8.1.85 would command more credibility than all that has been stated by so many Tamils so many times. The last in this line of disappointments is the failure to implement the promises made in the 1977 UNP manifesto.

Then again, would it be prudent to attempt to change the long established demographic patterns by introducing armed 'settlers' just at this stage when the flames of hatred are raging high? Could not integration by means of population exchange wait till the heat subsides? Moreover, the experience in other parts of the world is that violence is perpetuated and intensified when demographic changes are brought about using armed force.

This practice is against the tide of world trends for carving out autonomous states or federal governments where there are concentrations of people with common linguistic, cultural or

TAMIL DAILY THREATENED WITH CLOSURE

The Sri Lanka Minister of State, Anandattissa de Alwis, has recommended to the government the closure of the Tamil daily newspaper, 'The Virakesari' for having published a statement issued by another Cabinet Minister (a Tamil), Mr S. Thondaman, the Minister of Rural Industries Development.

Mr Thondaman, dealing with the orchestrated violence in the eastern province, had in his statement alleged that persons in seven buses and two jeeps had gone to the east and were responsible for the violence. Mr de Alwis said that the ban on the paper for failing to submit Mr Thondaman's statement to the censor before publication will apply for several days.

It is strange that action has been taken against the newspaper in the context of the previous clear and un-

ambiguous statement made in Parliament by Major Montagu Jayawickreme, the acting Leader of the House, that censorship would be confined only to news concerning movement of troops. Mr Thondaman's statement did not intrude into this prohibited area.

Mr de Alwis described the statement of Mr Thondaman as a 'collection of crap', and called it 'stupid'. How one Minister could denigrate his colleagues in public and remain in the same Cabinet is difficult to contemplate.

When questioned as to what action would be taken against Mr Thondaman for issuing the statement when the newspaper which had published it was going to be penalised, Mr de Alwis said that Mr Thondaman might have had genuine reasons for issuing the statement and therefore no action was contemplated against the Minister.

race ties. Settlements by force can permanently impair prospects for peace and harmony.

Unequal citizens

On the other hand, the government has a chance of winning over moderate Tamil support if it at least implements those clauses of the A.P.C. agreements dealing with elimination of discrimination and disabilities which make Tamil citizens unequal with their Sinhala compatriots. To feel piqued that the TULF did not accept the entire proposals and to throw away the baby with the bath water would be most inopportune, to say the least. Then again, to cut off all development works in the North after collecting taxes can only alienate people more. Can bridges of understanding be built when even in the matter of treatment of refugees, differences are shown between Sinhala and Tamil?

In this background, can today's trends lead to any good? They point to an unintentional transition from temporary alienation caused by politics without principle — one of the seven social sins according to Mahatma Gandhi — to permanent estrangement by failure to learn from mistakes in the past. A nation that prides itself as one blessed by the Enlightened One and which has cultivated the spirit of non-killing to the extent of having scruples in breaking even an egg, how can it encourage killing by the army as if political killing is excluded from the law forbidding the taking of life — whether of militants or non-combatants — unless it is acting under emotional stress?

Until malevolence turns to benevolence, intolerance to tolerance, narrow-mindedness to wise understanding, revengefulness to forgiveness, pride to nobleness, and we learn to adjust, adapt and accommodate, there is little hope for this land once blessed and now seemingly cursed. If a miniscule part of the zeal that is now being shown 'to wage war' had been spent on reconciliatory measures, the situation would not have declined to this depth.

Third Party mediation

As a concluding suggestion, it would not be irrelevant to point out the advantages of third party mediation, which the government rejects as a reflection on its ability to find a solution. The very fact that for three decades this problem has remained unsolved provides proof of our incapacity for reconciling the two contrary stances of the disputants. The advantage of mediation is that it overcomes that weakness that mankind is heir to of being unable to see our own faults and failings.

This is spotlighted by Lord Jesus when he said: 'You see the mote in your brother's eye but not the beam in your own eye.' There is another weakness that humanity is prone to, namely, that even in rare cases when we see our faults, we are too proud to admit them and make amends. We generally try out utmost to justify our actions by hook or by crook. There is still a greater reason to try third party mediation, namely, the precedent set by Lord Buddha himself coming in person to settle factional disputes in ancient Taprobane. So, why should we shrink from a method with such promise of success? If Indian mediation is unacceptable, let us approach a party acceptable to both disputants.

Greatest tragedy

There is an impression created by the speeches of important people and the news media in recent times that we have reached the point of no return.

WHAT ABOUT TERRORISM IN THE SOUTH ASKS S.L.M.P. LEADER

President Jayawardene repeatedly speaks of terrorism in the North, but he never utters a word about that in the South. Terrorism in both North and South is only a creation of President Jayawardene himself, said Mr Vijaya Kumaranatunge, General Secretary of the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party, speaking at an SLMP propaganda rally at Kuliypitiya UC grounds. Dr Cecil Bandara Senaratne, SLMP co-ordinating secretary, Kurunegala district, presided.

Mr Kumaranatunga added that within a month of the UNP coming to power, there were communal riots. Mr Jayawardene as the Prime Minister then took no steps to settle the problem but he put not only straw but petrol as well to the communal fire. It was UNP thugs led by Cyril Matthew and Gami-ni Dissanayake who burnt the Jaffna Library — the largest library in Asia.

Terrorism in the south was seen only on the morning of 22nd July 1977, the day following the general election. It was not Maheswaran or Prabakaran who burnt the houses of Sinhala Buddhists in the south and robbed them, but UNP thugs.

Was it Amirthalingam who ordered the erection of a barbed wire fence around the temple of the Ven. Labu-duwe Siridhama Thero? It was by the Dharmista leader President J.R. Jayawardene.

