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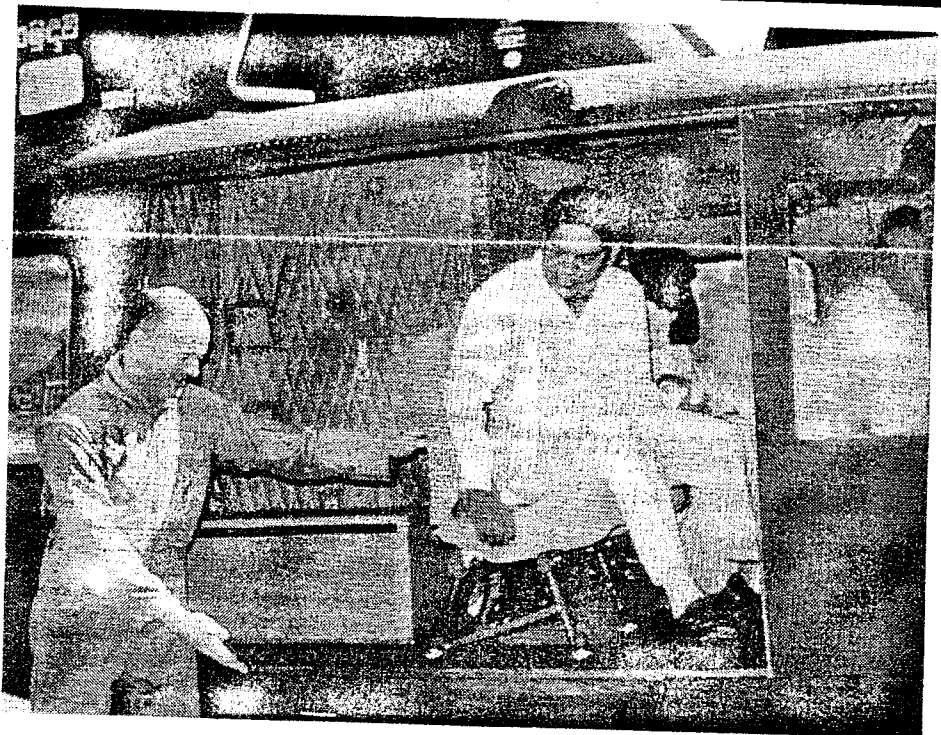
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SPOTLIGHT ON FOREIGN MERCENARIES IN SRI LANKA

— Pages 12 & 13

Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, Sri Lanka's
Minister for National Security, seen with a
British mercenary in Jaffna.
By courtesy of Asia Week.



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Bottom Row: President Jayawardene, Sultan of Oman, ex-President Numeiry (Sudan) and Lt. Col. Oliver North.



U.N. HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION
RESOLUTION
ON SRI LANKA

— Page 6

(Courtesy of London Daily News 6.3.87)

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PEACE WILL NOT RETURN MILITARILY

EVEN THOUGH it was announced as a fuel embargo, the fact that it turned out to be a full-scale economic and communications blockade covering even firewood, kerosene, essential food and medical supplies and fuel to hospitals, reveals the sheer inhuman nature of the present Sri Lankan government. And the fact that it has announced a partial lifting of this embargo out of fear that India was considering the feasibility of despatching humanitarian relief does not mitigate the evil nature of the government's action.

In the meantime, the thousands of troops which almost encircle Jaffna and the many more thousands massed within the peninsula are continuing their atrocities in pursuance of government orders. Aerial bombing, rocket firing and strafing, shelling from naval gunboats and firing missiles and mortars from the many army camps are continuing on a daily basis resulting in hundreds of civilians being killed or injured and causing incalculable damage to property. Every time an incident occurs between the security forces and Tamil militants, the defenceless civilian Tamils have to face the inevitable – the indiscriminate attacks from army camps situated in all parts of Jaffna. Hospitals, temples, churches, mosques, schools, colleges, houses, shops and a host of other private and public buildings have been irreparably damaged. Considerable parts of the Jaffna Teaching Hospital, Tellipallai Government Hospital, the Co-operative Hospital, Nallur Kandaswamy temple, Thurkai Amman Kovil, Annanmar Kovil, Varuthalaivilan Pillaiyar Kovil and many schools including the Vembadi Girls College have been damaged.

School and College buildings have been and are being taken over to be converted into a ring of satellite army camps. For instance, the Tholakatty Monastery including the Catholic Church nearby have been forcibly taken over and converted into an army camp. All houses, shops and other property including trees around the army camps for a distance of up to nearly 2000 metres have been dynamited and destroyed.

These and other actions of the government demonstrate beyond doubt that it is determined to take over Jaffna by storm even at the risk of killing thousands of innocent civilians and destroying the entire peninsula and its environs. Already, the government has succeeded in destroying hundreds of villages in the other areas of the northern and eastern provinces and thousands of families have become refugees. The government's military adventure is aimed at a total military victory. Being a politician with no popular base in the south, Lalith Athulathmudali, the Minister of National Security, is hell bent on staking his claim for the Presidential succession by spilling the blood of the Tamils over their dead bodies.

A government which, for whatever reason, deliberately denies a section of its own people essential food and medical supplies, a government which bombs and kills a section of its own citizens, a government which demolishes and destroys the homes, schools, temples and churches of a section of its own population and a government which pursues a policy of turning a section of its subjects into refugees and force them to flee from the land of their birth has no moral or legal status or right to claim any authority over them, and it does not deserve their allegiance. On the contrary, such a government has qualified for retaliation and rebellion, armed or otherwise, by the affected people.

The government and its leaders may succeed in destroying Jaffna and killing half its population. They may even win many battles with the Tamil militants, feel that they have captured the whole of the Tamil areas and even fly the Lion Flag atop the Town Halls of Jaffna, Trincomalee and Batticaloa. But they will certainly not win the war. They will not have peace, not only in the north and east, but also in the whole island, by military means. They may have the support of all the dogs of war including the Israelis, Pakistanis, South Africans and the British S.A.S. but peace will not return to the country. Today they may spend 15 billion rupees on defence; next year it may be increased to 30 billion rupees; and in the following to 60 billion rupees. They may even mobilise a 500,000 army. Still peace will not return. Why do we say so? Not because we want it that way but so long as there is one person prepared to throw one grenade once a month in the name of the Tamil people and their struggle, peace will not return. Even if the government succeeds in suppressing and even annihilating the entire Tamil resistance, there will remain more than one to handle a grenade.

THE REAL AIM OF GOVERNMENT

"TOTAL ANNIHILATION OF TAMILS"

M. SIVASITHAMPARAM, (President, TULF)

The situation in the North and East is grim. The Government of President Jayawardene is waging a war against the Tamil people of the Northern and Eastern provinces. The victims of the cruel attacks of the racist armed forces of Sri Lanka are mainly the non-combatant Tamil civilians. The brave young men of the LTTE have put up a courageous fight against very heavy odds and against the entire might of the state. But the armed forces massacre innocent civilians.

In late January 1987, the Sri Lankan armed forces, without any cause, suddenly launched major military operations including aerial attacks, in the Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts, killing over 200 Tamil civilians and destroying substantial civilian property. This was followed by further military offensives in early February in the mainland of the Northern Province, in the Mannar, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts. Over 300 Tamil civilians were killed here and houses and other property were destroyed. In Jaffna, strafing and bombing from the air, firing shells and mortars from army camps, have claimed over 100 lives. Within the short space of a fortnight over 600 Tamil civilians have been killed.

The economic and communications blockade, which has been in force for the past ten weeks, has subjected the civilian population to immense deprivation and suffering. Starvation stalks the peninsula. All transport and economic activity have ground to a halt. Hospitals are short of even life-saving drugs.

By all reliable reports, over 20,000 troops have been massed within and on the periphery of the peninsula, heavily armed and ready for a major offensive at very short notice.

In the face of the on-going peace efforts pursued by the Indian Government, these military offensives and preparations are totally unwarranted and unjustified. These establish beyond doubt the malafides of the Sri Lankan Government and their talk of negotiated settlement is only a facade to cover their real intention of beating down the Tamils and imposing a military solution.

Understandably, the Indian Government has decided to call the bluff and in its message to the Sri Lankan Government, intimated to them that the economic and communications embargo be lifted, the military operations be suspended and a firm commitment be made to the proposals of 19th December, communicated by President Jayawardene to Ministers Chithambaram and Natwar Singh, 'as a basis and starting-point for negotiations'. The response of the Sri Lankan Government was, as usual, hedged in by many 'ifs' and 'buts'. The economic and communications blockade and the military operations continued with usual rigour.

