

# Tamil TIMES

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## ESCALATION OF MILITARY OPERATIONS IN EAST SRI LANKA

The first two weeks of October witnessed a massive escalation of military operations by the government in many parts of the eastern province of Sri Lanka. These operations have inevitably led to scores of Tamil civilians being killed, many villages abandoned and has created a refugee problem of enormous proportions.

The government would appear to explain these widespread military operations on the basis that the Tamil militants were regrouping themselves in the Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts and mounting sporadic assaults on military installations and personnel.

The government's concentrated military operations which commenced on 2 October were described by the Ministry of National Security as a "combined joint operation with the main objective of clearing the transport bottle-necks". Although civilian sources in east Sri Lanka reported that over 1000 military personnel were involved in these operations, the government claimed that only three companies consisting of a maximum of 450 soldiers were engaged in the Trincomalee area.

The so-called flushing-out operation in Sambalathivu in the Trincomalee district resulted in a battle between the security forces and groups of Tamil militants. The security forces are reported to have used attack aircraft and helicopter gunships in these

operations. The entire civilian population of Sambalathivu and nearby areas had been ordered to evacuate before the operations began. The other villages affected by these operations were Nilaveli, Kuchchaveli, Kumburupiddy and Irakkandi on the east coast, north of Trincomalee.

Mass arrests of Tamils between the ages of 15 and 50 have also taken place in various villages in the eastern province, especially in and near Batticaloa. Even the government controlled press in Colombo have reported several instances of mass arrests, very often 100 to 200 persons in a single swoop. The English daily, 'The Island' of 20 September reported that "security forces rounded up over 100 youths in a massive cordon-off operation mounted in the heart of Batticaloa" on 18 September. The same paper reported the arrests of 44 persons on 26 September in Batticaloa, 75 persons on 9 October at Urani, over 200 persons in a dawn raid in the heart of Batticaloa town on 12 October and another 125 persons at Puliyanthivu on the same day.

## BATTLE AT ADAMPAN

Several soldiers were killed and many injured on 12 October when an army unit engaged in combing operations at Adampan, a village in the north-western district of Mannar, was ambushed by a group of Tamil militants belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

A pitched battle is said to have ensued lasting three days in and around Adampan. Helicopters carrying reinforcements and providing air cover to the entrapped army unit were shot at by Tamil militants killing a machine-

gunner. Although the government claimed that only one soldier was killed in the battle, LTTE sources claimed that as many as 28 were killed. The bodies of 9 soldiers were removed by the LTTE to northern Jaffna where they were handed over to the Commander of the Army Camp in the Jaffna Fort through the Jaffna Citizens' Committee.

It is also learnt that Victor, the commander of the LTTE in the Mannar district, was killed during the military encounter at Adampan.

**Tamil  
TIMES**

## A GREAT LOSS

*DR. K. ARUMUGAM, an academic of great excellence in his chosen field, was a man of wide knowledge, learning and experience. He was a much travelled man with an international outlook. He was unassuming, simple and humble. He was at ease with men of learning as well as the not so learned. He befriended the old and the young alike. He possessed a social conscience which inexorably led him to serve in many organisations committed to the cause of the oppressed and the needy.*

*Although Dr. Arumugam played an invaluable role in the work of the expatriate Tamil community in focussing attention on the trials and tribulations to which this community has been subjected in Sri Lanka, he eschewed narrow nationalism and ethnic chauvinism. He was passionately committed to the liberation of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka from majority domination and oppression, but he never condoned the excesses committed in the name of liberation. Even in the context of the almost unbridgeable gulf that had developed between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities of Sri Lanka in recent years, his contact with all the positive and progressive sections in Sri Lanka never ceased.*

*Dr. Arumugam's premature demise is a great loss to the City University where he taught for over 20 years, to his family and above all to the Tamil people of Sri Lanka for whose liberation he was actively engaged at the time of his death.*

## We complete five years

*TAMIL TIMES completes five years of its existence with this issue. It has not been an easy five years; it involved a great amount of effort, work and sacrifice.*

*These five years also have been tragic and traumatic for the Tamil community in Sri Lanka. In the pages of the TAMIL TIMES, we have to some extent attempted to reflect this tragedy and trauma. We have sought to expose and focus attention on many issues including the growing menace of state terrorism, the abuse of emergency rule, the undermining of the constitutional and electoral processes and the drift towards authoritarianism in Sri Lanka.*

*The government of Sri Lanka 'loved' the TAMIL TIMES so much that it activated its dirty tricks department, the so-called Society for Ethnic Amity, to produce forgeries of the TAMIL TIMES with its own propaganda material, and to circulate them through Sri Lankan missions abroad. As a British Conservative Member of Parliament said, the greatest fact that the government was forced to indulge in such an exercise of blatant deception is proof of the effectiveness of the TAMIL TIMES.*

*During these five years, we have had our denigrators and detractors, but they were very few. Attempts have been made to pressurise us to write this or omit that. But we never succumbed. We are gratified that the paper is read by many, in as many as 75 countries throughout the world. We have been beneficiaries of a tremendous amount of goodwill and support from our readers and wellwishers. We go into the sixth year in the confident hope that we will continue to have that goodwill and support in increased measure.*

## GUILTY OF COMPLICITY

*SEVERAL HUNDREDS of substantiated and proven cases of torture, enforced or involuntary disappearances and summary executions of persons (mainly belonging to the Tamil community) taken into custody by the security forces, form the basis of the latest 89-page Amnesty International Report titled 'Sri Lanka: Disappearances'. The Report draws attention to 195 cases of 'disappearances' in respect of which the United Nations Working Committee on Disappearances called for explanation from Sri Lanka in 1985. It also lists a further 272 cases of 'disappearances' of persons since 1985.*

*The reaction of the Sri Lankan government to this Report was predictable: total denials and a campaign of calumny against Amnesty International. Before the Report was released to the public, the AI had transmitted its findings to President Jayawardene and his Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, requesting explanations and calling for independent judicial investigations. Their response had been total silence.*

*That the Report was partial, incomplete and based on easily obtainable affidavit evidence were some of the accusations levelled at the AI once the Report was made public. When confronted by a BBC correspondent, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali replied that it was not for him or his President to undertake investigations as requested by the AI. He further called upon the AI or any other*

*organisation to lodge their complaints with the police who, he assured, would investigate.*

*Mr. Athulathmudali is not fooling anybody by this laughable suggestion. Does he really expect anyone to believe that any purpose would be served by a complaint made to the very person or body of persons who are responsible for the alleged crime? The fact is that, in Sri Lanka, incommunicado detention without trial, torture, enforced or involuntary disappearances and arbitrary and summary executions constitute an integral part of the repressive machinery of the state.*

*The President and the Minister of National Security preside over this repressive machinery, with the police and the security forces operating under their direction and control. As the Ministers responsible, they provide the locations in which and the tools with which these crimes are committed. They have consistently refused to order independent investigations - not a single court martial and not a single prosecution so far. Nor have they condemned such crimes. On the contrary, they have often attempted to protect the perpetrators by shielding them through blanket denials. To that extent, they are as culpable as their military minions who commit these crimes. They have done nothing to exculpate themselves from the charge that they are guilty of complicity in the commission of these crimes.*

# RANDOM THOUGHTS

By C. Subramaniam (Principal Emeritus, Skanda Varodaya College)

**THE EDITOR of the Tamil Times has honoured me by inviting me to write and, though I am in indifferent health, I am bound to accede to his request, as I feel that the Tamil Times has a very important place in the life of the Tamil Community in the United Kingdom, giving them and the world outside, correct and authenticated accounts of what is happening in our country and publishing the views of eminent men on some of our current problems. In fact I have found more detailed and up-to-date information about the killings and destruction there, than what I have been able to know when I was in Jaffna. I wish that, with the co-operation of our people, its usefulness is enhanced by being made a weekly at an early date.**

I belong to a generation that has almost passed away. As Sir Bedivere cried out to King Arthur when he was being taken away by the Ladies of the Lake, "The days darken around me, and I, the last, go forth companionless, among new men, strange faces, other minds" (quoting from memory), I too find myself among a generation with 'other minds', separated from it in many matters, especially in ideologies. To offer advice is the prerogative of old age, however gratuitous it may be, and I hope my friends will forgive me for my views on some matters.

I do not know how many of our people are living and working here but, meeting friends and talking to them, I find that almost all the people I know, (and my life has spanned many generations) or their children or their grandchildren are here. They are all working and doing well. In a way the whole of Jaffna seems to be here, leaving it to the 'Boys' there to fight it out. **In the euphoria that naturally flows from a happy life, there is always a tendency to be complacent and neglect vital issues, some of which I wish to place before you.**

The Tamil Community will not integrate with the British, nor is it desirable. They cannot lose their identity. They have fled their homes as their identity was in danger. **To retain their identity they have to preserve their language and their culture.** Their children should not be cut off from their cultural moorings. I have in mind parents who have growing children.

There is a strong belief among many parents that the language of conversation in the home should be English and they converse with their children in that language, otherwise, they think, that their children's proficiency in English would be poor. This is a fallacy. In the school, in their extra-curricular activities and in their

dealings outside the home, they have to speak in English and this is quite enough to give them fluency in that language. Besides, mastery of a language is not the main thing in a child's education. It is knowledge of the subject of study which is all important. Did your parents, dear reader, speak to you in your home in English? Have you lost anything by your parents not doing this? Have you and your contemporaries not done very well coming here and taking up a job? I have seen many of our children unable to speak in Tamil. This is a tragedy and you are perpetrating a virtual genocide, I would therefore earnestly request parents, who are not doing so now, to speak always to the children in the home in Tamil. Religious worship by the chanting of Tamil devotional hymns should be a regular feature in the homes. Parents could take a few lessons in Tamil Language and Literature with their children. This will be of mutual benefit.

Hard work, courage to fight against adversity, and to face up to all challenges have made the Tamil people great. We should not lose these qualities of our sturdy ancestors. In earlier decades our young men who came to the United Kingdom for higher studies, crammed five or six years study in two or three years crash courses, by following a fantastic work schedule in spite of all the distractions around them and created records in the English and Scottish Universities, especially in Medicine and Sciences. Our children should emulate these examples. Parents should give them the motivation by narrating to them the lives of great men like Christian Barnard,

the well known heart-transplant specialist who, in his autobiography, says that he and his brothers went constantly barefoot and often during the winter, their feet would toughen up and crack open; that he was sent to Cape Town University, wearing his brother's cast-off clothes.

I find that television has become a craze among our children both here and in our country. I have seen children sitting in front of the set and taking their meals as if offering oblation to the Television Goddess, before their meals. If this trend continues, our children would imbibe T.V. culture and mastery of cockney English! I think T.V. should be selective and controlled. Parents may not realise the dangers to which their children are exposed at a very impressionable age, seeing scenes which are violent, brutal with lots of shooting and killing. Their finer senses would be blunted. Their minds, enervated by the amorous scenes they see so frequently, would be totally unfit for the hard work required of them for a successful, if not a distinguished completion, of their educational and professional courses. I must now stop as I have outrun the space given to me.

*At 84, Mr Subramaniam is as alive and alert as he was three decades ago when I was privileged to sit at his feet. We look forward to more words of wisdom and admonition from one of Jaffna's most revered schoolmasters, now on a short sojourn in Britain. Incidentally, his friends and old pupils will be entertaining him to lunch on Sunday, 9th November, at the Lola Jones Hall, London SW17. [Ed.]*

## Aerial Bombing:

### AFTER JAFFNA, NOW BATTICALOA

**Several villages in the Batticaloa district in eastern Sri Lanka have been abandoned and their inhabitants have taken refuge in nearby jungles as Italian made Sia Marchetti aircraft of the Sri Lanka airforce manned by foreign mercenaries fired rockets and dropped bombs for several days in September. Low flying helicopter gunships strafed the area with machine gun fire.**

Residents of 40 houses in a housing scheme at Paduvankarni in Batticaloa were forcibly dislodged by the Sri Lankan security forces and the scheme was converted into a police commando camp of the Special Task Force on 10 September. The point at which the Commando post was created constituted the only access to and from the 7 villages to the nearby town. The affected 7 villages are Eechanthivu, Vilavedduwan, Karaveddy, Navatkadu, Monkykadu, Thoondi and Kurichamunai.

As the dreaded Commandos of the STF moved in, the people fled from their villages. In the meantime Tamil militants commenced a sustained attack on the Camp with small arms and mortar fire. As this attack continued, the Sri Lanka airforce began bombing and strafing the surrounding area.

No exact details of casualties and damage are available at present, but are thought to be heavy. However according to sources close to the Batticaloa Citizens' Committee, food and other necessary supplies have not reached the villagers for many days. The request of the civilian Government Agent of the area for permission to transport supplies to the affected people has been refused by the authorities, but supplies to the security forces have been airlifted. As of writing (16 September) the fighting between the forces and Tamil militants is said to be continuing.

# DR. KANAPATHIPILLAI ARUMUGAM

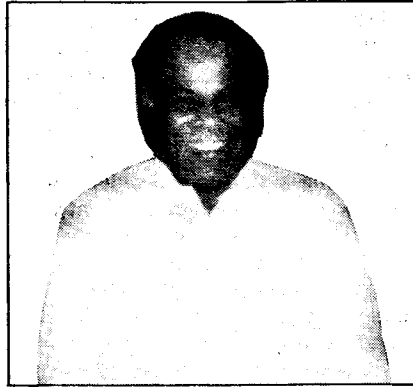
## "A GREAT TREE HAS BEEN FELLED"

WHEN the phrase the 'abundance of the heart' was first coined, it is likely that the author had visualised rare people like Dr Arumugam who has been suddenly snatched from our midst on the morning of 9th October 1986. His large heartedness was legendary, his keenness to help transcended all barriers. His enormous fund of goodwill was never exhausted. The endearing terms in which he was referred to - Aru and Doc Aru - reflected the warm affection which bound him to his friends and associates.

After a brilliant career at St John's College, Jaffna, where he won several prizes, he entered the University of Ceylon, where he passed out with a first class in Civil Engineering and went on to a research scholarship in the United Kingdom. On his return to Sri Lanka after obtaining his doctorate, he joined the Civil Engineering Faculty of the University of Ceylon before coming over to England. Aru was a classic example of a generation of Tamil academics, whose brilliant services were lost to Sri Lanka as a result of their being treated as "second-class citizens" in the land of their birth.

On this fateful day, Aru was walking along the corridor of the City University, (where he was a Senior Lecturer in Civil Engineering) to his lecture hall, when he collapsed and never regained consciousness. His sudden demise has been a rude shock to the members of his family, colleagues and numerous friends and associates. It was only the previous

evening that he had taken part in the vigil organised by the Eelam Solidarity Campaign (of which he was Chairman) opposite the United Nations Refugee Rehabilitation office in London.



Aru has left a void in the Tamil expatriate scene, which it would be difficult, nay impossible, to fill. It is tragic that he has passed away at a time of great crisis for the Tamil community. He spearheaded the campaign of the expatriate Tamil community in the United Kingdom for the rightful place of the Tamil people in the body politic of Sri Lanka.

Even before the terrible anti-Tamil violence of 1977, Aru had initiated through the Pothukai Trust, a broad plan to assist the deprived sections within the Tamil community by raising their standard of living. The events of 1977 which displaced thousands of Tamils convinced him that the tasks ahead required wider support from the expatriate community and that is how the Standing Committee of Tamil

Speaking People - SCOT - came to be inaugurated in that year. He was its first President and throughout the nine years since then, has been its main guiding force. SCOT today is a leading Tamil organisation in the UK with strong links with relief agencies and expatriate communities outside the UK. It was largely his vision, his deep concern for the less privileged sections of our community, his insistence on credibility and accountability that have put SCOT in a position to channel support of those outside Sri Lanka, who are concerned with the sufferings of the Tamils of that country.

Aru along with his wife Lingeswari and daughter Ponni formed a closely knit family. His loss must be a great blow to them. They might derive some consolation from the fact that their great grief is one that is shared by many hundreds, and perhaps that thought might sustain them in the days to come. While we miss him and grieve for what we cannot but feel was his premature death, we are thankful that we had the privilege of knowing and being served by someone who was a giant among men, but endowed with an abundance of humility.

A great tree has been felled by the remorseless forces of nature. Those of us whom he left behind have a duty by him and the great vision for the future which he represented - to translate that vision into a reality.

*May the great soul rest in peace.*

N. S. Kandiah  
President, S.C.O.T.

### From the City University

## An outstanding academic, full of warmth and generosity . . .

**THE sudden death of Dr. K. ARUMUGAM, who was a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Civil Engineering at The City University, came as a great shock to all who knew him. Aru was a highly respected and much loved colleague for over 20 years since joining the University early in 1966.**

He had been an outstanding postgraduate research student at Imperial College in the early 1950's and has been described by one senior academic as the most brilliant and most efficient doctoral candidate known to him over a period of 37 years.

Aru brought to The City University an unbounded enthusiasm for his speciality, Fluid Mechanics, an enthusiasm which he passed on to his colleagues and the many

undergraduate and postgraduate students with whom he worked.

In addition to his teaching and research Aru was a member of the Board of Studies in Civil Engineering, Senior Tutor for research and he was also responsible for initiating a Master's degree course in Water Resources Engineering in collaboration with Queen Mary College, University of London.