Who had sabotaged the Sinhala Bala

But let us not forget the large numbers of good people on both sides who abhor bloodshed and who would like to see the problem resolved by bringing into play our innate human goodness. The Tamils gratefully remember the abundance of compassion shown by so many Sinhalese who sheltered Tamils at the risk of their own lives in July 1983, and in previous communal riots. There are also several instances where good-hearted Tamils have shown kindness and human tenderness towards affected Sinhalese. It is unfortunate that while such goodwill exists, the good people are unable to influence the course of events. In fact, it is they — the good people on both sides — who can do something to bring about reconciliation. They should come forward and influence public opinion. Given below is a statement by Martin Luther King which should inspire us to action: 'The greatest tragedy of this period of social transition could be not the strident clamour of the bad people but the appalling silence of good people.'

Mandala meeting, slapped the Ven. Maduluwawe Soratha Thero, and assaulted Prof. S. Ediriweera Sarath-chandra and Buddhist leader Mr Siri Perera? Was it Uma Maheswaran or Prabakaran? This had been done by UNP thugs led by the henchmen of Cyril Mathew. Who had led the bicycle chain and blade groups to attack Bhikkus, workers and students? Those things had been done by the terrorists in the South. The President spoke no word about these things but spoke repeatedly about the North.

There were many modern Dutugemunus today. But none of them could be compared to the original King. Modern Dutugemunus were in the air-conditioned rooms in Colombo, but sent the security forces to battle. The original King Dutugemunu did not have a National Defence Fund. He led the armies himself.

We are not communalists. Both North and South are the same to us. Our fight is to build up a reasonable society so that workers, farmers and proletariat can live in dignity, enjoying all the facilities and privileges enjoyed by the capitalists and feudal classes today.

President Jayawardene was calling for unity to save the nation. The problem was from whom? We too invite people — all the progressive, to come forward to oust the brutal regime of President Jayawardene, he said.

SRI LANKA – THE POWER BROKERS

By VAYAL

In the contemporary world, religion is gradually ceasing to be the 'opium of the masses'. With the extension of political and social awareness, it is being confined to its traditional role of ministering to the spiritual needs instead of being regarded as a prescription for all ills in society. Where religious leaders reluctantly stepped out of these confines it has only been to add voice to the need for social reforms or to champion the cause of the oppressed — not to apply leverage in politics.

There are, however, well-published exceptions where the clergy have cast themselves in the role of power brokers in politics. The Ayatollahs in Iran and the Mullahs of Pakistan have strong grips on the political machinery because politics in these countries have in recent years been dominated by an obsession to preserve religion and everything that goes with it. Not so well known, not nonetheless seasoned in the art of power of brokerage, is the Maha Sangha (the Buddhist Clergy) in Sri Lanka. Particularly since 1948, they have extended their historical position of that of being mentors to the unenlightened masses to assume the more influential role of articulating what they perceive as Sinhala-Buddhist interests.

A powerful factor

Whilst it is a matter of judgement whether they simply mirror Sinhalese gut instinct or play a more positive part in the orchestration of Sinhala views, the hard fact is that they have become a powerful factor in any political equation. In 1956, the Eksath Bhikku Peramuna (United Front of Buddhist monks) provided the main thrust to bring Mr Bandaranaike's SLFP to power; likewise in 1977, the Mahanayakes of Asgiriya and Malwatte put their weight behind Mr Jayawardene to ensure a landslide victory for the UNP.

The Buddhist clergy in Sri Lanka, find themselves, like their counterparts in Iran, in the remarkably advantageous position of being able to influence the course of political events without actually entering the mainstream of the political process itself — that is to say that they have no responsibility to an electorate and yet retain considerable muscle in the decision-making machinery. Thus, it was possible for the Mahanayake of Asgiriya to assist in the abortion of the All-Party Conference by his resistance to even the most modest concessions that were offered at this conference to meet Tamil demands.

It is against this background of concealed power that one must assess the views he expressed in an interview with Rodney Tasker ('Far Eastern Economic Review', February 1985). His approach to the ethnic problem could not have been spelt out in more simplistic terms:

'The Sinhalese are the original settlers. The minorities came later. Now they are demanding all the facilities and rights enjoyed by the Sinhalese . . . Because some of the minorities have lived here for hundreds of years, they should be given the reasonable rights according to the size of the population . . . But we will never give way to a demand for a separate state.

The Mahanayake's argument is founded on two distinct premises. Firstly the rights of any ethnic or other grouping in a state are determined by reference to the time of arrival of that group and that the rights of the individual citizens should be graduated to reflect the numerical strength of the ethnic group to which they belonged. The second premise that national boundaries are fixed for all times is even more fundamental.

Let us take the first premise — specifically the application of the criteria about the time of arrival. If the rights of the aborigines of Australia, the Maoris of New Zealand and the Indians of North America and all the other indigenous populations, were decided on this basis, where would it leave the white immigrants to these countries. If the rights enjoyed by individual citizens, on the Mahanayake's terms, are, as it were, subject to a tariff which reflects the size of their ethnic or other group, the underlying cohesiveness that makes it possible for a heterogenous society to exist would be seriously impaired. And this is precisely what has happened in Sri Lanka. Nation states built on this fragile premise have bitten the dust one way or another.

The cardinal principle

The Mahanayake's position becomes even more untenable because it ignores the cardinal principle which sustains the concept of a nation state — which is that the political and civic rights of every single citizen are fundamental and they should be regarded as equal. It is this principle which constitutes the pivot of the social contract between those who govern and those who are governed.

Clearly, the Tamils in Sri Lanka have had it demonstrated to them,

time and time again, that the exercise of these rights within the existing unitary political structures is at risk, if not actually denied to them. In such a situation, there are two available options open to them. Either the existing political framework must be drastically rearranged so as to ensure their legitimate rights whilst preserving the national identity, and if this cannot be achieved because people like the Mahanayake are allergic to any change in the 'status quo' then the only other option available to the Tamils is to construct a polity that will secure these rights.

National boundaries

This takes us to the Mahanayake's second premise that national boundaries are fixed for all time by some immutable law. At the end of the two world wars national boundaries, particularly in Europe, were drastically altered to impose the will of the victors over the vanquished. But more recently, nation states have emerged to reflect in the words of Jehan Perera (a young Sinhalese scholar) 'the struggle for liberation from poverty and misrule, the demand for a community possessing self-esteem to determine the course of its life'.

