

# Tamil TIMES

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## RAMASWAMY VENKATARAMAN

### President of India



A GANDHIAN, a freedom fighter cut from the old cloth, an uncompromising progressive, is how most of 73 year-old Ramaswamy Venkataraman's peers describe him. But "RV" as he is affectionately called, is remembered above all as a man imbued in the tradition of humanist philosophy.

One of the features of Venkataraman's long and distinguished career, which began in 1942 when he went to jail for participating in the Quit India Movement in his native Tamil Nadu, is the fact that the lawyer-turned-politician never actively sought political office.

His first ministerial office was virtually thrust upon him by Kamaraj in 1957, when Kamaraj insisted he join his Madras

state (this was before the DMK renamed the state Tamil Nadu) cabinet as industry and labour minister. In this capacity he gave birth to the concept of industrial estates. He then served in the Planning Commission and in 1980, Mrs. Gandhi inducted him as finance minister and later selected him for vice-presidency.

A clear thinker, astute logician and consummate debater who is known for never losing his cool. Venkataraman enjoys the distinction of having earned the respect not only of partymen but also of opponents, whose cases he has demolished during parliamentary debates. Excerpts from his interview with Senior Editor...



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# Wanted – A KONZEPT

WE USE THE German spelling of "concept" because it appears to convey in more severe terms what is needed now, in this crucial hour. President Soekarno of Indonesia, one of the founders of the Non-Alignment Movement and indeed the originator of the founding phrase, pregnant with meaning, "Pantjasila" (as the Indonesians spelt it), felt, at one point in his long rule that his people needed a **konsepi**, to give them a sense of **national purpose**, which again is the same as a concept or **Konzept**. We will continue in this editorial to use the stronger word **konzept** with a view to driving home our point.

Since 1977, President Jayawardene has successfully weaned off V. E. K. R. S. Thondaman from the ranks of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). But even while Thondaman was one of the three leaders of the Liberation Front, he had his own reservations about a separate state. This arose from the fact that many of his country people lived amidst the Sinhalese. We therefore have on the civilian political front today two organisations, the Tamil Congress represented by M. Sivasithamparam and the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi led by A. Amirthalingam. These two organisations have virtually merged and speak with one voice. We have however to turn our minds to what goes on among the militant groups. Velupillai Prabhakaran's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) seem at present to be the most active fighting force on the ground. They are vigorously assisted by the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS). On the other hand the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) are in and out. The Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) has virtually ceased to be a fighting force, while the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Force (EPRLF) has indulged in sporadic attacks on Sinhala targets.

There are two essentials in this grave hour of crisis or else there is a danger that we might sink together because of internecine warfare. Cain is killing Abel much to our dismay. And we must be careful of moles and infiltrators in our midst. The first essential is to evolve a unified command structure at the military level. We almost made it when the Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF) was formed at the time of the Thimpu Talks. As to who will lead the Front is a matter of consensual politics and is best left to the constituent components of the ENLF. Every attempt must also be made to bring in all the fighting units under one umbrella organisation. More importantly, we need to develop our **Konzept**, an all embracing ideology, on which not a single Tamil can shift ground. We have an excellent, seminal starting point in the historic Thimpu Declaration. Two of the statements in the Declaration merit universal attention: (1) the right the Tamils of Sri Lanka have to self-determination, (2) there cannot be security for the Tamil people without a distinct demarcated homeland. Devolution of power, forms of government, kinds of legislature and executive are minor details once this **konzept** is recognised.

Many Sinhalese mistake the idea of self-determination to mean secession. This need necessarily not be so. Once the Sinhalese accept that there are two nations, who must approach each other on an equal footing in this one island, then meaningful safeguards can be devised not merely to protect the Tamil nation but also its Sinhala counterpart. We must underline however that the discussions, arguments and negotiations must be on the basis that the two nations are parleying on equal terms. It cannot and should not mean that the major group is making **concessions** to the other. The Tamils and Sinhalese are the founding races of Sri Lanka just as the Anglophones and Francophones are the founding races of Canada. The Anglophones have come to recognise that for peace and tranquility, there must be **timely** accommodation of the French. In this way Quebec has been kept within the bounds of Canadian federation.

The **konzept** (self-determination and one contiguous homeland) must therefore be the foundation of our basic Tamil demand. We should not allow these carefully thought out, unanimously agreed upon, hardly worked, objectives lost sight of in the medley of constitutional formulae however tempting these might be. The ever present danger is that in the tangled skein of structures and institutions which some of us might be lured into, we might lose track of our primary **konzept**. Once the Sinhalese accept that we, the Tamils, have the right of self-determination and a homeland to call our own, then any assault on our entity as a nation can be warded off. Tamils in every walk of life must bear this **konzept** in mind. Sinhala propagandists and disinformation disseminators keep mouthing meaningless formulae on regional autonomy and forms of government (as Alexander Pope said of the latter, "let fools contest").

All these institutional devices are void of content. They are heavily mined territory into which an unsuspecting Tamil people might unwittingly wander. Even Indian constitutional experts are not conversant with the Sinhalese strategy of "Parangiya Kottaygiya vagay" (which is a Sinhalese saying of how they deliberately took the Portuguese when they first came to Ceylon through a long and tortuous route to Kotte instead of the direct route to that town). However if Tamils, especially with Sinhalese friends, are asked "what is it you Tamils want?" "What more can we give you than provincial councils etc?", a complete answer will be the **konzept** we have spelled out here. Often Tamil people, and so have Muslim people, been insulted, when Tamils are told, "why can't you behave like the Muslims and work within the framework?". It seems as if the Sinhalese are blighted by the rich Muslims (they deceive themselves into thinking all Muslims are alike) in their midst and therefore ask these inane questions. Besides one does not need a pick axe to find out what a Sinhalese really thinks of a Muslim. Though, for argument's sake, the Muslims are dragged in as people who behave with sheep-like docility in the presence of Sinhala wolves dressed in sheep's clothing.

# RAJIV LAYS OUT INDIA'S OPTIONS AND SRI LANKA'S DIRECTIONS

**OUR OPTIONS will depend on Lanka's directions. This was Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi's terse, somewhat cryptic observation at a luncheon meeting hosted by the Indian Association of Foreign Affairs Correspondents.**

He was replying to a question about India's options if Sri Lanka was not interested in a negotiated political settlement of the ethnic conflict.

The question-and-answer session was telecast by Doordharsan on Monday night (June 29) - the day President J. R. Jayawardene met his National Security Council to discuss the launching of the third - and final - phase of 'Operation Liberation' in the Jaffna peninsula.

On TV, Rajiv looked not only Mr. Clean but also Mr. Cool. He was unflappable and deftly parried the sharp, probing questions.

After tracing the background of Indian efforts to bring the militants and the Sri Lankan Government to the negotiating table, Rajiv said "It's up to Sri Lanka to decide whether it wants a negotiated political settlement of the ethnic conflict. The ball is in Lanka's court."

Rajiv noted that following the November 1986 visit by President Jayawardene, the December 19 proposals were evolved for purposes of negotiation - in fact, he said, the proposals go back 7 months earlier.

After some tacking and confusion - characteristic of Sri Lanka's policy on this issue - Sri Lanka had eventually consented to the package being the basis for negotiations.

The launching of the military offensive in the Jaffna peninsula made it difficult for India to pursue its efforts to bring about negotiations, Rajiv said.

For the last two and a half years, he pointed out, India had tried to help in evolving a negotiated political settlement. But there's some confusion about the directions Sri Lanka is moving in, on the issue. It was up to Colombo to come up with new ideas and new initiatives so that the dialogue on a negotiated political settlement could start again.

Rajiv strongly defended the air-drop of relief supplies in the Jaffna peninsula: it was India's response to a situation that demanded humanitarian relief. He rejected the suggestion that Operation Poomalai had damaged India's image in the neighbourhood or in the rest of the world. Nor had it affected India's mediatory role. On the contrary, he asserted that the net results are positive.

He said an accord had been reached with Sri Lanka on the distribution of relief supplies to Jaffna: this made dialogue possible again.

When a correspondent remarked that the talks between Sri Lanka and India had

proved fruitless, Rajiv disagreed. He said both countries had gained a lot during these talks. Perhaps it was time now to change the level and the method, bring in more political initiative. But he didn't elaborate on this point.

## INDIA WILL CONTINUE TO SEND RELIEF SUPPLIES TO JAFFNA.

While Rajiv said this at the luncheon meeting, back here in Sri Lanka, the Government gives the impression that the party is over: no more relief supplies from India. The situation is getting curiously.

Then Rajiv turned his attention to India's neighbours - and Sri Lanka's friends - Pakistan and China.

Pakistan has an active nuclear programme but has not gone nuclear yet, he stated. Neither did he have any facts at his disposal to back up reports that Sri

Lanka had entered into a pact for mutual assistance with Pakistan.

As for China, there had been some increase in the level of Chinese troop movements in Tibet. India had taken note of it. There was no border problem because India hasn't occupied an inch of Chinese territory. Nor was there any confrontation between the two countries as the Western media tries to make out.

At this stage, a correspondent remarked that India seems to be having trouble with all her neighbours.

Rajiv's response: We want to improve our relations with our neighbours. But this will not be done at the expense of our national interests and security. Our options are within the constraints of our national interests. Let me assure you India's interests will never be allowed to suffer.

**OUR VIEW: President Jayawardene will try to cheat Rajiv Gandhi again. The "Catch 22" question is "will he succeed?"**

## The Flower of our Youth

*OUR MOST PROMISING young men and women have been the victims of the terrible villains that constitute the Sinhala Buddhist militocracy. It is poor consolation to know that armies viciously suppressing Tamil youth in their struggle for Tamil rights will do the same with Sinhala youth, sooner rather than later. Sinhala youth have already become aware of the danger. President Jayawardene knows well that it was youths who overthrew Soekarno, De Gaulle and the South Korean rulers.*

*The witless President has now devised a scheme where young people will stay at home and prepare for their degrees. They will not congregate in universities. So with a magic wand, student unrest has been wished away! Little does the President realise that an idle mind at home could be the devil's (in our opinion, the angel's) workshop. These young people will have time to spare to use their intelligence to overthrow the tyranny that has gripped them.*

*What about our own young people? The sadistic Jayawardene tyranny has tried to destroy them, torture them, imprison them in the most unhygienic conditions (the President forgets that Mrs. Bandaranaike fed his son Ravi in a tin plate and gave him water in a coconut shell) carpet-bomb them along with their aged fathers and mothers while his chief assistant has every young person (man and woman) in the age group 14-40 arrested and taken prisoner to the*

*concentration camps in the Sinhala Buddhist south.*

*Why is the world permitting the outbreak of a phenomenon which is on a scale with the holocaust of the Jewish people by the monster Hitler? Is this not exactly what is being done to a proud and intelligent people, the Jews of Sri Lanka? As the former Labour Member of Parliament, R. Kilroy-Silk, stated in The Times, "must the world turn its eyes and conscience away from the dreadful atrocities that are being perpetrated?" The time indeed has arrived when an international tribunal might be constituted to try the Adolf Eichmanns and Klaus Barbies, the Mengeles and Himmlers, for the foul and evil deeds their Sinhala Buddhist counterparts are inflicting on innocent Tamil humanity.*

*Tamil opinion must alert, wherever Tamil people are, the consciences of many good men, church leaders, politicians and statesmen of the casualness with which evil is stalking the land in Tamil Sri Lanka. Our caution is that if steps are not taken now to bring the criminals to book, it may be too far gone for anything to be done. We can only hope that if the world continues to ignore our alarms, then the Tamil people themselves will have to form their own group of Nazi-hunters.*

*These Nazi hunters will surely bring to justice those who have supervised the butchery of our people and the murderous torture of our youth.*

# THE ELECTION GAMBIT

## Jayawardene's Plot

IN WHAT the opposition has already dubbed a political ploy in a country ravaged by civil war, President Junius Jayawardene plans to hold by-elections to parliament in August and nationwide polls for local bodies in September. But whether the government will be able to conduct these elections remains a wide open question.

The parliament by-elections are for the 16 seats in the northern and eastern provinces where Tamil guerrillas are fighting for a separate state. These seats have remained vacant since 1983, when the MPs from the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) left parliament after refusing to disavow separatism, required by the sixth amendment to the constitution.

The sixth amendment, supported by both the ruling United National Party (UNP) and the main opposition Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP), was passed in 1983 after the country was rocked by communal rioting in July that year. The constitutional provision to prohibit any demand to divide the country was rushed through parliament. The TULF MPs, elected on a separatist plank at the 1977 general election, predictably refused to take an oath of allegiance to the unitary constitution thereby losing their seats.

SLFP leader and former prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike has called the recent surprise decision to hold by-elections an attempt to appease the Western aid donors who were meeting in Paris on June 25. Under the election laws, the polling will have to be held between three and five weeks after nomination day – fixed for July 15.

The TULF, most of whose leaders have lived in self-imposed exile in the south Indian city of Madras were quick to denounce the by-elections. "It is a political ploy to create the impression

that political processes can be reactivated in the north and the east. But the people of the country and the world will not be deceived by this," a TULF spokesman said.

The TULF's ability to contest the by-elections has in any case been seriously eroded by a pan on its participation in politics placed on it by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the dominant guerrilla group which now calls the shots, particularly in the north. With two of their ex-MPs murdered by the separatists in Jaffna in 1985, the TULF understands very well that the guerrillas mean business.

But will the LTTE or any of the other guerrilla groups now claiming the mantle of representing the Tamils of the north and the east take part? The present indications are that they will not. A spokesman for Eros, the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation, the LTTE's junior partner, said in Madras that the by-elections were mere eyewash, ominously adding that "those who disregard this warning will be regarded as enemies of the people and the militant movement."

Apart from the fact that any serious contenders from the Tamil mainstream is unlikely, the law requires that the anti-separatist oath must be taken at the time of nomination. Unless the government decides to repeal the sixth amendment before July 15, the separatists would be shut out of the race.

Moreover, there is also the major question of Colombo's ability to hold by-elections in the troubled areas. The writ of the Jayawardene government does not run in most of the Jaffna peninsula, though the government has retaken control of a part of the area from the LTTE following a recent military offensive. Although the Eastern Province is in government hands, the insurgency continues to

rage there too, with the rebels killing soldiers and policemen almost every day. The elections commissioner has remained tight-lipped on his ability to conduct free and fair elections.

From Jayawardene's point of view, giving the Tamils of the north and the east the opportunity of electing their own representatives to parliament is most desirable. He would then be in a position to negotiate a political settlement of the ethnic problem – which has cost at least 6,000 lives in four years – with the representatives who have a mandate from the Tamils.

The Indian Government is once more hard at work trying to bring the LTTE to the negotiating table. LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran has sent his deputy Krishnakumar, or Kittu as he is better known, to New Delhi for talks, according to reports published in Colombo. These reports say that Prabhakaran has two pre-conditions on starting talks: that the security forces withdraw to positions held on December 19 last year, when what seemed to be the most workable negotiating lank was devised by New Delhi and Colombo, and that the LTTE be recognised as the Tamils' sole legitimate spokesman. If the second condition is granted, Prabhakaran is reportedly amenable to ignoring the first.