Apart from his departmental responsibilities Aru had also served the University as a whole as a member of Senate and was, for a time, treasurer of the local branch of the Association of University Teachers and an active member of the local committee.

He was a citizen with a great sense of responsibility and his concern for the problems in Sri Lanka was apparent to all who knew him well.

Aru had a great love of books and of

knowledge and truth. He enjoyed discussion on many subjects always demonstrating his clear understanding of the problems involved.

Some of his colleagues and postgraduate students will remember him also for his culinary skills for he introduced them to the delights of Sri Lankan cuisine at the parties that he organised for them.

Above all Aru will be remembered with affection for his personal warmth and generosity, for his willingness to give support to all who sought his help and for his joviality at all times.

He will be sadly missed both as a friend and as a colleague by all who knew him at the City University and in his field of work outside.

Prof. P. O. Wolf, Peter Burhouse,  
Paul Carr and Kuldeep Viridi.  
Dept. of Civil Engineering

# An Untiring and Steadfast Fighter for Justice . . .

IT was sometime in 1981. I was talking to a friend in my home in Colombo. My friend was a Tamil who was working abroad as a Vice-President of a large multi-national corporation and he was in Sri Lanka on a short visit. He said: 'You know, in Dr. Arumugam, we have a future Prime Minister of Eelam - he is one of those few Tamils who can help to bring many of us together.' I had not met with Aru at that time. But I did meet with him in the years that followed and I believe that I came to know him and also understand him. I also came to understand something of what my friend had said in Colombo in 1981.

Last week, when I heard that Aru had passed away, my immediate feeling was one of having suffered a personal loss. It was a feeling that comes from the passing away of a human with whom one has shared not only many thoughts but also many feelings and experiences. Each one of us is a composite of matter, life and mind and to the extent that we integrate all of these elements into a larger whole, we move towards becoming whole and

therefore holy - and to that extent, we are more evolved. Aru was one of those more evolved humans. He was more internally integrated than many and it was this which was often reflected outwardly as his 'integrity'. There were many occasions when I did not agree with his conclusions - but there was never a moment when I doubted his integrity. To him, as for Mao Tse Tung, theory was the most practical of things. And a theory divorced from practice was not for him. He had the capacity to laugh openly and I enjoyed laughing with him. He was a simple man, not given to ostentation and it was always easy to talk to him directly and openly. He had a clear mind and he was equally at home with Karl Marx and with Aurobindo. And the philosophy of Saiva Siddhantham was not unknown to him. He cared for people and I know that he has helped many in unobtrusive ways and without expectation of any return. Aru, in his own life, gave content to Lord Krishna's injunction to Arujna on the battlefield of Kurushetra: 'To action you have a right - but not to the fruits thereof'.

My wife as well as my son, who is in his twenties, enjoyed his company as much as I did, but not always for the same reasons. Aru was not only a personal friend - he

was a family friend. The largeness of a human is often shown by his capacity to relate to a wide spectrum of people, of different ages, coming from different backgrounds and with different aspirations. The friends that Aru has left behind reflects the largeness of the man.

It is related in the Mahabharatha, that when Tharmar, the eldest of the Pandavas, was questioned as to what was the most surprising thing in the world, he replied: 'The most surprising thing in the world is that man knows that he must die, but he lives as if he will never die'. Aurobindo, for whom Aru had an enduring affection, commented many thousands of years later that this feeling, which impels man to live as if he will never die, was but a shadow of his true immortality - an immortality which we may glimpse from time to time, in our moments of inner quiet and peace, when our chattering mind is silent. Aru was a good and honourable man in a world where goodness and honour are not always easy to find. In his death, the Tamil people have lost an untiring and steadfast fighter for justice, his family a caring husband and father, and many of us, a friend to whom we could turn to.

Nadesan Satyendra

## Trinco, The Pulse Of A Bitter Conflict

FOR the people who try to go on living here, this picturesque port is Sri Lanka's most sensitive barometer of war and peace.

To the north, around the Jaffna Peninsula, the land is acknowledged ethnic Tamil territory. The city of Jaffna lives in armed equilibrium, with the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam controlling the streets and the Sri Lankan Army, mostly ethnic Sinhalese, safe behind fortifications. In the south, few people have to face the reality of civil war.

But Trincomalee remains the focus of a bitter contest between the minority Tamil Hindus and the majority Sinhalese Buddhists. When talks to end the country's ethnic strife progress, tensions drop perceptibly, according to residents of the town and the surrounding district, also named Trincomalee. When talks falter, fears rise and violence returns.

Over the last few years of accelerating warfare between Tamil separatists and the security forces, thousands of refugees have fled in and out of Trincomalee, leaving the town crammed with dislocated villagers but empty of professional services.

When a team from the French voluntary organisation Doctors Without Borders arrived here in August to offer help, they discovered that the town had no functioning surgical hospital and scant medical supplies. No Sri Lankan medical people want to work here, they were told.

The Tamils and the Sinhalese both say that the port, with one of the world's best natural harbours and an extraordinarily beautiful geographical setting that could make it a major tourist attraction, is what

the Sri Lankan guerrilla war is all about.

Neighbourhoods once shared by Tamil, Sinhalese and Moslem families are pockmarked with sacked and burned shells of houses and shops. Most of the destruction has been borne by Tamil families, whose sons and fathers have been detained by the hundreds, residents say. Local monitoring groups report 217 people missing since January of this year. As many as 80 pc. of them are feared dead.

Although Tamil guerrillas have recently begun raiding uncooperative villages, relief workers say, many victims insist their attackers were members of the Home Guard, a locally recruited paramilitary force.

The Home Guards patrol the streets, Without Trincomalee, Tamil militants say, neither an autonomous homeland nor the independent state they are seeking would work economically.

With Trincomalee, Sinhalese nationalists say, the Tamils could pose a serious security threat. The harbour and port installations that might be developed could be offered to an unfriendly foreign power or serve as a supply conduit for an endless civil war.

If the ethnic strife is to be settled peacefully, moderates on both sides suggest, Trincomalee may have to be declared a special territory.

On the streets of this low-rise stucco town strung out along miles of clear white sand and waters in all shades of blue, the effects of the struggle for Trincomalee's future have been brutal. Residents say that if the politicians from Colombo, the capital, were forced to visit here, the dispute might be resolved faster.

spreading terror, one resident said, that electricity was often purposefully cut off to cause alarm and inconvenience and that guards pounded on doors at night to keep families in a state of tension.

Recent reports that 100 prisoners were about to be released from a camp near the country's south coast brought hopeful women to the offices of the Trincomalee Citizens' Committee.

There, where local volunteers try to keep track of broken families, the women thought they might learn if a son or father was among those to be freed.

But the government had not issued a list. The failure of the authorities to provide information is a major source of anguish, relief workers say.

Trincomalee, a British base in World War II, has Christian districts drawn from both Sinhala and Tamil people. Priests have been active in organising what relief services are available to refugees in the town.

At the Eastern Human and Economic Development office of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Trincomalee-Batticaloa, a relief worker said, nearly every house in town was being shared by two or three families. Hundreds of other people are crowded into makeshift camps.

Near the development office, an empty school building, hot and putrid with the smell of overtaxed latrines, is home to several hundred women, children and elderly people who sleep on concrete floors.

If and when the war ends, relief workers say, many of these people will have no homes to return to, and perhaps no income-earner. The rehabilitation of Trincomalee and countless rural villages around it will be a huge and costly task.

International Herald Tribune, 8.9.86

# The Tamils and Their Future in Sri Lanka

*By Professor A. J. Wilson*

University of New Brunswick being the text of a public lecture under the auspices of The Tamil International Research Council headed by the Rev. Fr. Philip Ratnapala, of Continuing Education and of the Department of Political Science, University of Ottawa on 24 September 1986

I AM pleased to appear before this gathering and to speak to you on a subject which is of critical international and domestic concern. Many of you would already be acquainted with the record of human rights' violations and the pogroms perpetrated on the Tamil people, pogroms which in my view have reached epidemic proportions since the present government was elected in 1977.

To look at the question of the future of the Tamil community, we must go back in time and see how certain historical forces have led us through the various twists and turns of history. I do not think these forces could have been stopped, immobilised or confronted. They had to wend their way through time. But in their wake, they brought consequences which had adverse effects on the Tamil community. Some modifications of policy could have dammed the flood tide of Sinhalese nationalism. But Sinhalese statesmen were not willing to undertake what to them seemed fraught with danger. The result was that the main impact of the movements I shall enumerate here were felt most by the Tamil community. Some measures enacted were wilful, vicious, pre-planned and deliberate. Instead of letting sleeping dogs lie, they were roused from their slumber. The result is what we are experiencing today almost 40 years after independence, a very short time indeed in terms of historical periods, within which the Sinhalese leadership of this country has brought it all to the edge of the abyss. So history will help us understand and enable me to explain why the present situation arose.

Firstly, a free education scheme launched in 1944 widened the provenance from which governments could draw for appointments to the public services and the public sector. Merit virtually ceased to be the criterion. Political influence replaced merit. And since the majority of MPs were Sinhalese, appointees were also Sinhalese. The Tamils did not count. Numerically the Sinhalese constituted the majority. The democratic view is that the will of the majority must prevail. But in Sri Lanka, it was and is the will of the numerical Sinhalese majority.

Secondly, it became state policy from 1953 onwards to enforce the national languages, Sinhalese and Tamil as the media of instruction at all levels, in stages, inclusive of the universities. This meant that a common language of communication ceased to exist. English is still used in certain sectors but is fast disappearing. What I am saying is that when

communities are compartmentalised in this way, there is little or no hope of national integration. There is no link language between the major communities.

Thirdly, the enactment of Sinhalese as the only official language throughout the island in 1956 meant the relegation of Tamil to an inferior status. The provision for the use of Tamil in an act in 1958, in Tamil regulations in 1966 and in the constitutions of 1972 and 1978 still maintains Tamil at an inferior level. This means the exclusion of numbers of Tamils from the public services, the public sector and sizeable sections of the private sector. Besides, none of these provisions for the use of Tamil have meaning since these are not implemented. The present government itself has admitted that sections of the Sinhalese bureaucracy have attempted to sabotage the use of Tamil even for the limited purposes intended.

Fourthly, the nationalisation of schools in 1960 and 1961 dealt a death blow to the educational institutions in the Tamil areas. Where these were previously run and efficiently maintained by Christian missionary institutions, they are now managed by a state which is hostile to them. This means that libraries, laboratories and day-to-day maintenance are neglected while Sinhalese institutions obtained favoured treatment.

Fifthly, the enlargement of the public sector, particularly the nationalisation of public utility undertakings during 1956-65 and of the plantations in 1971-72 were again more or less tantamount to Sinhalese domination.

Sixthly, Tamil political parties have had no share in the state patronage system, in the spoil system, in the pork barrel, since no Tamil political party cooperated with governments during 1956 to 1965 and 1970 to the present day. It might interest you to know that not a single Tamil from a constituency in the Tamil Jaffna peninsula has served in any government since 1953. The brief interlude 1965-68 was for the specific purpose of ensuring the implementation of district autonomy. When this failed to materialise, the one and only Tamil minister withdrew from the government. He was not an elected minister but a member of the second chamber. There are a few Tamils in the present government. They have been co-opted. They are not representative of Tamil opinion. They are mainly showpieces. Even the Indian Tamil minister in the present government had admitted to me that he has not been able to help his community in any way. He protests that he is out-voted at meetings of the cabinet whenever he brings up projects that could benefit his people.

Seventhly, the government of 1970-77 introduced a vicious system of discrimination against Tamil students in

the matter of admissions to the universities. The system was given the misleading designation of standardisation. It meant that Sinhalese students with lower marks could enter the universities whereas Tamil students had to obtain higher marks. To worsen matters a quota system of admissions was tacked on to the so-called standardisation policy. The more densely populated Tamil Jaffna peninsula had its numbers lowered. So was the Western Province where the schools had low country Sinhalese and Tamils. The overall result of quotas was that the Kandyan Sinhalese benefited and were over-represented in the universities. Here is reverse discrimination in favour of a majority ethnic group, a political concept impossible to justify.

Lastly, the policy of state-aided colonisation with Sinhalese settlers in areas traditionally regarded as Tamil homelands served the double-edged purpose of reducing Tamil representation in Parliament and of inroads being made into Tamil territory.

Mention must be made of the acts of 1948 and 1949 enacted within a few months of independence under which the large majority of Indian Tamils were deprived of citizenship and voting rights. These acts were a reversal of promises and undertakings given by the Sinhalese leadership before the grant of independence. Britain had been made to understand that there would be seven Indian Tamil representatives elected to Parliament. Seven were elected at the 1947 general election to prove the leadership's good faith. This was because of their quest for independence which Britain granted in February 1948. Soon thereafter the acts of 1948 and 1949 took the Indians out of the voting registers. Not a single Indian Tamil was elected to Parliament at general elections since 1947. In 1977, a single Indian Tamil was returned notwithstanding the fact that there are over half a million Indian Tamils who are entitled to Sri Lankan citizenship.

Several questions arise from this tale of deliberate discrimination against Sri Lanka's principal ethnic minority. The Sinhalese leadership had hoped and believed that the Tamils would endure repression and suppression and would resign themselves to second class status. This did not happen. On the contrary there was strong resistance to the Sinhalese attempts to make the land, the Arya-Sri Lanka race (a concept of racial superiority which incidentally Paul Sieghart in his *Sri Lanka: A Mounting Tragedy of Errors*, a publication of the International Commission of Jurists, published in 1984, states that "outside the Nazi imagination of half a century ago, there is no such thing" . . . p.4) and the faith (Sinhalese Buddhism) the foundation of the social structure of not Ceylon or Sri Lanka but Sinhala-dipa (the island of

*Continued on page 7*

Continued from page 6

the Sinhalese). The faith is given special recognition. Section 9 of the present constitution states "The Republic of Sri Lanka shall give to Buddhism the foremost place" etc.

Firstly, is there any hope in a set-up which drills the Sinhalese people daily into a war psychosis through the state controlled media? Can there ever be peace between the two communities when this kind of thought control is rigorously applied? Just now there are reports that government ministers are stomping the country preaching the virtues of inter-communal harmony. I shall answer this question shortly, after I have raised a few other pertinent ones.

Secondly, given the shameful record of betrayal of solemn understandings and pacts between the leadership of the two communities under which the Sinhalese leadership solemnly pledged to provide for a measure of autonomy for the Tamil areas, can the Tamil people or their leadership place any reliance on the undertakings of Sinhalese leaders?

Thirdly, the measures I have enumerated directed at forcing the Tamil people to a second class status from 1948 to the present day in my view cannot be wished away with a magic wand. The land, the race and the faith are the credo of every Sinhalese. One does not need a pick axe to find this out. It is there either staring you in the face or just below the surface. A war to the death between the two races in the course of 2,500 years cannot be settled in a week or two of negotiations.

Fourthly, the savage brutalities of an inhuman rabble that passes off as an army, the bombing of centres of population in the Jaffna peninsula, the massacre of innocents, the raping of women, will not be readily forgiven by proud people who have a civilisation of their own.

My last point is that persons do not count in this clash and movement of historical forces. It does not matter whether the persons are D. S. Senanayake, J. R. Jayawardene, or S. J. V. Chelvanayakam. These persons are part of an ongoing historical process. In my opinion, this historical process is moving inexorably to the completion of the task set out for it by history itself. History waiteth for no man, for that matter for no statesman. There might be moments when history like time can be seized by the forelock. In my view that time has passed.

The answer to my question has been in a way provided by none other than the President of the Republic of Sri Lanka. In his apocalyptic moments, in interviews to the foreign press, he stated on one occasion: "my country will become like Cyprus." On another occasion, he said "Sri Lanka will be partitioned and U.N. troops will have to be called in to protect the borders." You might think this to be a negative view of the situation that prevails in that sad island. But let me remind you

that far from being negative, it can be said that one man's pessimism is another man's optimism.

Are there any compromises that can be effected short of the island being partitioned, a proposition which cannot be ruled out, or for a Cyprus-style situation.

I think there are models, the demonstration effect as I have often referred to, which can maintain the island as a single entity.

Firstly, there is the solution that the Parti Quebecois of Rene Levesque advocated for the French in Canada. Quebec will be in all respects a sovereign state but maintain a sovereignty association with the Federal government in Ottawa for certain common purposes such as defence, currency, trade and communication. In all other respects Quebec will retain sovereignty. Although the Parti Quebecois was defeated, the spirit of a separate sovereignty still prevails among influential sections of the Quebecois population. My view is that the question is not dead. It will come up again and again.

Secondly, Benazir Bhutto has offered a deal to the provinces of Pakistan. The federal government in Islamabad will retain control over defence, foreign affairs, currency and communications. In all other matters, the provinces will retain control.

Thirdly, there is the Aaland (pronounced Orland) Islands solution. Britain was largely responsible for the settlement brought about through the League of Nations in 1921. The Aaland Islanders are Finnish citizens whose mother tongue is Swedish. They are however under the 1921 settlement neither Swedes nor Finns. The Aaland

Islands based their claim under President Wilson's principle of self-determination. The compromise reached through the League of Nations was that Finland retained sovereignty but the islanders obtained home rule and powers in respect of education, labour, farming, fishing, police, social and health services, roads, town planning and nature conservancy. Control in foreign affairs, defence, national taxation, the courts, post office and alcohol are in the control of the government of Finland. However the Governor of the Aaland Islands who is regarded as the representative of Finland is appointed only with the approval and consent of the Parliament of the Aaland Islands. Shipping and tourism are the principal sources of income for the 23,000 people of this territory.