The Mahanayake's problem is the fixation that this right of self-determination must inevitably lead to the creation of a separate state. The Mahanayake knows only too well the historical background in which the demand for a separate state for the Tamils was formulated. But, of course, it would not be consistent with his role as a power broker, if he did not flag up the bogey of a separate state. At any set of proposals which seeks to resolve the ethnic problem on an equitable basis — even if those proposals fell far short of the minimum Tamil demand for regional autonomy.

There are, however, hopeful signs that the younger members of the Sangha are moving away from the hierarchy of power brokers, and beginning to show a remarkable perception of their true vocation. In a letter to the Editor of the 'Saturday Review' (April 6, 1985), a young Bhikku, Ven Mandawala Pannavasa, announces the formation of an organisation — 'Bhikku organisation for Humanity' and makes the plea:

'We humbly admit that there are racial-minded and chauvinist monks. But not all. Please let the Jaffna people know of our organisation and about the non-racist monks. . . We are sorry that we have been misunderstood by the Tamil people. As our organisation

PROBLEM NOT ETHNIC, BUT MARXIST

Within Sri Lanka the Tamils in general and the Liberation groups in particular are attacked by President Jayawardene and his Ministers as anti-Sinhala separatists who are attempting to divide the country and push the Sinhalese into the sea. Recently, he declared that 'If we do not go to the border, the border will come to us'.

However, during his recent visit to Pakistan, he played his characteristic Jekyll and Hyde role. 'Make no mistake. There is no ethnic problem in Sri Lanka. The Tamils wanted to create a united Marxist-Leninist state in the North and the South too, to set up a communist state in Sri Lanka,' President Jayawardene said.

The duplicity of President Jayawardene is evident from one thing he says for internal consumption and another for external propaganda. Internally, he whips up anti-Tamil sentiment among the majority community on the assertion that the Tamils are out to capture the entire country, and externally for the purpose of obtaining aid and weapons from Western countries he raises the spectre of Marxism and communism.

SUNIL de SILVA
Colombo 12, Sri Lanka

WELCOME UNITY

The Tamil speaking people, and in fact all those concerned with their present plight, will wholeheartedly welcome the unity forged recently among the different Tamil liberation groups.

Such unity brings strength to the Tamil struggle and no longer will the government of Sri Lanka be able to under-estimate or ridicule the Tamil

FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

is in its infancy, our voice is not so powerful. Our voice will soon be influential. We are sure of that. We are gradually beginning to understand what is happening in your area.'

Contrast the tone of this plea with that of the Mahanayake's assertion, elsewhere in the same interview with Rodney Tasker: '... it is the duty of the Maha Sangha to help people in a situation like this by making suggestions to the government. Many people are now going to the monks throughout the country and asking them to bring them to peace.'

The Mahanayake's 'suggestions to the government' to date have not been designed to bring peace. Instead, his 'suggestions' have proved to be the most effective impediment to a rational consideration of the problem leave alone finding a solution to it.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

militants. The time has now come for the remaining groups to shed their ideological and personal animosities and unite under one banner.

L.S. Nathan
Ontario, Canada

PRAISE FOR M.P.

Let me congratulate you on the excellent interview with Mr Kilroy-Silk MP (April 1985). He deserves praise for his forthright exposure of the grave violations of human rights in Sri Lanka.

The government cannot accuse him of carrying on 'Eelamist propaganda' because he and his colleague, Mr Roger Sims MP, were in Sri Lanka as guests of the Sri Lankan government.

S.K. Maran
Bambalapitiya, Colombo

NEW I.G.P.

President J.R. Jayawardene has appointed Mr Herbert Weerasinghe as the new Inspector General of Police in succession to Mr Rudra Rajasingam. The fact that Mr Rajasingam is a Tamil and held the post of Inspector General of Police did not prevent his subordinate police officers going berserk and indiscriminately attacking Tamil civilians. However, the government used the fact of his being a Tamil to 'rebut' the well-founded charge of discrimination against Tamils. Now that this figurehead Tamil IGP has gone and a Sinhalese has taken his place, it will no longer be possible for the government to play this card.

S. CHINNIAM
Batticaloa, Sri Lanka

WORSE THAN SOUTH AFRICA AND ISRAEL

People often regard the treatment of blacks in South Africa by the whites and the Arabs in the West Bank by the Israelis as most appalling and, rightly, the international community has time and time again condemned the South African and Israeli regimes. However, the recent shooting in Kwanobuhle by the South African police in the course of which over 20 blacks died has been the subject of a judicial inquiry which has exposed the sheer high-handedness of the police action.

The massacre of Palestinians in the Sabra and Chatila camps in Lebanon was also the subject of a judicial enquiry which resulted in the dismissal from the Cabinet of Ariel Sharon as Defence Minister and of many senior Israeli Army officers.

However, in Sri Lanka, the regime there has always resisted efforts to cause any investigation into the July 1983 anti-Tamil attacks in which many thousands perished. It never set up a judicial investigation into the murder of 53 Tamil political prisoners and suspects in Welikade goal. The army had gone on the rampage and killed hundreds of Tamil civilians and burnt down their properties on a number of occasions but the government have not only failed to investigate these wanton acts of lawlessness and destruction but also has engaged itself in a deliberate cover-up of atrocities committed by the security forces.

In this context it is my view that the Sri Lankan regime is much worse than that of South Africa or Israel.

S.S. PERER
Panadura, Sri Lanka

ATTACK ON HINDU TEMPLE

The Annual Festival at the Nainativu Vinayagar Hindu Temple was abandoned following an attack on the priests and trustees of the temple by the Sri Lankan security forces.

In spite of the fact that the victims of the attack suffered serious injuries to the head, eyes and body, and were bleeding profusely, the attackers ordered them not to leave the temple to seek treatment.

Complaint to government

In their complaint to the Jaffna Government Agent, the trustees have stated that the annual festival began on Friday April 4. On Sunday, April 6, at about 10pm, members of the secur-

ity forces in blue uniform entered the temple and ordered those sleeping there to point out the homes of the priests and trustees. They forced the priests and the trustees to go to the temple where they were attacked with hands and rifles causing them serious injury.