The TULF is not aware of the full

proposals of December 19. The President had tabled some documents in the Sri Lankan Parliament but it is not certain if these are all the proposals. The TULF does not wish to comment on these proposals till we are duly apprised of them from the proper channels. But I do wish to state that we have asserted and reasserted that **there are some fundamental matters like the unit of devolution, exclusive legislative and executive power, power over land, on which we will not compromise.**

After constant pressure from India and Tamil Nadu, after the Prime Minister of India hinted at other possible action, the Cabinet of Sri Lanka made some decisions, of doubtful value. I want to comment on these decisions:-

1. *Partial relaxation of the embargo on fuel. Fuel is to be rationed to those vehicles that are licensed with the authorities. Having failed to persuade vehicle-owners to licence their vehicles with the Government, this is an attempt to compel them to do so by making that the pre-condition for the issue of fuel. This is really calculated to re-impose their authority and not to afford relief.*

2. *Release of detainees above the age of 40. Faced with the mounting criticism of reputed international organisations like Amnesty International about detentions, torture and disappearances, the Government is enacting this farce of releasing those above the age of 40 who must form only an infinitesimal part of those in detention.*

3. *Elections to certain electorates in the North and East. President Jayawardene's Government which has killed democracy by not holding elections due in July 1983, which deprived the Tamil people of representation by enacting the notorious Sixth Amendment of the Constitution, is pretending to be democratic by promising elections in some electorates. The Tamil people, fighting for survival, fighting a life and death struggle, are not interested in any elections to the Sinhala Parliament.*

It is thus clear that the Sri Lankan Government is not coming forth decisively to use India's good offices to arrive at a just and honourable settlement. All that has happened leads us to the irresistible conclusion that the real aim of the Sri Lankan Government is the total suppression and annihilation of the Tamil people. We have appealed to the Prime Minister and people of India to take such action, as would ensure the physical protection and survival of the Tamil people in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, pending a final solution.

March 17, 1987

P.M. REVIEWING OPTIONS ON SRI LANKA TANGLE

AFTER the last high-level meeting the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, held on Wednesday, March 4 to review the Sri Lankan situation, there have been a series of follow-up discussions at different levels to formulate the alternatives open to India, for further consideration by him. The Political Affairs Committee of the Cabinet will be meeting to decide how India should proceed to deal with this tragic situation.

Lengthy discussions: The great importance Mr. Gandhi is attaching to the Sri Lanka tangle is evident from the fact that Wednesday's meeting lasted more than four hours, a record for any strategy session held in his office. It is seldom, if ever, that he has devoted so much time at a single meeting to a single problem.

It will take a few more days for Mr. Gandhi and his advisers to make up their minds on what can be done to stop the senseless slaughter of innocent Tamils by the Sri Lankan armed forces. **However, it is obvious that India is not**

going to remain a mute witness to any new bid by the Sri Lankan Army to regain control of the Jaffna peninsula through an all-out military campaign.

Every pressure: The Government of India will exert every possible pressure to prevent such a hazardous gamble, because it would have grave repercussions across the Palk Strait in the adjoining Tamil Nadu districts. It would also land India with a serious refugee problem.

If Sri Lanka responds to the repeated Indian pleas for a simultaneous cessation of all hostilities, by both the security forces and the Tamil militants, followed by a suspension of the oil embargo and communications blockade, Indian mediators will be faced with the exasperating problem of getting together a representative group of Tamil leaders to negotiate a political settlement.

Courtesy of "The Hindu",
March 14, 1987

TEXTS OF INDIA'S MESSAGE AND COLOMBO'S RESPONSE

A RESPONSE is awaited from the Government of India to the Sri Lankan Government's response, dated February 12th, to the Government of India's message delivered to Mr. J. R. Jayawardene on February 9th by the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. J. N. Dixit.

The substance and details of the respective positions were presented, in full text, by Mr. Jayawardene in his address to the Sri Lankan Parliament on Thursday. Here are the texts of the original Indian message and Colombo's response:

Indian message

Message from the Prime Minister and the Government of India to the President and Government of Sri Lanka, delivered in Colombo on Monday, February 9th:

1. As far as the current military operations against the Tamil civilians continue, and other discriminatory measures, like economic and communications blockade affecting civilians exist, India is not in a position to resume discussions with Tamil militants. While this is so for the present, India will remain willing to resume the peace process if and when these actions are withdrawn.

2. India is firmly of the view that the proposals which emerged on the 19th of December, after Mr. Natwar Singh and Mr. Chidambaram's visit to Colombo, must clearly be affirmed by the Government of Sri Lanka as a basis and only a beginning point for further negotiations. India is also of the view that the final framework of a solution based on those proposals can only be forged when (the) Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil side come together again for negotiations.

3. If the Government of Sri Lanka continues the economic blockade and military operations against Tamils, prospects of violence will increase. India's assessment is that the conflict will be prolonged and will escalate."

The response from the President and Government of Sri Lanka to the Prime Minister and Government of India was handed over by Mr. Jayawardene to Mr. Dixit on Thursday, February 12th. It was worded as follows:

Colombo's response

Introduction

"The response to the Government of India's message being given below is predicated on the clear understanding that all further discussions to be held or solutions to be evolved shall be within the framework of the Independence. Territorial integrity and Unity of Sri Lanka.

1. If the armed separatists (LTTE) agree to cease armed violent operations and related military preparations and desist from any activity aimed at setting up, or interfering with, the legal administration of the area, and this is announced by them, the Government of Sri Lanka would ensure that the Armed Forces will not carry out any further military operations in the area during this period.

2. When hostilities cease, in terms of para 1 above, the embargo (on the movement of certain commodities), now in force in the Jaffna peninsula will be lifted.

a. If the LTTE is prepared to attend talks with the representatives of the Government of Sri Lanka towards a peaceful solution of the ethnic problem, appropriate talks may be held in New Delhi with the assistance of the representatives of the Indian Government. The Government of Sri Lanka expects the Government of India to underwrite the implementation of any agreement so reached.

3. Upon the armed separatists giving up their arms – a vital step in strengthening the civil administration – a general amnesty will be given to them by the President of Sri Lanka.

4. When talks towards a peaceful solution to the ethnic problem commence, the Government of Sri Lanka will release those persons now held in custody under the Prevention of Terrorism Act who have no charges against them.

5. In all these proceedings the mediatory role and the good offices of the Government of India are relevant. The Government of Sri Lanka reaffirms that the results of the discussions held so far, including the proposals of 19th December, 1986, will be the basis for evolving a durable solution.

6. The Government of Sri Lanka is agreeable to an early date being fixed for the negotiations."

Some restrictions lifted

FOLLOWING LAST WEEK's Cabinet decision to lift certain restrictions imposed on the Northern Peninsula, the government yesterday announced the following fuel distribution schemes.

No restriction on kerosene. However, the Government agent, Jaffna will appoint 20 dealers to handle the distribution of kerosene for Jaffna peninsula. No restriction on firewood. No restriction on engine oil. Petrol and diesel will be distributed rationally. The scheme will be read out by the Coordinating Officer and the Jaffna GA and will be implemented as follows:

- (a) Private cars – three gallons per week.
- (b) Private buses, vans and lorries – ten gallons per week.
- (c) Tractors – five gallons per week.
- (d) Motor-cycles – one gallon per week.

All vehicle owners will however have to produce their 1987 revenue licences, vehicle registration books and insurance certificates to obtain their quotas. Normal requirements will be issued to SLTB buses.

Island 17/3/87

December 19 Proposals

The December 19, 1986 proposals, worked out between the Governments of India and Sri Lanka as "a basis" and "only a beginning point for further negotiations", have not been officially handed over either to the LTTE or the TULF. Here is the text of the proposals which emerged after talks in Colombo between the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, and the two Indian Ministers of State, Mr. K. Natwar Singh, and Mr. P. Chidambaram in December.

"The present territory comprising the Eastern Province minus the Amparai Electorate (electoral district) may constitute the new Eastern Province.

"A Provincial Council will be established for the new Eastern Province.

"The institutional linkages between the Northern Province and the Eastern Province discussed earlier will be further

defined in order to make it more acceptable to the parties concerned.