A final point worth noting is Clause 2(b) of the Constitution of Malaysia. It states: "Parliament may by law alter the boundaries of any state but a law altering the boundaries of a state shall not be passed without the consent of that state (expressed by a law made by the legislature of that state), and of the Conference of Rulers.

It is my view that any of these compromises can maintain Sri Lanka's unity. Any one of these can confront the forces of history and stop these in their tracks. Any other solution in my opinion can only be a temporary truce, a calm before the next storm. None of the other solutions will prove acceptable and we will then be on the path to state breaking. Like pre-partitioned India and post-independent Pakistan, Sri Lanka can become two states unless individual Sinhalese leaders are bold enough to make history stand still and work out the kind of solutions I have suggested.

## Three Sisters Widowed Overnight



TRAGEDY struck the husbands of three young sisters, all in their 20's, and six young children were rendered fatherless, in a motor accident on the M1 motorway.

Rengasamy Kannan (23), Janarthanan Ramadas (34), and Gopalakrishnan Kulasegaram (34) had all gone to Birmingham to recover one of their lost cars, and were towing the vehicle home to Manor Park in East London, when a lorry crashed into their vehicles on the M1 motorway in the early hours of Friday, 3rd October. Kannan and Ramadas died instantly whilst Kulasegaram succumbed to injuries after admission to hospital.

All three deceased were active members of the London Tamil Sangam School and also of the London Sri Murugan Temple at Manor Park.

Their funerals took place on the 6th October.

# Effects of Conflict on Economy in Northern Sri Lanka

*The economic effects of disturbances short of full-scale war such as those that currently prevail in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka, extend well beyond those people and institutions directly touched by the violence. This paper examines the economic conditions in the Jaffna peninsula which is connected to the mainland by a single road through which all trade must pass. While the focus of the paper is on the trade and production disruptions and consequent market distortions, it also looks at the micro-economic repercussions of the conflict, such as those arising from Sri Lanka's foreign exchange constraints.*

**This is the first part of the study undertaken by Dr. Paul Seabright in Northern Sri Lanka during the latter half of 1985. The second instalment will appear in a subsequent issue. Dr. Seabright is presently attached to Churchill College, Cambridge.**

THE micro-economic effects of certain kinds of stress or hazard upon primarily agricultural systems are an important area of study. Economists are increasingly appreciating that studies of economies at points of crisis, as well as being of intrinsic value, may have lessons for our understanding of their behaviour in more normal times. Crises of an environmental nature – famines, droughts, floods, and so on – have for obvious reasons been better studied than those that are primarily man-made – especially crises due to a deterioration in people's physical security, of which war is the most extreme case. In conditions of physical insecurity short of full-scale war, such as those that currently prevail in Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka, the economic effects of the disturbance usually extend well beyond those people and institutions directly touched by the violence.

## The Jaffna Peninsula Current State of Conflict

The Jaffna peninsula is an area of 524 square miles at the northern tip of Sri Lanka, comprising just over 3 per cent of the total land area of the island. Its population according to the 1981 Census was 853,000 and is currently estimated at 975,000. The large increase is due to the inflow of Tamils from other parts of the island and has taken place in spite of considerable international migration from Jaffna.

Some 50,000 to 60,000 families are thought to have entered Jaffna since the 1983 violence, and of them more than 50,000 have come (mainly from the districts of Vavuniya and Trincomalee) since the ceasefire agreed between the government and the main militant organisations on June 18, 1985. The population is overwhelmingly (more than 95 per cent) Sri Lankan Tamil, with a small presence of Muslims and Indian Tamils (though the latter are somewhat more represented among the recent refugees).

The peninsula appears to be the only area of troubled Northern and Eastern provinces where the ceasefire has had any effect. Elsewhere, particularly in the ethnically mixed areas of Trincomalee and Vavuniya, killings and displacements by all parties to the conflict have intensified since August 1985. These include many killings of non-combatants by Sri Lankan security forces and home guards and also (to a lesser extent) by militant organisations. In Jaffna district the security forces have with rare exceptions remained confined to barracks, and there have been only occasional incidents, usually involving mistaken identity as in cases of firing upon other members of the security forces or upon cattle. **This has meant that there is no official law-enforcement in the peninsula.** One corollary to this has been a reported increase in incidents of robbery and killing, either by members of

militant organisations or by other groups operating in their name. But murders of local businessmen in Puthur and Karainagar in October provoked strong public protests and demonstrations, including blocking of roads and threats to expose militant encampments to the army, there was widespread outrage at the robbing of the large Perumal temple; and on November 12 an attempt to rob the Jaffna railway station was prevented by a major public protest.

The frequency of such incidents is said to have since declined. A shoot-out on November 15 between rival organisations accusing each other of robbery indicates that the ability of the militant groups to maintain discipline is somewhat fragile, and on December 14 there was a general strike in Jaffna in protest against the killing of three Tamil militants by a rival group. But overall there is no doubt that the ceasefire has brought the citizens of Jaffna a welcome reduction in violence.

Prior to June 18 by contrast, much of the violence was focused on the peninsula. It was here that an army patrol was ambushed on July 23, 1983 with the loss of 13 lives, an incident that sparked off the ethnic violence in which some 2,000 Tamils are said to have died, 51 of them in Jaffna town as a result of reprisals by the army.

Following a second land-mine explosion on April 9, 1984 in which some 15 soldiers were killed, a further 77 civilians were killed and 52 injured in reprisals that also involved large-scale destruction of property. The situation faced by civilians deteriorated with the shelling of the Velvettiturai coastal area by the navy in August 1984, killings of students at Point Pedro, and the beginning of systematic cordon-and-search operations in October 1984. Shortly afterwards the authorities declared the coast and a land strip of 100 yards inland, from Mannar round the peninsula to Mullaittivu in the East, to be a prohibited zone, as a result of which all fishing in the region ceased. On November 22, 1984 a curfew was imposed in Jaffna, extending with 2-day breaks for Christmas and the Tamil New Year until July 10, 1985.

During the day traffic movement in the peninsula was severely restricted. Although the incidence of bank robberies in the district declined from a high point of 17 in 1984 (there are only 27 bank branches in the district) to five in the first ten months of 1985, this was due to a refusal by banks to carry cash and was not a sign of any diminution in the violence on either side before the truce in June.

## Disturbances in Trade

Against this background, it is to be expected and it will be seen that the ceasefire has led to a significant easing of stress upon the internal economy of the peninsula. What it has not done is to improve trade much between the peninsula and the rest of the island. The reason for the failure of trade to pick up significantly since the ceasefire appears to be that while hazards to vehicles and drivers have diminished within the peninsula, south of Elephant Pass they have remained high.

Some 20–25 lorries and their goods are estimated to have been lost during 1985, six of such cases having taken place at the time of the Vavuniya incidents in August; I have no

reliable estimates of the numbers of occupants killed or injured. After a lull in September and October, a lorry driver was reported shot on November 18 by soldiers at the Elephant Pass army camp after being passed through the police checkpoint there. A result of the danger has been to raise the salary paid to drivers to some 500 Sri Lankan rupees for the Jaffna-Colombo round trip, from a level of about Rs 175 before July 1983; especially at difficult times it has risen to Rs 750. There are other costs as well: some 8–10 cases of hijackings of entire lorry-loads of goods (the lorries themselves being sent back) have been reported in 1985; diversion of small quantities of goods at road checkpoints are said to be common though I have no means of estimating their frequency; however, monetary demands are reportedly rare.

The goods sent out of the peninsula consist mainly of onions, chillies, tobacco, potatoes, gingelly oil, cement and asbestos sheets; those coming in are primarily essentials such as groceries and textiles. A reduction in transport of chemical products, such as caustic soda, has been noted by the "Central Bank Review of the Economy 1984" (CBRE) as contributing to the poor sales performance of the Paranthan Chemical Corporation. And trade in electronics and other consumer goods has dropped severely, both because these are non-essentials and because they invite pilferage. Before the troubles, importers of consumer goods in Colombo reported brisk trade with the peninsula (a trade no doubt swelled by possibilities of smuggling to India); one such, 50 per cent of whose turnover was in Jaffna, now reports a complete cessation of trade.

There is a further reason why trade in consumer goods has been particularly cut. Within the peninsula, though threats from the security forces are now rare, vehicles are prone to be taken by militant organisations. Often these are borrowed and returned, if not always in the same condition as when taken; but several informants report that the brunt of these demands falls on business and commercial enterprises in Jaffna town and that farmers are rarely troubled, this may be due to a combination of the ideological sympathies of the organisations concerned and a concession to the fact that the rural areas, where camps are based, are where they most require public support or at least acquiescence.

As might be expected, trade in vegetables and other perishable commodities which fell significantly during the troubled period, has not reached its former level, for journeys still frequently involve delays as well as risks, and vegetables that arrive in the South may not be in condition to fetch good prices. In vegetables produced in Jaffna this has meant much lower prices in the peninsula: tomatoes, at Rs 3 per kilo in Jaffna, compares with Rs 15 in Colombo; brinjal at Rs 3 compares with Rs 12 in Colombo; grapes at Rs 8 to Rs 10 per kilo in Jaffna are sold for up to Rs 30 in Colombo; during the mango season the famous Jaffna mangoes were at Rs 1.50 against a Colombo price of about Rs 4.50; manioc at Rs 1.50 a kilo in Jaffna is now reported at Rs 6 in Batticaloa.

Nonetheless, although overall trade volumes have not picked up significantly since the ceasefire, in certain categories of goods shortages and distortions have been clearly

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# DEFICIENCIES IN GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS

THE MOVEMENT for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE) is glad that, based on the government's proposals for the devolution of power to a provincial level, a process of political negotiation has now begun in order to evolve a solution to the ethnic problem.

MIRJE has examined the government's proposals and wishes to place before the people its observations:

1. Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious polity. From this flows the promise that state and political structures must be such as to favour no particular ethnic group or religion.

2. The major problem that faces the country today is ethnic. The Sri Lankan Tamil people, who form the second largest ethnic group, constituted on the basis of their ethnicity, language, religion, culture and habitation, have been led to demand the creation of a separate state because the existing Sri Lankan state, dominated by the majority Sinhala community, discriminates against them and has been unable to provide them the safety and security that a state should ensure all its citizens. Some sections of the Tamil people have taken up arms in the course of this struggle and have been engaged in an armed struggle for the last 8 years or so.

When examined against this background, the present proposals immediately reveal certain basic deficiencies.

The establishment of Provincial Councils throughout the country and the devolution of certain powers to them are the core of the government's proposals. This is being put forward by the government as part of a continuing democratic process which will also solve some of the problems faced by the Tamil people. While welcoming the substantial devolution of power to the level of the province, it is necessary to state that these proposals do not take into consideration the specific characteristics of the problem before us.

For example, the decision to adhere to existing provincial boundaries and to devolve power on the basis of existing administrative units necessarily negates the desire of the Tamil people for a region in which they can, in unity and security, manage their internal affairs. A similar defect relates to the devolution of power with regard to education. Letting the province exercise power up to the level of secondary education and reserving state universities, professional occupations and training to the state will hardly meet the needs of Sri Lankan Tamils, specially when it is remembered that the victims of a discriminatory system of education originally constituted the militant groups.

It is therefore necessary that the scope of the present proposals be expanded to the point that they amount to a reasonable and just solution of the ethnic problem and meet the demands of the Tamil peoples for recognition as an ethnic community whose rights of self-determination can be exercised within a united Sri Lanka. In that context it is suggested that the present proposals be revised in the following areas:

## 1. Unit of Devolution

(i) The existing provincial boundaries will constitute the limits of the area of authority of the provincial council, excepting in the case of the Northern Province whose boundaries will be redrawn so as to include those areas of the Eastern Province which are predominantly ethnic Tamil. It should be possible to demarcate such a contiguous region on the basis of AGA districts or electoral districts. Given the demographic patterns in Sri Lanka, it is

unavoidable that there will be people of all ethnic communities in each of the units of devolution. Arrangements are therefore necessary to ensure that all ethnic groups participate equitably in the government of the province.

## 2. The Provincial Councils

(i) The Provincial Councils should have legislative as well as executive (including financial) powers within their territories in the devolved subjects.

(ii) The Governor of the Province will be only a constitutional head and should have no independent executive authority.

(iii) There is no reason why the term of office of each Provincial Council should be coterminous with that of Parliament. Parliament may be dissolved for a variety of reasons that should not affect provincial administrations, which should also possess an autonomous life of their own. Since it is desirable that provincial administrations should face the elections more frequently than the Parliament, it is suggested that the normal term of office of each Provincial Council be limited to 4 years.

(iv) In order to preserve the autonomy of Provincial Councils and administrations, members of Parliament elected for electoral districts within a Province should have no participation at all in the deliberation of Provincial Councils.

(v) The Finance Commission which will apportion financial resources to the provinces should be representative of the major ethnic groups.

## 3. Devolution of Powers

The subjects and functions exclusively reserved to the central legislative and executive authorities should be amended as follows:

(i) National Policy on all subjects and functions is too broad. This may be used to override provincial legislative and executive authority on all matters. It is desirable that this power be restricted in respect of functions devolved on Provincial Councils by making consultations and concurrence mandatory in those areas.

(ii) The subjects - mines and minerals, inter-provincial/district trade and commerce and professional occupations and training need not be reserved exclusively to the central government.

(iii) While national broadcasting and television may be handled by the central government, it should be possible for provincial administrations to operate or licence the operation of local broadcasting and television stations.

## 4. Industry

(i) The management of existing state-owned industries can be transferred to the administration of the provinces in which they are situated.

(ii) Ministry appraisal of new projects should only be necessary when foreign investments or loans are involved.

## 5. Education

(i) The devolution envisaged - up to secondary level - is totally inadequate. Provincial Councils should have the right to establish and maintain universities as well as institutes of technical, technological and professional education from their funds or to permit such private institutions, subject, of course, to standards set by the Universities Grants Commission and professional bodies at the national level.

(ii) It is also not enough to state that national education policy will be non-discriminatory. This will have to be spelled out in detail.

## 6. Law and Order

(i) The objective should be to ensure the greatest degree of autonomy to the provincial administration with regard to the maintenance of law and order.

(ii) For this it would be more desirable to have separate Police forces in the provinces and a central police force with linkages at the level of D.I.G. rather than the divisions - central and provincial - that are now proposed.

(iii) It will then follow that recruitment in accordance with nationally accepted standards, discipline, etc., in the provincial police forces will be attended to by Provincial Police Commissions, constituted of the D.I.G., a nominee of the Chief Minister and a nominee of the presiding High Court Judge of the Province, and that the size of the provincial force and other matters including the type and nature of fire arms will be determined by the provincial administrations and the Provincial Police Commissions.

(iv) Training of recruits may be handled by the Provincial Police Commissions at lower levels and by the National Police Commission at higher and more specialised levels.

(v) It will also be necessary to ensure that the National Police forces operate in the provinces only in consultation with the Provincial Police.

(vi) The provisions with regard to breakdown of law and order need amendment. It is open to the President in such circumstances to declare an Emergency, assume the powers of the chief executive and move in with the central police force or the armed forces. However, in the event of an Emergency not being declared, the President should be able to do so only if he is specifically requested by the Chief Minister of the Province.

(vii) Together with the devolution of police functions, it would also be necessary to decentralise the functioning of the Attorney General Department so that each province has a Director of Public Prosecutions.

## 7. Land and Land Settlement

(i) It is agreed that land should be a devolved function. However, the present proposals envisage that state lands will remain outside the control of the provincial administration. This is not correct. State lands within each province should be vested in the provincial administration with the proviso that land required for the purposes of the government in respect of subjects not devolved on Provincial Council will be made available without any restrictions.

(ii) The National Land Commission should be representative of provincial administration.

(iii) The stipulation that all inter-provincial irrigation and land development projects should be the responsibility of the central government is too broad. While it is possible to accept that schemes like the Mahaweli, Walawe, etc., that straddle several provinces should be the central government's responsibility, there may a large number of smaller projects which concern only two provinces. In such cases it should be possible for the two provincial administrations to work together in consultation and determine such matters as size of holding, principles and criteria for selection of allottees, etc.

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# THE LIES OF REV. MADHIE PANNASEEHA MAHANAYAKE THERA

THE BUDDHA proclaimed the Dhamma or Universal Truth for the benefit of the people. The essence of the entire Buddhist teachings lies in the realisation of the Four Noble Truths which will guarantee everlasting peace and happiness.

However, to some of the so-called followers of the Buddha in Sri Lanka, TRUTH has always been a disposable commodity. Their stock-in-trade is brazen lies and misleading propaganda in their relentless anti-Tamil campaigns.