Meanwhile, the SLFP and five other opposition parties have announced that they will boycott the countryside local government elections to be held in September to elect members of municipal and urban councils as well as pradeshiya sabhas which will replace the old village committees. Only the Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) plans to run against the ruling UNP at these elections. The LSSP decision threatens to destroy its left-wing alliance with the communists and the Sri Lankan Mahajana Pakshaya.

The SLFP and most of the opposition parties fear that if the UNP sweeps the local elections, as it expected, the ruling party might once again attempt to extend the incumbent parliament with a snap referendum as in 1982. On that occasion the UNP took advantage of Jayawardene's presidential election victory to obtain the people's consent to extend parliament until 1989. The opposition has condemned that referendum as a fraud.

The LSSP, which is not represented in the present legislature, says it will go along with this argument provided the opposition withdraws from parliament – an option the SLFP and its allies are not willing to contemplate. These opposition parties maintain they would boycott most of the parliamentary sessions, attending only the important debates. In their attempts to counter the UNP, they say, parliament remains far too important a forum to give up.

By courtesy of Far Eastern Economic Review, 9 July 1987

## SINHALA SOLDIERS CAPTURED



Sunil, Nimal, Piyantha – the 3 Sri Lankan soldiers taken captive, when the Tigers stormed the Jaffna Telecommunication Army Centre on Wednesday morning, (June 3).

# The British Media and the Tamils

ON SATURDAY EVENING, June 27, the London Broadcasting Corporation hosted a programme, appropriately titled *Paradise Lost*, with Suresh Joshi as its compere. The programme lasted almost two hours. The principal participants were, Gamini Dissanayake and the Sri Lankan High Commissioner in London, Monerawela, arguing the Sinhalese side, while M. Sivasithamparam and N. Satyendra represented the case of the Tamils. The programme was evidently paid for by Sinhala advertisers judging by the number of 'ads' from Sinhala commercial houses.

Sivasithamparam and Satyendra proved heavyweights against Gamini Dissanayake and the High Commissioner. There may have been Sinhalese who wanted to believe Dissanayake but the Tamil public were neither impressed nor convinced. For that matter, not even any impartial non-Tamil listener.

Gamini Dissanayake dealt with admissions to Universities with a nonchalance bordering on contempt for the truth. He trivialised the suffering the Tamil people were going through. This is not cause for surprise.

Gamini Dissanayake himself once said that should India invade, every single Tamil in Sri Lanka will be sacrificed to the land! Chandra M. indulged himself in parrot-like repetition of hackneyed examples on employment - 'The Chief Justice is a Tamil. The Attorney General is a Tamil' - revealing the paucity of convincing arguments against discrimination.

Sivasithamparam and Satyendra on the other hand dwelt on the failure of the United National Party to live up to the promises in its manifesto, namely, their pledge to deal with the discriminatory policies heaped on the Tamils by the criminally culpable Government of Sirimavo Bandaranaike, during 1970-77. Sivasithamparam, in particular, dealt with the Jayawardene Government's farcical claim that it had corrected the vile discrimination practised by Mrs. Bandaranaike on Tamils seeking admission to the Universities.

Satyendra was forthright in reiterating the principles enunciated in Thimpu and he underlined his statements with passages from Virginia Leary's and Paul Sieghart's findings on the Sri Lankan Government's cruel policies of torture and its disrespect for the independence of judges.

There was "a phone-in" where a question by Mrs. Murugiah on the bombing of the Jaffna Hospital showed Minister Gamini fleeing from the truth. But the compere, Joshi, added his half penny's worth by stating that when he flew over the hospital from tree-top level, he did not see any damage! The answer to this thoughtless statement was given in Vivian Simson's documentary on Sri Lanka in "World in Action" on ITV, on

Monday evening, June 29 at 8.30 p.m.

Jaffna Hospital in fact had been bombed, not once, but many times, and there was the hospital with the damage inflicted for all the world to see. Why did not Joshi stop to think that there must be something that a Government wants to conceal if it takes foreign journalists by air at tree-top level without permitting them to make their own investigations on the ground? Even the ordinary intelligence will smell a rat!

There were the usual questions from Sinhalese during the phone-in. The Sinhala worry is that they (the Tamils) had had it so good under the British (this is not accurate, there being more Sinhalese Christians and pro-British Buddhists in the administration) no proper breakdown has been made; in fact, Tamil Hindus were discriminated against. The biggest lie is that even if the Tamils found places, they did not, as the Sinhalese say, get in there by stealth. They sat competitive examinations and were recruited on merit.

The phoner, Vimal, had the hardihood to say that the Tamils had it fine in Sri Lanka after independence up to 1956 and for a few years thereafter. This shows that the Sinhalese Governments from 1948-1956 were forced to recognise merit even as a temporary expedient. Why should "Sri Lankans", if there is such a word, be divided on the basis of race? It is only one step more for Sri Lanka to have employment on religious and caste grounds. That day is not far off once the Tamils have been subjugated, if ever.

Why should (if there is truth to this lie) the alleged sins of the (Tamil) fathers be visited upon their Tamil children and grandchildren in an entirely new context? Does Britain discriminate on the basis of Irish, Scots, Welsh and English people? Or are they all regarded as British regardless of their nationality?

The documentary on Sri Lanka in "World in Action", by Vivian Simson on ITV on June 29, brought home the atrocities perpetrated on an identifiable minority, the Tamils, by a bestially evil Sinhala Government. The *terrible villain* behind the pogromisation of the Tamils was not interviewed.

Minister Gamini Dissanayake was once again there with his small talk and its yawning credibility gap about sending "signals" to the Tamil Tigers that they cannot hope for their "military solution". That, he said, was the reason for the Sinhala military, aerial and naval assault on Vadamardachy. Obviously in these matters the Minister is short on sensitivities in that he advocates the use of the sledge hammer to **not** kill the fly (the Tamil militants) but to **injure** them.

He is of course aware that innocent Tamils are being killed in this pretence of a policy to "send signals". The fact is that the Sinhala Government stated at the beginning of their "last offensive" that

"either they (the Tamil militants) win or we win" and they added: "this is a war to the finish". Now that they have been thwarted by Rajiv Gandhi, they indulge in sweet talk on "signals."

Gamini Dissanayake glosses over the enormous crimes against Tamil humanity committed by the State's terror system. At places, viewers noted that the investigative Simson's efforts found the Minister averting direct questions and the truth.

Viewers also witnessed the wise and perspicacious Simson cornering General Cyril Ranatunga. Simson had collected convincing proof of the callous bombings, the arson from napalm bombs, with chemicals mixed with bombs so that the fire will adhere to the flesh and cause widespread destruction to property. The General was obviously lying through his teeth when he responded to Simson's question on the napalm bombs. These he said were not damage inflicted by Sinhala Buddhist bombs but the result of stored petrol and diesel barrels catching fire when "terrorist" bunkers were hit by aerial attacks. Obviously the "terrorists" could not have had chemicals mixed with the oil in their barrels. Nor was General Ranatunga refraining from telling lies when he said that there were only 46 civilian casualties.

When stumped, he stuttered that there must have been 180-200 civilian casualties. And all this, after 10 days of indiscriminate bombing of densely populated areas where even temples were subjected to sadistic and savage air attacks. One woman told Simson that Tamil women including pregnant women had been taken by army men to be raped. At least 20 of them, she said, were found killed, some without their limbs. The cowardly Commander had also permitted his Sinhala troops to use Tamil civilians as a human shield to move from area to area.

The Viraj Mendis programme on Tuesday, June 30 brought out in greater clarity the lies that characterise the Sri Lankan Government and its Ministers. The British supporters of Viraj Mendis, who is now provided sanctuary in a church in Manchester, made it plain that they would not trust President Jayawardene or High Commissioner, Monerawela.

This is only to be expected. Persons of the Jayawardene vintage are habitual liars who practise inhuman torture and kill for pleasure. Some British members said they would not want Viraj Mendis's blood on their conscience. Surely the world should by now know that the villains in Sri Lanka's Jayawardene Government practise deceit and trade in plain and simple prevarication. It is a fact that the Jayawardene Government will kill Viraj Mendis and then repeat the well told lie that he was fleeing to South India all the way from Colombo. They have manufactured the story about the 7 Tamil boys killed in Boosa concentration camp.

*Our Media Correspondent*



# INSIDE JAFFNA

## Tale of wanton destruction and desecration and deaths told in pictures (by kind courtesy of Frontline)



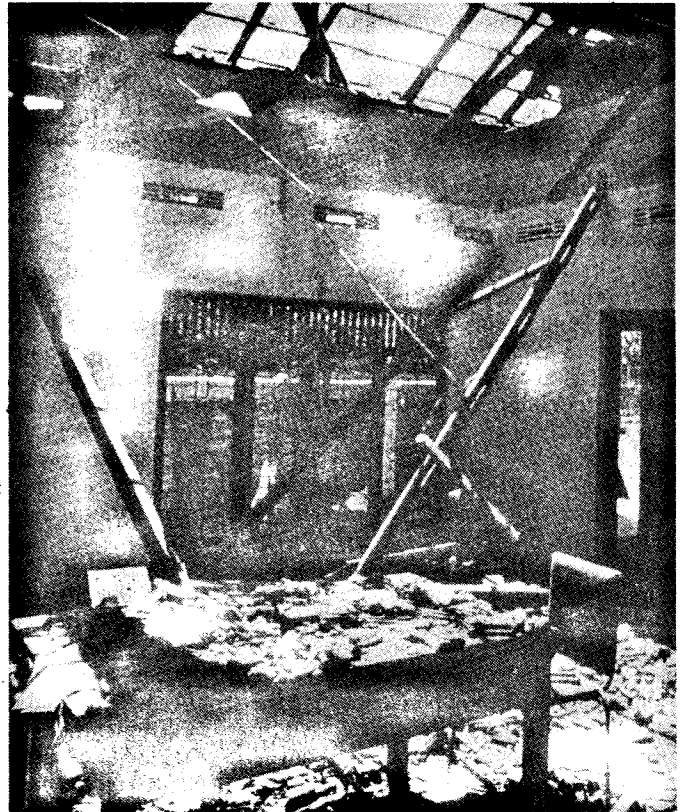
While helicopters were bombing the neighbourhood, children seek refuge in an air-raid shelter.



The Chidambara College in Valvettiturai destroyed in Air Force bombing during the offensive on the Vadamarachi region of the Jaffna peninsula. The LTTE had then built sheds for the classes, but these too were not spared by the incendiary bombs.



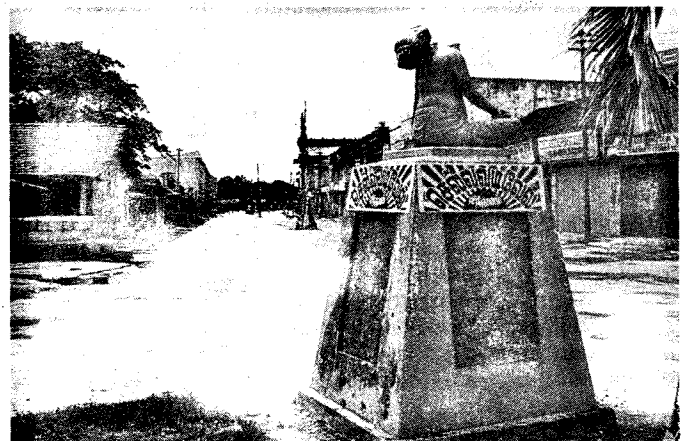
The Vannarpannai Vaitheeswaran temple, one of the government notified "shelters" in the Jaffna peninsula, after the Sri Lankan Air Force had bombed it. The child below had taken shelter inside the temple.



A Jaffna home after an air raid.



A family fleeing after incendiary bombs were dropped from the Air Force's Avro planes.



As if symbolic of the town's suffering, the damaged statue of saint-poet Tiruvalluvar at the deserted Periakadai junction in Jaffna town.

# THE BRUTAL ASSAULT ON VADAMARADCHY

VALVETTITURAI in Vadamadachy, North Sri Lanka is the birth place of Prabhakaran, the Leader of the Liberation Tigers. Assumed among Sri Lankan circles therefore as the stronghold of the LTTE, it was however common knowledge that strategically, Vadamadachy, had to be the first point of attack in a push against the Peninsula.

The close proximity to South India and the constant presence of the Sri Lankan naval vessels patrolling the coast around the Peninsula in a determined bid to cut off communications between the militants and their supporters across the Palk Straits, it was an open secret that the Sinhala Second Front was being launched at Vadamadachy. And sure it came as expected in the early hours of May 26, by land, sea and air.

Appropriate noises had already been made. Declared Junius Jayawardene, it would be a fight to the finish. "Either they win or we win". It was indeed an ominous warning to the Tamils of the North in particular.

"More than 26,000 troops are now deployed in the Peninsula. Of these 8,000 have been moved in over the past ten days. Six bombers, 14 Bell 212 helicopters, two Cessna reconnaissance aircraft and two Chinese Y-12 transport planes are providing aerial support. An unspecified number of vessels including gunboats and patrol boats

are also being utilised," reported *The Hindu* in the last week of May. But for the strength of the infantry which had tripled to about 60,000 the rest of the military strength could easily be guessed as the entire might of the Sri Lankan State. J. R. Jayawardene therefore had every right to warn the Tamils of the North, at best about five hundred thousand in the Peninsula, now after their deaths and flights to more secure places of safety from the land of their birth, and of refuge after July 1983.

The stage itself seemed to have been set by the Pettah Bomb that exploded in the last week of April and the indiscriminate bombing of Jaffna City that followed almost overnight on the 22nd itself. It began as a determined bid after the civilians of the Peninsula had been terror struck by frequent and unexpected strafing and bombing from helicopters and transport aircraft carrying petrol bombs mixed with some lethal plastic, a Sri Lankan invention, confused with napalm. The economic blockade has already strangulated the peninsula. It was already a land under siege.

When "Operation Liberation" was begun on May 26, it was Goliath from out of the Bible. It was intense and bloody. Entire buildings were razed to the ground and rockets and bombs from overhead fell on a number of churches and temples. Most people

preferred to take shelter in the bunkers built by the Tigers.

A clerk working in the Kandy Commercial Bank who had gone to Nelliadi in the heart of the Vadamadachi area to see his family says he was trapped in bunkers for three days while the shelling and bombardment went on. Requesting anonymity for fear of army reprisals, he says: "We were given two hours to move to a safe place before curfew was imposed. I took my wife, mother and children to a small church which seemed like hell. There was no food, the children were screaming and there were reports about people who ventured out to get food being shot.

We went without food for three days before we could flee to a safer place." In Valvettiturai (population: 8,000) and Point Pedro (population: 35,000), residents have been cowering in terror in temples and churches since the offensive began on May 26.

Just how many civilians have died is impossible to say. Lalith Athulathmudali, Minister for National Security, claims that only 47 civilians have died.

The Indian High Commission in Colombo puts the figure at between 200 and 300. The LTTE claims that over 600 have been killed. But as Athulathmudali admits: "The actual figure will be impossible to discover till some documentation is done."

## SINHALA CAPTIVES INTERVIEWED

THE FIVE SOLDIERS and three policemen held captive by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) after they overran the mini-camp of the Security Forces at Pannai, Jaffna, on March 23, 1987, were interviewed for international television by Mr. Chandra Perera of the National Broadcasting Corporation of America (NBC) and Worldwide Television News (WTN) who were accompanied by the Editor of the 'Saturday Review'.