"The Sri Lankan Government will be willing to consider a proposal for a second stage of constitutional development providing for the Northern Province and the new Eastern Province coming together subject to modalities being agreed upon for ascertaining the wishes of the people comprised in the Northern Province and the Eastern Province separately.

"The Sri Lankan Government is willing to consider the creation of an office of Vice-President to be appointed by the President for a specified term.

"The five Muslim MPs of the Eastern Province may be invited to visit India and to discuss matters of mutual concern with the Tamil side under the auspices of the Government of India."

THE INTERNATIONAL TAMIL CULTURAL ASSOCIATION

has obtained observer status at U.N. General Assembly. The International Tamil Cultural Association will be able to send two representatives to the annual sessions of the U.N. General Assembly.

Although as mere observers its accredited representatives will not be able to participate in the General Assembly debates or other proceedings, yet it would provide opportunities for lobbying officially. The ICTA representing Tamils resident in many countries is expected to hold its Annual Convention in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia during May 1987.

U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

"VIOLATIONS BY SRI LANKAN SECURITY FORCES ARE QUITE TRANSPARENT"

The following is the text of the intervention at the 43rd Sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission on 4 March, 1987 by the Indian Ambassador, Mr J. S. Teja, made in reply to the statement of the Sri Lankan representative.

MR. CHAIRMAN, my delegation wishes to exercise its right of reply to the statement made by the distinguished representative of Sri Lanka last night. Had there been an opportunity to speak yesterday, my delegation would have done that immediately.

Mr. Chairman, let me say straightaway that we share the sentiment that India and Sri Lanka are friendly countries with many common values and aspirations and with a common stake in peace, stability, progress and development in the world, particularly our region.

We have repeatedly said that we would like a peaceful, negotiated solution of the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka within the integrity and unity of Sri Lanka. India has been doing all it can to bring the two sides to this ethnic conflict together to resolve the issue through negotiations. It was therefore painful to hear the unfounded, unsubstantiated and unwarranted utterances of the representative of Sri Lanka yesterday.

The representative of Sri Lanka said yesterday something to the effect that India has destroyed its credibility with the Sri Lanka Government and that India has no capacity to play the role of an honest broker because of what he called "having no control over the militants". He also quoted with approval from some newspapers.

I do not know what the representative of Sri Lanka means by "control". The militants are not Indian nationals; they are Sri Lankan. If they were active, that activity too would be on Sri Lankan soil. How can India exercise control over citizens of another country in that country itself?

As for credibility and capacity as a mediator, our clear impression is that the Government of Sri Lanka would like India to continue its mediatory role. That is what the President of Sri Lanka has said in public and through official channels. We would prefer to go by his statements and that of the Government of Sri Lanka. For example, just before leaving for Maldives, President Jayawardene told the High Commissioner of India on 2nd March this year that he considers India's good offices important. As late as 12th February, the President gave formal indication to India that if the LTTE is prepared to attend the talks with the representatives of the Government of Sri Lanka towards a peaceful solution of the ethnic problem, appropriate talks may be held in New Delhi with the assistance of the representatives of the Indian Government. The Government of Sri Lanka expects the Government to underwrite implementation of any agreement so reached. In all these proceedings, the mediatory role and the good offices of the Government of India are relevant.

On 22nd February, President Jayawardene sent another letter to the Prime Minister of India which was handed over to the Prime Minister on 2nd March. The letter was along the same lines.

It is precisely the sort of remarks made yesterday and which are at variance with what we are told officially which cause serious impediments to the negotiating process because they send conflicting signals. The problem is not between India and Sri Lanka but between two sections of its citizens. It is disingenuous to drag India into it.

Mr. Chairman, this is not the forum for discussing political matters but permit me to say briefly that if violence continues unabated, if recourse is taken to the military option, if civilians get killed by hundreds, if no adequate response is made to proposals designed to bring about a political settlement, how can the peace process be restored? The Sri Lankan representative said yesterday

something to the effect - I do not have the text of his remarks because they have not been made available - that only one question remained to be resolved in the negotiations. It is precisely on that point that India made certain proposals on 9 February and asked for an adequate and more positive response which has not come so far. Meanwhile military operations continue in the north. These facts speak for themselves!

The Human Rights Commission is concerned with human rights directly and we would prefer to keep the discussion within its four corners.

The representative of Sri Lanka stated that security operations in the Northern and Eastern provinces were intended "to restore not only law and order but to maintain supplies and services" etc. The facts on the ground however speak otherwise.

There has been a massive military build-up on the Jaffna peninsula where several thousand troops have been deployed in an area with an extremely high density of population. If the anticipated military offensive takes place, there are bound to be very high civilian casualties, thereby adding to bitterness and seriously complicating the efforts towards a negotiated settlement.

The imposition of economic and communications blockade is not only an action against Tamil militants but against the entire civilian population. This unprecedented blockade is already in its third month. More than 200,000 people have been affected. Schools and factories have been occupied by armed forces and hospitals starved of essential drugs. Telephone lines remain cut off and transportation severely disrupted. If the blockade continues, there are likely to be starvation deaths in the peninsula. Should the innocent Tamil civilians be made to suffer in the process of Government's operations against any particular militant group?

The representative of Sri Lanka suggested in his statement that the outflow of refugees from Sri Lanka has been manipulated on the basis of false propaganda about a consistent pattern of gross human rights violations to justify what has been described by the Sri Lankan representative as "illegal immigration". The main reasons for which refugees from Sri Lanka are leaving the country, have been well-documented and established by a number of Governments, international organisations and respectable human rights organisations. Refugees flee from their hearths and homes only in the face of violence visited upon them, not because they are looking for economic gains. There is a very clear difference in international law between refugees and immigrants whatever their legal status. The exodus of refugees has continued and there are now over 130,000 Tamil refugees from Sri Lanka in India, not to speak of more than 40,000 refugees who have sought shelter in distant countries. Economic blockade and military operations by security forces could well lead to an increase in that number.

The representative of Sri Lanka said in his written statement that the cause of human rights is not advanced by polemics because polemics serve propaganda purposes. We too do not wish to engage ourselves in polemics or propaganda. It is precisely for this reason that we have confined ourselves to stating the factual position only. The authenticity of reports of human rights violations by the Sri Lankan security forces is quite transparent. Even from the Government's accounts, the number of civilian casualties appears very high. Gross and systematic violations of human rights including arbitrary arrests, detentions, disappearances, torture and inhuman treatment, extra judicial killings, air attacks and shelling of civilian areas have been well-documented by reputable international organisations including the International Alert, Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists. We could cite specific instances but that would only take more of Commission's time. It would be sufficient to say that more than 2,000 civilians are reported to have been killed in 1986 alone. Most of these were Tamils.

continued on page 15

U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

"LARGE SCALE SUFFERING INFLICTED BY GOVERNMENT ON TAMIL COMMUNITY"

The following is the text of the intervention by Mr. Virendra, leader of the Indian delegation made on 2 March, 1987 during the 43rd sessions of the U.N. Human Rights Commission held in Geneva:—

"THE COMMISSION on Human Rights meets once again at a time when both the situation of the Tamil minorities in Sri Lanka as well as the progress towards a satisfactory solution to the ethnic problem leave little room for optimism. In deliberations in this Commission in the past few years most delegates and observers including those from India and Sri Lanka had expressed hopes for an improvement in the situation and an early settlement. Unfortunately the violation of the human rights of the Tamil minorities continues and our sincere hopes for a settlement have remained unfulfilled.

"If we recall the discussion on this question in the past three years we find that the deliberations of the Commission seem to have acquired a recurrent and tragic refrain. Attention was drawn in previous years to arbitrary arrests, disappearances, killings and denial of human rights to the Tamil minority. The actions of the Sri Lankan military and security agencies against civilians and non-combatants came in for especially severe comment. The Sri Lankan Government sought to justify these events as the legitimate response of law and order agencies to the actions of those it perceived as terrorists bent only on separation and destabilisation. Civilian losses, however major, were portrayed as inevitable and even acceptable in this process. At the same time the Sri Lankan Government repeatedly assured the Commission of its commitment to a political solution.