Recently, Rev. Madhie Pannaseeha Mahanayake Thera, the leading ideologue of Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinism, wrote a series of articles in the Sri Lankan daily, *The Island* (13, 14 and 16 September 1986), which were predictably replete with distortions, exaggerations, half-truths and deliberate falsehoods. One example is more than enough to illustrate this point. Pannaseeha Thera wrote, "The Sansoni Commission Report refers to the murderous statements made by Mr. Amirthalingam and his wife about swimming in waters of Sinhala blood and wearing slippers made from Sinhala skins". This is not the first time he and some in his yellow-robed fraternity have peddled this lie to incite the ordinary unsuspecting Sinhalese people against the Tamils.

This same allegation was made before the Sansoni Commission, the Special Presidential Commission appointed to inquire into the causes of the island-wide anti-Tamil pogrom of August 1977. The allegation was investigated by the Commission which concluded that "there has been a conspiracy to implicate TULF politicians by accusing them of having made such shocking statements which they never made. It was a dangerous and evil conspiracy which was calculated to damage Sinhalese-Tamil relations . . ."

Rev. Pannaseeha and his ilk have not been detracted by such an outright rejection of such maliciously wild and criminally irresponsible allegations. Some Sinhala politicians and prelates have been and are repeating the same allegations on public platforms even today with a view to inciting the Sinhalese people against the Tamils.

The relevant parts of the Sansoni Commission Report of July 1980 (Sessional Paper No. VII - 1980) are contained in paragraphs 107 to 124 on pages 79 to 82.

*Extracts from the Sansoni Commission Report are shown opposite.*

## "Army Camps . . . Must Be Removed"

### Jaffna Citizens Committee

THE Jaffna Citizens' Committee had addressed the following memorandum to the President of Sri Lanka M. E. J. R. Jayawardene regarding wanton acts of destruction caused by the security personnel to cultural institutions in the North:

WE refer to our letter of 25th August '86 wherein we appealed to you for your immediate intervention to stop shelling of Vembadi Girls' High School by the State Armed Forces. In another letter to you on the same date we demanded the removal of the Jaffna Fort and Mandaitivu Army Camps.

We now understand that there is a threat of closure of Vembadi Girls' High School and Jaffna Central College. Jaffna Citizens' Committee shares the deep grief with the students of these schools past and present, well wishers, educationists and the population they serve of this shocking news.

This now brings us to the strategy involved in the establishment of these camps in such congested areas under the pretext of fighting the militant youth. At Point Pedro the Army Camp was established near two leading schools Hartley College and Methodist Girls' High School - the Hartley College library was completely burnt down by the State Armed forces, people living close by moved out, places of business, markets all moved out and the net result - an area of about 1 km radius is deserted. This was repeated at Valvettiturai. Now we fear this may be repeated in and around Jaffna town - a civilisation that the people of Jaffna had taken centuries to build; but the Government, whose function is to govern, is following a policy of destruction - a philosophy certainly foreign to this country. It is felt locally that destruction of libraries and closure of schools in these areas has now become Government policy. These areas probably have comparatively more 100 year-old-schools and larger number of libraries than the rest of the country put

together. This civilisation and culture was not built overnight.

The establishment of these camps has resulted in closure of schools and libraries such as Hartley College, Methodist Girls' High School, Chithambara College, Sithiviniyagar Vidyalaya, Palaly Training College, Vasavilan MMV and now the threat of closure of Jaffna Central College and Vembadi Girls' High School (one of the only two national schools in the Tamil areas) and destruction of the Jaffna Public Library which was reconstructed from public funds after the near total destruction in 1981 by state armed forces. These actions amount to cultural genocide.

We are told that the purpose of establishing these camps were to maintain law and order in the area thereby ensuring safety and security of the civilians of the area. The result of establishing these camps has exactly the opposite effect and we the citizens of Jaffna, are witnessing a human drama where we are held hostages as security to the State armed forces and not the State armed forces offering security to the people as professed. This process in operation amounts to annihilation of the innocent Tamil citizens by frequent indiscriminate shelling.

According to the daily papers, the number of Tamil civilians killed by armed forces during July '86 and August '86 were 292 and 137 respectively and the number of persons missing during July '86 is 96.

Your Excellency, if you wish the Tamils to be considered as citizens of this country then it is our contention that the army camps which have been established in these areas endangering the life of civilians and the very existence of schools, libraries and places of worship must be removed.

The presence of these camps serves only a prestige value and does not provide security to the citizens.

If Your Excellency removes these camps it will pave the way for the recommencement of schools and Training College, functioning of the places of worship and removal of threat of closure of schools.

## ARMY KILLS WEST GERMAN

A West German Engineer, Ulrich Heberling, attached to the Deutsche Wella Perka radio station in Trincomalee who according to the state media, *Ceylon Daily News*; was killed "by terrorist mortar fire on the evening of 27th September" was actually shot by a Sri Lankan aircraft.

At the inquest conducted by Trincomalee judge, Sunil Rajapakse, a West German colleague of the deceased stated that he and four others were travelling by car towards Trincomalee when they were stopped by some civilians and advised not to proceed further, as firing was going on. They stopped the car and went on foot to the other side of the Erukkampitiya bridge which had been damaged earlier.

Suddenly an aircraft appeared overhead and started to drop bombs on all sides, including the top of the car. They had run for safety into the jungle.

Lt. PUNCHIHEWA stated at the inquest that the security forces had received information that 'terrorists' were attacking the area. He and fourteen others went to the spot. At that time there was a land-mine explosion and they counter-attacked. As they could not get out of the area, they asked for air cover and they were able to extricate themselves in the night under air cover. He said that he did not see any foreigner being killed but they later heard from the villagers that a foreigner had been killed.

The judge returned a verdict of accidental death.

### Refugee Situation as on 30.9.86

| District                    | No. of Camps | No. of Families | No. of persons |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Trincomalee                 | 23           | 5,780           | 28,746         |
| Batticaloa                  | 5            | 2,301           | 10,722         |
| Mullaitivu                  | 8            | 2,420           | 10,889         |
| Vavuniya                    | 6            | 727             | 3,127          |
| Mannar                      | 2            | 233             | 1,047          |
| Kilinochchi                 | 5            | 280             | 1,397          |
| Kilinochchi (outside camps) |              | 5,300           | 26,500         |
| Jaffna                      | 11           | 1,201           | 5,301          |
| Jaffna (outside camps)      |              | —               | 14,699         |
| <b>Total</b>                | <b>60</b>    | <b>18,242</b>   | <b>102,428</b> |

The above figures are only in respect of those who have received assistance in some form or other from TRRO.  
(See Appeal on p. 14).

## Deficiencies in Govt. Proposals

Continued from page 9

### 8. Other Matters

There are certain other matters that are outside the present proposals which should receive consideration if a satisfactory political settlement is to be achieved. Among these are the following:

- (i) *The state should be a secular institution with no partiality towards any particular religion.*
- (ii) *Sinhala and Tamil should both be declared official languages.*
- (iii) *Institutional arrangements for the protection of civil, linguistic, religious and cultural rights of individuals as well as of groups, this be done through appropriate constitutional amendments or through the establishment of a Council of State in which all ethnic groups find adequate representation and whose concurrence would be necessary for any legislation affecting fundamental rights.*

MIRJE hopes that all progressive political parties, other mass organisations and elements in Sri Lanka will assist in expanding the scope of the present proposals to the point that they amount to a reasonable solution of the ethnic problem and in mustering popular support for their implementation.

Charles Abeysekera President (MIRJE)

## BEHIND THE NEWS

### A SUPREME INSULT?

THE recent announcement by Mr. Joe Clark, the Canadian External Affairs Minister, that his government would re-open an investigation into the *affaire* of the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in Canada, Maj. Gen. Tissa Weeratunga, following fresh allegations against him of torture and human right abuses, has provoked predictable noises within Sri Lanka and among the extremist Sinhala chauvinist lobby abroad.

While the chauvinist Sinhala lobby has been concentrating its venom on the Tamils in Canada for having raised the issue in the first instance, back in Sri Lanka the pro-government media has gone beyond the bounds of justifiable criticism of the Canadian move. A typical example of this was the editorial in the English daily, 'The Island', of 9th October. Describing the proposed investigation by Canada as 'a supreme insult' to Sri Lanka, the editorial, while engaging in an exercise of self-glorification, was abusive of Canada and the Canadian people: "We might as well remind the simple-minded, naive Canadians, with a history barely two centuries old that Sri Lanka has had experience in dealing with great empires of the world

millenniums before North America was colonised - at a time when human rights of the New World were not a matter for consideration. The Roman historian Pliny records visits by ambassadors from Anuradhapura to the Court of Augustus I... The Sri Lankan government must say it loud and clear that **we are not prepared to barter our self-respect as a nation for a few Canadian dollars. We will never succumb to the power of any purse, be it Canadian or someone else's...** This is not the first time that Canada has insulted Sri Lanka. There were the so-called refugees from West Germany. Despite conclusive evidence that they had lived in West Germany and would have been deported from that country had they not left, Canada was naive to grant them asylum status. **Present day Canadians may be wanting to rid the guilt complexes of their nation, of building up a country while obliterating the native population. That is not the concern of Sri Lanka.**"

One is tempted to ask the question: "What happened to the native population of Sri Lanka following the arrival of the so-called Aryan Prince, Vijaya, with 700 of his followers and established the first Sinhala settlement in Sri Lanka? Do the present day Sinhala jingoists suffer from any guilt complexes for the virtual genocide of the indigenous Sri Lankan population by Vijaya and his followers?"

## Extracts from The Sansoni Commission Report

107. I should refer here to evidence that led us to statements alleged to have been made by Mrs. Amirthalingam at a meeting held by the TULF at Vavuniya on 3rd June, 1977. Three witnesses called S. Appuhamy of Mamaduwa, A. D. A. Seneviratne of Vavuniya, and K. Suddahamy of Perappammaduwa stated that they heard her say that the Tamils must swim in the blood of the Sinhalese, and that she will be able to sleep only when she wears shoes made out of the skins of the Sinhalese. Undoubtedly if such statements had been made by her, they would have evoked hatred between the two communities, which would have led to the outbreak of violence. Their evidence has been contradicted by Mr. Seïathambu, M.P. for Mullaitivu and Mr. Sivasithamparam, M.P. of Vavuniya. Both of them said that they were present at that meeting, that Mrs. Amirthalingam spoke at it, but that she never used such language in her speech. Mr. Amirthalingam who said that he was also present, also denied that his wife uttered such words. He said that it was against their culture to say such things, and especially for a lady to do so. I prefer to believe the three Members of Parliament on this matter.

108. Evidence was also led in regard to another meeting held in Jaffna on 4th July, 1977, close to the Naga Vihara, in support of the candidature of Mr. Yogeswaram. The Venerable Nandarama Thero, Chief Priest of Vihara, stated that he heard Mrs. Amirthalingam making a speech there, in the course of which she said that she could not sleep until she cut the Sinhalese and swam in and drank their blood. He also stated that Mr. Amirthalingam in his speech said that the Sinhalese population in Jaffna was not sufficient to make a sambol, and that all Sinhalese must be assaulted and chased away from Jaffna.

109. The witness also stated that he heard Mr. Yogeswaram say that the Tamils will not be content till they skin the Sinhalese and make slippers with their skins; and that he also heard another unidentified speaker say that one month after the elections, they would walk over the bodies of the Sinhalese and establish their State. All this the witness claimed to have heard from his temple because the meeting was held very close to it and loudspeakers were used. He also stated that the Police were at the meeting, recording speeches.

110. When the witness was being cross-examined by Mr. Bartlett, Counsel asked Senior State Counsel to produce the Police report of the speeches because that would be the most acceptable evidence of what was said by the speakers. Senior State Counsel said that he had already asked the Police to produce the report and make it available to him.

111. The witness stated that the news of these statements referred to by him had spread to the Southern province and other areas of the country, and that was also an important factor in the communal disturbances of August, 1977.

112. The witness finished his evidence on 1st September, 1978, but the Police report on this meeting had not yet been made available to the lawyers.

113. On 20th April, 1979, Mr. Yogeswaram was recalled and he contradicted what the Chief Priest had stated. He said he remembered the public meeting held near the Naga Vihara on 4th July, 1977, in support of his candidature: it was the only meeting held there. He was present, but neither Mr. nor Mrs. Amirthalingam attended it or spoke at it, though he himself did. He denied that he made the filthy statement attributed to him by the priest.

114. Mr. Shanmugalingam at this point again asked that the Police report of this meeting be produced. Senior State Counsel replied that if it was available it would be produced. On 23rd April, 1979, while Mr. Yogeswaram was being cross-examined by Mr. Gunatillake, Mr. Shanmugalingam informed me that he had received the Police report of the meeting on the previous day.

115. The report was produced and marked on 23rd April, 1979. It is a report on an election propaganda meeting held on 4th July, 1977 at 74, Stanley Road, Jaffna, organised by Mr. V. Yogeswaram for the TULF and lasting from 7.10 pm to 10.30 pm. It contains a list of 15 speakers. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Amirthalingam is mentioned in that list. This was obviously the report that Mr. Bartlett and Mr. Shanmugalingam had been pressing for. It corroborates Mr. Yogeswaram's evidence, and I informed Counsel on that day that Mrs. Amirthalingam need not be called to contradict the evidence given to prove that she had spoken at that meeting.

116. Mr. Amirthalingam gave evidence for the second time on 25th April, 1979 and subsequent days. He denied that he or his wife said the filthy things attributed to them at the Vavuniya meeting held on 3rd June, 1977, although he admitted that they had both spoken at it. He also denied that he or his wife attended the meeting held near the Naga Vihara on 4th July, 1977, and he said that it was a diabolical lie if anybody said that they attended or spoke at it.

117. I consider the evidence led in rebuttal of the priest's evidence, including the Police report, sufficient to disprove the priest's evidence on this matter.

118. I shall now deal with other witnesses who implicated Mrs. Amirthalingam in statements she was alleged to have uttered at other meetings. G. Dharmadasa, a bakery owner, who claimed Rs. 85,000, as damages over an attack on his bakery, said that he listened to speeches made near Punkankulam Railway Station about 15 days before the election. Neither Mr. Amirthalingam nor Mr. Sivasithamparam the candidate for Nallur, made any remarks against the Sinhalese, according to the witness. He had a different tale to tell against Mrs. Amirthalingam and a young girl who also spoke. He said he heard Mrs. Amirthalingam say "the Sinhalese people should be killed and beaten and they should be skinned, and until we wear slippers out of their skin we will not sleep". The young girl, he said, spoke saying "the Sinhalese should be caught. We should swim over their blood and create a separate Tamil State". The witness admitted that he had not told anybody about having heard these statements, before he gave his evidence.

119. Mr. Amirthalingam denied that his wife uttered such words, and I believe him. Mr. Shanmugalingam at this stage asked Senior State Counsel to produce the Jaffna Station reports for which he had asked earlier, and the latter gave his assurance that no such speeches had been recorded by the Police. This took place on 25th April, 1979. I reject the evidence of witness G. Dharmadasa.

(The evidence of two other witnesses making the same allegations, this time at Trincomalee, was also examined and the ex-Chief Justice concluded as follows:)

124. I have considered the evidence led on this subject through all the witnesses I have referred to. I am satisfied that none of these "filthy statements", as they were correctly described, were made at the TULF meetings mentioned. I accept the evidence of the TULF leaders who repudiated the allegations that such expressions were used. It is remarkable that not a single police report supporting the allegations is available. It seems to me that there has been a conspiracy to implicate TULF politicians by accusing them of having made such shocking statements which they never made. It was a dangerous and evil conspiracy which was calculated to damage Sinhalese-Tamil relations, and if any Police Officer heard any of these statements he could not possibly have omitted to make a record of them."

This must surely nail the coffin for the chauvinistic efforts of that worthy prelate.

# ETHNIC CONFLICT TOWARDS A CONSENSUS?

## The Product of Our Own History

1. Before analysing the substantive contents of the PPC proposals, and its implications for consensus, I would like to put forward a few preliminary remarks. The first point that I would like to make is that the proposals before us today are the product of our own history, the history that we as a society have chosen to create. Most of us here who are bilingual have been brought up or trained in the liberal, social democratic or Marxist traditions of political thought. We do not really like the word ethnic. Nor do we favour political boundaries drawn in terms of ethnic factors. And yet, history has deprived us of the opportunity of drawing political lines based on more objective criteria such as administrative efficiency, geographical similarity or economic backwardness. Instead our recent history presents us with an intractable ethnic conflict waged over ethnic boundaries. This has been waged at a primordial political level, involving issues of territory and physical security.

In appraising the proposals before the PPC, or any proposals for that matter, we have to move away from what we may ideally favour in terms of political structure to appreciation of historical processes and historical necessity. This realism is fundamental if we are to survive as a nation-state. And I believe that it is this realism that will allow us to build a future society where more universal values which transcend ethnic boundaries will be nurtured. In other words, it is a realism rooted in an awareness of an ethnic give and take which will move us toward a greater humanism away from the injustice and brutality of the past few years.

## The PPC Proposals Distinguished From Peace Process

2. The second point I would like to make as a preliminary remark is that for the sake of clarity, we must separate the PPC proposals themselves from what may be called a peace process. Aspects of the proposals can be rejected but there still may remain a commitment to the peace process – a process based on negotiation, barter and compromise. We do not know what the final outcome will be, but if this current process continues for a longer period, I think that we will find that the major contradiction will no longer be between Tamils and Sinhalese, but between those who want a just peace and those who want a tribal war; those committed to a political solution and those committed to a final military solution.