Present on the occasion were "Mr. Raheem", spokesman of the LTTE, and Mr. M. Kanagarajanayagam, a Director of the 'Saturday Review'.

This was the first time the eight prisoners-of-war held in a well-guarded house in Jaffna were interviewed for international television.

The Editor, in a brief address, in Sinhala, told the eight prisoners that like so many others in the Security Forces, they had been sent as "cannon fodder" to the North while leaders of the Government and the Generals relaxed in Colombo in air-conditioned comfort. He said it was a big political game in which some leaders of both communities, as well as arm dealers and contractors, benefitted.



Captain Raheem, (LTTE)

He asked for the ages of the captives. They were all within the range of 20 and 22 years.

Kandy Trinity College 'Raheem', a big man in the LTTE set-up is also within the same age range. He is only 20. He was a self-composed man, compared to the eight captives, who appeared to be somewhat nervous in the presence of so many fully armed guards.

But questioned by the Editor, the

captives said they had been treated well by the captors. No torture at all. Not even a slap on the face compared to what happens to Tamil youths, some completely innocent, taken into custody by the Security Forces. The Editor told them that he had seen some Tamil youths hung upside down in the former Army camp at Gurunagar.

The Editor asked them why they were in Jaffna. "For a job" was the unanimous reply.

Poor chaps. Given an inadequate training, they are sent to the North to battle against Tamil youths dedicated to preserve their heritage.

Some of the remarks (unprintable) made by the Editor made 'Mr. Raheem' smile. "But do not get deceived by the smile", the Editor said. He could be ruthless as any other Tiger! "Mr. Raheem" smiled again.

### NO PARALLEL

There's no parallel between Sri Lanka and Punjab, says Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. He said the Indian Government was not bombing or shelling the Sikhs in Punjab, unlike what was happening to the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

## Can the Tamils and Sinhalese ever again live together?

M. Sivasithamparam, President, Tamil United Liberation Front

### **Economic Destruction**

This is the question that is uppermost in the minds of every Tamil – the farmer who can no longer go to his field, the fisherman who can no longer go to sea, the student whose books have been burnt, the Government-servant whose every action is suspect, the young man hanging upside down in Boosa, the militant with the rifle slung over his shoulder – after all the blood that has flown, after all the houses reduced to dust, after all the barbaric torture inflicted on young men, after every Tamil has had to “live under sentence of death” for months, can we again live together?

You quite rightly asked for an answer from the TULF who in 1976 solemnly proclaimed to the world that *only the restitution of the sovereignty of the Tamils which was lost to the foreigner could guarantee to the Tamils freedom, equality, security, dignity, honour and economic well-being. In other words, the time has come to part company.* The TULF also felt that true amity with the Sinhalese would be possible only with such a political solution to the vexed ethnic problem.

Let me try to answer the question and the answer has necessarily to be somewhat long. Many of those who decry the agitation of the Tamil people for their just rights often speak of the harmonious living-together of the Sinhalese and Tamils in years gone by. Nothing can be further from the truth.

An Oxford University publication, “Ceylon – a divided Nation”, is a historically substantiated account of the continuous bickering between the two national groups. At times the conflict was open, at other times it was simmering to flare up again. Of course, when the British exercised absolute power, both groups reconciled themselves to live together without conflict. But once a modicum of power was transferred to Ceylonese hands, the rivalry and bickering started, with the British playing a dubious rule of umpire, sometimes favouring the Tamils, sometimes the Sinhalese.

### **Broken Pacts**

The rivalry reached new heights when real power was to pass into Ceylonese hands in 1945. The Sinhalese leaders wanted all power in their hands and were only prepared to concede a semblance of sharing power by gifting portfolios to their Tamil lackeys. The Tamils were to live in the island at the pleasure of the Sinhalese and were to be satisfied with what the Sinhalese gave them out of the largeness of their hearts.

No self-respecting Tamil was prepared to accept this humiliating position and the conflict went on with varying degrees of intensity. Rival Sinhala leaders, facing a crisis in their power struggle, suddenly awoke to Tamil grievances and entered into pacts and agreements with Tamil

leaders. Once the crisis passed and their power base became secure, they forgot their promises and pacts and became once again pan-Sinhala leaders and Tamils had to take to the streets again.

In 1972, a new constitution was promulgated which clearly placed the stamp of second-class citizens on the Tamil people and removed even the meagre safeguards provided by certain provisions, like Section 29, in the Soulbury Constitution.

### **Demand for Tamil Eelam**

The Tamil people decided to meet this new challenge by closing ranks and forming the Tamil United Liberation Front. At its annual convention in Vaddukkoddai, the TULF adopted the famous resolution to constitute the free democratic socialist secular State of Tamil Eelam. This was not a decision taken without due consideration by youthful enthusiasts. This was taken in the presence of Mr. Chelvanayakam and while Mr. Ponnambalam was alive and Co-President of the TULF.

After many weeks of discussion, having considered all options, the TULF made this decision. It was certainly not an election gimmick. The Tamil people, by an overwhelming majority, endorsed the decision of the TULF.

### **Foreign governments aware**

The first task of the TULF Members of Parliament was to table an amendment, based on the Vaddukkoddai resolution, to the Policy Speech of the Jayawardene Government. I had the privilege of moving the amendment in Parliament. Even as I was speaking in Parliament, all hell broke loose in various parts of the country. *Tamils were attacked in all parts of the country. This was the work of the Jayawardene Government to divert people's attention from this historic resolution.* They did succeed; for two long years we spent our time and energy in rehabilitating our people so badly afflicted by the riots and in preparing the evidence to be placed before the Sansoni Commission. But the riots attracted the attention of the world to our demand for a state.

Diplomats of various countries interviewed TULF leaders to ascertain the real nature of the Tamil problem. While all of them agreed that the Tamil people had deep-seated grievances and successive Sinhala Governments had cussedly refused to redress them, they all expressed their serious doubt if a separate state was the only remedy. ‘Was there not some other reasonable alternative?’ was the question they all posed to the TULF leadership. As a responsible party, the thinking of the leadership went somewhat on the following lines – *world opinion will have to be on our side. If the UNP, as promised in its election manifesto, came up*

*with an alternative which reasonably satisfied the aspirations of the Tamil people, let us take it to the people and with their approval try to work it. If it succeeds, well and good, we have achieved the well-being of our people. If the UNP did not come up with any alternative or such alternative did not work, then we can, with all justification, tell the world, ‘we tried to obtain an alternative but the Sri Lankan Government, as usual, failed to meet the just aspirations of the Tamil people and therefore the pursuit of the idea of regaining our freedom was the only option left to us’.*

On this line of thinking, we announced that we stood by the mandate given to us by the Tamil people. We were, however, prepared to place any reasonable alternative before them. In the end we only saw the district development councils farcically worked by the Government and a war of attrition against the Tamil people. We lost 10,000 lives; we lost property worth billions; a once proud people are helpless refugees in their thousands in all parts of the world; the flower of our youth languishes in detention camps, suffering barbaric torture. But we also saw our brave youth, inadequately armed, standing up to the might of the State. There is a virtual civil war in the island. In this grim situation, every human emotion cries out **we can no longer live together.**

### **Opposition to separate state**

We are, however, a people with a long history of learning and training which teaches us that emotion must be tempered with reason. We recognise that India alone is our true friend, guide and philosopher. The entire sub-continent, all parts of it, are with us in this hour of crisis; every political party has expressed deep concern at the sufferings of our people; most newspapers have expressed strong opinions on our behalf. But we must also take note of the fact that the great majority of them do not go so far as to support our demand for Tamil Eelam. In fact many of them have said so. What then are we to do?

Is it too late for us even now to map out a common demand, win support for it in India primarily and in other countries, give full support to the fighting militants to keep up the pressure on the Sri Lankan Government and compel the Sinhala leadership to agree to a political arrangement that will satisfy the aspirations of the Tamil people and will be commensurate with their sufferings. No constraints of unitary constitutions or referendums should be permitted to water down any such solution.

*Let us therefore tell the Sinhala people and their leadership –  
Let us live together on our terms or let us part. Please do not force us to think of other options.  
This is no idle threat . . .*



# HORROR TALES FROM JAFFNA

**Following the persecution of civilians, especially teenagers, by Sri Lankan soldiers in Jaffna, there is a refugee influx into the Mandapam camp once again. They bring with them tales of unspeakable horror. A glimpse into the camp brings out the mood of the refugees.**

TAMIL REFUGEES from Jaffna in Sri Lanka have started trickling into the Mandapam camp in Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu. Many of these refugees are young people who have left behind their close relatives and come to India to save their own lives. "The older you are, the better your chances of survival in Jaffna," said one of them.

Gnanammal of Tiruveni, near Jaffna, said that it was the young ones whom the security forces were after. Boys in their teens were branded as "kottiyas" (Sinhalese for Tigers), the nickname for the Tamil militants. And if it is a woman, what the soldiers do is anybody's guess. "They take away everything from young women, strip them and finally throw them into the fire."

Arunthavaselvam (20) and Ugadasan (22), two students from Vadamarachi, had come to the refugee camp a couple of days earlier. They seem to have no doubt that Pakistan is actively involved on the side of the Sri Lankan forces in crushing the Tamils in Jaffna. "We saw an unexploded bomb with Pakistani markings," they claimed.

## "Foreigners"

Alagusundaram, another refugee, said he saw heavily built, white-skinned men with long brown hair and short beards leading the Sri Lankan soldiers into the villages. According to him, these "foreigners" were in command. They could not, however, say to which country the men belonged.

The Sri Lankan forces entered the Jaffna villages and at the word "go" they ran amuck. Shouting abuse in Sinhalese, the soldiers ransacked the houses of Tamilians, carried away young women with swords, held infants by their legs and tore them apart and ripped pictures of gods and goddesses.

## Minister "garlanded"

A refugee recalled a rather comic situation where the civilians were compelled to garland and receive

Lalith Athulathmudali, Sri Lanka's National Security Minister, during his visit to Jaffna. The day before his arrival, a group of soldiers addressing the civilians had said that the Minister should be made to feel that they were happy with his arrival and that they had accepted the presence of the soldiers. So saying, they had thrust upon them a number of garlands. The civilians, out of fear, complied. Video tapes of the civilians garlanding the Minister were taken by Government cameramen.

The Sri Lankan Government was trying to make out that the island's security forces were "liberating" the civilians of Jaffna from the militants. But the refugees were quite firm in saying: "It is the other way round. The soldiers are wiping out the Tamil race. But for the militants, we would have disappeared long ago."

Yugawathi Subramaniam was separated from her husband six months before their first baby was due. Now the child is 18 months old, but the father is yet to see her. He is in a refugee camp in West Germany. A foreign television team that visited the Mandapam camp recently took pity on Yugawathi and her child and promised to help her join her husband.

The security forces take over the civilians' houses and treat the inmates as menials. The people are kept confined to the house or the village and are forced to eat just what is left over by the soldiers.

## In no position to pull trigger

Jesunathan and his wife Anita said the soldiers persecuted the civilians in a terrible manner. Often they chopped off the thumb and forefinger of young men saying "now you will be in no position to raise a gun and pull the trigger." The soldiers would also have

soda bottle splinters strewn on the ground and make their captives strip to the waist and roll on the glass pieces.

In the last few days, teenagers in large numbers have been coming in as refugees. These people said they had been giving a moral boost to the militants. But now, as the security forces "did not engage in battles but were bent upon wiping out the Tamils" they had come to India. "We want to save and preserve our race," they said.

## Teenagers cause problems

The arrival of the teenagers from Jaffna has caused some problems in the refugee camp. As the camp was overflowing, the authorities wanted to divert the "single-member families" to camps in other districts. But the teenagers from Jaffna would not agree to this. A small group demanded that the refugees who had come from Mannar be sent to other districts. "The people from Mannar had run away from their places much earlier in panic while we from Jaffna had stayed on all these years and have come now, leaving our property. Therefore we should be given priority over the others," they argue.

When told that it was not possible to uproot those who had already joined the camp, the teenagers sat down in front of the camp gate and prevented the Rehabilitation Department officials from leaving the premises. The District Revenue Officer (Rehabilitation), A. Ponnusamy, talking to the boys, told them that the Department had its own rules and regulations which were in the interest of the refugees and it would be good for the boys not to do anything that would make them fall into disfavour. The boys, then, reluctantly withdrew.

By courtesy of FRONTLINE,  
June 27-July 10, 1987

## VADAMARADCHY "THE BLEEDING STATISTICS"

UNCONFIRMED REPORTS from the Vadamaradchy area, where the Sri Lankan Government launched the first stage of its massive military operation to wrest back control of the Jaffna peninsula from the Liberation Tigers, say that between 900-1,000 people died, during the Government's self-styled Operation Liberation.

The same sources say about 5,000 people were injured by heli-strafting. About 500 were injured by slash-and-cut army men wielding swords and knives. More than 4,000 troops, 8 helicopters and 6 bombers were deployed, these sources add.

While the "Saturday Review" is not yet in a position to confirm the above details - for obvious reasons - some statistics and information gathered from hospital sources will be helpful to the discerning reader.

On May 26 - the day the offensive was mounted - 600 people were admitted to the Base Hospital at Point Pedro. 120 were dead. The hospital can accommodate only 250 patients. 25 patients were brought to the Jaffna Hospital after 10 days.

The fingers of at least one of the persons admitted to the Point Pedro Hospital that day, had been chopped off. The hospital was run mainly by doctors and nurses from outside the Peninsula that day: reinforcements perhaps.

On admission, the first screening post asked the patients (and/or those who accompanied them) to say terrorists had shot them. The patients said the army shot them: the hospital record says terrorists shot them.

That's a nice touch, Mossad.

Courtesy of Saturday Review,  
June 13, 1987

## RACISM RISING IN REFUGEE HAVEN

NOBODY, including Government officials, has precise figures about the number of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in West European countries, but estimates vary between 10,000 and 30,000. It is a community under emotional and psychological siege.

The current attitude of West European Governments compounds the crisis as nobody knows how many will be granted asylum. Once the situation in Sri Lanka is normalised, it is possible that many of them may not want to stay in Western Europe where racism is a living reality in most countries.

**Tamils die in fire:** In the West German media is the widely reported case of two Tamil refugees who died in a fire at a hotel for refugees in Detmond, yesterday. The authorities believe the Tamils set the place on fire. Four other men at the centre were treated in hospital for minor injuries.

The public prosecutor investigating the incident said four molotov cocktails were found outside the building. The two men, who had been in Detmond for 18 months, were wearing special fire-proof gloves and the clothes of one were drenched with liquid explosive. The official said it was too early to speculate whether they started the fire as a protest or whether it was suicide. There are about 40 asylum seekers in the Detmond camp. Most are Sri Lankan Tamils and Turks. There has been no tension so far except, according to police, in a Tamil home where bachelors lived.

But the fire highlights the issue of Sri Lankan Tamil asylum-seekers in West Germany, where public opinion is hostile, to say the least. The conditions under which Third World asylum seekers are held have been repeatedly criticised by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees who said recently that Bonn's policy towards refugees had 'failed completely'.