THE UN HRC RESOLUTION ON SRI LANKA

The following resolution co-sponsored by Argentina, Canada and Norway was unanimously adopted by the 43rd sessions of the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations on 12 March, 1987:

THE SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

The Commission on Human Rights, guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the universally accepted rules of international humanitarian law,

Recalling its decision 1984/III of 14 March, 1984,

Taking note of the Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and the Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances,

1. Calls upon all parties and groups to respect fully the universally accepted rules of humanitarian law,
2. Calls upon all parties and groups to renounce the use of force and acts of violence and to pursue a negotiated political solution, based on principles of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,
3. Invites the Government of Sri Lanka to intensify its co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross in the fields of dissemination and promotion of international humanitarian law and invites the Government of Sri Lanka to consider favourably the offer of the services of the International Committee of the Red Cross to fulfill its functions of protection of humanitarian standards, including the provision of assistance and protection to victims of all affected parties, and
4. Expresses the hope that the Government of Sri Lanka will continue to provide information to the Commission on Human Rights on this question.

"As we look back today at the course of events after the tragic July 1983 disturbances we find the same pattern repeated, with the promise of negotiations being followed by unrestrained military action. The situation this year is no different. I need not go into individual instances of violation of human rights as these have been widely reported and well documented by international groups. I shall recall only some of the more recent of such instances. On the first day of this year the Sri Lankan Government took the unprecedented and extraordinary step of imposing an economic and communications blockade against its own citizens in Jaffna. In the north, the flow of fuel, firewood and, in many cases, even essential supplies, was cut off causing immense suffering to the civilian population in the north. This has been recounted in appeals made by the Citizens' Committee to international organisations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross. Whatever the reasons that may be put forward to justify such a step, **large scale suffering inflicted by the Government on the entire Tamil minority can only antagonise the community further and make progress towards a negotiated settlement that much more difficult.**

"In the beginning of February the Government's security forces carried out several operations, especially in the eastern province, ostensibly against the militants but with civilians as the main victims. In one such operation alone over 150 Tamil civilians are reported to have died. Even the Sri Lankan press has confirmed the massacre of 23 unarmed employees of a foreign managed seafood firm by the Special Task Force. Recent reports indicate ominous troop movements towards Jaffna in the north. **There are reports that the loss of civilian lives in 1986 alone exceeds 2000. The overwhelming majority of them are Tamil civilians.** It is even more unfortunate, though this is not the first time it has happened, that these actions by the Sri Lankan Government and its security forces took place at a time when the negotiating process seemed to be making some headway.

"India believes that only a negotiated political settlement can resolve the problem in Sri Lanka. India has continued to offer its good offices for this purpose. What is still lacking is the political will and a firm conviction on the part of the Sri Lankan Government that a solution can and will be found only through political means and not through military action. Over the past three years we have too frequently seen a resort to force, often when hopes for a political settlement had been rising. This causes a setback to peace efforts, adds to the list of grievances of the Tamil minority and makes the negotiating process even more difficult.

"Repeated human rights violations result in lasting resentment and bitterness. These become a major obstacle to a political solution. It is only by ending such violations and by restoring the human rights and aspirations of the Tamil minority that a lasting solution to this problem can be found. We believe that the Commission on Human Rights can play a very important role in encouraging the move towards a political solution to this tragic problem by highlighting the humanitarian concerns involved and by helping to ameliorate the distressing human rights situation in Sri Lanka."

Women's International League

The Women's International League would like to state its deep concern with the acts of violence which are taking place in Sri Lanka and their effect on the women and children there. We reiterate the call we made, along with other Non-Governmental Organisations, for international action in order to bring humanitarian aid and an acceptable settlement to the conflict.

U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

"SRI LANKA HAS FAILED TO REMOVE STRUCTURAL CAUSES OF VIOLATIONS"

The following is the text of the intervention by Miss Tamara Kunanayakam on behalf of the World Student Christian Federation made during the 43rd sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission held during February–March 1987:

I SPEAK on behalf of the World Student Christian Federation, a non-governmental organisation with movements in more than 90 countries throughout the world.

It is increasingly recognised in reports of the Commission's monitoring bodies in respect of detention, torture, enforced disappearances and summary executions, that these violations are usually part of a systematic pattern; and such systematic violations of human rights usually betray structural root causes which need to be addressed before the violations will disappear. For example, the Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances (E/CN.4/1987/15/Add.1, paragraph 43) stated with regard to Peru that "it is not feasible to divorce the issue of disappearance completely from related violations of human rights or from the socio-political processes that have engendered them". He concludes that "only when the structural factors that contributed to the spiral of terror and counter-terror are properly dealt with, can there be any hope of preventing a recurrence of the excesses of the past." The report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture (E/CN.4/1987/13, para.5) states that "torture almost invariably takes place in a political context," and that "victims of torture are very often opponents of the government in power."

These reports show that the inter-related violations such as torture, disappearances and summary executions and manifestations of deeper structural realities. Mr Chairman, it is within this wider context identified by the Special Rapporteurs that we wish to deal with the violations of human rights that occur in Sri Lanka. Our case is that the government of Sri Lanka should address itself to the underlying causes if it is genuinely committed to the restoration of human rights in that country.

The distinguished delegate of Norway yesterday (24/2/87) said "Enforced and involuntary disappearances and torture of persons seem to be used as convenient tactics for governments suppressing opponents and espousing a policy of stifling dissent often on grounds of national security or with reference to the national integrity and sovereignty." This is exactly the practice prevailing in Sri Lanka today, in the context of the government's failure to address itself to the legitimate grievances of the Tamil people stemming from socio-economic and political causes.

"There is incontrovertible evidence that compared to previous years, larger numbers of people have been arrested in 1986, very often on a mass scale, and detained for prolonged periods. A civil rights monitoring group in Sri Lanka estimates that the total number taken into custody during 1986 to be in the region of 14,000 persons. Those arrested are detained not in normal detention centres but in army camps located in various parts of the country under degrading conditions. Most of the arrests, the victims of which, by and large, are Tamils, are effected under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations. It may be noted that the Prevention of Terrorism Act has been described by the International Commission of Jurists as an ugly blot on the statute book of any civilised country. Sri Lanka has been ruled by the present government under a state of emergency for most of its life since 1977.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act authorises detention up to a period of 18 months and Emergency Regulations for an unlimited period. Yesterday (24/2/87) the Sri Lankan delegate sought to argue that unlimited detention is not possible under Emergency Regulations because orders under a State of Emergency can legally

last only for a month. The fact of the matter is that the State of Emergency has been renewed every month without interruption during the last several years thus enabling detention of persons for unlimited periods. The Committee for Monitoring Cessation of Hostilities appointed by the government itself in its report dated 17 January, 1986 stated that "Those held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for more than 18 months are served with detention orders under Emergency Regulations which authorise unlimited detention."

For all practical purposes there is no prospect of judicial review of detention of persons whether under the Prevention of Terrorism Act or Emergency Regulations. Mr Chairman, yesterday (24/2/87) the Sri Lankan delegate sought to impress this Commission about the remedy available by way of habeas corpus applications. This remedy in actual practice has proved ineffective and in most cases unavailable. In this connection the President of the Law Society Sri Lanka has said "Since it is a tedious legal process which entails inordinate delays, a Habeas Corpus application does not serve the intended purpose. Quite a large number of applications in respect of persons about whom nothing is known after arrest, is still pending in the Appeal Court." (Island, 20 January, 1986).

The Sri Lankan delegate also claimed yesterday, that detainees or their relatives have the right to make representations to an Advisory Board appointed by the President. A delegation of the UK Parliamentary Human Rights Group which visited Sri Lanka in February 1985 stated, "The problem is that it frequently takes several months for the parent's or mother's letter requesting a review to reach the Advisory Board via the Ministry of Defence. And, once the Board has made its recommendation, it takes several more months before the Ministry of Defence acts upon it."

The Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations have removed most of the legal safeguards prescribed under the International Covenants on Human Rights. Prolonged incommunicado detention without trial is the norm. The whereabouts of people arrested and detained are not made known to relatives. Lawyers and relatives have no access to detainees in most cases.

Mr Chairman, it is in this context that many substantiated cases of torture and deaths in custody have been reported, so much so that the Special Rapporteur on Torture has expressed great concern in his report referring to Sri Lanka. The suspension of important legal safeguards under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and Emergency Regulations have created conditions conducive to the practice of torture.

Another new but reprehensible development reported during 1986 has been the use of detainees as hostages and/or human shields during military operations by security forces.