It is premature to predict which political groups are on which side of this contradiction, but if the peace process in operation today gathers momentum, then I think the groupings will also become more clear.

In this context, we must accept the fact that a commitment to peace must be based on a rejection of a military solution, and the desert civilisation which must inevitably follow the pursuit of such an option.

The Sinhalese who want a final military solution are ready to brook genocide – one speaking to me not realising that I was a Tamil said without batting an eyelid, "Well about

8,000 Tamils will have to be killed before we can break the back of the movement and get a final solution". They cling to the belief that they can impose Central government authority on the Tamil periphery without its consent. This in the face of historical experience in other parts of the world. In addition, Sri Lanka is not a super-power and is in fact a small island state extremely vulnerable to geo-political realities and international economic and political pressure. It is my belief that pursuing a final solution on the Sinhalese side will not only mean a measure of genocide against Tamils but also lead to the tragic brutalisation of Sinhalese culture and civilisation as we know it.

Tamil commitment to a final solution on the other hand is based on the belief that a generation can be sacrificed and any means used to achieve the goal of a separate state. This assertion of Tamil rights to statehood, if pitted against the will of our neighbours and in violation of others rights may lead to debacle and catastrophe. A movement which is justified in terms of preventing the genocide of the Tamil people may, unless tempered by reason, lead the Tamil people toward ethnic suicide. I say all this because unlike in 1983, we cannot have recourse to political innocence, an innocence which we Sinhalese and Tamils lose and find at our own convenience.

The past few years have shown us in concrete real terms what ethnic conflict means, what violence means, what intolerance means, what brutality means. We know the forces we have set in motion on both sides whether it be torture chambers of the Special Task Force Commandos or the bomb squads of the Tamil militant movement.

Given these ugly truths, political parties which accept or reject proposals with the ease with which they rejected the B-C Pact or the D-C Pact can only be seen as callous and opportunistic. In doing so they cannot really expect to be regarded as providing the country with a future alternative. I am not saying that the present proposals in themselves are an answer or that democracy can be regained, but they have set in motion a political process, a process which should be encouraged not boycotted, guided not rejected.

## Consensus of the Select

3. This brings me to why I am speaking about consensus. I would like to state at the outset that there can never be a complete consensus on the resolution of our ethnic conflict, especially if any political group sees ethnic loyalty as the supreme value. Those who believe that even though 25% of this country consists of minorities, Sri Lanka is not a multi-ethnic society, cannot be made to accept political concepts of sharing power. They cannot form part of a national democratic consensus. Their idea of a solution is the imposition of majority will even in areas where the so-called majority is less than 2% of the population.

On the other hand, those who believe that the Ceylon Tamils have a historical destiny to create a separate state in the North and the East

by Radhika Coomaraswamy

also cannot be made to accept a broad-based negotiated settlement. Their romantic notion of the future will find it difficult to compromise with the imperatives of the present. Destiny and consensus are irreconcilable words in the Sri Lanka context.

When we talk about consensus then we can only mean consensus among those who do not regard ethnic loyalty as the supreme political value. Those who accept modern strategies of bargaining, negotiation and compromise over feudal loyalties based on myth, destiny and promised lands. I am willing to concede, that in defining consensus in this manner, we may exclude a large number of Tamils and Sinhalese. But my consensus is aimed at the consensus of the future, the "ethnic compact" which will have to emerge if we are to survive as a civilisation. Today this may seem to be the "Consensus of the Select", but I am convinced that it will not be the "Consensus of the Bereft".

## Forces behind a Consensus

7. Given this reality, I think we have to accept the fact that the present proposals, with all their shortcomings, have set in motion a process which may, and I want to emphasise the word may, lead to a consensus. Already the forces aligning themselves behind this process both at the national and international level are quite formidable. We Sri Lankans have a cultivated "xenophobia" and this exists precisely because we are so vulnerable to regional and international pressures. However, we must also be realistic. The PPC proposals have received tremendous international support; the same mixture of strange bedfellows who always appear to come to Sri Lanka's rescue. Any group which decides to go against the peace process therefore risks being categorised in international eyes with all the other international pariahs, whether in South Africa or Israel, who see their race and their tribe as the only factors of importance in world history and civilisation. Both Tamil and Sinhalese extremists become vulnerable to this charge.

What about other major actors? Let us begin with Tamil Nadu; unlike at Thimpu, the PPC proposals and the peace process have approval in Tamil Nadu as represented by their Minister in the Central Government, Mr. Chidambaram. He has put on record not only Rajiv Gandhi's reputation, but also his own. There may not be overt pressure from India on the respective parties to this conflict, but only a very naive political scientist will be oblivious to the subtle but dynamic pressure applied by both the Indian Centre Government and certain sections of the Tamil Nadu Government.

As for the Tamil movements, the TULF has already come to Colombo and judging from interviews given to the media they are taking the process seriously. But one can legitimately ask who do they represent? They do have the expertise to iron out a solution which may be more acceptable to the Tamil militant groups especially if it is done without public posturing and declaration. But in the final result without the endorsement of some of the militant groups, a political solution is impossible. Therefore the process in operation must be a two phase project – the first phase involving negotiations between the government and the TULF to work out the blueprint. The second, negotiations which include the militant movements.

I think that it is well known, despite the protests in Jaffna against the present PPC proposals, the militant groups themselves are divided on the issue of the inevitability of a

*Continued opposite*

separate state. There are those who have transcended their ethnic loyalty to accept at least in theory a solution short of Tamil Eelam. If the current process is successful and provides a meaningful alternative, the left groups within the Tamil Movement will reconsider. Their main problem, I think like everyone else's is the lack of trust they have in the "on again, off again" Sri Lankan Government. Even if a solution is reached, will the government implement its promises?

What about the Sinhalese political parties. Again, there is a strange mixture of bedfellows. The UNP, the SLMP, and the traditional left favour the PPC proposals. Political gossip has it that despite the unanimous endorsement for public consumption, the SLFP itself has been divided on this issue. If the process succeeds the left flank of the SLFP may give it their tacit support.

What we see then is the gradual inching together of the middle with widespread regional and international support. It is still a delicate process and one does not know whether it will succeed and yet such a historical conjecture has not existed with such intensity before. The intensity is conditioned by the fact that both sides are running out of other options. Unless one seizes the time, there may be little hope for a non-violent future.

#### Political Will?

8. Given the past history of the government, we must also ask - is there a political will to negotiate, and to genuinely solve the problem politically. My answer is yes, some members of the government have the will not because they are visionaries, statesmen or humanists. They have not shown any of these qualities in their approach to the ethnic conflict. I hold no brief for them. But at this time, even they have begun to see the writing on the wall. As a cabinet they have, I think, come to terms with the intensity of our crisis and what that means for their future. Let us be grateful that this realisation has come now, even if we condemn the fact that they have allowed so many lives to be lost and so much suffering to take place. Will they really implement the proposals in a spirit of sharing power? I think that their pragmatism and will to survival will compel them to do so even if their democratic and liberal convictions have long been silent. Even as I say this, however, we hear of incidents yesterday, in Mutur and Mullaitivu. I am not a believer in conspiracy but in contradictions. I feel that there are sections within the government, the administration and the armed services who will attempt to scuttle the talks. But in the long run, I think or perhaps hope that there is a slight chance that pragmatism will win out.

The main reason for this optimistic introduction is to sustain you through the rest of the analysis, which involves identifying the disagreements and gaps in the proposals themselves.

#### Indian Constitution

9. Before discussing the actual provisions of the Proposals, it is important to note that many of the principles and in fact much of the language in the proposals and in the draft legislation which has been circulated is drawn directly from the Indian Constitution.

However, the Indian Constitution is the result of a different political and legal process. Constitutional provisions are often copied from other societies, this is not new, but one may have to make adjustments to suit our own reality. Two aspects come to mind with regard to the Indian Constitution. The first is that the Indian Constitution is a federal one while we in Sri Lanka are trying to squeeze devolution within a unitary framework. The Indian

Constitution in its very structure recognises the sovereign will of the regions or states, ours does not. We can scrap any scheme with a 2/3 majority in Parliament. Their is a political devolution, which is recognised and secure, ours is attempting to be a political decentralisation within an administrative framework.

Secondly, the Indian Constitution was drafted just after the nationalist movement when trust within the Indian polity, especially trust in leaders such as Nehru and Gandhi was extremely high. Nobody was thinking in terms of maximising safeguards against the Centre but accepted a genuine give and take. It is only in the 1960's that other issues emerged. In our context, these provisions are being drafted at the height of our national conflict in which there is no trust and very little goodwill. Safeguards then become important considerations especially in a unitary framework where the Centre as I said by a mere 2/3 majority can scrap the scheme altogether. Given the political framework, where Tamil voting power regionally based is less than 2/3 of national voting power, this gives a certain measure of insecurity to the minority. Ironically, in reading articles in the papers and also the SLFP statement, it appears that this national control does not seem to give any sense of security to the Sinhalese.

## II. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PROPOSALS

10. In discussing the proposals let us begin with what is not included in the proposals but which is essential if the scheme is to succeed.

The first and most important factor is that there are no provisions on Finance. Presumably this will be worked out by the PPC itself. Given the fact that all sides agree that one of the reasons why the DDCs failed is because there was no adequate finance, one would have expected this to be one of the most detailed aspects of the proposals. Perhaps there is something to the statement that lawyers rush in where economists fear to tread. Annexure 'C' of 1984 envisioned a broad range of powers to be granted to the periphery to raise revenue. But, powers are meaningless unless there is also a resource base. In that context, what appears to be developing Sri Lanka today is foreign aid and foreign loans. Will the Provincial Councils have the power to raise foreign loans? What will be the nature of Central Government control? Can foreign loans be denied arbitrarily or will objective criteria for decision making have to be worked out? These are all questions which have to be faced and answered. Presumably, the finances for the province will greatly depend on a Central Government Finance Commission which will make grants to each Province. But aren't these funds limited? What are the criteria by which such grants will be given? It may be necessary to work all this out in detail beforehand. After all these political efforts, if the scheme were to fail for lack of financial feasibility, then the efforts will be only part of a wasted process.

#### Regional Public Service

11. Another important aspect which is not mentioned in the proposals is the area of a regional public service to administer the Provinces. This is perhaps not as crucial as the section on finances but the terms and conditions of employment, their link to the national service etc. . . have yet to be worked out.

#### Dissolution

12. A third important aspect which is not clearly covered in the proposals is the subject of the "dissolution of the provincial Councils" by the Centre in the event of disagreements with

the Governor, or with the Centre. The DDC Act allowed dissolution by the Minister in charge on ground such as mismanagement etc . . . after an independent judicial hearing. This is dissolution as it operates on administrative bodies and after precedents set up in the administrative laws of this country. However, when it comes to provincial bodies which are elected, this kind of dissolution is not feasible because of the political nature of the body. In this context it may be necessary to work out how and why the Governor or the President can dissolve the Provincial Councils. Perhaps the provisions with regard to the dissolution of the national parliament can operate at the provincial level with regard to provincial councils, thus ensuring a time-limit and subsequent elections.

#### Democratic Climate

13. There are many aspects, not directly linked to the proposals, but which will determine the climate for implementation, which have not been included as part of the package, eg: a ceasefire - in fact a ceasefire should have been a first priority. Also such matters as Amnesty, the Removal of Emergency and the PTA have also to be considered.

The SLFP has also been urging that the proposals be linked to a greater democratisation in the South. In fact it is said that the SLFP rejection of the proposals came after the reading of sections of the Chidambaram papers which stated that Provincial Council Elections will be held in the North and not in the South. If the PPC solution is to be seen as a genuine political solution, it cannot be fettered by petty politicking. It should apply to the whole country, as a democratic exercise for everyone. Otherwise, arguments of unfairness will cloud any achievement of peace. In fact the constitutional amendment could be struck down under the equal protection clause of the constitution.

In addition to creating a democratic climate, no provisions have been set up for the possibility of sharing power at the Centre, eg: Tamil being made an official language or the creation of a second chamber or the creation of a type of Ethnic Relations Commission. These are also matters for consideration.

#### To be concluded

## Arrest of all males

ON 10/9/86 at 6am Army personnel cordoned off the Tamil area of Chelvanayagapuram in the Trincomalee District in east Sri Lanka and began search operations and arrested almost all the male inmates including elderly people. They arrested nearly 150 people and took them through jungle paths and sound of gun shots were heard by the people of the area. All arrested people were taken to Love Lane Police Station. Nobody was allowed to see them.

When the dependants, relatives, kith and kin went to Love Lane Police Station where the arrested persons were taken they were told that all the detainees had been taken to Fort Frederick Army Camp. Complaints were made to the local Citizens' Committee. About 40 people mostly Government employees were released the next day. There are nearly 100 people still in custody. On the same day three bodies were brought to Trincomalee Base Hospital by Security Forces. These bodies were not identified. Later Mrs. Senthivel Puvaneswary testified that her husband Senthivel was one of the three persons shot dead.

The arrested persons while in custody were said to be very cruelly treated. They were hand-cuffed and chained to one another and led in rows reminiscent of slave treatment. At times these persons were taken out to the esplanade ground out of the Fort and forced to cut grass and clear shrubs in the land in front of the Buddhist Pilgrims Rest. The visiting dependants and relatives complained that they were forced to make payments for the haircuts of the detenus!

# SRI LANKA & INTERNATIONAL AID

The Board of Governors,  
World Bank/International Monetary Fund,  
Washington D.C.

Tamil Information Centre,  
24-28, 3rd Floor, Chapham High Street,  
London SW4 7UR, England, U.K.

September 25, 1986

Dear Sirs,

Having been stung by wide international publicity of increasing military attacks against the Tamils, the Sri Lankan Government has responded with much publicised "peace moves" ... "negotiated settlements" ... and "recognition of legitimate rights of Tamils", while relentlessly pursuing what is considered to be a military "final solution". Over the past three years, the Sri Lankan Government's "peace initiatives" were orchestrated and given greater visibility just prior to important events - UN sessions, summit meetings, Aid Consortium Meetings etc.

Thus just prior to the 1984 Aid Consortium Meeting the Government let the world believe that President Jayawardene was serious in fulfilling

the promises held out through the late Mrs. Indra Gandhi to find a quick and peaceful settlement of the Tamils' grievances. In June 1985, the donor countries believed that a just solution was being hammered out at the Timpu Talks in Bhutan. In 1986 at the consortium meetings in Paris, the Sri Lanka delegation countered mounting criticism by the donor countries by announcing that the Government will issue "new proposals" on June 25 to peacefully resolve the ethnic conflict - and so it did. In the same week as this announcement was being made in Paris, however, the Government was making intensified military preparations. Despite our appeals, however, the aid commitments to Sri Lanka were increased with the proclamation that the serious ethnic problem should be resolved through peaceful, negotiated

means and not by military force.

But the subsequent activities - indiscriminate arrests, mass executions, aerial bombings, disappearances of thousands of young Tamils, and many crimes committed by the Police, Army, Navy, Air Force and Home Guards - show beyond doubt that the Government never had any serious intention of relenting, but was persistent in using military force to achieve its initial design. In 1985 alone Sri Lanka spent US\$400 million on this war against the Tamils.

We again appeal to the international community in general and to the aid donors in particular to censure the Sri Lanka Government on its pursuit of its malicious war against the Tamils, and to suspend economic aid until the Government satisfactorily resolves the ethnic conflict.

Information Officer

## The Refugee problem

- as we face it.

The refugee situation in the Tamil regions of Sri Lanka has become too acute, and thus more complicated, to be solved soon and easily. It has become a part of our present existence.

Whereas on the one hand the Sri Lankan Tamil refugee problem has been internationally highlighted, involving such countries as West Germany, Canada, the U.K., Scandinavian countries and India, within Sri Lanka, which is the focal point of TRRO's activities, Tamil refugees could be classified into two major groups:

(a) Inter-district refugees - These are Tamil families which have been dislocated from the districts where they have been living and are now seeking security and shelter in other Tamil districts.

(b) Intra-district refugees - These are persons and families having to leave their homes due to proximity to Army Camps and/or to the sea coast (fishing is banned) and are seeking shelter and security in safer areas within the same district.

They are too poor to leave the country, too poverty-stricken and indigent that they need some assistance to establish themselves in the new areas. Having lost their near and dear ones, their homes, their life's earnings and all material wealth and the community living they had, they are now without huts to live, fields to work on, sea to catch fish and schools for their children.

TRRO has undertaken the humble task of helping these people directly and through their own grassroot level organisations to secure a "renewal" of their lives. Your co-operation towards alleviating the sufferings of these unfortunates is earnestly solicited. Cheques may be drawn in favour of TRRO Ltd., Account No. 12503 maintained with the Commercial Bank of Ceylon Ltd., Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

106, 4th Cross Street,  
Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

30.9.86

## SAVE THE BRAIN FUND

80% of the human brain develops from the moment life starts in the womb of the mother to within three - four years of life. If the nutrients needed for the development of the brain are not provided during this short period that brain is damaged beyond repair. No amount of subsequent nutrients can undo the damage done and that individual is condemned to mental retardation for life.