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affirm that everyone has an equal right to settle anywhere in this country. It is quite a different proposal for the state to mix up populations so that all minorities will always be outnumbered by the majority community. Every cultural minority needs to preserve its identity.

Rev. Shelton A de Silva
Methodist Church,
Colombo South Circuit

(By courtesy of Lanka Guardian, Feb 15, 1985)



MARTYRDOM OF REV. FATHER MARY BASTIAN

Rev. Fr. M. MARY BASTIAN

Born: 11.12.1948

Major Seminary:

☆ St. Paul's, Trichy.

☆ National Seminary, Kandy.

Ordained Priest: 25.4.1975

Died: 6.1.1985

● 5.1.1985. 6 pm. Curfew begins. Fr. M. Mary Bastian is in the Priest's House (Presbytery) with an orphan boy, Alagaratnam and a helper, Nathan Croos.

● About midnight (6.1.1985): convoy of vehicles moves towards village (Vankalai) and stops at the entrance of the church.

● Security Forces (SF) on foot enter church premises.

● Shots fired and SF take position around the premises.

● SF enter the rear veranda of the priest's house through the rear gate.

● SF knock at the door calling for Fr. Bastian. Fr.

Bastian, in his cassock, enters the parlour with rosary in hand along with Alagaratnam and Nathan.

● Shots are fired through the windows of the parlour from the rear veranda. Fr. Bastian pleads, 'please, please'.

● Fr. Bastian is shot along with Alagaratnam and falls crying 'amma' (mother).

● SF force open the parlour door on the rear veranda. Fr. Bastian is shot dead.

● Nathan is lead out to other buildings along the parapet wall — the generator and store rooms.

● Nathan is taken back to the parlour and shot dead.

● SF fire shots in and around church premises — a 72-year-old woman is killed.

● About 4 am, Fr. Bastian's body is dragged out through the rear gate and deposited on the steps of the Girls' School (old building) close to the Convent.

● Only the bodies of Alagaratnam and Nathan are found in the parlour.

● Some 'articles' are placed around the body of Fr Bastian and photographed.

● Bodies of Alagaratnam and Nathan are removed from parlour by SF.

● About 5 am, Fr. Bastian's body is carried by three men in uniform and placed in a mini-van and driven away.

● One of the four cans of kerosene found in the rear veranda is poured on the blood stains found in the parlour.

● 5 am — curfew being lifted, the nuns who were awake from midnight, are seen near the gates of their Convent.

● The nuns and girls residing with them are lead into the Church by the SF through the door under the Portico.

● Some villagers who had taken shelter for the night in the old Girls' School are led into the Church. They notice blood stains on the steps.

● SF ransack the entire Convent, removing wrist watches, cash and other articles — SF open the Tabernacle in the Convent chapel and meddle with the Monstrance.

● Vehicles move into the Church premises up to the rear gate.

● About 7.30 am vehicles move out.

● About 11am nine bodies are produced at the Mannar Hospital mortuary.

● Fr. Bastian's body not produced.

THE MURDER OF FR. BASTIAN GOVERNMENT'S LIES EXPOSED

The government of Sri Lanka and its ambassadors abroad continue to lie about the brutal killing of Rev. Fr Bastian by the security forces on January 6, 1985, in his own church at Vankalai in the north-western district of Mannar in Sri Lanka.

In a letter to a leading British politician, who expressed concern about the killing of Methodist Minister Rev George Jayarajasingham and of Rev. Fr. Bastian, the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in the UK, Mr Chandra Monerawela, has responded with deliberate falsehood. In regard to the killing of Fr. Bastian, Mr Monerawela states:

'The true facts are that the services who were on a combing out operation at Vankalai were engaged by terrorists at St Anne's Church on 5 January 1985. In the encounter, eight terrorists were killed and five others captured. A large quantity of arms and ammunition was also found in the premises of

the church. The service personnel or the captured terrorists had no information about Fr. Bastian. The government has held an inquiry — this inquiry was held by a Tamil Magistrate of Mannar and there was no evidence that he has been killed by the army. However, there is suspicion that he may well have disappeared to evade arrest or questioning, as dynamite, arms and ammunition had been found in the premises of the church.'

To dispose of one lie: there was no inquiry by a magistrate about the killing of Fr. Bastian. The inquiry Mr Monerawela refers to is the 'inquest' held in respect of the nine dead bodies (not eight) handed over by the security forces to the Mannar Hospital mortuary. Not that Mr Monerawela, an apparently intelligent career diplomat, does not know the purpose and facts of this 'inquest'. He is only proving that diplomacy is the patriotic art of lying for one's country!

There is incontrovertible evidence that Fr. Bastian was murdered by the Sri Lankan troops. The sequence of events leading to his murder and the disappearance of his body (see box) have been catalogued by eyewitnesses.

The Bishop of Mannar, Rev. Dr. Thomas Soundaranayagam, after ascertaining the facts from eyewitnesses said in a letter dated January 9, to President Jayawardene:

'Father Bastian was shot dead in his room, and his body was removed by the armed forces and taken away in a van. We earnestly appeal to your Excellency to hold a high level and impartial inquiry into the murder of these two priests.'

The Bishop also protested against the false propaganda (and repeated) by Mr Monerawela too in his letter referred to above) that arms and ammunition were found in the church. In a press statement dated January

MAY 1985

7th, 1985, he said:

'We deplore the killing of the Catholic Priest, Rev. Fr Mary Bastian, Parish Priest of Vankalai in the early hours of Sunday the 6th morning at Vankalai Mission House by the security forces. Fr. Mary Bastian, aged 38, a dedicated pastoral worker, was deeply involved in the upliftment of the poor people in the diocese of Mannar. The Catholics of Mannar and I bemoan this cruel, inhuman and unthinkable act against a man of God. We strongly protest against the Government mass media for giving out false news that arms and ammunition were found in the Catholic Church of Vankalai and that the church was used as a base to attack the security forces. We also condemn the killing of innocent civilians in the village of Vankalai.

'We strongly object to the unlawful entry into the convent of the Holy Family Sisters at Vankalai by the security forces.'