There is also substantial evidence to indicate that over a thousand persons have disappeared or gone missing after being taken into custody. Besides the well documented Amnesty International Report on "Disappearances", dated September 1986, the UN Working Group also has reported an increasing number of disappearances. The current report before this Commission by the Special Rapporteur refers to 321 outstanding cases of disappearances transmitted to the Sri Lankan government of which it was able to provide clarification in only 5 cases. By any standards, this is unacceptable.

Mr Chairman, while the violations of human rights to which we have adverted occur in the context of a continuing ethnic conflict, there is increasing evidence that wider sections of the whole Sri Lankan population, including those belonging to the majority Sinhala community, are becoming victims of similar violations. And very often the victims have been members of a wide range of opposition groups including members of some political parties, trade unions, women, student and human rights organisations.

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U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

12 NGO's CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS INTERVENTION

The following is the text of an appeal made by Mr. D. Von Der Weid on behalf of twelve Non-Governmental Organisations on 24 February, 1987 during the 43rd sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission:

I TAKE the floor to make a solemn appeal to this distinguished Commission on behalf of our Organisation, Anti-Slavery Society, as well as the following Organisations:

International Commission of Jurists; International Federation of Human Rights; Human Rights Advocates; League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples; World Student Christian Federation; Centre Europe Tiers Monde; Pax Christi International; Pax Romana; World Conference on Religion and Peace/International Disabled Peoples' International; International Youth and Student Movement of the U.N.

A country, once described as a Paradise Island is today rocked and wrecked by armed conflict. Three Special Rapporteurs of this Commission have in their reports made reference to serious allegations of Human Rights Violations in Sri Lanka. I do not propose to list the systematic and persistent patterns of violations that have been documented in detail by various Human Rights

Organisations. The situation in Sri Lanka is so grave that Governments as well as Non-Governmental Organisations share extreme anxiety about the physical insecurity and suffering to which the civilian population of that country is subjected today.

The situation is so grave that it warrants exceptional and urgent consideration by this distinguished Commission. We appeal to the conscience of distinguished delegates and the Governments they represent to ensure that all essential steps are undertaken in terms of International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law.

We believe most fervently that the most appropriate course of action to adopt in this situation is for the International Committee of the Red Cross and other similar Organisations to undertake a programme of work in order to provide necessary assistance and protection to the people in the affected areas. We also appeal to the Sri Lankan Government to invite the ICRC into the country so that it may perform its humanitarian mandate.

Mr. Chairman, this appeal is exceptional by reason of the urgency of the situation. It is also exceptional because of the number of NGO's who joined in making this appeal.

Mr. Chairman, may I conclude in the confident hope that this distinguished Commission share our sentiments and rise to the occasion in acceding to this appeal."

"SRI LANKAN CONFLICT HAS OVERFLOWED INTO THE COURTS & PRISONS OF OTHER COUNTRIES"

The following is the text of the intervention by Mr. Martin Ennals, Secretary General of International Alert, made on behalf of the Minority Rights Group, during the 43rd sessions of the U.N. Human Rights Commission held during February-March 1987:

MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP has long been concerned by the problems of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka. International Alert of which I am Secretary General, was established to work on ethnic conflicts and mass killings leading to genocide. The escalation of violence in the past twelve months has led to manifold allegations of human rights violations by all parties to the conflict. These allegations are based on eye witness testimonies, evidence in courts of law, reports by international and national organisations, and U.N. bodies such as the Working Party on Disappearances. The brutalities of the conflict affect civilians of all ethnic groups, creates a massive dispersion of population, the growth of internal and external refugee camps and the overflow of the Sri Lanka conflict into the courts and prisons of other countries.

Human rights do not depend on the rights and wrongs of any political conflict and affect the lives of many far removed from the actual scenes of war. The growing body of international human rights standards and humanitarian laws and institutions must be invoked on behalf of all victims of the present internal conflict in Sri Lanka. No body is more appropriate than the U.N. Human Rights Commission to express its concern and recommend measures which will contribute to the cessation of hostilities and respect for the human rights of the Sri Lankan peoples under the terms of the Universal Declaration and the Covenants.

As indicated by the distinguished delegate from India, there can be no doubt that security forces of the government of Sri Lanka have committed serious offences against civilians caught up in the internal conflict, that innocent civilians have been killed, not in the cross-fire between factions but in the course of the day to day existence of family life. Similarly the Tamil militant groups have been guilty of deliberate assaults on civilian targets resulting in deaths, mutilation and fear. The refugees are an automatic product

of these violations of human rights. Tamil refugees are now facing deprivation of their liberty in third countries, many of them in Europe.

It is regrettable that there is at present no resolution before the Human Rights Commission on the situation in Sri Lanka, but it is not too late. No one wishes to make matters worse or to prejudice the chances of the peace initiative which has been launched and the talks which continue between parties to the dispute. The good offices role played by the Indian government is appreciated and central to any long term settlement. But none of these political steps can be allowed to seem to justify the suffering being inflicted upon civilians and The Commission on Human Rights may wish to make reference in its deliberations to possible international steps which could be taken to increase protection of human rights without taking sides in negotiations which at this stage appear deadlocked while military operations continue and indeed are reportedly being intensified in the north which will endanger lives and create more refugees.

The Commission could, for example, recommend to all the parties to the conflict to observe basic international human rights standards and humanitarian laws in regard to the treatment of civilians. The government of Sri Lanka could be encouraged to take the initiative of inviting the International Committee of the Red Cross to exercise its protective role by visiting all places of detention and the areas of conflict. The government of Sri Lanka may also feel itself able to invite the U.N. Working Party on Disappearances to visit Sri Lanka in furtherance of its study on the allegations of involuntary disappearances.

The Tamil militant movements, recognised in terms of their involvement in the peace negotiations, could also be urged to act as responsible parties to an internal conflict and recognise the rules of war and refrain from attacks on civilian populations.

None of these steps would remove the fears of those facing the violations of their rights, but a statement by the Commission would be seen as an expression of international concern about a conflict which has long since overflowed the frontiers of Sri Lanka and would serve to reinforce the peace process without which no permanent state of tranquility can be restored.

U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Sri Lanka is in Violation of Geneva Convention

The following are extracts from interventions by Ms. Karen Parker, on behalf of the International Human Rights Advocates at the recently held 43rd sessions of the U.N. Human Rights Commission:

IN SRI LANKA, where armed conflict governed by Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions continues, serious unjustified abrogations of the rights of civilian detainees occur, especially in regard to persons arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act No.48 of 1979, directed mostly at the Tamil population, and the Emergency Regulations. Both acts allow the government to detain persons for lengthy periods (18 months under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and "for an unlimited period as determined by the Secretary" under the Emergency Regulations) with no judicial recourse. Although Article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights does allow derogations of many procedural rights in situations of armed conflicts, Common Article 3 of the Geneva conventions, automatically invoked by the armed conflict requires judicial processes "affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognised as indispensable by civilised peoples." **The government of Sri Lanka does not meet this minimum standard.** Additionally, Sri Lanka has yet to conform to minimum standards of detention of prisoners-of-war."

"Several other situations warrant attention under this item because, although the governments are able to justify some

suspensions of rights because of actual armed conflict conditions, the suspensions have been excessive. In El Salvador, Guatemala and Sri Lanka, objective conditions for civil war governed by Common Article 3 and Protocol Additional II of the Geneva Conventions are clearly met. Nonetheless, the Governments violate the rights of both civilian detainees and prisoners-of-war."

The governments of both Sri Lanka and Guatemala have refused to apply the Geneva Conventions in the course of armed conflict raging in those countries. The refusal is egregious in the case of Guatemala in light of repeated Commission and General Assembly resolutions indicating application of Common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions to the armed conflict in Guatemala."

Objective conditions for the automatic application of internal armed conflict rules clearly are met in Sri Lanka - there are armed dissidents, controlling territory, engaged in military operations against government armed forces. Refusal of the governments of Guatemala and Sri Lanka to acknowledge the obvious does not impair the rights of civilians who have fled - they still are entitled to the right of *non-refoulement* as long as the civil strife continues. **The refusal of these governments to recognise their obligations under humanitarian law only serves to enhance rights of refugees.** Countries that forcibly repatriate Sri Lankan or Guatemalan civilians commit grave breaches of humanitarian law. We particularly call on Switzerland to ensure compliance with its obligations under general principles of humanitarian law regarding Sri Lankans."