**Feeling against aliens:** Racist feeling runs strong in West Germany which has an alien population of some 4.7 millions, mainly

from Greece, Turkey, Portugal and Italy. The Turks some 1.5 million, are in the majority. It is more pronounced and ugly there than in France or Britain, though they have significantly exploited foreign labour to build their post-war economy.

In the early 1960s, the majority of West Germans wanted foreigners to come and help them build up the country. They were then called 'guest workers'. Today, a vast majority would back a call for the repatriation of all foreigners.

**Nazis coming out:** This animosity has also brought the old Nazis out of political hibernation. The scenario is perhaps as embarrassing for the West Germans as it may be frightening for the victims of racism.

Resentment against foreigners has been further provoked by the increasing number of asylum seekers pouring in from Third World countries. There are also refugees from Poland and East Germany – but these are welcome because they belong to the same cultural and racial stock and because they 'cannot be sent back to totalitarian States'. The same criterion does not apply to Third World refugees who are immediately suspected of job hunting.

No one disputes the fact that the vast majority of political asylum seekers, from India and Pakistan in particular, are bogus. But in the case of Sri Lankan Tamils there are many genuine cases.

**Worry over 'German traits':** There is now sharp political wrangling over the future of foreigners in West Germany – it remains to be seen if the Germans have really abandoned the racist traits of the last generation. Many observers have serious doubts. With the growing prosperity of West Germany and its larger-than-life status in Europe, many non-German Europeans seriously worry about what they call 'German traits and the future problems in Europe'.

By courtesy of "The Hindu",  
(International Edition), July 11

## Ties with India not lost, says Hameed

THE SRI LANKAN FOREIGN MINISTER, Mr. A. C. S. Hameed has said despite charges and counter charges in Delhi and Colombo, "we have not allowed our relations to deteriorate beyond redemption".

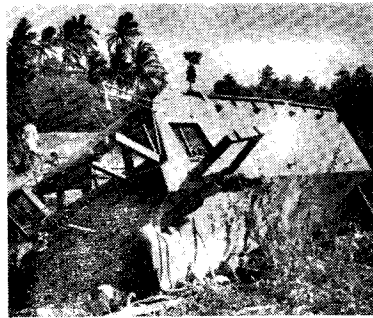
The "very fact that during this (ethnic) crisis, running through the last three years, dialogue was possible between the two capitals shows that we have been careful to avoid a situation where all doors are closed".

In an interview with the English daily 'Island', Mr. Hameed said the fact that Sri Lanka "buys arms and ammunition from Pakistan and China, and that our officers are being trained in Pakistan" was not by design. These arrangements came as a result of "terrorism".

**Why Israeli interests section:** The Minister also argued that the opening of the Israeli interests section in Colombo was again due to "terrorism". This Government came into office in 1977. The interests section was opened in 1984. "So when we sought to buy arms and ammunition from there and obtain the services in intelligence gathering. We had to have some contact point for them (Israel) in Colombo".

Replying to a question, Mr. Hameed said: "It is not correct to say that only China and Pakistan came out against India's air-dropping" of relief goods in Jaffna.

## A SOUTH AFRICAN MADE BUFFEL ARMoured CARRIER IN MANNAR DISTRICT



## Significant Milestones on the Road to Tamil Eelam

- 4.2.48 Ceylon granted independence
- 5.6.56 Sinhala-only Act passed in Parliament
- 26.7.57 Banda-Chelva Pact signed
- 20.2.61 Tamil National Struggle "Satyagraha" commenced
- 24.3.65 Dudley-Chelva Pact signed
- 22.5.72 First Republican Constitution came into effect
- 10.1.74 9 Tamils brutally killed by police at International Tamil Research Conference in Jaffna
- 5.6.74 Sivakumaran becomes first martyr in Tamil Struggle
- 2.2.76 Police killed 8 Muslims in a mosque
- 21.7.77 Tamils give mandate for Tamil-Eelam
- 15.8.77 State-sponsored Communal Violence started
- 16.5.78 Act proscribing Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and other similar organisations passed
- 14.7.79 6 Freedom fighters tortured and killed by Police
- 20.7.79 Prevention of Terrorism Act comes into effect
- 1.6.81 Jaffna Public Library, oldest in South Asia, burnt by Police
- 13.8.82 Youth leaders Kuttimani and Jegan sentenced to death under P. T. A.
- 25.7.83 35 Tamil Eelam fighters massacred in Welikade Prison
- 27.7.83 Another 17 fighters massacred in the same jail
- 4.8.83 Constitutional Sixth Amendment against separatism
- 23.9.83 42 Tamil Eelam fighters freed from Batticaloa Prison. A new chapter opens in the Liberation Struggle.

## For the nth time! J. R. proposes to Tamils

IN A FRESH BID to end Sri Lanka's ethnic war, President Junius Jayawardene has proposed a concession to Tamil militants, and offered to grant autonomy to the northern and eastern provinces under one provincial council, press reports said.

Mr. Jayawardene told a trade union meeting in Colombo that the Government is willing to accept the creation of an autonomous state comprising the Tamil-dominated northern and eastern provinces.

The offer does not include merger of the two provinces, as demanded by the rebels, but grants the creation of one council to oversee both districts. There was no immediate reaction from the Tamil rebels. – A.P.

The Guardian, July 20, 1987

# THE BITTER MOOD IN SRI LANKA

AN INDIAN SHIP carrying relief supplies finally berthed at Kankesanthurai, the northern-most Sri Lankan port, a fortnight ago. But New Delhi could have chosen a ship with a less provocative name. *Island Pride* can only add salt to Sri Lankan wounds. Anti-Indian demonstrations are still held every other day before the Indian High Commission in Colombo while Prime Minister R. Premadasa leads the protracted, propagandist, anti-Indian war, passionately supported by the media.

The Sinhala middle class, in particular, is seething with anger, more because the manner of intervention has been so bitterly humiliating. Perhaps an invasion by a power a hundred times stronger, would have been preferred. In the case of the Sinhalese opposed to the ruling United National Party (UNP), the question is whether India or their own regime is the main enemy.

The wily opposition leader, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, has partially resolved that contradiction. She, her son Anura, who is leader of the Opposition, and their Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP) have condemned the Indian violation of sovereignty. But she also blames the Jayawardene Government, its anti-Indian policy ineptness and inconsistency.

A government that cannot defend the country's sovereignty must resign, she said last week, adding: "My foreign policy of genuine non-alignment and friendship with neighbours was our first line of defence." She then went to demand a "restoration of democracy" and found all other opposition parties, including the rival three-party left alliance, responding to her slogan.

With the arrival of the *Island Pride* and relief supplies likely to be a two-week operation, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil

Eelam (LTTE) have announced a unilateral ceasefire – an assurance to the Indian Government – and expressed the hope that the army will do the same. Though there have been sporadic clashes, the drop in casualty figures reflects the sharp scaling down of the fighting, which effectively ended with the Indian air-drop. As part of this politico-military struggle, four cabinet ministers also flew to the north to appear on television, distributing food and talking freely to local people.

Recent happenings trouble those Sri Lankans who realise that the alienation of the Tamils in the north may reach a point of non-return, and psychologically, if not physically, a 'separate' state may come into being. Prominent U.S. Congressman Stephen Solarz, said last week that if a political settlement is not reached soon, the Tamil north will become South Asia's Ulster. The current situation suggests that Jaffna has already gone beyond Ulster.

The Tigers in the Jaffna peninsula have gone strictly by the book – on guerrilla warfare. With the exception of Jaffna city, they have withdrawn in the face of the armoured might of the Sri Lankan forces, particularly in the Vadamarachi area on the north-eastern coastal flank, where the army has the advantage of the sea behind its back and naval protection. If the Tigers' reflex was a classic guerrilla response so was the Sri Lankan Army's. It has established nine new camps, extended the defence perimeters of all camps, dug trenches, fortified forward positions and gone through the predictable exercise of consolidation.

The question being asked last week was whether it can hold, patrol and defend the "liberated zone". The Tigers have meanwhile strengthened their positions in Jaffna, the key in this highly complex politico-military conflict which not only

involves the two combatants but also the politics of this island country and India as also – overtly or covertly – Pakistan, Israel, China, Britain and the US.

Politics in the Sinhala south is the great neglected factor in both India's Sri Lankan policy as well as in foreign media reportage of the island's crisis that has also gone beyond its original boundaries of an ethnic conflict. In July the UNP will celebrate its tenth anniversary in office, the longest of any regime in an island accustomed to "throwing the rascals out" every five years. Besides electoral exhaustion and impatience, there is the long-suppressed anger of the Sinhala constituency over how this longevity was acquired.

Rajiv Gandhi has said that he had two objectives in mind while making the air-drop: help for the Tamils and a message to Colombo that Delhi cannot be a silent spectator to a military onslaught on the civilians of Jaffna. He might have added a third. The Tamils were being told that in the final analysis, it was not the Tigers or even Tamil Nadu which could be their protector but the Indian state.

Delhi has also urged the Tigers and others to work out some reasonably acceptable regional autonomy formula. If this will lead to a resumption of talks, and the talks pave the way to a settlement, Rajiv's 'benign intervention' will make his assertion of regional paramountcy more meaningful. But it is only after Minister for National Security Lalith Athulathmudali's return to the island from Pakistan and the US that the Government's next move will be known. Pakistan, top favourite in the local media, will obviously have much to do with it.

Courtesy of INDIA TODAY,  
July 15, 1987

## Mercenaries direct genocide in Sri Lanka: Natwar

DURING HIS TALKS with British and American ministers, Mr. Natwar Singh made clear that India views with grave concern the threat posed to her security by the proposed supply of arms by the United States to Pakistan and also over the situation in Sri Lanka.

As reported in *India Weekly* of 1 May Mr. Singh made it clear to the US secretary of state, Mr. George Shultz and defence secretary, Mr. Caspar Weinberger and other Congressional leaders that the US refusal to review her policy in the face of Pakistan's march towards acquiring nuclear weapons, and in particular, US insistence on the continued supply of AWACS and Hawkeyes to Pakistan: Mr. Natwar Singh warned them that this policy, if continued, could harm Indo-US relations.

The Indian Minister conveyed in clear terms both to US and British ministers, India's deep concern over the activities of British and Israeli mercenaries in Sri Lanka, particularly the "Keeny Meeny Services" which were carrying

on a campaign of genocide against the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Mr. Natwar Singh stressed to the British ministers the need to bring about a withdrawal of these mercenaries from Sri Lanka and he urged the British ministers that the government should not allow "Keeny Meeny Services" organisation to carry on the indiscriminate killings of Tamil men, women and children; although the "Keeny Meeny Services" is a private one, it has links with the British government as it is often used for providing security at British diplomatic missions abroad. They provide helicopter pilots and instructors for training the Sinhalese army and other mercenaries to take an active part in the campaign against the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

It is understood that Mr. Natwar Singh was unable to get assurances from British ministers that the activities of the British mercenaries would be halted from the British side.

## Short On Food Stocks

ACCORDING TO OFFICIALS attached to the Kachcheri Secretariat, Jaffna, 2,000 metric tons of rice and 240 metric tons of flour are required a month.

The last stock-taking at the Kankesanthurai Government Stores was taken on May 24 and indicated that only 1,320 metric tons of flour and 4,000 metric tons of rice were available. The last shipment of flour and rice came to K.K.S. harbour a month ago and the stocks at present are far too short to meet the needs of 21 multi-purpose Co-operative Stores in the 13 Assistant Government Agents' Divisions in the Peninsula. Moreover, not a single lorry-load of foodstuffs was issued to the MPCs since 24th May.

Immediately after the "Operation Liberation I" the Government Agent was asked to contact the military authorities and instructed to make arrangements to supply rice and flour to the Co-operatives.

Co-Op Society lorries which – on the instructions of the Jaffna G. A., went to KKS to collect food supplies, after the curfew was relaxed on June 1, turned back from Tellipalai, empty, when they saw soldiers pouring out from the Palaly and Harbour View Camps. The lorries flew white flags.



# Indian High Commission Official Enquiries into Murderous Deeds by Special Task Force and Security Personnel in Batticaloa

IN RESPONSE to reliable information reaching Colombo on July 5 that the STF commandos in Batticaloa had been responsible for a mass slaughter of Tamil civilians, Captain Gupta, Defence Adviser to the Indian High Commission, proceeded to the Eastern Province capital, to acquaint himself with the real situation. It had been alleged that the commandos had gone on July 3 to the Pillaiyar Kovil at Pavatkuli Chenai, 20 kilometres from Batticaloa town when the local inhabitants had gathered at the Temple to celebrate the 'Water Cutting' festival. It had been reported that 18 of the devotees died on the spot whilst 30 injured were taken by the STF to a nearby jungle and burned to death to destroy any evidence of their crime. After the incident, a few injured survivors made their way to Batticaloa and informed the Citizens' Committee about this gruesome and tragic incident.

High Commissioner Dixit expressed India's concern at such a massacre by the agencies of the State to senior Sri Lankan Defence officials and pointed out that under such circumstances it would be difficult to maintain a ceasefire even in the Jaffna peninsula. Subsequently, the National Security Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali, offered to take an official of the Indian High Commission to Batticaloa to check the veracity of the report that had been received.

Mr. Dixit sent Captain B. K. Gupta, Defence Services Adviser, to Batticaloa expecting that he would be allowed to carry out an unhindered and independent investigation.

Unfortunately, the Sri Lankan Government sought to use Captain Gupta's visit to Batticaloa as a cosmetic propaganda exercise to show that no civilian massacre had taken place. Captain Gupta was not permitted to ascertain facts for himself.

Captain Gupta was flown in a helicopter to Batticaloa and taken straight to the STF camp at Kallady in the company of two senior officers from Army Headquarters, one a representative of the Chief of the Joint Operations Command and the other a representative of the National Intelligence Bureau. At the STF camp they were met by the Military Coordinating Officer of the area. When Captain Gupta expressed his intention to go out into Batticaloa town and meet members of the Citizens' Committee and injured survivors of the massacred, he was told, after checking with authorities in Colombo, that he could not be allowed to leave the STF camp and carry out an independent investigation. The only concession to objectivity that the STF and Army Officials made was that they invited Mr. Sam Tambimuttu, President of the Citizens' Committee of Batticaloa and Father Chandra Fernando (Priest from the

main Batticaloa Church) and two other members of the Citizens' Committee to come to the STF camp to talk to Captain Gupta in the presence of Sri Lankan military officers.

In spite of the intimidating presence of these officials, Mr. Sam Tambimuttu informed Captain Gupta that on July 3, according to information reaching him, 17 civilians were killed and a few others injured in Pavatkudichenai. He said that the incident had taken place close to the Pillaiyar temple where people had gathered for a 'Water Cutting' Ceremony. Out of the 17 people killed, six were very young; their bodies were taken away by the STF and these were cremated by the people of the area. The injured people were treated at the Out-patients Dispensary of the Batticaloa General Hospital and only one person with a bullet injury was admitted to the hospital.

Mr. Sam Tambimuttu and other members of the Citizens' Committee indicated that they had not been allowed to visit the scene of the massacre by the STF who had cordoned off the area and therefore he could not give a first-hand on-the-spot report of what had happened.

The Coordinating Officer told Captain Gupta that the incident on July 3 had taken place at Kalimadu, which is one and a half miles west of Pillaiyar temple, in which five "terrorists" were killed, a large number of weapons recovered from the "terrorists" hideout and an unknown number of persons there injured.