The government first admitted that a priest had been killed in a shoot-out in the church. The English-language daily SUN (Colombo) on January 7, 1985, quoted an Information Department press release, said: 'A woman and a priest are believed to have been killed in the shoot-out'. However, the Government and particularly the Minister of National Security, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, who is in charge of security operations later changed the story. Firstly, it was that Fr. Bastian's body 'had not been found', and later a total denial that the priest was ever killed by the security forces. It was even accompanied by a suggestion that he had disappeared — 'gone over to South India possibly'.

The Catholic Bishops Conference, a body of all the bishops in Sri Lanka, protesting at the killing of Fr. Bastian, demanded an impartial investigation and said:

'On the one hand, media reports indicate that the army was provoked by a terrorist attack from church premises. On the other, reports reaching us indicate that it was an unprovoked army attack on the church and its incumbent. The versions presented in the local media could prejudice the public on the whole issue and create unnecessary tension both in the North and in the South. The truth of this matter should therefore be established after a thorough investigation and an impartial inquiry at the highest level. We urge the government to hold such an inquiry

'In view of the widespread demands for an investigation, the Minister for National Security announced on January 9 that he had asked the Inspector

General of Police for a full inquiry. However, even while the so-called inquiry was pending, the Minister continued with his claim that Fr. Bastian was not killed by the army and made speculative statements that the priest had gone over to India to 'join the boys' (meaning thereby the Tamil militants).

Contradicting reports in the Sri Lankan media that no witnesses had come forward to testify about the killing of the priest, the Bishop of Mannar stated: 'On January 13 and 14, officers of the CID came to Mannar. We produced six witnesses and their statements were recorded in the police station.' The Bishops' statement was confirmed by a news report in the English-language daily THE ISLAND of January 19, which said that statements of witnesses were recorded by a special team of CID investigators at the Mannar police station from 11 a.m. on January 13 to 12 noon on January 14.

The government so far have failed to publish the result of the police investigation. In the meantime inspired stories have been planted in the Sri Lanka media raising doubts about the murder of Fr. Bastian by the security forces. The Catholic Bishops Conference of Sri Lanka has strongly denied the suggestion that Fr. Bastian might be alive, affirming that there were eyewitnesses to his killing and expressing regret that the government had not published the results of its investigations. In a statement, reported in THE ISLAND of March 2, 1985, the Catholic Bishops Conference is quoted as having said:

'Our attention has been drawn to some reports in the local press casting doubts about the killing of Rev. Fr. Mary Bastian of Vankalai on the 6th January 1985. These reports have made vague allusions to foreign press reports and broadcasts that the priest might still be alive. The reports in the local press also try to make out that the Catholic hierarchy in Sri Lanka had some doubts regarding the killing of Fr. Mary Bastian.

'Our position has remained unchanged. According to eyewitnesses he was killed in his own mission house, with two young boys who had been staying with him for some years. His body was removed by those who killed him. These eyewitnesses were produced before the police who recorded their evidence. We urged the government to publish the results of its inquiry. We regret that this has not yet been done.

'In the light of our categorical statement affirming the killing of the priest and vague reports in newspapers which might mislead the public, we once more strongly urge the gov-

BISHOP'S 'OBJECTIONABLE' TELEGRAM

Following the murder of Rev. Fr. Bastian by the security forces, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Jaffna sent the following telegram to the Pope in Rome:

'DEEPLY DISTRESSED BY THE MURDER OF OUR CATHOLIC PRIEST FATHER MARY BASTIAN IN MANNAR DIOCESE, SRI LANKA. WE HUMBLY REQUEST YOUR HOLINESS TO APPEAL TO THE GOVERNMENT TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF MINORITIES.'

CHIEF PASTOR AND PEOPLE
OF GOD OF JAFFNA DIOCESE

The Chief Postmaster refused to transmit the telegram, presumably on instructions from some temporal 'Almighty' and wrote to the Jaffna Bishop in the following terms:

'Rev Sir,

I regret very much to inform you that the telegram tendered by you on 21.01.1985 addressed to His Holiness Pope John Paul, Vatican City, Italy, has been categorised as an objectionable telegram. Hence the telegram has not been transmitted to Italy please.

Yours in service,

sgd — Chief Postmaster, Jaffna
24.1.85'

ernment to publish its findings.'

The Amnesty International, having investigated and scrutinised the available information, has concluded that 'there is credible evidence that Fr. Bastian was shot dead by the army in his mission house and that his body was removed by them from the place of the incident and disposed of:

According to reports received by Amnesty International, the security forces surrounded the church premises around midnight 5-6 January 1985, entered the back of the mission house, and called Father Bastian. When he approached, he is said to have been shot through the windows from the veranda in a room at the back of the mission house. After several hours, his body was reportedly removed and put on the steps of a girls' school close to the Convent, photographed after certain objects had been put around it and in the early hours of January 6 taken away in a white van by uniformed security forces personnel believed to be from the nearby Thallady army camp.' (Report of the Amnesty International, April 1985: ASA 37/03/85)

In the light of the facts disclosed, one

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 19

STATE TERRORISM

BULLETS FOR THEM — DYNAMITE FOR THEIR HOUSES

MARCH 21, 1985

Hundreds arrested at Chavakachcheri: Security forces combing several villages in the Chavakachcheri area took into custody well over a 100 innocent Tamil youth. Two houses which were found locked up without any occupants were demolished with explosives. It is understood that occupants of these houses had moved over temporarily to live in other areas considered 'safe'; from vandalism by troops. In keeping with the current policy of the troops that unoccupied houses should be demolished, these two houses were dynamited.

MARCH 24, 1985

Commandos kill 7, injure others: Police commandos carrying out a search of vehicles on the road near the Pannai Bridge in Jaffna opened fire at a mini-van and a state-owned bus killing seven innocent civilians, seriously injuring six and wounding several others. Among the bodies identified were that of Mrs Ponnammah (55 years, Velanai North) and Kandiah Navaratnam (45 years, Mankumbaan). The following sustained serious injuries: K. Selladurai (66 years, Velanai), Kandiah Devarajah (55 years, Velanai West), T. Selladurai (47 years, Koddady), M. Nadarajah (59 years, Suruvil), K. Ganesiah (38 years, Velanai) and S. Nagarajah (70 years, Navakuli).