SRI LANKA HAS FAILED

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Referring to the situation in South Sri Lanka, the Campaign for the Release of Political Prisoners (CROPP), an organisation based mainly in South Sri Lanka and whose leadership by and large belong to the Sinhala community, in a recent statement said

"Reports coming in from those close to arrested persons reveal that tactics of arrest and detention long associated with repressive regimes in Latin America and in Asia, in the Philippines under the Marcos government, have been put into practice in Sri Lanka:

- ★ people are followed and picked up from the street, from public transport, in unmarked vehicles by persons in civil clothes;
- ★ houses and boarding houses are raided at night;
- ★ torches are flashed into the faces of suspects to 'blind' them and prevent identification;
- ★ private homes and offices are used as places of detention and interrogation;
- ★ families are never informed as to the cause of arrest; deliberate deception is also resorted to, to prevent families pursuing inquiries."

The same organisation also expressed its concern that "powers of arbitrary arrest and detention arrogated by the State are being increasingly used to silence its political opponents and to stifle popular protest against the regime."

Mr Chairman, it should thus be recognised that these violations in the South are also occurring in a broader socio-political context, denial of basic trade union and democratic rights. Pickets, demonstrations and strikes have often been banned under Emergency Regulations, and when they had taken place those workers who participated have been summarily dismissed from employment. For instance, when the Bank Employees decided to take industrial action in the form of a 'work to rule' campaign, Emergency Regulations were promulgated declaring banking and associated activities Essential Services, all industrial action made illegal, the entire leadership of the Bank Employees Union

summarily dismissed and the Union's assets made liable to confiscation. In addition, the civic rights of the leaders of the Bank Union were made liable to be deprived.

In the political arena, the right of the people to participate in the political processes by means of regular elections has been denied since 1977, by the extension of the life of parliament without a general election. In place of a general election, a referendum was held under a State of Emergency. The Parliamentary Elections Commissioner in a recent report has catalogued substantial electoral malpractices as having taken place during this referendum. In the absence of an orderly democratic means of expression by the people or sections of the people, contradictions and conflicts are bound to result leading to a repressive response from the State. And it is that response, accompanied by a process of militarisation, which has brought in its train the practice of arbitrary arrest, detention, torture, disappearances and summary executions, not only in the areas affected by the armed ethnic conflict, but increasingly so in the South of the island.

Mr Chairman, the real situation is reflected by the fact that Sri Lanka has figured prominently in the three reports of the Special Rapporteurs and by the fact that thousands have fled the country in search of physical security, and not by the abstract, technical and often theoretical arguments advanced by Sri Lanka before this Commission.

Mr Chairman, no longer can the government of Sri Lanka divert the attention of those genuinely concerned by the human rights situation in that country by references to separatism and terrorism. It must, as we said earlier, address itself to the root causes that have given rise to violence and violations that characterise Sri Lankan society today."

UNITED STATES

With regard to the difficult situation in Sri Lanka, the Special Rapporteur mentions a "spiral of violence" which includes allegations of torture. My delegation is aware of Sri Lanka's constitutional guarantees against torture and its public statement in opposition to the use of torture in its unilateral declaration to the United Nations, and we hope that any necessary preventive and remedial measures have already been taken by the Government of Sri Lanka.

U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

SRI LANKA PLACED ON PROBATION

By our Special Correspondent

LEANDRO DESPOUY was a victim of the former Military Junta and spent eight years in exile in France from where he conducted a relentless campaign against the human rights abuses in Argentina under the military regime. During his exile he had attended the U.N. Human Rights Commission as a representative of Pax Romana to plead the cause of human rights. The respect he earned then enabled him later to be elected as an Expert Member of the Sub-Commission on Human Rights.

An intellectual with a sharp and analytical mind and an orator who speaks with few or no notes to assist him, Leandro Despouy presently enjoys the elevated position of an Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary under the civilian democratic government of President Alfonsín. Neither his commitment to the cause of human rights nor his natural affinity to Non-Governmental Organisations concerned with human rights has in anyway suffered in consequence of his elevation. That such a person should take the lead in highlighting the gross abuses of human rights in Sri Lanka came as no surprise to those who knew him.

When Leandro Despouy, in his capacity as Head of the Argentinian Delegation to the 43rd Sessions of the United Nations Human Rights Commission, deposited the resolution (L74) relating to the situation in Sri Lanka at three minutes to 6 on 5 March, 1987 (the dead line being 6 p.m.) only carrying his sole signature, the instant reaction of the Sri Lankan delegation was one of incredulity and shock. In spite of a number of detailed interventions by NGOs and some government delegates relating to human rights violations in Sri Lanka that preceded the submission of the draft resolution, the Sri Lankan delegation headed by H. W. Jayawardene was confident that, as in previous years, no draft resolution would find its way into the agenda. The lavish entertainment and a campaign of malevolent disinformation indulged in by Sri Lanka failed to do the trick this time.

Desperation and Anger

As the fact that a draft resolution had been placed on the agenda began to sink into the rather impenetrable heads of the Sri Lankan delegation, the initial shock gave way to sheer desperation and anger. "Blood will flow on the floor of this Commission" was one intemperate response from one of the Sri Lankan delegates, to which, I understand, a member belonging to the delegation of another Asian country had retorted, "Aren't they satisfied with the blood-letting that is already taking place in their country?" Another Sri Lankan delegate was heard to say, "We will go down firing". Still another young Sri Lankan junior diplomat who had flown in from Colombo agonised, "We have the feeling of a virgin woman having been raped". What this young man did not realise was that in the course of the dirty war that the Sri Lankan regime had launched against a section of its own people, not only large numbers of women had in fact been raped, but also thousands of persons, women, children, old and young men, mainly belonging to the Tamil community had been wantonly and cruelly killed. Further, what this young diplomat did not learn was that, despite the elaborate efforts to present an outward appearance of a nice face, the true inner ugly image of Sri Lanka had become all too obvious to everybody in the context of the unmitigated gross abuses of human rights in that country.

The fact that Sri Lanka found itself in the unique position of being pilloried in Reports of three important U.N. Working Groups demonstrated the sheer scale and extent of human rights violations brought to the attention of the U.N. The Special Rapporteur on Torture had expressed 'great concern' at the practice of torture in Sri Lanka. The Report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances listed several

hundreds of cases of disappearance of persons taken into custody by the security forces, but unaccounted for by the government. The Report of the Special Rapporteur on Summary Executions also had several paragraphs relating to allegations of arbitrary killings in Sri Lanka. By its simultaneous appearance in these three reports, Sri Lanka had graduated into the notorious league of the worst violators of human rights in the world. And in this context, if Sri Lanka expected to avoid international scrutiny, then those at her helm were only deceiving themselves.

Following their initial shock and desperate, angry and agonising responses, the Sri Lankan delegates engaged in ridiculing the Argentinian delegate for his stupidity in presenting a draft resolution with his sole signature. They thoughtlessly inferred that the resolution did not attract the support of the other 42 member countries. As time passed, ridicule gave way to vituperation and abuse – that Argentina was taking revenge on Sri Lanka for having voted against it at the U.N. on the resolution relating to the Malvinas (Falklands). It is to be noted that Sri Lanka was one of only three countries to vote with the UK, the others being Belize and Oman on that occasion. The puny mind that governed the conduct of Sri Lankan affairs had not realised that Argentina had already had discussions with other countries which had assured her support for the resolution.



Call for Red Cross Intervention

Before the draft resolution was formally tabled, an initial draft had already been circulated among delegations deeply concerned with the situation of human rights in Sri Lanka and the developments in the ethnic conflict in which the government was resorting to a military solution. Two detailed well-prepared documents, one on Arrest, Detention and Torture in Sri Lanka, and the other on Extrajudicial and Arbitrary Killings had already been distributed among delegates and NGOs as background material. Thirteen Non-Governmental Organisations jointly made an open urgent appeal calling for immediate action by the Human Rights Commission and intervention of the International Committee of the Red Cross. NGO after NGO spoke describing in detail the various gross abuses of human rights in Sri Lanka. They attacked the military offensive launched by the government in the Tamil areas of the north and east of the country. With equal force, they denounced the use of foreign mercenaries by the government of Sri Lanka.

Martin Ennals, the Secretary General of International Alert and an English gentleman, was seen handing a copy of the initial draft resolution (it had until then been circulated only among a select group of countries) to Harry Jayawardene of the Sri Lankan

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delegation, and discussing Sri Lanka's reaction to the prospect of getting the Commission to adopt such a resolution. It would appear that the Sri Lankan delegation arrogantly refused to entertain the idea of even a single line resolution. They were all out on a 'no resolution' platform.