Once it was clear that Captain Gupta was not going to be given unhindered access to the scene of the massacre or the injured survivors, he indicated to the officials that he would like to return to Colombo and that there was no purpose in continuing the exercise. However, the officials insisted in taking him by helicopter to Pillaiyar temple and Kalimadu along with other military officials from Colombo. Prior to the team's visit to Pillaiyar temple and Kalimadu, more than 50 STF commandos along with an ASP (that too the ASP who had conducted the so-called operation) were sent as an advance party ostensibly to secure the area but in fact to remove all evidence of the massacre and to produce some "appropriate civilians" as witnesses.

On reaching Kalimadu and Pillaiyar Temple, four mortally frightened and trembling Tamil civilians were brought in and made to corroborate the version given to Captain Gupta by the military Coordinating Officer, Batticaloa. The person who interpreted for Captain Gupta whilst the Tamil civilians spoke was a National Investigation Bureau Official.

So, as readers can see from the above account of Captain Gupta's visit, there was very little scope for Captain Gupta to ascertain the facts about the massacre



Capt Gupta, Defence Adviser to the Indian High Commission

beyond getting the version of the STF and the information given by the Citizens' Committee representatives who themselves had not been allowed access to the area.

It may be of interest to readers to know that the Citizens' Committee representatives took up the question of disappearances, mass arrests and detention and summary executions by STF commandos of Tamil civilians in Batticaloa district, with the Sinhalese Army and STF officials, in the presence of Captain Gupta. They pointed out that approximately 600 people from Batticaloa district were missing since 1983. The Citizens' Committee had concrete evidence about their arrests by Sri Lankan Security Forces but Security Forces had not accounted for their disappearances. Approximately 1,800 Tamil civilians had been killed in Batticaloa, and 1,600 people of Batticaloa district are being held by the Security Forces in Boosa and other camps without trial.

We also reproduce below the text of an appeal sent to President Jayawardene by the President of the Executive Committee of the Citizens' Committee for Batticaloa and Amparai districts which would give an idea of the citizens' grievances against Security Forces in these two districts:

"THE TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION passed unanimously by the Executive Committee Meeting of the Citizens' Committee of Batticaloa and Amparai districts held on June 21, 1987 is given below for your Excellency's earnest consideration and appropriate action:

"The Batticaloa-Amparai Citizens' Committee is deeply disturbed about the large number of persons reported missing after having been arrested by the Security Forces and the killing of innocent civilians by the Security Forces in recent months".

continued on page 17

# WHAT THE WORLD THOUGHT

The December 19 proposals and older ideas about limited autonomy for the Sri Lankan Tamils are no longer relevant. The question now is whether New Delhi should go in for a Cyprus-type situation. If it decides against this option, then it must decide what other solutions it can live with. And even if New Delhi remains opposed to direct intervention it cannot allow Mr. Jayawardene to achieve a military victory over the militants, especially with Israel's and Pakistan's assistance.

(The Times of India, 3 June)

**It will be unrealistic for the international community to expect that India will just watch and do nothing in the face of continued Tamilian casualties in Sri Lanka. The danger that India will get sucked into Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict is becoming increasingly real. It can still be warded off only if Colombo decides to call off its military operations immediately and help in ensuring that the relief supplies are distributed in Jaffna. Once it calls off military operations it should express readiness for a political settlement of its ethnic conflict, possibly with India's help. There does not appear any other rational course of action available to Sri Lanka.**

(The Hindustan Times, 3 June)

**Thus, to send food and medicines is the least that the Indian Government is obliged to do in the circumstances. To think that having embarked on this course, a gesture, a token will suffice will be to put oneself up for a Bay of Pigs type fiasco. The gesture will have to be followed through. We should be clear: the Government has committed itself and the country to take whatever other steps may become necessary to save the Tamils from the Sri Lankan army.**

(Indian Express, 3 June)

**Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi today strongly refuted the Sri Lankan President's statement drawing comparison in the situation between Jaffna and Punjab and categorically stated there was "absolutely no parallel between the two." At no time was there blanket bombing, strafing or shelling in Punjab. While these types of dreadful incidents took place in Jaffna, the Prime Minister said in reply to a question at a Press conference here today.**

(The Hindustan Times, June 4)

**Brooklyn Democrat Stephen J. Solarz, who is chairman of the House sub-committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, said that while he generally**

was of the opinion that "countries should not interfere in the affairs of their neighbours, I can conceive of extraordinary circumstances where the humanitarian considerations are so great that the principle of humanitarian rescue has to take precedence over the principle of non-interference in the affairs of other countries."

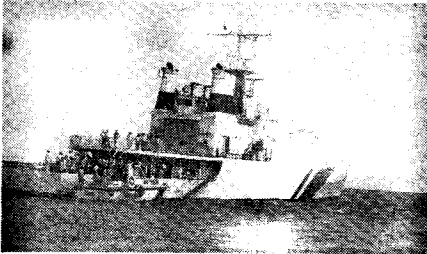
(The Hindustan Times, June 12)

**India is the frontline state vis-a-vis the genocidal crisis in Sri Lanka and no amount of self-congratulation, abuse and mock-heroic, tragi-comic bluster by the Premadasas and the Athulathmudalis can make any material difference to his rather large reality. Every child in the South Asian region must be expected to know that the physical, political, military and logistical capabilities to counter the Sri Lankan ruling clique's brutal course against innocent Tamil civilians are very much in the possession of India - that's not the problem at all. A review of the performance of Indian official policy from 1985 does suggest that New Delhi has been taken for a ride by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi virtually acknowledged.**

(The Hindu, 6 June)

## A Diary of India's Relief Operation

(as reported by Tamil Information Centre - London)



**JUNE 25:** Two Indian ships arrived at Kankesanthurai today, carrying food and other supplies. Meanwhile Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi reportedly held a meeting yesterday with some of his ministers to discuss the Sri Lankan problem.

**JUNE 26:** As the Indian relief supplies are being unloaded at Kankesanthurai, another ship is expected to leave Madras soon with supplies.

**JUNE 27:** The Indian team accompanying the food supplies has visited a refugee camp at Mallakam, the Tellopalai hospital and Vannai Pillayar temple. Thousands of people lined up the streets to welcome them. The distribution of food supplies is expected to begin soon.

**JUNE 28:** Relief supplies were distributed yesterday to 560 displaced families at the Rosary Church at Colombuthurai and to 58 other such families at the Mallakam bus depot. The distribution was inaugurated by the Indian Red Cross personnel, Choudri and Vernu Gopal. The refugees requested them to provide not only food but also protection for their lives. These personnel were guided by the Jaffna Red Cross to some places damaged by bombs, including the Jaffna hospital.

**JUNE 30:** Yesterday the Indian Red Cross distributed food supplies in the Vadamarachchi area. The areas which received supplies are Nelliadi and Vathiri.

People have appealed to the Indian officials that their urgent need is to live in security and some of them have also appealed that they can be taken away to India.

It is expected that the Sri Lankan Government would inform India that further food supplies will not be welcome.

## SWITZERLAND TO DEPORT TAMILS DESPITE WARNINGS

**SWITZERLAND PLANS TO DEPORT 1,000 Tamils back to Sri Lanka despite the advice of its senior diplomat on the island.**

The decision is based on the government belief that the security situation in Sri Lanka has improved markedly since a repatriation programme was suspended last year.

A government official said at the weekend that Colombo was "less dangerous than Paris." Departure deadlines will be issued this week to asylum seekers whose applications have been rejected.

But Berne's assessment has been contradicted by the Swiss chargé d'affaires in Colombo, Mr. Henri Cuennet, who says the position for refugees returning home has deteriorated over the last six months.

He told Swiss National Radio that he was unaware of the Government's intentions until the decision was announced.

Mr. Cuennet warned that the refugees, who were regarded as "potential terrorists" by the Sri Lankan authorities, faced serious problems of reintegration.

He said they had little chance of finding work, even in the supposedly safer southern region of Sri Lanka.

The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva has also called on Berne to postpone any action, saying the security risks in Sri Lanka are "common knowledge."

But the decision was defended by the Director of the Swiss Office for Refugee Affairs, Mr. Peter Arbenz, who said the Government was pursuing a "moderate, step-by-step" policy.

"We know from the Sri Lankan Government that Tamils who have no direct links with terrorist groups will be accepted back. Indeed, we have proof of that from the Tamils who return daily," he said.

By courtesy of The Guardian, July 15, 1987

# CHANGE IN THE TAMIL MOOD

**While the Tamil mood turned upbeat after India started reaching aid to the beleaguered population in Jaffna, there is a visible change of mood in New Delhi too regarding the handling of the Sri Lankan crisis after the prolonged experience of being taken for a ride by the island republic's Government. What are the implications?**

AN OLD MAN with a placard reading, "Our thanks to the Indian people," walks up and graciously bows before Hardip Singh Puri at Tellipalai in the Jaffna peninsula. No words are spoken. Puri, the First Secretary (Political) in the Indian High Commission in Colombo, is visibly moved.

Some distance away, another old man pounds the van in which Puri and the Defence Attache, Capt. B. K. Gupta, are travelling. Highly-strung, he keeps screaming, "We don't want food; our boys want arms. We don't need food, give us arms".

Schoolgirls in spotless white uniform keep up the chant: "We want freedom; we want freedom; recognise the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam; supply us SAMs (surface-to-air missiles)."

Hundreds of Tamils jostle with one another to garland Puri and Gupta. They try to pass on to them whatever they can, especially auspicious things like betel leaves and nuts, turmeric pieces, kumkum and even a tray of assorted biscuits. At the entrance to Tellipalai town, the Indian officials are welcomed with "poornakumbham."

## Electrifying impact

Indeed, the mood is upbeat in Jaffna now. The air-dropping of food by the Indian planes on June 4 and the subsequent distribution of relief sent by chartered Indian vessels have had an electrifying impact on the psyche of the Tamils of the Jaffna peninsula. After months of vacillation, it was the first time that the Government of India had stepped in on the side of the Tamils and the despatch of rice, wheat flour, sugar and medicine was a clear expression of solidarity with the oppressed people. And the tumultuous welcome that the members of the Indian "mercy mission" received from the people of the peninsula was at once a reflection of their hitherto intense suffering and an outpouring of gratitude. (Colombo and New Delhi reached an agreement on June 15 on

providing relief to the Tamils of the Jaffna peninsula).

When the representatives of the Indian Red Cross Society arrived in Kankesanthurai on June 25 aboard the Indian relief vessels, "Island Pride" and "Srivatsava" and Puri and Gupta flew in on the same day from Colombo, little would they have imagined the extraordinary welcome that awaited them. Hundreds of thousands of people massed on the 18-km route from Tellipalai to Jaffna town to throw an emotional reception to them. People called out lustily, "Long live Rajiv Gandhi," "Long live MGR." The turbaned Puri was especially the target of their affection. They cheered, hugged, kissed and garlanded him. They thrust hundreds of petitions into his hands. Instead of the normal 30 minutes, the journey lasted five hours as the motorcade wound its way through the crowds. This despite the LTTE fighters led by Yogi regulating the crowds which were jubilant as well as emotional.



Hardip Singh Puri and Capt. B. K. Gupta (lighting the lamp) of the Indian High Commission in Colombo being given the traditional welcome with "poornakumbham" as they enter Tellipalai town.

A television image summed up the entire picture: Puri, smothered by the groundswell of affection, trying to extricate himself to take some air even as the LTTE's Capt. Raheem attempts to fend off the swarming crowd. And the relief distribution itself began on June 27 with the Jaffna Government Agent, M. Panchalingam, lighting a ceremonial lamp in front of refugees sheltered in a church at Sapamalai and the bus depot at Mallagam, both near Jaffna town.

The questions that naturally arise in this context are: What was the implication of this extraordinary reception to the Indian relief mission members? What might have been the impact if India had sent the relief and open solidarity earlier?

For much of 1985-86 and particularly after November 1986, the dominant feeling among the Tamils on the island was a sense of disenchantment over the Government of India's handling of the ethnic crisis. The massacres of Tamil civilians at Vavuniya and

Trincomalee took place even as the Thimpu talks were being held (July and August 1985) under the good offices of the Government of India. The killings were stepped up viciously in 1986. By the end of 1986, the Tamils began questioning the relevance of the peace process. The situation took a turn for the worse in November 1986 with the seizure of the militants' arms and the house arrest of their leaders in Tamil Nadu. The confiscation of the militants' communications equipment and India's rush-about style in finding a superficial fix to the ethnic crisis during the SAARC summit in Bangalore (also in November) only helped to heighten the Tamils' disillusionment.

To make matters worse, Colombo imposed an economic and communications blockade of the peninsula in January 1987. This was followed by the Sri Lankan security forces' vicious offensive in the East and North in January and February respectively, claiming hundreds of Tamil civilian lives. The sustained aerial bombing of the peninsula in March and April (after the bomb blast in Colombo on April 21) with no worthwhile condemnation from the Government of India firmed up the Tamils' impression that the Sri Lankan President, J. R. Jayawardene, would have his way with a military solution while India watched from the sidelines. Then began the armed forces' brutal offensive on the Vadamarachi region of the Jaffna peninsula from May 26, bringing a staggering destruction of property and a loss of about 1,000 civilian lives. The terrible feeling of helplessness and alienation was complete among the Tamils.

In these circumstances, the Tamils looked up to India to intervene in some form to stop the killings. Thus, the decision of the Government of India to send the food supplies within an unambiguous context of solidarity made a powerful impact on the people - even if they were not expecting food but an actual intervention.

In the assessment of the LTTE's Political Adviser A. S. Balasingham, "I would say the food relief is regarded as a symbolic expression of solidarity with the oppressed people. The extraordinary welcome that the Indian relief mission received was an outward manifestation of joy and gratitude but arising out of a deep internal frustration and alienation for a long time. It was a tremendous morale booster to our people. Also, it constitutes a kind of deterrent to the Sri Lankan Government (demonstrating that India, is capable of taking firm action if the mass killings continue." Balasingham points to another

*continued opposite*



"positive development": the LTTE's unilateral proclamation of ceasefire till the distribution of relief is over.

In the opinion of A. Amirthalingam, Secretary-General of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF): "Apart from the actual material help to the people, the air-dropping mission and the relief by ship are an indication to the Sri Lankan Government that India would not just look on as the Tamil people are being decimated by direct attacks and starvation."

However, Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, R. Premadasa, accused India of "betraying partisanship by confining its food supplies to a particular area." He claimed that the whole exercise was suspect in the eyes of Sri Lankans and Indians as well. He even flaunted a tone of condescension: "I wish to tell India: if you are keen to help our people, win their goodwill first. If the intention is altruistic, send your so-called relief to Colombo for distribution by the Government."

### The decision of the Government of India to send the food supplies within an unambiguous context of solidarity made a powerful impact on the Tamils.

But whether it is Balasingham, Amirthalingam or Eelam Revolutionary Organisation (EROS) leader V. Balakumar, they are unanimous on one thing: that the Sri Lankan armed forces ferocious offensive on Vadammarachi would not have taken place had India sent the relief earlier. It would have averted the colossal loss of lives and the exodus of refugees.