APRIL 3, 1985

Fuel crisis in the North: The North of Sri Lanka beyond Kilinochchi is in an acute fuel crisis. Due to the government deliberately restricting fuel supplies to the North, there have been a spate of fuel robberies and hijacking of fuel bowsers. This has given the government ample excuse to consider closing down a good part of the 68 petrol sheds situated in the Jaffna district.

More houses demolished: The Navy are now busy demolishing houses in the vicinity of the Karainager Navy camp. Today the houses of Mr V. Sinnadurai and Mr A.A. Selliah were dynamited and brought down. Four more houses from which people were evicted are due to be dynamited tomorrow. This is being done for the

safety of the navy base, it has been announced but over the last several weeks there appears to be a concerted attempt by the armed forces to destroy the houses of Tamils on a widespread scale.

APRIL 5, 1985

84,095 Tamil refugees in India: It has been officially announced in India today that since July 1983, 84,095 Tamil refugees have crossed over to India from Sri Lanka. The Tamil Nadu government has so far spent Rs.74,21,000 and the Indian Central Government Rs.69,36,000 for the welfare of these refugees.

Houses set ablaze in Batticaloa: The armed forces have set fire to several houses of Tamil people at Aayithiamalai in the Batticaloa district in reprisal for a shooting incident that took place at Kodduwamadu. Several innocent Tamil youth were also taken into custody.

Fuel confiscated by troops: Several lorries bringing fuel (in short supply in the North) in drums and barrels to the North have been stopped by troops and their 'precious cargo' confiscated.

Missiles injure family: Missiles fired indiscriminately by troops in the Gurunagar village of Jaffna have landed on the house of one Soosai Alfred Lewis (56 years), necessitating him and his family — Mrs Francisca (53 years), Christian Anthonypilai (27 years) and Alfred Sebamalai (19 years) to be admitted to the Jaffna Hospital.

Mother of four shot dead: Mrs Jeyagouri Thavarajah (33 years), a mother of four children, died in Manipay as a result of being shot by the soldiers today. She died on the way to hospital. Her husband is employed in France.

Tractor driver shot: 25-year-old Mr Singarajah from Ariyalai was shot at by the troops while driving a tractor at Pannai today. He was admitted to Jaffna Hospital in a critical condition.

APRIL 6, 1985

Vavuniya murders: Two brothers, Ponnai (19 years) and Muthulingam (14 years) who set out on a bicycle to go fishing at Vavuniya were shot and

killed by the army today.

No petrol for Jaffna doctors: The shortage of fuel in the North has resulted in doctors in Jaffna being unable to attend to medical emergencies.

APRIL 9, 1985

Demolition squads again: The demolition squads of the Sri Lankan army today turned their attention to a shelter within the premises of Subramaniam Park in the heart of the Jaffna town. They blasted it down with explosives as it was considered a security risk!

APRIL 12, 1985

Shooting spree on New Year's Eve: On the eve of the Hindu New Year troops went on a shooting spree in Jaffna town injuring several civilians. The following have been admitted to Jaffna Hospital with gunshot injuries: Anthonypillai (26 years) of Colombothurai, S. Sivakumar (19 years) of Anaikoltai, V. Subramaniam (32 years) of Gurunagar and Jesudasan (18 years) of Kokuvil. All shops had to put their shutters up after the incident and mini coaches stopped plying on the roads.

Gurunagar inhabitants flee homes: Due to increased troop movements at Gurunagar, a great degree of tension prevailed at Gurunagar making hundreds of inhabitants to flee their homes and take refuge at Colombothurai Hindu school.

APRIL 13, 1985

Shooting spree on New Year's Day: Troops continued their shooting spree well into New Year's Day in Jaffna injuring several civilians. Among those injured were Rev. Father Karunairatnam and K. Balan (22 years).

400 houses burnt in the East: It has been reported that nearly 400 houses belonging to Muslims in the villages of Karativu and Kalmunai in the Eastern Province have been gutted by fire. It is said that this has been carried out by Sinhalese thugs transported from Colombo with the help of the security forces. The government has claimed that Tamil militants carried out the act to drive a wedge between Tamil and Muslim communities that have lived in amity in these areas from time immemorial.

SUKHRAN'S DIARY OF THE OCCUPIED TAMIL AREAS

Monday	1 8 15 22 29	Monday	5 12	Monday	7 14 21 28	Monday	5 12 19 26
Tuesday	2 9 16 23 30	Tuesday	6 13 20 27	Tuesday	8 15 22 29	Tuesday	6 13 20 27
Wednesday	3 10 17 24 31	Wednesday	7 14 21 28	Wednesday	9 16 23 30	Wednesday	7 14 21 28
Thursday	4 11 18 25	Thursday	10 17 24 31	Thursday	1 8 15 22 29	Thursday	8 15 22 29
Friday	5 12 19 26	Friday	1 8 15 22 29	Friday	2 9 16 23 30	Friday	9 16 23 30
Saturday	6 13 20 27	Saturday	3 10 17 24 31	Saturday	3 10 17 24 31	Saturday	10 17 24 31

BASTIAN & THE BISHOPS

The Catholic Bishops Conference has asked the government to publish the findings of the investigation, it ordered into their charge that Rev. Father M. Bastian, the Catholic priest of Venk-alai, Mannar, was gunned down in cold blood by a section of the armed forces in his Mission House. In a press release the Bishops again assert:

'Our position has remained unchanged — according to eyewitnesses he was killed in his own Mission House, with two young boys who had been staying with him for several years. His body was removed by those who killed him. These eyewitnesses were produced before the police who had recorded their evidence.'

Instead of seeking to get away, as Minister Lalith Athulathmudali tried to do, with diversionary hints that the priest may still be alive and has joined the 'terrorists' in south India, the government should accept the challenge.