Indian Attack

While some government delegations and NGOs were canvassing support for a resolution on Sri Lanka, the Head of the Indian delegation launched a vehement attack on the human rights situation in Sri Lanka and the government's action in resorting to military means in the ethnic conflict. He referred to the arbitrary killing of several hundreds of innocent civilian Tamils by the security forces. This intervention not only reflected a breakdown in Indo-Sri Lankan relations, but also signalled that India would bring to bear its immense international influence in support of a resolution against Sri Lanka.

On the following day, Harry Jayawardene responded. His intervention, by its tone and content, served only to alienate even those delegations which would have until then given the benefit of the doubt to Sri Lanka. His interventions were grossly negative, gratuitously offensive, openly abusive of NGOs, replete with falsehoods and distortions and abrasive and arrogant in tone. The brutal and indiscriminate military force that was being employed within the country found ample reflection in the tenor and tone of his contribution. Besides his familiar attacks on 'Tamil terrorism' and regurgitation of the theoretical but ineffective remedies available under the Sri Lankan Constitution in regard to human and fundamental rights abuses, he accused the NGOs and some states (no doubt meaning India and Argentina) of being politically motivated in their attitude to Sri Lanka. Referring to 'Non-Governmental Organisations and self-styled human rights watchdogs', Jayawardene said that they "masquerade as dedicated human rights workers behind the facade of well-meaning world figures" (no doubt a reference to Martin Ennals, the Secretary General of International Alert). He engaged in patent falsehood when replying to the charge made by the Indian delegate that 23 farm employees of a prawn farm had been killed by the Special Task Force on January 28. Jayawardene claimed, "Sadly 3 civilians were killed in the cross-fire". He even went to the extent of misquoting the Managing Director of the prawn farm who had in a press statement asserted that 23 of his workers, including the Manager, had been deliberately killed by the forces in the eastern province.

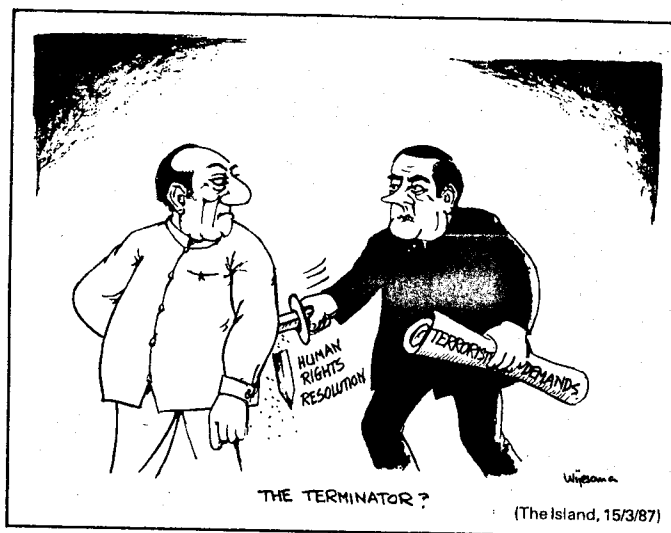
The exchanges in reply that followed between the Sri Lankan and Indian delegations reflected the serious deterioration in relations between the two countries. The Indian delegate firmly reminded the Sri Lankan delegation that India's mediation efforts in the ethnic conflict were at the invitation of President Jayawardene, but Brother Harry was playing a different tune in Geneva.

False Calculation

The draft resolution tabled by Argentina had been deliberately couched in such a way as to allow for further discussions and

compromise with other delegations with a view to maximising support. While the delegations of Argentina, Norway, Canada, Belgium, and Australia were discussing the draft resolution in private, the Sri Lankan delegation, either from arrogance or a mistaken calculation of the support they could muster against the resolution, flatly refused even to talk with the Argentinian delegation. In fact, Sri Lanka prevailed on the Pakistan delegation to move an amendment, which in effect was not an amendment but a counter-resolution extolling the efforts of the Sri Lankan government and condemning the Tamil groups. Such were the high hopes in which Sri Lanka was deluding itself!

The arguments advanced by the Sri Lankan delegation behind the scenes against the draft resolution were dishonest and self-contradictory. Having known that the draft was being sponsored by Argentina with the support of some Latin American and West European countries and India, the Sri Lankan delegation went about describing it as a 'Tamil sponsored resolution'. There wasn't a single Tamil delegate in any of the delegations of member or observer countries except Malaysia which had included a Tamil, Mr. N. Parameswaran. But, Malaysia did not involve itself in the resolution not being a member of the Commission on Human Rights.



Trump Card Fails

While publicly charging that the Tamil refugees in European countries had come over seeking 'greener pastures' and as economic refugees, and openly inviting the governments of these countries to send the Tamil refugees back to Sri Lanka, the Sri Lankan delegates were telling some non-European delegations and NGOs that the reason for some European countries supporting the draft resolution was because they wanted the Tamils sent back to Sri Lanka. In fact one senior member of the Sri Lankan delegation told this correspondent that the NGOs who had campaigned for the non-return of Tamil refugees to Sri Lanka had fallen into the trap set by the 'Western moral imperialists' whose only aim in supporting the draft resolution, which included the call for intervention by the International Committee of the Red Cross, was to send back the Tamils once the ICRC had been admitted into Sri Lanka. This correspondent suggested to him that Sri Lanka could not have it both ways - to accuse the Tamils as economic refugees and openly call for their deportation to Sri Lanka on the one hand, and on the other to express horror at the prospect of their return. The fact of the matter is that the Sri Lankan delegation had been confident that so long as Tamil refugees in large numbers continued to remain in some European countries, the governments of these countries would not back any resolution, however horrendous the human rights situation might be in Sri Lanka, because such a resolution might be invoked in support of the claim for refugee status by the Tamils. In fact, a Sri Lankan diplomat told this correspondent that the presence of Tamil refugees was Sri Lanka's trump card. But unfortunately this time the card had been trumped by the sheer scale of the carnage and violations that have taken place in Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lankan delegation also engaged in their usual attempt

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SPOTLIGHT ON MERCENARIES IN SRI LANKA

SOLDIERS IN TAMIL PROTEST

Sri Lankan torture claims reveal new Whitehall links with mercenary row firm

BRITISH mercenaries in Sri Lanka have walked out after complaining that the Government troops they trained have committed a series of atrocities against the minority Tamil population.

Security sources say the men, most of whom are ex-SAS, were sent with Whitehall's approval. They work for KMS Ltd., the powerful London security company which has been implicated in the contra arms scandal in Washington.

The firm's links with the Prime Minister are being probed by senior Labour MP's who want to know whether she has been secretly helping President Reagan by authorising the company to support the American-based contras in Nicaragua.

TORTURE

The mercenaries walked out on their £20,000-a-year tax-free jobs after complaining that the Special Task Force, which they set up for the Sri Lankan Government in 1984, was running out of control and was indiscriminately killing and torturing Tamil civilians.

Amnesty International has gathered evidence that the force has kidnapped Tamil civilians who have never been seen again. Soldiers are also accused of executing detainees after ordering them to dig their own graves, using nails and pliers to torture prisoners and burning the bodies of those who died under interrogation. The Sri Lankan Government has rejected the charges.

They said their lives would be at risk if they were returned to the island, which has been torn by civil strife for five years.

RUSSIANS

Last week the ex-SAS major who runs KMS, David Walker, flew to Sri Lanka to try to salvage the company's contract.

Sixty of his men have now either walked out, refused to renew their contracts or been sacked. "The whole operation is a bag of worms," said one source.

KMS has been working from a base at Katukurunda, an hour's drive south of the capital, Colombo.

The company's role is believed to have been endorsed by the Secret Intelligence Service, MI6, in an attempt to bolster the Sri Lankan Government against overtures from the Russians, who want naval facilities on the island.

Sri Lanka originally asked the Foreign Office for an SAS unit. But the Government declined for fear of alienating the Indian Government, which supports the Tamil separatist movement.

Instead, say sources, the FO sent a squad of 12 KMS mercenaries, including an ex-SAS colonel and an ex-SAS adjutant.

The Ministry of Defence is also believed to have supplied sophisticated new automatic rifles which have been developed by the Royal Ordnance factory

and are not yet available even for regular British Army units.