According to Balakumar "If the relief had been sent earlier, the offensive on Vadammarachi would not have taken place. We may have gone in for a political solution. We feel it is no use talking with the Sri Lankan Government now. Only after the military situation is reversed would there be a chance of political solution." Amirthalingam hastens to point out that the TULF had written a letter to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi as early as March 6, demanding that as a humanitarian measure, food and fuel be provided to the deprived and suffering Tamil populace through the good offices of the Government of India.

There have been practical problems in relief distribution as well: Colombo refused to allow supplies to reach Vadammarachi, the worst affected region that needs the aid most. Besides, the relief vessel "Bhoruka II" had to wait from June 28 to July 3 at Kankesanthurai before it was unloaded. Two other Sri Lankan ships were given preference in unloading their stockpile of arms and ammunition. Doubts also

arose as to whether Colombo would allow any vessel after "Bhoruka II" to sail in. The latest reports indicate, however, that relief will be supplied to Vadammarachi and that supplies by "Bhoruka II" will not be the last shipment. Further supplies are definitely on the cards after consultations with Colombo.

But the Tamils in the Eastern province have been left out of the scheme of relief aid. R. Sampanthan and Amirthalingam of the TULF and Balakumar of EROS have repeatedly appealed to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to despatch food to the Tamils in the East, who have been suffering for a longer time than their counterparts in the Jaffna peninsula. Thousands of Tamils there suffered from malnutrition and lack of medical facilities. But media attention has not yet focussed on them. "These are the most needy people who deserve the relief supplies. Sending a ship to Trincomalee harbour will expose to the whole world the sufferings of the Tamils and the atrocities of the Sri Lankan soldiers in the East," feels Balakumar.

Earlier President J. R. Jayawardene threw in a wild card by announcing parliamentary by-elections to the 14 seats from the North and East. A gazette notification issued on June 19 said the nominations would close on July 15. The seats fell vacant when the TULF MPs refused to take an oath disavowing separatism, as demanded by the Sixth Amendment to the Sri Lankan Constitution.

The TULF said it would be "a travesty of democracy" and "an unmitigated fraud" to hold the elections when about 400,000 Tamils had fled the

island and an equal number had been displaced from their homes by the army's atrocities in the North and East. The TULF asked the people to boycott the elections.

Despite the LTTE's announcement of a unilateral ceasefire, limited fighting broke out between the Tigers and the Sinhala soldiers. On July 2, many soldiers were killed when they tried to surround the LTTE's base at Uddupiddy in Vadammarachi. Another clash at Munthirikulam in Mullaitivu district on June 30 claimed the lives of 21 soldiers. But the LTTE suffered a serious loss when the army encircled its camp at Mudur in Trincomalee and shot dead 12 Tigers, including "Major" Gajendran.

On June 29, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi confirmed the meaning of the signals sent to Colombo by the air-dropping mission and the supply of relief by sea. India felt it should step in with the humanitarian aid because of the situation in the Jaffna peninsula. Besides, the Indian action prompted the Sri Lankan Government to lift the economic blockade of the peninsula. He knocked down a suggestion from a foreign affairs correspondent that the air-dropping mission had "tarnished" India's mission. By and large, all countries had accepted the validity of India's action.

"The ball is very definitely in Sri Lanka's court," declared Rajiv Gandhi. This plus the remark that "our options can come only when we know their (Colombo's) direction" point to the mood in New Delhi now - after the prolonged experience of being taken for a ride by the Sri Lankan Government.

By courtesy of Frontline,  
July 11-24, 1987

## SOCIALIST DEMOCRATIC PARTY

54, Jalan SS2/31, University Garden, 47300 Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia

June 7, 1987

### The Cycle of Violence and Death in Sri Lanka

*AS PEOPLE who respect universal human rights, we are deeply concerned about the escalating cycle of violence in Sri Lanka which has resulted in more than 5,000 deaths and many more thousands of injured and maimed among both the Sinhalese and Tamil people since 1983. Thousands of Tamils have been forced to seek refuge in India, Canada, Europe and other parts of the world.*

*The Sri Lankan Government must bear the greater portion of the responsibility for the present tragedy in Sri Lanka. First it refused for a long time to listen to the grievances of the Tamils in the country.*

*Now that it does listen, it is offering too little too late. The present killings, horrific as they are, are not the causes of the tragedy that has engulfed the people of Sri Lanka; they are the direct consequences of long and deep-seated political, social and economic causes which the Government chose to ignore for years. To the many legitimate demands and grievances of the Tamils for equality and autonomy, the Sri Lankan Government responded with torture and killings of Tamil dissidents. Such repression and blatant violations of human rights have been carefully documented by Amnesty International and other international human rights organisations over the last few years.*

*The present tragedy in Sri Lanka can only be resolved if the Sri Lankan Government demonstrates sincerity in bringing about a peaceful and just solution, not by way of indiscriminate aerial bombing of Tamil settlements.*

*We call on the Sri Lankan Government to initiate immediate peaceful negotiations with the Tamil people on a fair and realistic basis.*

R. S. Menon, Director, SDP Labour Bureau

Fan Yew Teng, Secretary-General, SDP.

## OTHER OPINION

RAJIV GANDHI has hesitantly taken one small step to break from the amateurish foreign policy which he has been pursuing over the last two years. When he came to power, his world view was closer to Morarji Desai's than that of his mother. It was based on a simplistic moral approach, namely, be nice to others, others will be nice to you. Indira Gandhi was a hard-headed politician who could perceive the clash of interests and tailor her response accordingly. Rajiv Gandhi's views, however, were the product of a less developed political insight. Romesh Bhandari, the then foreign secretary, used his flamboyance to demonstrate that a new era of "good neighbourliness" had dawned under Rajiv Gandhi, thus indirectly condemning Indira Gandhi's policies. Rajiv Gandhi's simplistic diplomacy was first implemented in Sri Lanka.

Indira Gandhi spelt out her Sri Lanka policy in the face of the crisis resulting from the first wave of massacre of Tamils. Addressing the SAARC foreign ministers' conference in Delhi on August 1, 1983, she said: "Ours is a troubled region. Most of our countries are multi-racial and multi-religious. It would be idle to pretend that we are not affected by what happens elsewhere." The signal to Colombo was loud and clear. If there had been any ambiguity about what India proposed to do, it was resolved when Mrs. Gandhi said: "India is just not another country". She translated the policy into practice by arranging material assistance for the Tamils in Sri Lanka. In short, Indira Gandhi was pursuing coercive diplomacy to force Jayawardene to accommodate the genuine aspirations of the Tamils within the framework of a united Sri Lanka.

The first thing which Romesh Bhandari, however, did when he visited Sri Lanka at the end of March 1985 was to reassure Jayawardene that with the death of Indira Gandhi her Sri Lankan policy was also dead. The then minister of state for foreign affairs, Khurshid Alam Khan, in a statement in Parliament on Bhandari's visit, equated the violence of the Sri Lankan security forces against the Tamils with the militancy of the Tamil guerrillas. He refused to admit that genocide was being committed against the Tamils.

Then followed the closing down of the training camps for the Tamils, the seizure of arms, and harassment of the Tamil militants in Tamil Nadu. India even stopped building world public opinion against the persecution of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Before leaving for his US trip in 1985, Rajiv Gandhi gleefully announced: "We have confiscated the arms cargo meant for Tamil militants." On instructions from Delhi, Tamil Nadu police authorities even humiliated the Tamil leaders. This emboldened Jayawardene, and made him more and more intransigent towards Tamilians. He started conceding far less than he would have had, had Indira Gandhi's policy been pursued. He utilised the breathing time to quadruple the strength of the island's security forces, and invited foreign military and intelligence elements hostile to India.

The Rajiv-Bhandari Sri Lankan policy created three main complications. First, Jayawardene's strong-arm approach and his attempt to seek a military solution had, instead of breaking, hardened the will of the Tamils. At one time, the Tamil movement had roughly been at a stage similar to India's national movement in the mid-Thirties when the Congress accepted office in 1937 under a British viceroy. Within five years, Gandhi had launched the Quit-India movement. The Tamil movement has now graduated to a similar "do or die" stage. Every Tamil "Tiger" carries a potassium cyanide pill. In other words, a political solution within the framework of a united Sri Lanka has become a hundred times more difficult now. Such a solution will only be possible either when one of the sides is defeated, or when both sides get

exhausted. Such a stage will arrive only after much more bloodshed.

Second, the alienation in Tamil Nadu has been increasingly very fast. The people of Tamil Nadu are beginning to feel that Delhi has adopted a double standard. When there was a problem in northern India, that is in East Bengal, the whole country was mobilised and Bangladesh was liberated. But now, problems in the south, have not bothered the people of north India.

Third, historically, we have been conditioned to believe that the country does not face any threat on its southern flank. Ever since independence, we have concentrated all our energies to safeguard our western, eastern and northern borders. Our navy was not developed extensively, but its limited powers were considered adequate to deal with the Pakistani threat at sea.

But now, our southern flank is also not safe. The threat is not from Sri Lanka as such. The threat lies in the fact that the Sri Lankan state is weak, and prolonged civil war would impel it to see foreign military assistance from sources hostile to India. In turn Sri Lanka would be forced to give them foreign bases. It would become an unsinkable aircraft carrier and a potential threat to India's security. Already, inimical foreign powers like Pakistan, China and Israel have found a toe-hold. Jayawardene has also been talking about offering facilities to the US Seventh Fleet.

By air-dropping food and drug supplies over Jaffna, Rajiv Gandhi has made a rather abrupt break from his policies. It marks a return to the policies of Indira Gandhi, but there is an element of adventurism, since it was done without mobilising world opinion. Fortunately, the reaction against the violation of Sri Lanka's sovereignty has not been very hostile. This indicates that liberal world opinion is aware of the atrocities committed on Tamilians. But if Rajiv Gandhi thinks that Jayawardene will become more reasonable about the Tamil demand simply because of this act of coercive diplomacy, he is mistaken. The grand old man of Colombo has a lot of tenacity. As for Rajiv Gandhi, it will be absolutely counter-productive for him to sit back now. The action has to be carried to its logical end which is to ensure that Tamils can live in peace and with due dignity in Sri Lanka. Their demand for a legitimate share of power has to be satisfied. India now needs to follow a definite strategy.

There is much to be learnt from the 1971 experience. With patience and persuasive diplomacy, world opinion was mobilised against atrocities in East Bengal. Western countries like the UK, West Germany and France adopted a neutral stance. Only the USA and Japan cut off aid. The real diplomatic master-stroke was to neutralise the Shah of Iran. Had he lent his air force to Pakistan, the cost of the liberation of Bangladesh would have been very high. At the same time, it must be remembered that a hundred nations voted in the United Nations against India. Only the communist countries stood by her at that time. Nevertheless, that did not deter Indira Gandhi from the final act.

Right now, though the initial reaction of the USSR is encouraging for us, Moscow cannot be taken for granted. As a global power, the USSR has its own preoccupations and priorities. But when our backyard is on fire, we have to ensure the support of that power. Rajiv Gandhi could learn a good deal from the art of diplomacy used by his mother in Moscow in September 1971 to involve the USSR in formulating the strategy to be adopted towards the then East Pakistan.

In 1971, the initial reaction of the USSR was unwillingness to go along with India. The Soviet

position was that happenings in East Bengal were the internal affairs of Pakistan. Indira Gandhi did not tell Moscow of India's intentions when signing the Indo-Soviet treaty. But when she went to Moscow in September 1971, Brezhnev realised the purpose of her visit. On the first day, Kosygin briefed Indian newsmen, and repeated that happenings in East Bengal were the internal affairs of Pakistan. Brezhnev even fell "sick" and asked Indira Gandhi to meet her counterpart, Prime Minister Kosygin.

Indira Gandhi cancelled the meeting with Kosygin, and virtually sat on "dharna" in the Kremlin, insisting that she would only meet Brezhnev. D. P. Dhar requested Indian newsmen to suppress both the stories - Kosygin's briefing and Mrs. Gandhi's cancellation of the meeting. (Even to this day, the Indian foreign office gratefully remembers the "patriotic" sense of Indian journalists).

Next day, Brezhnev came rushing to the meeting. He asked: "Madam, what do you want?" Indira Gandhi explained the geo-strategic situation arising out of the happenings in East Bengal. Brezhnev asked again: "But Madam, what do you want?" She explained the situation a second time, and added: "I did not sign that piece of paper (the treaty) for nothing." Then Brezhnev said: "Madam, go ahead, we are with you." Kosygin briefed Indian newsmen a second time and said that what he had actually meant to say was that happenings in East Bengal had the elements of a national liberation struggle. Indian newsmen happily filed stories on Kosygin's second briefing.

When Dobrynin came to Delhi last month the question of Sri Lanka was not raised at any of his meetings. But it is hoped that Sri Lanka will be a top item on the agenda when Rajiv Gandhi meets Gorbachev early next month in Moscow. Even the pursuit of coercive diplomacy vis-a-vis Jayawardene would require a lot of international support. Otherwise, India is likely to become totally isolated in the world community.

Also the air-dropping of food supplies over Jaffna will have to be followed up with much more to ensure that alienation in Tamil Nadu is contained. The Tamils are a very emotional lot. Gestures of martyrdom through self-immolation are not uncommon among them. Besides, the seeds of secessionism are already there. The country must show a sense of solidarity with the people of Tamil Nadu now, when they are emotionally upset.

One way of displaying solidarity could be to form a non-official group of political heavyweights headed by a towering north Indian leader like Kamalapati Tripathi to collect aid in the form of money, food, clothing, drugs, etc., for the suffering Tamilians in Sri Lanka. The art of nation-building requires a leader to transform any genuine regional cause into a national cause. Courtesy of SUNDAY

(Ananda Bazar Patrika), June 21-27, 1987

## At Cross Purposes

*SRI LANKA'S ethnic divide seems to have split the Ceylon Red Cross Society.*

*The Jaffna branch of the Ceylon Red Cross Society has written to the parent body in Geneva, the International Red Cross Society has not helped it in any way despite appeals.*

*The Jaffna Branch has also drawn the attention of the parent body to the distressing situation in Vadamadachy after the recent military offensive. Food, infants' milk food, medicines and clothes - these are urgently needed now, the Jaffna Red Cross has told the parent body.*

## TEMPTATIONS FROM THE RIGHT

Father C. A. Joachim Pillai

I DID APPRECIATE the two pieces in your April '87 issue, one by Mr. Ed Benedict (p.6) and the other by Mr. A. J. Wilson (pp.12-13). Mr. Benedict convincingly argues why the Tamil boys who are freedom fighters should not be too glibly described as terrorists, communists or separatists. Mr. Wilson shows the wise alternatives open to the Sri Lankan Government to resolve the ethnic crisis.

While agreeing fully with most of the points made, I have serious reservations about how both authors try to make Sri Lankan Tamils attractive to the West and to the U.S. régime, and how both take their distance from leftist politics.

The fact that the Tamils are naturally conservative, individualist and family-oriented does not mean that they have to remain closed to liberal, community-oriented socialist options. If they have not been as left-oriented as some of our Sinhalese brethren, it is not necessarily a quality; nor should that fact be used - as Mr. Benedict tries - to make the Tamils' cause attractive to U.S. public opinion. It can be counter-productive.