Meanwhile, Pope John Paul II himself has, according to the official 'Catholic Messenger' (3/5) 'expressed concern about the disappearance of Fr. Bastian'. It should, however, be noted that, according to the same issue of the 'Catholic Messenger', Catholic priests in Jaffna have 'deplored' the

FROM PAGE 7

human rights lawyer in Indonesia, Roberto Savio from Argentina, Director of Inter Press Service (Rome), and Dr Aberahman Youssoufi (Morocco) of the Arab Lawyers Union.

SIFEC represents a convergence of the two principal human rights groups — those concerned with economic, social and cultural rights and who work internationally in the areas of development economics, and those concerned with the traditional human rights represented by the civil and political rights recognised as international law through the UN Covenants and the European and American Conventions. Increasingly, development agencies have found that their work is frustrated by ethnic conflict and that with-

FROM PAGE 9

small non-Tamil components. But they have long been regarded by Tamils as integral parts of traditionally Tamil-majority areas. Earlier encroachments by Sinhalese settlers have been a major source of Tamil grievance.

'In the circumstances, were the government to go ahead with its scheme, it is our view that it would only result in a hardening of Tamil attitudes and lead to even greater violence.'

fact that the Bishops' statement does not go far enough and 'is non-committal as it neither condemns nor deplors this murder'.

They have asked whether the Bishops have 'lost confidence in their confreres' and 'lost faith in the sacred character of Catholic priesthood in not considering the killing of a Catholic priest as sacrilegious'. They also point out that the Bishops did not hesitate to condemn the killing of a Japanese Buddhist priest in Jaffna.

If the government continues to remain silent and evasive about even the more moderate position of the Bishops Conference, it has only itself to blame for any adverse conclusions people, including non-Catholics, may reach.

M.X. Fernando
Negombo, Colombo

FROM PAGE 17

wonders whether the Sri Lankan High Commissioner, Mr Chandra Monerawela, if he has an iota of personal integrity — a commodity so rare and in short supply among those in authority in Sri Lanka as well as those who represent them abroad — would continue to claim that 'the story was spread by the terrorists that he (Fr. Bastian) had been killed by the army to cover up their activities.'

out basic human rights economic progress and rights cannot be fulfilled.

Sri Lanka is an outstanding example of ethnic violence. Protestant, Catholic, and other development agencies in Holland, Germany and the UK have urged and supported the creation of an International Emergency Committee on Sri Lanka. Non-governmental organisations working together in Geneva have submitted joint statements to the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva and similar reports have been prepared by groups in other countries. Amnesty International, the International Commission of Jurists, Law Asia and others have published reports on the decline both in human rights and the rule of law in Sri Lanka.

The escalating violence on all sides of the conflict in Sri Lanka itself; the increasing number of refugees crossing to India and facing refoulement (deportation) from European countries, increasing restrictions on freedom of movement, and the creation of camps for internal refugees; the erosion of civil liberties and constitutional democracy over recent years; all of these demand the focusing of attention on Sri Lanka and the new initiative to help the victims and if possible facilitate solutions.

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Similar projects relating to other areas of ethnic conflict will be taken up in whatever seems appropriate to the forum. A Research Committee has also been appointed to pin-point the areas of future danger and to find comparative symptoms in the hope of avoiding conflict becoming violent, and SIFEC will work closely with all other organisations operating in similar fields.

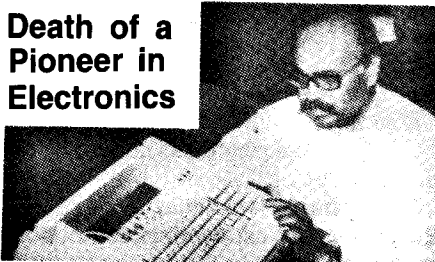
SIFEC is a registered charitable foundation in Utrecht, Netherlands. In the UK, its headquarters will be at 24 Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1LK, telephone 01-405 7382. The International Emergency Committee on Sri Lanka will also operate from the same address.

SENTU EXCELS IN TENNIS

Sentu Kandasamy (14) won the Guardian title in the Wimbledon Indoor Tennis Tournament held recently. He is being coached by his grandfather, Mr K.C. Praesoody, who lead his uncle, Rajah Praesoody, to glory as Ceylon's No.1 star. Sentu lives at Fishpond Road, London SW17 and is the son of the late Dr. N. Kandasamy and Mrs Sita Kandasamy.



Death of a Pioneer in Electronics



Mr V.K. Thillainayagam (56), whose funeral took place on 16.4.85 at Slough, will be remembered for his pioneering and dedicated research in electronics information technology. He came to Britain 22 years ago and did his electrical and electronics engineering at University of Aston, Birmingham, after which he joined Plessey Telecommunications Research as an engineer. He worked as the company's Principal Electronics Engineer before retiring prematurely due to ill-health.

His full-time career was his hobby and he spent all his spare time and money on carrying out private research. He has several inventions in the field of electronic information technology for which he holds British and worldwide patents. He has read several papers on his subject at several international conferences and was recently elected a Fellow of the British Institute of Electronic and Radio Engineers. Mr Thillainayagam leaves behind his wife Saku and daughter Gowri.

Eelam Tamil Association of Quebec

The following were elected office bearers of Eelam Tamil Association of Quebec on April 21, 1985:

President: Mr S. Sabanadesan; Vice-President: Mr S.P. Kanagasabapathy; Secretary: Mr N. Ramkumar; Ass. Secretary: Mr R. Ganesharatnam; Treasurer: Mr T. Sritharan; Board of Directors: Mr G.V. Nanthanakumar, Mr T. Sivathanan, Mr K. Srimurugan, Mr I. Kannathasan, Mr K. Iyaththurai, Mr K. Theivendraraajah, Mr N. Sooriyakumar, Mr K. Sathyanathan, Mr K. Thillainathan, Mr N.M. Jothinathan.

KURAVANJI

Kuravanji, a programme of Indian classical dancing, was held on April 28 at Ilford Town Hall with Mr Neil Thorne, Conservative MP for Ilford, Essex, as the Chief Guest. Organised by the East London and Essex Tamil Association, the performance was a remarkable success, with over 300 people present. Without doubt, it was an entertaining evening with the artistes displaying their virtuosity in the skills of this rather complex dance. Mr Neil Thorne said that he was acutely conscious of the problems facing the Sri Lankan Tamils and would do his best to ensure that justice was done.