Jaffna Municipality has started a project to tackle this problem, which is widespread in all third world countries, including Jaffna which is now experiencing a particularly hard time. When hard times come to a family, it is the woman who stints herself and feeds her children and her husband. When she is carrying a child in her womb this will damage the brain of her child. If she is breast feeding her child, the milk will be inadequate.

The M.O.H. Jaffna Municipality has selected the Jubilee Health Centre to start a field project. This includes wards 2, 3, 4 & 5. If this project is a success it will expand to the other wards too. All expectant

mothers and children under five years are registered and attended to at the J. H. Centre. Medical defects are corrected and necessary milk and food supplements given. There are about 200 infants and pre-school children under 3 years who are malnourished and need supplementary feeding. In order to provide them milk we need about Rs.24,000 per month. Jaffna Municipality is not able to finance this alone. Hence we hope well-wishers and philanthropists will come forward and help us in this project to make it a success.

In terms of Section 31 of the Inland Revenue Department Act No. 28 of 1979 your contributions to this fund will be considered tax-free. Your contributions should be made to:

Municipal Commissioner A/c. No. 12698  
Commercial Bank, Jaffna

with a copy of information to us, i.e.

Municipal Commissioner,  
Jaffna Municipality, Jaffna.

## The Army Wants Peace: "We Want This War To End"

"It is not much fun for the soldiers to be penned up in Camps in the Northern peninsula of Jaffna while the militants lie in wait at every gate", says Michael Hamlyn reporting to The Times (19 September) from Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Brigadier Gery Da Silva, the Commander of the Security Forces in the Jaffna Peninsula, is further reported to have said:

*We want peace, too, you know . . .*

*We miss the company of our families too. We want this war to end.*

# THE UNSAVOURY REALITY OF THE SRI LANKAN MEDIA

"Sri Lanka's media", says the Far Eastern Economic Review, "is constrained by restrictive press and emergency laws. The largest newspaper group in the country was nationalised in 1973, and with radio and TV also under state ownership the government has almost total control over the national mass media."

In a damning review of the Sri Lankan Press and its attitude on national issues over the years since independence, its hard hitting analysis of the Sri Lankan media refers to at least two thirds of the dailies and a sizeable part of the magazines' circulation as coming from the government-controlled publishing group:

"To a casual visitor the varied fare in news and views gives the impression of a vibrant and thriving press in Sri Lanka. But a closer look unveils an unsavoury reality."

"... the press tamely follows the official line on almost all issues, for fear of offending the authorities who are armed with a set of draconian laws to rein in the press. State power of patronage, in large scale public sector advertising and import regulations on newsprint, act as an additional restraining influence on the press. With radio and TV also in official hands, the government has almost total control over the national media, a situation which has prevailed since the 1970's."

"The ethnic unrest in 1981 and 1983 and the ensuing Tamil insurgency which led to the emergency rule have also come in handy for the UNP as an excuse to ignore demands for relaxing press controls..."

The daily fare of Colombo's newspapers consists of stories that read the same, most emanating from the same official sources. In the absence of correspondents abroad, foreign news is limited to copy from international news agencies and syndicated features. During Bandaranaike's rule in the 1970s, development news from the Third World was favoured, but under the pro-Western Jayawardene government the Third World no longer gets extensive coverage."

"Colombo's new found relationship with Israel, which is providing aid, weapons and training to help the government combat the Tamil insurgency, translates into a total absence of editorial criticism of the Jewish state, and its

economic and technical achievements are praised. On the other hand, the sizeable employment opportunities for Sri Lankans in the Middle East and the favoured position of the Muslim minority at home results in the press limiting its comments on Arab affairs."

"News of the Tamil insurgency and the military's counter moves come mainly via the Ministry of National Security and the Joint Operations Command of the Sri Lankan Forces. Although local journalists keep in telephonic contact with the Tamil-dominated areas of the country, it would be a brave editor who would dare to dwell at length on the Tamil side of the story."

"With the increasing violence of the ethnic conflict since late 1983 the prevalent anti-Tamil bias of the Colombo press was strengthened. Even those publications which have been usually liberal on most other issues have taken a hard line on the ethnic problem. The Sinhalese language newspapers in particular with each other in taking a decidedly majority-chauvinist line, while the Tamil press is too small and too timid to upset the Sinhalese authorities."

The Council for Harmony through Media, a voluntary group of Sri Lankan intellectuals, did a content analysis of the coverage of the ethnic issue in the Sinhalese press during June-August 1981, when the police ran amok in Jaffna with the backing of UNP politicians and the carnage led to counter violence by Tamil youth."

"The analysis found that the Sinhalese press distorted the facts, doctored age-old proverbs to suit its biased reporting and wrote jingoistic editorials against the Tamils. The thrust of the reports was that there was no basis for Tamil grievances and in fact it was the Sinhalese community that was threatened. The analysis regretted that the press did not discuss the underlying causes of the ethnic conflict and added that it was full of "anti-Tamil propaganda, which goes against attempts at communal harmony".

The anti-Tamil tirade has grown more strident since then. The press is so subservient that it rarely mentions those - Tamils and Sinhalese alike - detained under emergency regulations, except when the government itself put out a release. Earlier this year a civil rights group campaigning for the release of political prisoners issued a statement which was totally ignored by the press. Later, no newspaper was willing to print even a paid advertisement by the group."

## Bishop Calls For An End to "Inhuman Acts"

The Bishop of Batticaloa and Trincomalee, in eastern Sri Lanka, Dr. Kingsley Swampillai, has outlined in a letter to President, J. R. Jayawardene the 'dark happenings' in Batticaloa in recent weeks.

"Terrorism should not be welcome in any form. It is the duty of the security forces to provide protection to the people. They are paid by the state exchequer from the taxes levied from the people. Those very forces are killing the people without remorse or pity and this is a cause for censure.

Three days ago (19th September) the security forces in a 'gunning spree' killed 8 innocent people in Batticaloa town.

A worker attached to the Church of St. Anthony's was individually downed by bullets.

Aerial bombing, bullet spraying have been undertaken by security forces under the cloak of security. The hapless victims in this type of action have been innocent civilians.

It is, therefore, necessary that suitable action acceptable to all be formulated to bring an end to these "inhuman acts".

**Hartal: Widespread protests in the form of hartals were observed in the Batticaloa and Kalmunai districts following the army rampage on 18.9.86.**

## HOLIDAY RETIREMENT HOMES

Building plots are available in an area of outstanding natural beauty in the hills of Tamil Nadu.

A land of eternal spring, yet within driving distance of the great temples of Madurai and Palani.

Only a limited number of plots are available - He stopped creating such beauty ages ago.

For details write to:

M. PILLAI,  
"SERENDIB",  
LAKE ROAD,  
KODAIKANAL 624101,  
TAMIL NADU,  
INDIA.

## SUBSCRIBE NOW!

There are many strands of Tamil life and experience but today only a few voices are heard. This is not because the others have nothing to say; they simply lack a place in which to say it.

The Tamil voice in Sri Lanka has been muted, almost stilled, by the burning of presses and libraries, banning of foreign journalists, censorship, draconian laws under continuous Emergency rule, intimidation, debarring of Tamil MPs from Parliament.

The Sinhalese voice is heard loud and clear as the Sri Lanka Government own and control not only much of the press but also radio and television and, above all, possess the full paraphernalia of propaganda and publicity.

The TAMIL TIMES, launched after the Army burning of the Jaffna Public Library, provides a forum for discussion and evaluation of plans and proposals for a solution to the Tamil Question and for the dissemination of news. It is published monthly. Don't be left out, without your copy of Tamil Times.

Subscribe today by sending the form below to The Circulation Manager, P.O. Box 304, London W13 9QN.

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## MEDIA FILE

Rarely has a diplomat kept so low a profile yet frayed ties so badly between two friendly countries as Sri Lankan High Commissioner Tissa Weeratunga.

The envoy, a relative of Sri Lankan, President J. R. Jayawardene, was dispatched to Ottawa as a reward for (armed) services rendered: he was the officer who commanded the army's brutal campaign against Tamil separatists.

Probes by human rights investigators from Amnesty International amassed testimony by Sri Lankan Tamils that Brig.-Gen. Weeratunga (at the very least) tolerated torture and disappearances of Tamil civilians while he was stationed in Jaffna in 1979. This week, a Tamil refugee visiting Canada from Paris claimed he was

personally tortured by Brig.-Gen. Weeratunga.

The Canadian government has been loath to rock the diplomatic boat over the controversial diplomat. External Affairs Minister Joe Clark was aware of most of the allegations when the Sri Lankan was nominated for the Ottawa post, but made little effort to verify them. External tried for a few months to discourage Colombo from sending him, but Mr. Jayawardene vouched for his kin's innocence and Ottawa finally accepted him.

Faced with new accusations aimed at this ex-officer, however, Mr. Clark has belatedly decided to make "cautious inquiries" about him. Anything less would be a betrayal of the UN Convention on Torture, of which Canada is a signatory. In contrast to the circumspection — to the point of

fecklessness — that Ottawa has shown, Colombo has been all too quick to escalate the controversy.

Two Sri Lankan cabinet ministers on Tuesday issued provocative statements, one demanding the extradition of the Tamil refugee who is visiting Canada from France, the other threatening reprisals against Canadian diplomats if Ottawa pursues its inquiries concerning Brig.-Gen. Weeratunga.

Mr. Clark should be equally blunt. Canada does not extradite exiles wanted for political offences. But Canada is prepared to expell diplomats if there is solid evidence they have committed war crimes. Or if Canadian diplomats face reprisals for inquiries into such abuses.

Globe and Mail, (Canada)  
September 25, 1986

## Sri Lanka: Institutionalisation Of Violence

P.T.A (Prevention of Terrorism Act), Emergency regulations, Armed Reserves, Home Guards, STF, Foreign instructors and a Ministry of National Security . . . but there is no security. Few persons of responsibility, whether government or outside it, appear to be fully alive to the astonishing spread of violence throughout the island in the very recent past. Not the military conflict or the terrorism or the private killing but altogether new types of violence, by small organised bands, most of them equipped with modern weapons.

Armed groups, not of any known political persuasion, seem to be quite active outside the north and east, the main theatres of war. The first signs of this phenomenon came with the disbanded Raja Rata Rifles. But then there was talk of other small numbers booted out of the forces for indiscipline. Next came news of deserters, who had taken to highway robbery. The private militaries and the gangs are also part of a dangerous new scene.

### SOCIAL LINE

Thanks to the Finance Minister the country had been rudely awakened to economic costs of war and the price the "liberalised economy" may have to pay (and therefore every consumer) if the peace effort collapses. What of the social costs of militarisation? While we are seeking to protect the nation and the religion, the **dhammadeepra** is being so rapidly transformed to a new kind of society where violence, like the Philippines in the 60's and 70's, becomes a way of life. And what of the moral costs? The incidence of violence involving young people, often from "respectable" families is not only shocking but menacing.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

The increasingly urgent and slightly desperate appeals by the IGP for discipline is yet another sign of the dry rot in old

structures. Lawlessness, crime and corruption have spread into the agencies of law enforcement. The headline "Probe on Fraud at Police School" is symptomatic. These observations in an unusually hard-hitting SUN editorial represent a timely warning about a dangerous trend:

"The recent shooting scandals involving indiscipline and criminally irresponsible policemen have spread fear and a reign of terror over innocent people who have to travel at night.

As the Morawewa Magistrate said after an inquiry on the double-killing at Mawarala, the Police have absolutely no right to kill. They have been given weapons, they have been given authority but they have not been given any right to use these irresponsibly or indiscriminately, the Magistrate ruled.

At Pepiliyana last Friday, an allegedly drunken policeman opened fire at a state van carrying Telecommunication Department engineers, after another policeman had checked their identities and told them to proceed. An innocent driver was killed by a crazy, cock-eyed cop who was supposed to aim at the tyres".

At Batapola, an innocent pedestrian was seriously injured when police fired, perhaps blindly, at a suspect escaping from custody.

All three incidents occurred in areas which are relatively peaceful and where the gun should be, if at all, the last resort."

The corrosive effects of the post-1977 "institutionalisation of political violence" (the phrase is Princeton Professor Gananath Obeyesekere's) and militarisation of Sri Lankan society were tragically evident in the Trinco camp incident in August when a soldier killed two officers and then, reportedly, shot himself. On Sept. 24, a private in a Colombo camp was said to have killed a colleague and then shot himself. Is this not the enemy's (whatever identity we give him) real revenge on a once fairly stable and peaceful southern society?

(Lanka Guardian, 1.10.86)

## CONFUSION REIGNS

Canada's official attitude towards Sri Lanka is baffling. Our bureaucrats and politicians are marching to their own drummer. And they're all out of step.

They should know that there are conflicts in Sri Lanka between the Sinhalese majority and Tamil minority. Both sides have been accused of murderous acts in this struggle, with the Tamils getting the worst of it.

That's why Tamils have been fleeing, why some were willing to brave that infamous lifeboat drop.

As a result, the Canadian government put Sri Lanka on the blacklist of 18 nations to which refugees cannot be returned. So far, Ottawa's attitude seems clear. But then it staggers into two murky questions.

Why is official Ottawa so casual about the charges against the Sri Lankan High Commissioner when he first came to Canada? Just why are we giving aid to this government that persecutes a minority?

Brig.-Gen. Tissa Weeratunga's appointment was accepted by Ottawa in spite of violent objections from the Canadian Tamil community which said he'd been involved in torturing Tamil separatists. Amnesty International says it has affidavits backing the charges. People swore they were tortured while Weeratunga watched.

External Affairs say the charges are unsubstantiated. But such serious charges must be investigated further.

Can anyone explain Canada's \$30-million annual aid to Sri Lanka? Here is a country from which citizens are fleeing for their lives and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) gives it our money.

Oh, they have explanations. Trouble is, they're not rational. CIDA says Sri Lanka is a democracy with whom we've had excellent relations since 1950.

Therefore, CIDA doesn't consider the Sri Lankan regime oppressive. Perhaps these officials might descend from their ivory CIDA tower into the dungeons long enough to consider the evidence of the tortured. After all, the torture is not in doubt, even if the politicians and bureaucrats of External Affairs haven't quite decided who supervised.

This confusion and blindness over human rights violations reveals our officials as uncaring bumbling on the world stage.

The Toronto Sun,  
September 16, 1986



# BELEAGUERED SKIES

## Sri Lanka's national carrier comes under government scrutiny

"THE taste of paradise", the heavily advertised slogan to which Air Lanka, Sri Lanka's national carrier, hitched its promotional star, has taken on a bitter tinge. With the state-owned airline proving to be a huge drag on the country's beleaguered economy, President Junius Jayawardene ordered in early August that a three-member commission of inquiry look into the affairs of the company, whose borrowings abroad now account for 17% of the country's debt-servicing obligations.

Victor Perera, a retired Supreme Court judge, is heading the probe team, whose other members are Tilak Samarasekera, chief of the Greater Colombo Economic Commission responsible for running the free-trade zone north of the capital, and Colombo attorney Henry Jayamaha, who is also assistant secretary of the ruling United National Party. The commission has been told to report to Jayawardene within two months. The terms of reference do not provide for an investigation covering the full seven years that Air Lanka has been operating, but are restricted to the period 1 January 1983 to 31 July 1986.

These years have seen Air Lanka's troubles and losses mount. The problems climaxed with the 3 May blast in a Lockheed Tristar-1011 on the tarmac of Colombo's international airport. Seventeen passengers and crew were killed in the explosion attributed to Tamil separatist terrorists battling for a Tamil state in northern and eastern Sri Lanka.

The commission has been given wide-ranging reference terms: it is required to establish whether there has been maladministration, financial irregularity or other administrative malpractice, or abuse in the conduct of certain specified activities of the airline, and if so, to fix responsibility. The activities specified for investigation include: staff matters; management of funds; acquisition, management and maintenance of property including land, buildings, aircraft, equipment and vehicles, and the conduct of all the airline's business.

Although the word corruption has not been specifically used, the terms of reference clearly provide for investigation

of "malpractice and abuse" in the management of funds and acquisition of aircraft and other property as well as "conduct of all business activities". That would enable any corruption which may have occurred to be investigated. However, there have as yet been no major corruption charges levelled up to now against any of the airline's senior managers. The principal criticism, however, is that Air Lanka over-extended itself in pursuit of becoming a first-tier airline, and borrowed too heavily to do so.

Most airlines would also regard Air Lanka's 3,400-strong staff to operate a fleet of five aircraft - two Tristars, two Boeing 707s and one 737 - as a heavy overload. But much of Sri Lanka's commerce, particularly government-owned enterprises, have been labour-intensive, even by South Asian standards. Air Lanka has been no exception.

In recent months, even before the Tristar blast, the airline has received a great deal of newspaper criticism from the privately-owned Independent Newspapers of Ceylon. The airline does not advertise with the group, and does not distribute its publications on board Air Lanka flights. Early this year, Independent Newspapers' Sunday English newspaper, The Week-End, splashed a front-page banner, "World Bank blasts Air Lanka", quoting David Hopper, the bank's vice-president for South Asia.

Hopper said: "Sri Lanka is a democratic country. If the people of Sri Lanka want to prop up an airline, that is their sovereign decision. All I can say is that the billions of rupees spent on Air Lanka could be put to much better use to benefit the masses. I do not see the justification for a citizen of Sri Lanka to give up his benefits to subsidise Air Lanka."