Mr. Benedict writes: "It is against the very ethos of the Tamil people to be communists." Now, that is an over-statement. It is not against the Tamil ethos to grow into a more leftist, socialist frame of mind. In fact, some of the new groups fighting for liberation, independence and self-respect seem to find inspiration in the life and work of great Asians like Mahatma Gandhi, Indira Gandhi, Mao Tse-Tung and Ho Chi Minh, who all knew how to take their distance from certain capitalist and nationalist ideologies. So, let us not for the sake of convenience and Western acceptability think that the Tamils are better than the Sinhalese because the leftist movements made no serious inroads in the Tamil homelands. It is not necessarily a plus. It just shows how conservative, insular

and fenced-in most Sri Lankan Tamils have been. No wonder, communal politics became an attraction.

In fact, in spite of their occasional opportunist betrayals, the leftists in the South (much more than even the religious organisations) seem to be the only voice of sanity for a just settlement in Sri Lanka. Thus, it is unwise to try to buy U.S. support by portraying the Tamils as individualist, capitalist and family-oriented. If that is true, then it is time they became more community-oriented, socialist and left-leaning too, as most of the revolutionary groups happen to be. We can learn from our Sinhala brethren in the South.

The same argument used to be made about China, India and Indochina. And these conservative lands, without losing their traditional values, have all become left-leaning too.

As for Mr. Wilson, true, he was speaking to the U.S. sub-committee on Asian and Pacific affairs; but we do not have to bend over backwards to show our closeness to U.S. ideology as compared with the leftist outlook. I agree with most of Dr. Wilson's fine analysis of the situation, and the wise alternatives he proposes. What seems totally exaggerated and unacceptable is when he says: "There has been a long tradition of education through American mission in the Tamil unit. The Tamil people feel morally obliged to the U.S. institutions which spent so much time over their education. Any agreement therefore with the U.S. Government will be honoured." First, it is not historically true. Though the American Christian Mission made a significant contribution to education in the North, one should not canonise it the way he does. There were many other more significant ways in which education took place for the Tamils both in the North and in the rest of Sri Lanka.

What I find particularly distasteful is the

type of conclusion he draws from this dubious proposition. He says that the Tamils will be more accommodating of U.S. interests (broadcasting facilities and the like) than the Sinhalese. In this he fails completely to see the wisdom of Sri Lankan policy towards capitalist and imperialist interests. This is another area where the Tamils can be open to learning from the Sinhalese. Sri Lankans under the Bandaranaiques and the Senanayakes because of the influence of leftist leaders like Colvin R. de Silva, N. M. Perera, Philip Gunawardene, Bernard Soysa and many others, did wisely change their tactics in relation to whatever agreements they had with the West. Thus it is rather unwise to fail to admire the foreign policy of the successive Sri Lankan governments, and even their openness to the left, especially under the SLFP. J.R.'s unprincipled antics of the last few years should not make us oblivious of Sri Lanka's bold and enlightened stand on foreign affairs.

Tamils do not need to pose as pro-American or anti-left in order to fight for self-determination and basic human rights. Nor should we disown Sri Lankan foreign policy of the last few decades, which rightly fought colonialism, feudalism and imperialism.

To conclude: the Tamils' individualism - even if it be true - is not a virtue that should exclude a healthy democratic socialism. The Tamils' purported education by American missionaries (which may have affected a small minority) cannot be construed as making the Tamils more reliable partners in agreements with the West or the U.S. The Sinhalese have qualities which we have to acknowledge, and even learn from; and our dubious 'virtues' should not be exploited in our dialogue with the West or the U.S.

While we deplore Sinhala Buddhist extremism, nationalism and chauvinism, let us not fail to appreciate the qualities and achievements of the Sinhala nation as a whole. Honesty is the best policy, even if it may not be the best situation in politics.

### Indian High Commission Official Enquiries

continued from page 12

The Committee is also very much concerned about the recent escalation of mass arrests of employees of public and private institutions and of students going to and returning from their places of work and learning and other citizens going about their lawful pursuits and the harassment, anxiety and inconvenience caused to them and their kith and kin. We therefore urge your Excellency as the President of this country and Commander-in-Chief of the Security Forces to intervene and redress the situation."

The STF is largely guided by Ravi Jayawardene till recently a permanent resident of Australia and the son of the President of what is left of Sri Lanka. The commandos have received training from Pakistan, Israeli "Advisers" and the notorious Keeni Meeni Services founded by ex-S.A.S. Major Walker and comprising British ex-servicemen and mercenaries. Ravi is not accountable to anybody except perhaps to his father.

### Point of View

## THE WAY OUT FOR THE TAMILS

WHAT IS HAPPENING right now in Jaffna is that India is feeding the people there. Sri Lanka has allowed this.

This shows that India is getting more and more involved. Don't you think that this is the time for the Tamil leadership to say that the Sri Lankan Tamils wish to join India in an acceptable political association?

We already have some form of association with India on a regional basis, through the recently formed SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation).

The very first thing to be decided is: In principle do we wish to join the Indian Union?

Whether it is to be a Federation or Confederation or as an Associate State could be decided next, in consultation with constitutional and other experts.

The reality of the situation in the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka is unless immediate steps are taken on the lines suggested above, the

present genocidal and scorched-earth policy of the Sri Lankan Government will result in more and more Tamils being tortured and killed and still more fleeing and deserting their homes and lands. This will make it easier for the hoodlums to be brought in as permanent settlers.

This proposal for some form of Federation with India is nothing new. The world famous savant Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy argued that Ceylon being culturally, racially and linguistically an integral part of India and taking also into consideration their historical past, it would be logical and prudent for Ceylon to come into an Indo-Ceylon Union.

Much more recently, the Tamil leader S. J. V. Chelvanayagam envisaged that Ceylon will join India not as one State but as Two States - Sinhala Sri Lanka and Tamil Eelam (see Prof. Wilson's article in the Tamil Times - February 1987).

Last week, hundreds of Tamils in their pro-India emotional demonstration in support of the food deliveries, kissed the vehicles, shouted appeals "Save us, do not leave us" and declared that India should annex the Tamil areas (The Times, June 29, 1987).

London, SW20  
6 July, 1987

K. Vaikunthavasan



## Letters to the Editor

### TAMIL GRIEVANCES

IN RECENT TIMES many spokesmen have appeared on television and radio to present the Tamil point of view on the crisis in Sri Lanka. Often one finds that these people do not have a clear idea of the problems facing the Tamils.

The immediate fear and anxiety of the Tamils in Sri Lanka is the threat to their physical existence. They fear that their lives and their property will be attacked by hoodlums among the Sinhalese in the Sinhalese Provinces and the Security Forces in the Tamil Provinces (the latter using aerial bombing to kill the Tamils and destroy their property) and the arbitrary arrests, torture and often killing of Tamil youths.

Historically the most devastating act of the Sinhalese Government has been the disenfranchisement of the Estate Tamils. This took away not only the Parliamentary representation and other civic rights from these Estate Tamils but also gave an increased Parliamentary weightage to the majority Sinhalese as against the Tamils of the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

This was done by carving out electorates in the hill country on the basis of population and not on the number of electors. This resulted in a smaller number of Sinhalese in the Up Country being able to elect a Member of Parliament as compared to the rest of the Island. The next most important threat to the Tamil identity came from State-aided Sinhalese colonisation of Tamil Provinces, thus not only reducing Tamil Parliamentary representation in these areas but also making the Tamils a minority in their own Homeland.

The above are the basic acts of treachery on the part of the Sinhalese Government and the rest of the acts of discrimination in the fields of Language, Religion, Education (Estate Tamils have only primitive facilities even for primary education), Recruitment to the Police and the Armed Services, and to Government and Semi-Government Services.

The impression given that the Tamils were a favoured group under colonial rule is a myth.

It should be noted that only the Tamils of the Jaffna peninsula and the Sinhalese in the south-west quarter of the Island accepted missionary education in order to obtain jobs in the colonial administration. Their traditional occupations in farming and fishing were given scant support by successive colonial administrations.

The Group that benefitted most under colonial rule was the Sinhalese Aristocracy. We know of the number of ancestors of the present Sinhalese political leaders who carried favour with the British and who were honoured with knighthoods. They were the people who sent their children to Western Universities for education.

Another fact that must be made clear is that the Tamils are not demanding a partition of the Island but are only demanding the restoration of their Sovereignty which they lost to the Western conquerors.

The Tamils have come to make this demand after all attempts to obtain equal rights with the Sinhalese had failed.

I am writing this letter in the hope that the younger generation of Tamils, who are increasingly taking part in discussions on the problem of the Tamils and of the aspirations of the Tamils in maintaining their linguistic and cultural identity as a distinct Nation.

Chigwell, Essex

S. Srinivasan

## India's move gives Sri Lanka food for thought

THE EVER increasing bloody oppression of the Tamil minority and the government's refusal to permit the Red Cross to operate in the stricken areas of Sri Lanka is sufficient evidence of how little influence and respect governments like Sri Lanka have for the Red Cross.

It is not only the Red Cross but also foreign organisations, journalists and private persons — especially intellectuals — who have been denied entry to the troubled areas.

The earnest attempts by the Indian government to try to settle the conflict by peaceful mediation have failed. The Lankan government has through its envoys deceived India and the outside world with propaganda implying that it is trying to solve the conflict peacefully. In reality it has been building up its arsenal and has increased its military assaults in the North and East. Even in the Southern parts the Tamil population is living in constant fear. A whole generation of Tamil youths between the ages of 17-40 are incarcerated in concentration camps such as Boosa in the south of Sri Lanka.

All this points to the fact that a systematic decimation or annihilation of the Tamil minority is under way. This is proceeding continuously despite the fact that the guerrilla organisation LTTE (the Tigers) has abandoned its claim for an independent state for the Tamils. They say they will

accept a federal solution if the Tamil population accepts this.

Göran Bäckstrand who together with Anders Wijkman contributed to the debate in Dagens Nyheter of June 7, 1987, had announced earlier "that the Lankan government, despite repeated negotiations refuses to let us in... even South Africa has allowed us entry".

Even Hitler's Germany gave access to the Red Cross. This disrespect for the Red Cross movement by the Lankan government has been intensified following its action against the Indian relief consignment to Jaffna. If the Lankan government has any respect for the Red Cross movement it would have accepted the air-drop while protesting against the Indian help. Now this was not done and the government has incurred a well deserved "mass media" criticism of Sri Lanka".

To my mind the publicity which the Red Cross has received as a result of the Indian action will be a reminder to governments and countries like Sri Lanka to show respect for the activities and work done by the Red Cross.

The action taken by the Indian Red Cross will not lead to other countries discrediting it; such a move on the other hand would expose the immorality of countries like Sri Lanka.

Dr. Aru Sandanam

(A Swedish doctor and a Tamil from Sri Lanka)

## THE BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

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### PRESS RELEASE: Dated 20 July, 1987

#### REFUGEE DETENTION: Agencies Call For Urgent Review

AN "URGENT" AND "COMPREHENSIVE" review of the British government's use of detention for people seeking asylum was called for at a meeting convened by the British Refugee Council (BRC), and chaired by the Bishop of Kingston, the Rt. Rev. Peter Selby.

Those calling for the review were BRC, the United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, the Ugandan Welfare Action Group, the Jewish Council for Community Relations, the Ethiopian Community in Britain, Refugee Action, Quaker Peace and Service, the Tamil Refugee Action Group, and the Methodist Church, Division of Social Responsibility.

The demand for a review follows the recent verdict (1 July) into the death of Ahmed Katongole, a Ugandan asylum-seeker. Mr. Katongole committed suicide in detention in Pentonville Prison on 22 March this year. The jury at St. Pancras Coroner's Court returned a verdict of "suicide aggravated by official indifference and lack of care." **British refugee agencies know of at least five cases during the last nine months where asylum-seekers in detention have tried to take their own lives.**

The Bishop of Kingston said at the meeting: "Asylum-seekers are being detained in increasing numbers and for excessively long periods of time. There is little apparent concern for the anxiety this causes to people already under great stress because of their refugee situation." Specific issues that the review should address include:

- \* Why asylum-seekers are put into detention when they have committed no crime;
- \* The increasing length of time they are forced to spend in detention;
- \* Opportunities to challenge or review a decision to detain an asylum-seeker;
- \* Access for asylum-seekers to legal and medical advice, counselling, friends and family while in detention;
- \* the use of ships as detention centres.

In recent months there has been a massive increase in the number of asylum-seekers held in detention. Two years ago there were no more than a handful in detention at any one time. In March of this year the Home Office reported 130 cases. However, the number of people seeking asylum has not risen significantly since last year.

Detention centres such as the Earl William ferry moored at Harwich are totally unsuitable for people seeking asylum. Most of them are under great stress already, yet the ferry is staffed by Securicor guards who are not properly trained.

The Bishop of Kingston concluded the meeting saying: "The British government must undertake an urgent and comprehensive examination of procedures and criteria used by the Home Office in relation to the detention of asylum-seekers." "Mr. Katongole's suicide illustrates the desperate need for such a review.

**"A tragedy like this must not be allowed to happen again."**

# Israelis Controlling Sri Lankan Security

**SRI LANKA'S INTERNAL SECURITY network appears to be entirely controlled now by the Israeli intelligence agency "Shinbet" that has been effective in controlling occupied Arab territories.**

The Israeli espionage and covert action agency "Mossad" is training the Special Task Force personnel. Increasing Pakistani personnel seem to be involved in the direction of military operations against the Tamil militants.

The Tel Aviv-Islamabad-Colombo axis in the total conduct of war against the Tamil citizens of the island republic has been evident long since. The Israeli involvement began in 1979 with induction of agricultural experts who had planned and effected new Jewish settlements in occupied Arab areas.

Colombo adopted the technique to settle Sinhalese in the northern and eastern provinces to create enclaves in the predominantly Tamil areas.

An increasing number of Pakistani military advisers have been seen in Trincomalee, Batticaloa and the periphery of the operational areas in Jaffna.

There are positive indications emanating from Sri Lanka that the SIAI Marchetti S-211 attack aircraft used by the Air Force to bomb and strafe Tamil-inhabited areas are mostly flown by Pakistani and Israeli pilots, as Colombo has been short of trained pilots who can carry out the sorties in the face of ground fire.

Pakistani intelligence personnel in Sri Lanka are involved in gathering operational information for the security forces – and take an active role in dividing the Tamils into communal lines.

Hitherto the Muslims in the eastern and northern provinces went along with the larger Tamil aspirations. But now systematic efforts are underway to keep them as a separate factor in the political negotiations that may eventually be needed for a lasting peace, after Colombo completes its military objective of assuming complete control of Tamil-dominated areas.

It is pertinent to recall that the first clashes on communal lines took place after President Zia-ul-Haq's visit to Sri Lanka.

During his visit to Islamabad in the spring of 1985, President Jayawardene repeatedly reminded President Zia-ul-Haq of transit facilities accorded by Sri Lanka to air-and-sea borne movement of civil and military personnel of Pakistan in the crucial months of 1971.

Pakistan has responded in more than ample measure to repay that debt of gratitude. Since 1985, Pakistanis have trained the Special Task Force commanded by the Sri Lankan President's son Ravi Jayawardene

(Security Advisor) who visited Israel in 1986.

Pakistani experts have trained hundreds of police intelligence personnel in Sri Lanka – many of them Muslims. Substantial quantities of small arms have been supplied by Pakistan to Sri Lanka for the military operations.