The Annual General Meeting of the 'Jaffna College ALUMNI ASSOCIATION'

will be held at 4.45 p.m. on 29 June 1985

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Mother seeks Hindu groom for girl aged 32 from Valvetthirurai now permanent resident of Australia. Box M28, c/o Tamil Times.

Jaffna Tamil Catholic parents seek professionally qualified partner employed in USA, UK, or overseas for their pleasant daughter, 25 years, employed in a leading corporation in Sri Lanka. Reasonable dowry available. Box M29, c/o Tamil Times.

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OBITUARY**K.S. SUBRAMANIAM**

Mr K.S. Subramaniam, 82, popularly known as 'KSS' and 'Boarding master' to several generations of students of Jaffna Hindu College, passed away on April 18th, 1985 at Suthumalai, Jaffna.



KSS is a part of the history of Jaffna Hindu College, having given all his career to the development of Sri Lanka's foremost Hindu educational institution and having remained in the forefront of a generation of self-sacrificing model teachers produced by the school.

As a teacher of English and Tamil, equally adept at the verse of Shelley and Milton and Maha Bharata; as a hostel warden hiding behind the parapet wall with cane in hand to receive truant hostellers returning from late cinema shows and at the same time treating all hostellers with the love and affection of a father; and as the architect of the superb meals (including the legendary 'Payasam') for which the hostel was famous, KSS will remain immortal in the hearts of thousands of students of Jaffna Hindu College now in useful pursuits all over the world.

ARAVIND

Death of Mr K.C. NADARAJAH

Mr K.C. Nadarajah, an eminent criminal lawyer of Sri Lanka died on 22.2.85. He was 67. He had appeared in leading cases such as the Turf Club Robbery case, the Sathasivam case

and the Ranjani Taxi case. He served in many African and Caribbean countries such as Nigeria, Zambia, Bermuda and Western Cameroons as Attorney General, legal adviser and judge.

Mr Nadarajah was the son of the late Gate Mudaliyar K. Sinnathamby of Karaveddy and Mrs P. Sinnathamby and a brother of Dr (Miss) Siva Sinnathamby, Medical Consultant.

The funeral took place in Colombo on Sunday (24.2.85). Mr Nadarajah leaves behind his wife, Maheswarv, a son and daughter.

Mr I.P. THURAIRATNAM

Mr I.P. Thurairatnam, known to young and old as I.P., died on 27th April 1985. After his early education at St Johns College and Jaffna College, he entered the Ceylon University College in July 1923.

After graduating in science, he joined the staff of Jaffna College where he taught for 10 years. In January 1935 he was invited to become the principal of Union College, where he served with distinction for 29 years till his retirement.

One's remembrance retains a record of cumulative praise for Mr Thurairatnam's vision of the Union of two schools, his dogged pursuit of money for new lands and buildings, his extraordinary administrative ability, his ceaseless energy, his own prowess in sports and his encouragement of his students' athletic skills, his identification with the Tellippalai community, his integrity and discipline, his passion for gardening and photography

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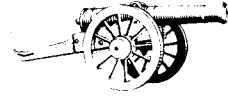
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CEASE FIRE, WHAT NEXT?

Hopes for a political solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka are being expressed yet again. Whether those hopes will materialise into reality will depend on the preparedness of the Sri Lankan government to recognise, accept and meet the legitimate national aspirations and rights of the Tamil people.

The recent visit of President Jayawardene to New Delhi and his discussions with the Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi would appear to have caused a sudden turn of events in Sri Lanka. Reports from Colombo indicate that the government has ordered a unilateral ceasefire and that the security forces would be withdrawn to the barracks.

Undeclared war

While the government of Sri Lanka has all along maintained that its security forces were directing their actions against the Tamil militants, what in fact was taking place was an undeclared ruthless war in the Tamil areas of the north and east of the country. The main brunt and thrust of this war was directed at the Tamil people as a whole. The imposition of a security zone, the creation of a prohibited zone along the northern coast, the enforcement of overnight curfews, the severe restrictions on movement of people and vehicles, the massive and almost daily indiscriminate killing, torture and detention of Tamil civilians, the mass evacuation of Tamils from areas where they have traditionally lived, the sending in of thousands of armed Sinhalese criminal elements into Tamil areas, and wanton destruction of Tamil homes and property all put together constituted nothing less than a total war upon the Tamil people. In this context 'ceasefire' may be an appropriate term for the action the government has proposed.

Indian role

Although the Tamil militant groups have so far not made any pronounce-

ments in response to the new developments, there appears to be no doubt that the government's move was preceded by some sort of indication as to what the militants' response would be.

That India has played a vital role in this new development is not in doubt. The joint communique issued following the meeting between Rajiv Gandhi and Jayawardene placed emphasis on the need for the parties to take steps to defuse the current tense and violent situation. The present move seems to be in the direction of achieving just that.

In spite of the bogus bravado of the Sri Lankan National Security Minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, it became increasingly clear to everyone that the government was not winning the battle against the Tamil militants who had, time and time again, demonstrated their capacity to strike even at places regarded as Sinhala heartlands and inflict heavy casualties upon the security forces. While political windbags indulged in mock heroics and empty rhetoric, the true professionals in the game distinctly saw the clear writing on the wall. Brigadier Nalin Seneviratne, the present Army Commander candidly admitted a few months ago, 'We can never win this. Our writ does not run beyond the sandbags that surround our camps and we can only do a holding operation

Anuradhapura massacre

Whoever carried out the Anuradhapura killings, it would appear to have had the effect of opening the eyes of some of the most obdurate extremist sections of the chauvinist Buddhist clergy. The reaction to this episode was one of sudden shock in its immediate aftermath, and later a gradual realisation that the violence and killing was not going to be one-sided all the time, that is, against the Tamils only. So, those sections, including the Buddhist clergy, which up to the Anuradhapura incidents vowed total eli-

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