Hurt to the quick, Air Lanka's Chairman, Capt. Rakhitha Wikramanayake, a commercial-airline pilot who continues to fly to keep his licence alive, told his employees that Jayawardene had reaffirmed his confidence in the airline's board and management. He said that he was aware that "a calculated campaign was being programmed to damage the credibility of the airline". He accused his detractors in the press of "constantly

## MEDIA FILE

attacking Air Lanka with distorted facts, with the sole purpose of damaging the progress and identity of the airline."

Wikramanayake, who has been the chairman and managing director of Air Lanka since its inception, claimed that Jayawardene, who is ministerially responsible for the airline, had assured him "in no uncertain terms of his confidence in the airline's progress and his total support for the manner in which the airline has been managed to date". He concluded by saying that Jayawardene had requested that his views be conveyed to all Air Lanka staff "in order that no disruption or dissatisfaction should arise from these inaccurate and falsified reports."

That was in February. Three months later came the Tristar blast, and questions have been raised about whether Air Lanka was in any way negligent. Another probe, with a retired judge as commissioner, has been appointed to separately investigate the explosion in the jetliner, believed to have been caused by a heavy charge of gelignite planted in a cargo hatch.

In July, Air Lanka published its financial report for 1984-85 (ended 31 March), which reported an operating loss of Rs 151.46 million (US\$5.4 million) against the previous year's operating profit of Rs 203.1 million. The operational loss was the least of its problems. Interest on capital borrowings put Rs 828.3 million worth of red ink on the balance-sheet and currency losses added another Rs 259.7 million, leading to a huge loss of Rs 1.24 billion, more than twice the previous year's loss of Rs 602.9 million, on the bottom line.

Wikramanayake explained that an inadequate equity-capital base in the initial stages of operations compelled the company to seek the assistance of commercial banks and other financial institutions.

With a total of Rs 5.3 billion in medium-term loans and capital-lease contracts on its books at the last balance-sheet date, and liabilities exceeding assets by Rs 1.6 billion, the financial picture looks gloomy. What Jayawardene would do once the commission's report is in is unclear, but observers in Colombo do not think it likely that a closure of the airline is imminent, as the commissioners have been asked to recommend remedies for whatever defects they may find.

By Courtesy of Far Eastern Economic Review,  
4 September 1986

## British Association of Tamil Schools (BATS)

The Association was formed early this year with the main object of serving as an umbrella organisation for the various Tamil schools in the United Kingdom. Its main functions will be inter alia the consolidation and centralisation of a substantial part of the administration, operations and the setting up of a common examining body thus ensuring a common syllabus, text books etc. In addition, it will maintain a central source of expertise, especially in the field of Carnatic Music and Bharatha Natyam (South Indian classical dancing) whence the various schools can draw according to their needs.

Currently 21 weekend schools in the United Kingdom have pledged their unqualified support for the British Association of Tamil Schools and more are anticipated to join. Between them 800 students are actively engaged in the learning of Tamil, Carnatic Music, Drama and Bharatha Natyam.

Interested schools may contact Mr Pillai on 01-857 6168 or write to:

59 Summit Road, Northolt, Middx. England.

## Colombo YMCA General Secretary

### Alagan Kadirgamar retires

After nearly thirty years in the service of the YMCA including ten years as its General Secretary Mr. Alagan Kadirgamar retired in June 1986 at the age of 55, to provide an opportunity for younger men equally dedicated to prove themselves. His portrait was unveiled in the Board Room of the Colombo Headquarters and several felicitations held in his honour.

Mr. Kadirgamar has attended several international consultations and conferences on behalf of the YMCA Colombo and was the chief executive conducting the YMCA centenary celebrations in 1982.

He is now on an assignment covering Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan as consultant in the same service.

# EFFECTS OF CONFLICT ON ECONOMY IN NORTHERN SRI LANKA

Continued from page 8

eased. Most important of these categories is fuel. Since the ceasefire the civil authorities have issued permits to private traders in petrol and kerosene, as a safer way of ensuring supplies than by using government transport. Most petrol in Jaffna is now purchased at the roadside in bottles; these sell for Rs 17 per bottle against a value of about Rs 11 at the controlled price of Rs 13.50 per litre. During the curfew period petrol rose to a price of Rs 80 per bottle. Kerosene is now Rs 10 per bottle against a controlled price of Rs 7.35 per litre, so the price remains somewhat more distorted. But it did not earlier reach heights comparable to those of petrol, the demand being regulated more by unavailability than by price (a difference due perhaps to the greater ease of finding effective substitutes for kerosene).

What is striking is that markets for different products have behaved in very different ways, so that relative prices have undergone great and continuing change. Table below shows the behaviour of prices of an unsystematically selected shopping-basket of items, grouped into seven main categories of price behaviour. It is notable that goods of which Jaffna produces a surplus have seen large falls in price within the peninsula due to inability to export customary quantities: grapes, coconut and mangoes are striking cases. However, this has occurred only in goods in which the impact of the disruption to trade has been greater than that of the disruption to production; by contrast, fish and potatoes, which have both seen production severely reduced, suffered overall rises in price in spite of their being among Jaffna's main traditional exports.

It should be borne in mind also that the insecurity in Jaffna has led to a fragmentation within as well as between markets, requiring us to take some liberties with the very notion of a market price. It is clear that grapes, for example, currently sell for prices that can change sharply from day to day and locality to locality, as supplies come irregularly onto local

markets that have not in the past been used to dispose of surpluses (the price quoted in the Table are in such cases an approximate average). To complement this picture of local trade it is now necessary to consider the disturbances in production.

## Disturbances in Production

**Fisheries:** Approximately one lakh persons (over 10 per cent of the population) are dependent upon fishing in Jaffna district. This group has been economically the single hardest-hit sector of the population, for under the terms of the prohibition zone introduced in late 1984 it was required to leave the shoreline and move inland, thereby abandoning its livelihood. Some 15,000 families were issued with government food stamps, but at Rs 40 per person per month these were clearly inadequate to meet even basic necessities. A study in April of fishermen's children under ten years of age in a camp in the north of the peninsula found evidence of marasmus (protein calorie deficiency) in 45 per cent of those examined, as well as high incidences of skin and other complaints. As will be seen, sudden and severe malnutrition has not been confined to the fishing communities, for agricultural labourers have also been seriously affected by the situation. But even now at Jaffna hospital it is reported that many of the patients in the children's diarrhoea ward are children of fishermen, and that around 95 per cent of patients show signs of acute under-nutrition.

Since June 18 the prohibited zone has been relaxed though not officially lifted, and fishing can take place up to three miles offshore. This limitation on distance still severely restricts both the volume of catch and its value, for many of the larger fish are to be found only in deeper waters. The result of this is that while supplies to the local market have somewhat improved exports from Jaffna to the rest of the island remain negligible. A daily traffic of ten lorries carrying ice fish and one carrying dry fish from Jaffna to Colombo has fallen to a rate of a lorry

only every five days or so. This represents a fall in value of exports of some Rs 250 million per annum from the peninsula alone. The Northern and Eastern provinces together are estimated to supply some 55 per cent of the island's requirements of fish. In particular they supply much of the high quality fish (especially crustaceans and molluscs) exported from Sri Lanka. So it is surprising that the country's exports of fish in the first six months of 1985 were Rs 123 million (nearly 40 per cent) down on the same period in 1984. The increased disturbances in the Eastern province since then mean this trend can only accelerate.

In addition to production losses there has been considerable damage to fishing boats and equipment. The Gurunagar Fishermen's Association reports about 100 boats destroyed by the security forces in 1985; other sources suggest the true figure for the whole peninsula may be much higher, with up to a quarter of all craft destroyed or seized. Boats are taken both by militant organisations and by security forces; most of the former and some of the latter are said to be returned. Despite the relaxation of restrictions fishermen are subject to continued harassment by security forces, with some ten per cent of craft stopped, portions of catch taken and crew members assaulted. (However, accounts from other districts indicate it is not Tamil fishermen alone who face hazards: 37 Sinhalese fishermen were kidnapped by unknown Tamils in September in the Eastern province; some bodies have been found and the others are reported killed, though there has been no official confirmation.) Given the high visibility of fishing as an occupation, and its dependence on expensive and vulnerable equipment, it is unlikely that fishing in the North and East of Sri Lanka will be able to return to anything like normal (whatever the state of official restrictions) before a resolution of the current conflict as a whole.

To be concluded

Courtesy of Economic and Political Weekly, Vol XXI, No 2, January 11, 1986

## RETAIL PRICES OF ASSORTED ITEMS

(in Sri Lankan Rs)

| Group                        | Item                | Unit     | Present Price | Highest Price Last Year | 'Normal' Price |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----------|---------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| I (high price rises)         | Blackgram           | kg       | 32            | 32                      | 18*            |
|                              | Greengram           | kg       | 28            | 28                      | 14             |
|                              | Milk powder         | ½ kg     | 29.90         | 29.90                   | 17             |
|                              | Shoes               | pair     | 120           | 120                     | 80             |
| II (lower price rises)       | Eggs                | each     | 1.60          | 1.60                    | 1.40           |
|                              | Mutton              | kg       | 55            | 55                      | 42             |
|                              | Chicken             | kg       | 50            | 50                      | 40             |
|                              | Coffee              | kg       | 90            | 90                      | 80             |
|                              | Tea                 | kg       | 70            | 70                      | 70             |
|                              | Mysore dal          | kg       | 29            | 29                      | 25.50*         |
|                              | Sugar               | kg       | 14            | 14                      | 12*            |
|                              | Bread               | loaf     | 3.15          | 3.15                    | 3.05           |
|                              | Cooking gas         | cylinder | 210           | 210                     | 185            |
| (rises, then moderate falls) | Rice                | kg       | 13            | 15                      | 8              |
|                              | Fish                | kg       | 30            | 40                      | 15             |
|                              | Potatoes            | kg       | 14            | 25                      | 12.50          |
|                              | Chillies            | kg       | 32            | 70                      | 32             |
|                              | Petrol              | bottle   | 17            | 80                      | 11*            |
|                              | Kerosene            | bottle   | 10            | 12                      | 6*             |
| IV (rises, then large falls) | Grapes              | kg       | 8             | 20                      | 12             |
|                              | Coconuts            | each     | 1             | 15                      | 2.50           |
|                              | Mangoes (in season) | each     | 1.50          | 10                      | 3              |
| V (small falls)              | Soap                | bar      | 2.95          | 3.10                    | 3.10           |
| VI (large falls)             | Coconut oil         | litre    | 9             | 22                      | 22             |
| VII no change)               | Flour               | kg       | 4.90          | 4.90                    | 4.90           |
|                              | Milk                | litre    | 5.50          | 5.50                    | 5.50           |
|                              | Textiles (local)    | metre    | 22            | 22                      | 22             |
|                              | Textiles (foreign)  | metre    | 28            | 28                      | 28             |

Note: \* Controlled price

## JAFFNA PUBLIC LIBRARY

The newly restored Jaffna Public Library now stands deserted due to its close proximity to the Army Camp in the Old Dutch Fort in the centre of the town. However, it continues to function through its four branch Libraries. On July 18th Library Services had been further extended to cover the Muslim areas as well, by the opening of a fifth Branch Library at Muslim ward by the Municipal Commissioner Mr. C. V. K. Sivagnanam.

## Australian HC's Donation

The Australian High Commission has donated Rs. 100,000 for the purchase of sewing machines, basic equipment and clothes.

The donation has been made to the Refugee Rehabilitation Fund - 1983 as "part of its rehabilitation programme for families whose bread-winners had lost their lives in Jaffna District in northern Sri Lanka due to the ethnic disturbances."

The Council of the Refugee Rehabilitation Fund selected 25 widows "who had opted to earn an income for the maintenance of their families by sewing and dress making".

## Letters to the Editor

### Our Men who lie abroad . . .

DIPLOMATS are an accepted breed who "lie abroad" for the sake of their Country. Not that there are others who don't. But diplomats are of course special in that they alone hold a state licence to do what they do, so long as it is purported to be in the interest of their country. It however beats the average layman how this genre could compromise its conscience against the blatant lies and half truths one is sometimes asked to dish out or defend, all in the name of his country. It makes him quite unlike the sort that average mortals are made of.

His kind however understands his language, his idiom so to speak, and the moral quandary he is put to. A wince or an enigmatic smile or sneer perhaps settles the matter of principles when he expresses himself to his counterparts at official levels. To the audience outside, however, he remains a genuine picture of all that his country holds dear, all that the country upholds that justifies its representation before the international community.

When therefore, Brigadier Lionel Weerantunga, now accredited to Canada after his "war service" in the North of Sri Lanka, went on Canadian TV to explain the human rights violations not only of his country but equally to exonerate himself from the accusations laid against him for being witness to the torture that is perpetrated by his regime, a grave charge in itself, he naturally had a double duty to perform. First his duty to his own benefactors. Those who accepted his inability "to eliminate the menace of terrorism in all its forms from the Island and more specially from the Jaffna district", and this in a matter of six months from July 1979: A decree from His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka himself.

Seven years now and the Island is yet in turmoil. A part of the Country is virtually abandoned to the so-called terrorists and the Army that the Colonel commanded is penned up like hostages in the encampments they built for themselves in north Sri Lanka, the Jaffna district referred to in the Presidential edict.

Despite all this, the Country somehow saw through the Brigadier's hidden talents

### The Cyanide Tablet

AS adults we have the option of choice, one which is often denied to children and in intolerable circumstances, to grown-ups. In Sri Lanka now the choice is almost non-existent.

Tamil youths, many in their late teens, are fighting a war. A war they believe is for the betterment of life, not just for themselves, but for all Tamils and in particular for the future generation.

*Is this a selfless act of love?*

The answer, I think, lies in the Cyanide Tablet. The Eelam Freedom Fighters risk their lives and worse still, the harrowing prospect of being tortured if they are captured by the security forces—rather than face this unpleasant fate, they opt to swallow the cyanide tablet, thus dying young, with an incomplete or unsatisfactory karma.

*Why do they do this? Is it a sacrifice?*

When one considers the age of the

to reward him for the task he could not accomplish. That he must therefore be forever grateful for the benevolence of his superiors is something the world fraternity is sure to understand. But what went through the mind of the Brigadier while he was put on the dock for his own participation in a torture taking place in his own camp, under his very nose and apparently at his own behest—only his conscience can tell, if the allegations contained in the affidavit of the victim are correct. Not even his own fraternity enjoying diplomatic immunity will condone such conduct. He can only therefore be left to console himself with the thought that there are others among his own countrymen who are equally in the same dilemma: all for the sake of their own personal advancement at the expense of their personal integrity and moral rectitude. Some stoop as low as to undertake the distribution of fake copies of the TAMIL TIMES to the unsuspecting public of Australia from the privileged position of the Australian High Commission in Sydney. Some do bend as far as their physique would permit in placating the Lord and Master for retrieving him from the inquisitorial proceedings for acting in collusion with the Tigers of Tamil Eelam in London, a baseless charge against a man desperately clinging to his power and pension in the evening of his career. There are others who have been abandoned by the wayside for things they never ventured to do: and these had to be Tamils. Some consolation then for the Brigadier.

Amidst all this at least one lead has been given. And this by a lady diplomat to whom duty to her conscience and above all a duty to her community was far greater than "lying" for a country that has disowned its own people and uses its military might to obtain a "final solution" through terror tactics and torture hardly associated with any civilised society. Not even South Africa has yet used its war planes to bomb out the civilian blacks in their own ghettos. So, Miss Lakshmi Naganathan has called it a day with the Government she could no longer represent with dignity and self respect. As a Tamil she refused the company of the self seekers who must perforce reckon with the Tamil community someday in the not too distant future.

A. Srikanthan  
Melbourne, Australia

freedom fighters, it would appear they are, indeed, sacrificing their lives and all that they hold dear to follow their dream of a State for the Tamils. A place where there would be democracy, equal opportunities in all spheres and fulfilment of the needs of the people. This is a dream—whether or not such an Utopian State can exist and function efficiently is to be seen. But it holds promise.

However, unlike Mahatma Gandhi, who solidly achieved his success through passive resistance, today's world, under threat of a nuclear war, seeks results quickly—most people would agree that violence, whichever way one looks at it, is abhorrent. But one can see that in an island as small as Sri Lanka and given the minority status of the Tamils, it would be difficult to effect a change in any other way. Peaceful confrontations among party leaders have failed to negotiate an acceptable solution—at times, drastic measures are required to get what one wants out of life.

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from the barrel of a gun. Freedom  
has to be shared or those who  
think they could enjoy it alone,  
find they are too busy trying to  
guard it."**

*Archbishop Desmond Tutu*

### Institute of Tamil Culture

The Institute has moved to its new premises provided by the Kingston Borough Council, at Knolmead Primary school, Knolmead (Sunray Estate) in Tolworth, Surrey as from 6th September '86. Classes in Tamil are held at 9.15 am on Saturdays.