"Shinbet" of Israel is training Sinhala troops in commando operations as well as internal intelligence ferreting. Together with "Mossad", it operates out of the Israeli Interests Section of the American Chancery in Colombo.

Actually, in recent years the Israeli connection has extended beyond military security to political links. Israeli President Chaim Herzog visited Colombo in November last and had extensive discussions with National Security Advisor Lalith Athulathmudali and President Jayawardene. He was accompanied by the Israeli Intelligence Chief.

There have been increasing trade

and academic exchanges between Tel Aviv and Colombo. Sri Lankan exports to Israel amounting to \$2.26 million in 1983 soared to \$90 million in 1986.

Israeli General Abron Meridore went to Colombo in January last and had comprehensive talks with President Jayawardene and Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali. In 1986, several Sri Lankans were trained in Israel, which has sold to Colombo missile equipped gun boats, rockets, small arms and ammunition.

"Mossad" trains the Special Task Force and is suspected of having engineered sabotage in Sri Lanka and in southern India (rail track blowing up) to discredit the Tamils. This is quite the pattern of activity they adopt in occupied Arab lands.

Colombo's increasing external involvement and operational base facilities for foreign agencies constitute a danger to Indian security interests and are laying the region open for big power presence.

By courtesy of The Overseas Hindustan Times, July 18, 1987

## COMMENT ON BLOOMSBURY VIEW:

# Woolf And The Swiss Model

by H. A. I. Goonetilleke

Sri Lanka's distinguished bibliographer

IT WAS GOOD to have Frederic Spotts and Jehan Perera revealing Woolf's prophetic proposal for a federal solution to what he correctly perceived would become Sri Lanka's thorniest political conundrum, in this day and age when the ethnic issue is literally sizzling in the fire. That an enlightened Englishman with a shrewd knowledge of Ceylon, even as it then was, had the prescience to discern future traumas and prescribe a cure is not surprising – the tragedy remains that no Sinhalese majority regime has been willing to consider the federal formula as a way out, and perhaps the only realistic way out, of a vertiginous and involved constitutional impasse, which has now engulfed the country in a virtual civil war.

The authors in their brief and precise introduction in Woolf's memorandum (SR June 13) draw pointed attention to the fact that the idea of a federal system has never been considered by the present Government as a sensible via-media as well as a sagacious and a fair-minded extension of the 1986 Draft Proposals. But one must not miss sight of the federal consistent campaign carried out by the Federal Party for the acceptance of the federal concept as a viable political solution for nearly a quarter of a century before the mid-seventies. No stone was left unturned to impress upon Sinhalese leaders and the Sinhala political consciousness the sound logic and political rationale of the constitutional arrangement.

Even more remarkable, the first Sinhalese politician of standing to adopt this credo did so thirteen years before Woolf wrote his far-sighted evaluation. When S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike formed the Progressive Nationalist Party in 1925, he chose the federal form of government as a fundamental plank in

his manifesto.

He further expounded the feasibility and, indeed, necessity of such a concept in writing to the Press in 1926. His strong allegiance to the idea apparently founded when he allowed himself to be swallowed up in the mainstream of Sinhalese nationalist politics. It was only to be revived in an emasculated form in the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact years later which the Tamil Federal Party found generous enough in its concessions to accept.

Ten years later a variation of this regional autonomy theme offered in the Dudley-Chelvanayakam Pact was again found acceptable by the Federal Party.

On both occasions the magnanimity of Sinhalese leaders and the responsible responses of Tamil leaders were sabotaged by waves of extremist and reckless opinion both within and outside the government. The rest is recent history – and a bloody revolting fall-out at that!

The time is now ripe to pick up the lost threads of this judicious constitutional device, before the waves of suffering and tides of bitterness overwhelm us entirely.

Neither durable peace nor lasting reconciliation can emerge from a military solution, whether partial or total.

Only a political solution in which the cardinal concepts of self-determination, regional autonomy, inter-racial justice, equality and freedom from oppression and discrimination are guaranteed through some form of federalism can preserve our unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The national fabric, if it ever existed in our plural society, has been too deeply riven and rent apart.

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# QUESTIONNAIRE ON TAMIL TIMES

**TAMIL TIMES** will be six years old this year. This questionnaire is designed to test the readers attitudes and opinions regarding the functioning of this paper in its present form. It is also designed to draw the readers into a discussion as we approach the 1990's and the Tamil people hopefully look forward to a better day. Please answer and return this form to P.O. Box 304, London W13 9QN.

The questionnaire is divided into five areas:

1. Technical; 2. Editorial; 3. Managerial; 4. Policies – Editorial and Political; 5. Suggestions.

## TECHNICAL

1. Does the *Tamil Times* display technical competence? YES/NO
2. Is the choice of typesetting pleasing to the eye? YES/NO
3. Do headlines clash? YES/NO
4. Is red the right choice of colour for the banner? YES/NO

If not, please suggest any other colour .....

5. Does the paper compare favourably and technically with other small journals? YES/NO

## EDITORIAL

1. Has *Tamil Times* anything to offer those other than Tamils? YES/NO
2. Has the *Tamil Times* kept Tamils outside Sri Lanka reasonably informed about events in Sri Lanka? YES/NO
3. Does the *Tamil Times* encourage independent opinion in the form of Letters to the Editor? YES/NO

## MANAGERIAL

1. Can Management do more to attract subscribers? YES/NO  
If yes what? .....

2. If *Tamil Times* increases its rates for financial reasons will you continue to subscribe? YES/NO

3. Give any specific ideas for the improvement of the paper.

## POLICIES (Editorial and Political)

1. Should *Tamil Times* pay greater attention to cultural and social concerns? YES/NO

2. Would you assign *Tamil Times* a leadership role in the struggle of the Tamil people? YES/NO

## SUGGESTIONS

1. What do you miss and would like to see in future issues. Please list.

2. Do you think any space is wasted in the paper? If so, please state the items.

3. Have you any other useful suggestions to make?

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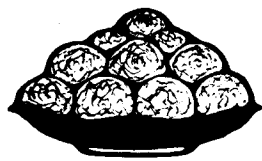
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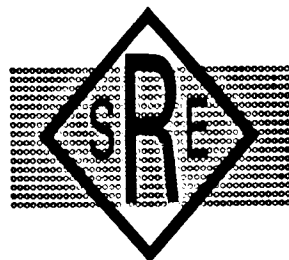
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## WORLD FEDERATION OF TAMILS

THE WORLD FEDERATION OF TAMILS (WFT), was established in 1984 to coordinate and unify, for their overall socio-economic development, the hitherto divergent initiatives of Tamils all over the world. The Federation has offices in Madras and Kuala Lumpur, and steps are now under way to open branches in countries where Tamil presence is significant.

The WFT is of the view that a mere association will not foster the unity of the Tamils. Certain constructive projects alone will bring the desired result. Hence the Federation has come up with some far reaching proposals such as the setting up of the World Tamil Development Bank and Tamil University.

The World Tamil Development Bank will have its main office in Gibraltar and branches in other countries. In due course it will render financial assistance to the Tamils involved in development projects.

The World Tamil University will be set up in South India, which varied educational facilities all under one administration and located in one place.

The WFT proposes to hold the Sixth International Tamil Research Conference at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, from August 23-27, 1987. The theme of the Conference, aptly entitled "Tamil in Science", will focus on achievements in linguistic research in the context of advancing Science and Technology. Academicians and Tamil scholars from all over the world have been invited to attend the Conference as delegates and to present research papers.

To realise this highly rewarding objective, we need the patronage of individuals who can give invaluable assistance in the promulgation of our aims.

The Federation's strength lies in its Membership. Hence we appeal to Tamils the world over to join hands with us to strengthen the Tamil Community.

20, Lake Area 5th St., Nungambakkam Madras  
Tamil Nadu, S. INDIA. Tel: 476501

21, Jalan Barat, 46200, Petaling Jaya,  
Selangor, MALAYSIA. Tel: 7566567, 7566115

### OBITUARY

#### SISTER ELIZABETH BAKER, M.B.E.,

Born February 22, 1902 - Died July 1, 1987

Sister Elizabeth set foot on the shores of Ceylon 56 years ago, on August 25, 1931. She had been there right up to the time of her death except for two short periods on furlough in England.

This is just one indication of the great love she had for the country, particularly for the poor and needy in the Tamil areas.

Her missionary involvement included spells of teaching in Kalmunai, training deaconesses in Puttur and evangelistic work in the Eastern Province. After retirement as a Methodist Missionary she joined the Rev. A. C. Thambyrajah to establish Navajeevanam, a centre for community living and now one of the few showpieces in the whole of the Northern

Province. She was also actively involved in the Ceylon National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis (C.N.A.P.T.) and with the Leprosy Association of Ceylon.



In recognition of her services in so many fields, Her Majesty the Queen awarded her the M.B.E. in 1974. In November, 1986 she fell ill and gradually lost her memory but died peacefully, surrounded by her large 'family' of orphans and refugees, friends and colleagues.

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Her mortal remains are buried in Paranthan, two miles from Navajeevanam, where she had spent the past 38 years.

### OBITUARY

#### Dr. Maheswary Arulampalam

retired School Medical Officer,  
wife of the late Dr. T. Arulampalam,  
Psychiatrist, mother of Meera  
Theivendra, Dr. Amirtha Pasupathy

and Asokan (all of UK) expired on  
13.7.87.

Cremation took place at Kensal  
Green Crematorium

36, Bouverie Road, West Harrow,  
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FRESH APPROACH FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT:**A FEDERAL SOLUTION ON THE 'SWISS MODEL**

Said Leonard Woolf a Long Time Ago

TODAY A RESTORATION OF PEACE is more remote than ever. Tamil militants who control the North of the island, insist on complete independence and are determined to fight for it. The Government remains unwilling to concede even the degree of autonomy that would satisfy moderate Tamils and presses its own military solution. The deadlock – political and military – is complete and implacable.

What is desperately needed is a new approach. By remarkable historic curiosity today's problem had been foreseen and a solution proposed fifty years ago by someone generally known more for his literary than his political background – Leonard Woolf.

Before marrying Virginia Stephen in 1912, Woolf had spent seven years as a British colonial administrator in Ceylon, as Sri Lanka was then known. Recently discovered in the archive of Rhodes House in Oxford is a proposal which Woolf put forward in 1938 in his capacity as a Labour Party advisor on imperial questions. Woolf's solution was as simple as it was novel to British

tradition – “a federal solution on the Swiss model.”

Woolf's line of reasoning is no less valid now than it was then. “The Sinhalese,” he argued, “have used and will use their majority against the interests of the Tamils.” But, Woolf noted, “The Swiss federal canton system proved extraordinarily successful under circumstances very similar to those in Ceylon, i.e., the coexistence in a single democratic state of communities of very different size, sharply distinguished from one another by race, language and religion.” Therefore Woolf concluded that by creating a cantonal system – with the Tamils having their own two cantons in the north and east where they are concentrated it would be possible to devolve power in a way that would protect the interests of both Sinhalese and Tamils.

To this day Woolf enjoys in Sri Lanka a unique reputation for his rectitude as a colonial administrator and for his lifelong affection for the country. Far from being an imperialist practising a

“divide and rule” policy, he advocated in 1918 – long before anyone else in Britain – that Ceylon should be given immediate independence. Moreover, Woolf was particularly well-disposed to the Sinhalese among whom he spent some of his happiest years. His advocacy of a decentralised system was both prophetic and impartial.

The Sri Lankan Government's latest proposals – of December 19, 1986 – offer some devolution of power to the existing nine provinces, but they maintain the unitary system. Most Tamils have no trust in the Government's offer and will be satisfied with nothing less than an autonomous “Tamil homeland.”

The idea of a federal system, which has never been considered by the Government, is a way out of the impasse. Willingness to explore it would be an acid test of the sincerity of desire of leaders on both sides to get out of the trenches and go back to the negotiating table. This fresh approach is perhaps the only remaining basis for a peaceful settlement.

**ETHNIC CONFLICT – WHO BENEFITS?**

**Novosti Press Agency  
has issued the following  
press release.**

Some western mass media, including “Wall Street Journal”, are alleging that the Soviet Union supplies arms to Tamil groupings involved in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka, seeks an access to the port of Trincomalee and to a major Sri Lankan airfield. Novosti Press Agency states authoritatively that these reports are a crude fabrication from beginning till end. Their goal is to camouflage the activity of those quarters, mostly American, which are trying to use the ethnic conflict as a pretext for building their military presence in the region. This can be seen from the following facts.

For a long time representatives of the U.S. Armed Forces, especially the Navy, have been seeking access to the Trincomalee base in a bid to use this deep-water bay as one more U.S. naval base in the Indian Ocean. The mass media of the South Asian region, report that, American warships already call at Sri Lankan ports, so far under the pretext of organising, so to say, rest for the Navy men. However, the Navy's efforts to obtain the Trincomalee base persist.

“Muscle-building” is combined with the expansion of the psychological war. For several years the U.S. has been striving for building in Sri Lanka the broadcasting station of the “Voice of America” which will be the second U.S. station in capacity after VOA in Washington. This station is supposed to be used for extending the

network of programmes which already cause protests in many countries of the region. The Soviet Union has also expressed its serious concern over these plans since the eastern part of the USSR is within the range of transmission of the US station in Sri Lanka.

Yet the station is being built, not only and not so much for the VOA. Facts reveal that the main aim of the U.S. Navy is to use this radio station for tracking the movement of ships in the Indian Ocean, which was quoted more than once. Moreover, there are plans to use it for communication through super-low frequency transmissions with the American submarines operational on combat patrolling in the region.

One cannot overlook one more reason impelling the Pentagon to extend its own political activities. Sri Lanka together with other countries of the region is actively campaigning for convening in Colombo in 1988 an international conference for proclaiming the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. This position is consistently and fully supported by the Soviet Union, other socialist countries as well as the non-aligned states.

Of course, such a conference does not suit the U.S. military quarters which have a permanent fleet of over 30 warships including an aircraft carrier. These quarters have foiled the convocation of an international conference on the Indian Ocean more than once. Besides the USA even suggested dissolving the U.N. Special Committee on the Indian Ocean and forget the proposal to hold the conference.

In an attempt to lay the blame on others

the USA imputes to the USSR its own militarist plans in the region. The Soviet point of view on the Indian Ocean problem is crystal clear. It was distinctly expressed in the speeches by M. S. Gorbachev, General Secretary of the CC CPSU in July in Vladivostok and in November in Delhi last year. The Soviet Union utterly shares and supports the assessment of the situation in the region by the Harare political declaration, standing for the earliest convocation of the conference in Colombo.

Obviously, this time too, the U.S. would like to use the ethnic conflict as a pretext for foiling this conference once again.

Who benefits from the escalation of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka? The answer is evident. Those who are not interested in demilitarisation of the Indian Ocean.

**Gandhi Warned Sri Lanka**

MR. J. N. DIXIT, Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, has warned Colombo that New Delhi will not tolerate another large scale military offensive to seize control of more of the Jaffna peninsula. A message to this effect was handed over to President Jayawardene on July 1.

The Indians have been convinced by reports from the Red Cross personnel and diplomats helping to distribute relief aid in the Jaffna peninsula that the scale of destruction is far greater than suspected. The Indians are proposing to send in at least 8,000 tonnes of food, medical supplies and paraffin.