Further information from:

**K. Jegatheeswaran, Head Master: 01-949 3012**

**W. Thayalan, Administrator: 01-399 7848**

# ASIAN STUDENTS EXPRESS SOLIDARITY WITH TAMIL STRUGGLE

**Text of the resolutions passed at the Asian Students Solidarity Mission to Eelam Seminar held in Madras from 28th June to 4th July in association with the General Union of Youths and Students of Eelam.**

## DECLARATION

*We, the participants of the Asian Students Solidarity Mission to Eelam, held in Madras from June 28 to July 4, 1986, have in these seven days seen with our own eyes the plight of the Tamil refugees, have had input from renowned speakers and have had lengthy discussions.*

*Through all seminars, photograph exhibition and a visit to refugees camp we have become aware of the history of oppression of the Tamil speaking people in Sri Lanka, the grave violations of human rights and the struggle of the Tamil speaking people.*

*The very existence of the Tamil people has been threatened by the systematic genocide by the Sri Lankan regime since independence in 1948.*

*While we abhor and condemn the systematic programme of genocide carried out by the state forces through the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the Emergency Regulations and all other black laws by the Jayawardene regime upon the Tamil speaking people, we also recognise that the continued support of foreign governments and imperialists through the supply of arms, military training, economic aid and all other kinds of assistance serves only to lend legitimacy to the regime, to perpetuate and intensify the mass killings.*

**a.** We therefore condemn the following: the sale and supply of arms to the present Sri Lankan regime by the governments of Singapore, the Republic of China (Taiwan), the Peoples Republic of China, South Korea, Malaysia, Apartheid South Africa, Italy, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and Zionist Israel.

**b.** the provision of military training to the Sri Lankan Security forces by the US, the Mossad and Shin Beth of Israel, the SAS and KMS (Kini-Mini Services) of the United Kingdom and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

**c.** the direct interference and involvement of the Israeli Services Personnel, i.e. Mossad and Shin Beth, and the SAS and KMS mercenaries of the United Kingdom in the Sri Lankan's insurgency operations against the Tamil speaking people.

We therefore demand:

● that the Jayawardene regime halt all indiscriminate killings, withdraw all

troops from the North and East, cease all aerial bombings specifically the use of napalm bombs, strafing by helicopters and shelling from naval coastal areas immediately;

● that the Jayawardene regime terminate all arrests and detention of Tamil speaking people and the regime's Sinhala opponents under the draconian Prevention of Terrorism Act and all other black laws;

● that the Jayawardene regime release ALL political prisoners presently held under the above laws immediately and unconditionally;

● that all sexual exploitation and rape of women by the regime's forces be terminated;

● that all foreign governments providing or intending to provide to the Jayawardene regime directly or indirectly any form of aid, military, political, economic or diplomatic, to withhold all these, in view of the grave violations of human rights in the country by the present regime against the Tamil speaking people;

● that all foreign governments immediately stop all arms sales to the Jayawardene regime in view of the widely condemned human rights record of his government, especially the continuing atrocities against the Tamil speaking people;

● that all governments express their concern for the heightening conflict and bloodshed in Sri Lanka and declare their recognition of Eelam, support the Tamil speaking people in their struggle for self-determination and independence;

● that the Indian government and organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations agencies pay more attention to the welfare of the Tamil refugees, especially their problems regarding migration, job opportunities, improvement of living conditions, education and medical care;

● that the Indian government aware of all the crimes committed by the Jayawardene regime on the Tamil speaking people, utilises all resources at its disposal, bilateral and international to ensure the rights of the Tamil speaking people are safeguarded;

● that all governments attempt to bring the Jayawardene regime to the International Court of Justice to expose the atrocities that have been committed against the Tamil speaking people;

● that all justice loving people recognise the right to self-determination, freedom and independence of the Tamil speaking people;

*We, the participants pool our strength in defence of the Tamil speaking people and express our profound solidarity with the Eelavar of Eelam in their quest for a new society. We, the participants anticipate that in the future, solidarity with the Tamil speaking people's struggle will be strong not only in the Tamil areas and outside Sri Lanka, but also within the Sinhala community. In conclusion we, the participants of the Asian Students Solidarity Mission to Eelam, believe in and support the struggle of the Tamil speaking people for self-determination and for a free and independent Eelam. At the same time, we would like to alert the Sinhala masses that the arms and ammunition which are at present being used against the Tamil speaking people will one day be used against them.*

## Signed by:

*Dravida Kalaham, Australian Students International Network, Australian Coalition of East Timor, League of Filipino Students, Moitree International, Asian Youth Centre, PAMOKAU, Third World House of Bremen, YSSU, CSCAB, Humanity Organisation of Indian Students and Youth, Bangladesh Students League (JSD), Dhaka University Central Students Union, Palestine Youth Organisation, SACRED Asylgrup West Berlin, College of Pharmacy, Canchipuram Arts Troupe, Student Organisation of Liberation Tigers, Hong Kong Federation of Students, Eelam Repatriates Organising Society, Eelam Friends Organising Society, New Zealand University Students Association, American College, Sri Lanka Solidarity Campaign, University of Jaffna Students Assembly, Democratic Youth Front, Rural India Social and Cultural Centre, ASA - Secretariat, General Union of Youth and Students.*

## Y.W.C.A. DESTROYED BY ARMY

One of the important buildings recently destroyed by army shelling from the old Dutch Fort in the Jaffna City happens to be the Jaffna Y.W.C.A. Headquarters, which was ceremoniously opened by the Canadian High Commissioner His Excellency Collacott in March this year when he visited Jaffna to inaugurate the new fire service of the Jaffna Municipal Council.

The Y.W.C.A. runs a Finishing School for the girls who leave school after finishing their secondary education, at the Methodist Trimmer Hall, which itself got destroyed a few days earlier. Now the Y.W.C.A. is faced with the problem of finding alternate accommodation for its Headquarters, as well as the Finishing School which is attended by more than two hundred students.

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**JAFFNA HINDU** parents, Singapore, seek professionally qualified groom for pretty English educated working daughter, age 36, home owner, financially stable. **Box No. M131**, c/o Tamil Times.

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**MOTHER SEEKS** educated Hindu bride for son 33 (ex-Peradeniya lecturer) settled in Canada. Research assistant in a University, completing Ph.D. Please write with details and phone number. **Box M133**, c/o Tamil Times.

**JAFFNA HINDU** parents, settled in U.K., seek suitable partners in employment, for their working daughter, 27 years and civil engineers son, 29 years. Mars in 8th House in both charts. Reply with horoscope and details, **Box M134**, c/o Tamil Times.

**JAFFNA HINDU** parents seek for daughter in late 20s, British citizen and graduate in high professional government employment in London, a suitable bridegroom. Please write with details. **Box M135**, c/o Tamil Times.

**JAFFNA TAMIL** parents seek doctor bride below 28 years for MRCP qualified son 30 years working in UK. **Box M136**, c/o Tamil Times.

**JAFFNA HINDU** parents seek bride for son 31, working as accountant. Also qualified in electronics and business management. Telephone: 01-888 4870.

**JAFFNA HINDU** brother, professional, seeks understanding groom, professional or student, above 29 years, for pretty modest sister, home owner, part qualified accountant, computers student, London. (Earlier marriage immediately nullified - innocent party). Horoscope essential. **Box M138**, c/o Tamil Times.

**JAFFNA HINDU** parents seek professionally qualified bridegroom, preferably medical graduate, for computer and electronics engineering finalist daughter, attractive, 26 years. Please write with horoscope and other details. **Box M.139**, c/o Tamil Times.

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#### Mr. S. CHIDAMBARAPILLAI

Mr. Chidambarapillai was known to me from the early thirties till the late eighties. He graduated from the Ceylon University College and served at Victoria College, Chulipuram, under the late Mr. S. Shivapathasunderam and the late Dr. K. Shivapragasam.

Later, he taught at the Teachers' College at Parameshvara College, of which he became Vice-Principal.

He was known for his sweetness of temper and ready-wittedness which won him the affection of his teachers, students, colleagues and friends.

At a time when the intricacies of the atom, radio, television, space travel and relativity were novel to many of us, he had familiarised his students with these subjects.

S. Kanthasamy (Principal Emeritus, Palaly Training College)

#### DR. K. ARUMUGAM

Aru, as we fondly called him, has left in the hearts of his family and us, his friends, a void that can never be filled.

He stood out as a dominant figure in our community, a man who was respected as a champion of the less able and of those in need. His warmth and cheerful frankness, inspired us with confidence to pour out our problems to him and he was always ready to lend his shoulder to weep on.

He will be mourned by many, but for us, he was an inspiring and reliable friend, whom we consider a privilege to have known.

Ranee and Arul Emmanuel

### IN MEMORIAM

#### JAYANTHI VILVARAJAH,

(25.11.51-11.4.86)

Remembered during her 35th Birthday and always by husband DR VILVARAJAH (USA), brother Jayakumar (USA), sisters Bavani, Ramani, Gowri (UK) and co-workers at "Macro", London. Special poojas will be performed at Jaffna Sivan Temple.

### DEATHS

**SIVAGURUNATHAN, Kumaraswamy**, Advocate, husband of Thilagawathy, father of Murukesan, Sakunthala, Ranjini, Nalayini and Kumerasen. Funeral 15th September 1986 in Madras.

**RATHNASABAPATHY**, (Retd. Chief Designs Engineer, P. W. D.) husband of late Kanamma, father of late Sabanathan, Linganathan, Loganathan, (Kuwait) "Saraswathy Vasa", Tinnelveli North, Jaffna.

**THURAISSINGAM, Velupillai**, husband of Grace, father of Selvayohini. Dr. Vasanthayohini, Saroj Kumar, Dr. Vasantharajah (U.K.) 9/6, National Housing Development Authority Building, Colombo 2.

**ARUMUGAM, Dr. (Mrs) Thanaluxmi**. Wife of E. Arumugam, sister of Shamugananda, Dr. Satchithananthan (U.K.), Vivekananda, Seetha. Funeral 18th September 1986, St. Kildas Lane, Kollupitiya.

**PONNIAH, Father Philip**, The death occurred recently of Father Philip, who began his service under the internationally renowned Rev. Fr. Gnanapiragasar at Nallur in 1940. Over the past 46 years he had served as a parish priest in Passayoor, Kayts, Cheddikulam, and many other areas in the Northern Province. He was Rector of the Seminary and the Director of the Evangelical Commission. Most recently, he started two missions at Maniyamthoddam and Uthayapuram in the suburbs of Jaffna.

We regret to announce the death of **MANO KADIRGAMAR**, which occurred on Sunday, 19th October after cardiac surgery at the Harefield Hospital. At the time of his death Mano was a Manager in the Export Department of Lloyds Bank, London. He leaves behind his wife, Pathmaranee (nee Thurairajasingham), a son, Ajit and a daughter, Nina. The funeral took place on Saturday, 25th October at the Golders Green Crematorium, 33 The Glen, Pinner, Middx.



Anushya, daughter of Dr & Mrs S. Thanabalasingham, had her Bharata Natya Arangetram in Logan Hall, London on 29th September, 1986. Anushya is a student of Smt. Uma Chandratheva, a diploma holder from the Kalakshetra. Anushya's splendid, faultless maiden performance reflected the stamp of this institution.

### Obituary

V. Navaratnam latterly attached to the University of Jaffna (Mathematics Dept.) passed away suddenly on 5th September '86.

He was formerly Asst. Director at the Department of Census and Statistics and subsequently joined the Institute of Chartered Accountants where he rose to the position of Director of Studies of that Institute.

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## U.S. INTRIGUE?

If Sri Lanka is attacked by a foreign country, the United States would not get involved, said the Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. James Lilley, when he recently gave evidence before the Foreign Affairs Sub-Committee of the US House of Representatives. He added that if Australia was attacked, the US response would be quick and determined, thus drawing a distinction between countries with which the US had formal military treaties and those with which it did not.

Political observers in Colombo are wondering as to why such a senior official in the Reagan administration should have singled out Sri Lanka for special reference although there are scores of countries in the world with which the US does not have formal military treaties. Such special mention is particularly intriguing when Sri Lanka does not in fact face such a danger of an attack from any foreign country at present. Was the US official trying to raise the bogey of an Indian invasion?

Speculation is rife in Colombo that singling out of Sri Lanka on this occasion was not accidental. At a time when Sri Lanka is engaged in a feverish attempt at militarisation and seeking financial and military assistance, some regard the action of the US official as an attempt to cajole Sri Lanka into a formal treaty with the US thus ensuring facilities for the US Seventh Fleet in Trincomalee harbour.

### Action and Counter-Action

At a recent meeting of a gathering of Buddhist priests addressed by former Prime Minister and leader of the SLFP, Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike, the Mahanayake of the Asgiriya Chapter, Rev. Chandananda Palipanna, threatened that the Buddhist clergy would 'resort to stern action' if the government went ahead with its devolution proposals. Mrs. Bandaranaike, in an attempt at political bribery, promised to reward any government MP who defied the government and voted against the government Provincial Councils Bills if and when they were presented to parliament.

President Jayawardene's response was prompt and characteristically authoritarian. He got his Cabinet's agreement to invoke the provisions of Emergency Regulations dealing with attempts to influence the President, MPs, the Police

and any service personnel from exercising their lawful powers. Emergency Regulation 23, which is already in force provides as follows:

"In any manner overawes, influences, or coerces, or prepares, conspires, or attempts to overawe, influence or coerce, any person with the intention of inducing or compelling the Government of Sri Lanka, the President, a Member of Parliament, a member of the Police, a member of the Armed Forces or a public officer, to exercise or refrain from exercising in any manner the lawful powers of the Government of Sri Lanka, the President, such Member of Parliament, member of the Police, member of the Armed Forces or public officer shall be guilty of an offence notwithstanding anything in any other law shall upon conviction before the High Court be punished with death or rigorous imprisonment for a period not exceeding twenty years and shall forfeit all his property."

President Jayawardene also announced the proposed amendment of the Constitution which will, in addition to the aforementioned penalties, authorise the imposition of civic disabilities (which will virtually outlaw a person from political life) by a Presidential Commission which will investigate and report immediately on any speeches, writing or action which attempt to organise a movement to prevent by force or other unlawful means MPs from attending parliament and voting for the Bills which will implement government's proposals on devolution.

It is learnt that many who are in the forefront of the campaign against the establishment of Provincial Councils are getting cold feet in the light of President Jayawardene's latest move. Mrs. Bandaranaike in particular is said to be very worried. She had been without civil rights and therefore out of parliamentary politics for nearly six years. Her rights were restored only in January this year. She certainly is unlikely to bargain for another long term in the political wilderness.

## Diplomatic Embarrassment

The term 'economic refugees' is a byword in the vocabulary of the Sri Lankan government propagandists to describe the Tamils fleeing from the ethnic violence in Sri Lanka. However, they have been particularly embarrassed by the action of two diplomatic officials belonging to the Sinhala community attached to the Sri Lanka High Commission in Canada.

Although their periods of assignment have long expired, the two officials, Francis Jagoda and Gamage Palihapitiya, have refused to return to Sri Lanka. Canada is not allowing the Sri Lanka Foreign Ministry to replace the two officials who had finished their tour of duty until they return to Sri Lanka.

Jagoda had reached the mandatory retirement age of 55 when his three-year term in Canada ended in January this year. Palihapitiya who is 42 has rejected the recall to Colombo at the end of his term. He is reported to have enrolled himself for a course of study at the University of Ottawa. He refuses to return to Sri Lanka saying that Canada is 'a compassionate society to live in'.

The Sri Lankan High Commissioner, Arthur Ranasinghe, accusing the two said "these men want to enjoy what they see as 'greener pastures' by taking advantage of the more liberal Canadian immigration system

The Canadian External Chief of Protocol, Ted Arcand, commented; "When we send foreign service officers to Colombo, or elsewhere, we ensure that they return to Canada when their terms are up. We simply want to see other governments follow suit. Unfortunately, Canada's current immigration mechanism is being exploited. To permit Sri Lanka to name replacements to fill the present gaps in its Ottawa mission would be to make a mockery of accepted international practice".

The extremist Sinhala chauvinist lobby in Canada which went to town when 155 Tamil refugees recently landed in Canada, has observed total silence on the issue although the media has been full of the ding-dong battle concerning the two diplomatic officials.

## QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

### CANADA

(Extracts from the *Hausard* of October 6, 1986)

Sri Lankan High Commissioner

**Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster - Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State for External Affairs. This morning he was given six confidential sworn affidavits by Tamils of Canada indicting Brigadier General Tissa Weeratunga for the torture of Tamils in northern Sri Lanka in 1979. Given this serious new evidence presented to him today does the Minister not think it time to invoke the Vienna Convention and declare Brigadier General Weeratunga *persona non grata*?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr.

Speaker, just this morning I received the six affidavits in question and I will naturally look into them. Our inquiries so far on the first affidavit have not turned up any information to corroborate allegations against the High Commissioner. Our inquiries are, naturally, continuing.

#### Requestion for Investigation

**Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster - Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister said he would, if necessary, launch a full-scale investigation rather than the informal investigations he has hitherto conducted. Will he now at least launch a full-scale investigation given the serious new evidence presented to him today?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, we will look into the allegations contained in these affidavits to see what further action they merit. I understand the delicacy of this matter and we will proceed in that context. I intend to have discussions with the six persons who have filed the affidavits to see if there is any way which will protect their security and allow the information they have conveyed to me this morning to be made available to Sri Lankan authorities. As the Hon. Member and the House will know, it is only in Sri Lanka that the final legal authority to adjudicate these matters resides. I will, naturally, not take any action that would cause injury or damage to citizens of Canada.