The mercenaries first got into trouble for indiscipline. One got drunk in a tourist hotel in nearby Kalutara and fired his gun into the ceiling. A group of former Rhodesian SAS men were sacked for making racist remarks to the Sri Lankans they were training and a South African pilot who disobeyed orders was transferred to the KMS operation with the contras in Central America.

But more serious problems followed. The Special Task Force moved into the island's Eastern Province and the KMS men began to hear reports of atrocities.

The mercenaries, many of whom have long SAS experience of counter-insurgency,

complained that this was a fatal error. They wanted the Task Force to win the "hearts and minds" of Tamil villagers to cut off the support they offered to Tamil guerrillas.

They complained the Task Force was making enemies of them all and made a series of protests to the senior mercenary on the ground, an ex-SAS colonel who joined KMS after being targeted by Irish terrorists.

He could do nothing. The mercenaries then pressed to be allowed to go into combat with the Task Force in an attempt to control them. But they were told this was unacceptable to the Foreign Office in London.

Discontent in the mercenary ranks grew. Less-qualified "cowboy" reinforcements were sent from London, including one man who has served a jail sentence for armed robbery.

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Government Newspaper Confirms 'Shin Bet' Role In Sri Lanka

THE GOVERNMENT controlled Lake House says that the "deadly" Special Task Force is causing trouble in the Eastern Province, under the training and direction of Israel's Shin Bet.

Lake House published this in an article about Israeli tactics, written by Arun Chacko in New Delhi. The article was in the World Paper section of the Lake House evening English language paper, Daily Observer.

The article was titled "What's behind Israel's alliance with Iran?" In it Arun Chacko says, among other things about Israel's role in Sri Lanka:

"In the Amparai and Batticaloa districts of the Eastern Province, anti-Tamil tactics come straight from the West Bank".

Also this:

Tamil militants and other suspects are arrested, tortured and then, masked, brought to other prisoners and made to identify comrades. A nod from the masked traitor spells doom. Again shades of the West Bank".

Excerpt:

Like everyone else, the Israeli's do anything to further their interests. The Americans are more or less taken for granted. If the Israeli's can carry them, well and good. If they cannot, they go ahead irrespective of them, confident that their all powerful lobbies will ensure US State Department support, whether or not it is in US interest.

But while continuing to wreak havoc in the Middle East through both clever and brutal tactics, the Israeli's have already extended their presence further East, finding a willing ally in Sri Lanka. Eyebrows were recently raised when Israeli President Chaim Herzog stopped over in Colombo - with which his country has no diplomatic relations - and was received by President Jayawardene.

Israeli involvement in Sri Lanka's brutal war with the restive Tamils has long been evident. And the Israeli interests section in Colombo has long been operated out of the US Embassy there. Several months ago, Sri Lankan member of parliament Halim Ishak demanded to know how many Israeli agents there were in the country. He was told 178.

There is clearly even more involvement. As of April Israeli nationals do not need visas to enter Sri Lanka. They come and go freely. President Jayawardene has also admitted that Sri Lankan army officers have been trained in Israel.

Shin Bet, Israel's domestic intelligence agency has been training and directing Sri Lanka's deadly special task force which is causing trouble in the Eastern Province. Several Shin Bet officials have been spotted here.

In the Amparai and Batticaloa districts of the Eastern Province, anti-Tamil tactics come straight from the West Bank. They include saturating the area with military camps, arresting males and harassing women and families as well as burning bodies with tyres, playing Moslems against Tamils, encouraging Sinhala settlements and arming settlers.

Tamil militants and other suspects are arrested, tortured and then, masked, brought to other prisoners and made to identify comrades. A nod from the masked traitor spells doom. Again shades of the West Bank.

There is some evidence that the Israeli's are eager to move from their military advisory role to a non-military one, so long as they can do so without losing clout. They would like to ensure their continued future on the island. For the moment there seems to be no uncertainty about that.

Arun Chacko,

World Paper's associate editor in South Asia, visited Sri Lanka recently.

SPOTLIGHT ON MERCENARIES IN SRI LANKA

Sunbathers by the Killing Fields

SAMMY DOUGHERTY spent half his life fighting with the Parachute Regiment. Now he teaches Sri Lankan troops to fight and is learning that he must try to justify his role in a bloody civil war.

Dougherty, 44, teaches government recruits how to face Tamil guerrillas. Despite controversy over KMS's role and accusations of massacres, he would not consider joining his colleagues who have walked out on the Sri Lankan troops. He believes that he is reducing the possibility of atrocities by staying on.

"A lot more people would get killed. Maybe there are atrocities, but not as many as there would be if we weren't here," he said.

He had just spent a week in the 100 degree heat of the jungle with a squad of Sri Lankan troops and an interpreter. Now he was in his swimming trunks relaxing at the bar by the pool of the Tangerine Hotel, a couple of miles from the police training camp at Katukurunda. He had for company two other former Para warrant officers and three ex-SAS men. The only thing they seemed scared of was being photographed. There were people scattered around the world they didn't want to see again.

Dougherty, from Belfast, did most of the talking. "I'll tell you what causes atrocities," he said. "Indiscipline causes atrocities. Scared, badly-trained troops cause atrocities. But what I teach helps stop them.

"Sure, they still happen. Some always will. But we get to hear about what happens when the Special Task Force gets into the field. They are not great, but they are OK.

"You can't get these lads to cease firing"

"What you have got to remember is that when these lads arrive for their 12-week course you can't even get them to cease firing. They just go on blasting away until they have emptied the magazine. That's how innocent people get killed.

"And then they want to charge straight through an enemy position instead of fighting their way through it. And that's how they get themselves killed. We're saving lives here, we're teaching self-control."

He might have been reading from the KMS brochure. Certainly he was the very picture of their "highly experienced ex-British Special Forces training personnel".

But 12 miles further along the beach at the Riverina Hotel, manager Nihal Fernando was having to make do with a replacement chef thanks to these very same Special Forces skills. His regular cook 'Sam' Samarasinga was in hospital with a broken collar bone and a smashed mouth.

Mr Fernando explained: "There was a British instructor in the disco and Sam was rude to him. The Englishman hit him." The Englishman was a 6ft 3in ex-Para sergeant called Dave. He said: "There was a bit of a disturbance and I was prepared to ignore it. In this line it is best to walk away from arguments. But he kicked me and nobody gets away with that, no matter who they are."

The incident was investigated by the police. According to Dave they put the report into File 13, a convenient Sri Lankan depository for anything best forgotten.

After all, it wasn't as if Dave had been a "three-year SAS man." This is a term of abuse. Three years gives just enough time to go through advanced training and then get into the security business with the right qualifications.

It was the three-year men, who in the words of Dougherty "got binned". "Sacked," he explained. "No good. There have been a few, there always are, and I wouldn't be surprised if they are the ones who find it convenient to say they left because of the atrocities.

Every man at this bar did 20 years in Army

"Certainly in the two years I have been here the only ones who left of their own accord are one who found he was too old and not fit enough, two who wanted to fight and found they weren't allowed to, and one who got the wrong end of the stick and thought he was going to have to fight but didn't want to. "But every man around this bar has done his 22 years in the British Army. Every man was a warrant officer. The average age in my team is 48."

If they had stayed in the army they would probably have been put in the recruiting

office. But their mates already with KMS had been saving places for them. "We had known about it for years. Every senior instructor in the Airborne knows about KMS," said Dougherty.

The initials KMS incidentally, stand for "Keenie Meanie Services". That appeals to the men. But while Dougherty is happy to say what a good firm KMS is to work for, he's less talkative about the range of work on offer.

There is "BG" - body-guarding - and there is anti-terrorist training. "We can teach that better than anyone in the world."

The Sri Lankans had wanted SAS instructors

But he claims to know nothing about suggestions that KMS, with its apparent links to Downing Street, gets contracts which the British Government is forced to turn down for diplomatic reasons. For instance, it has been said that the Sri Lankans wanted SAS instructors but that would have upset the Indian Government.

But there is little difference. The training meted out by the men at Katukurunda is exactly the same. At the centre of it is the "hearts and minds philosophy" invented by the British Army in Borneo.

It works on the principle that if you win over the hearts and minds of villagers by helping to dig wells and inoculate babies, they will turn against the terrorists who cannot exist without their support.

Atrocities ruin this technique. "The Sri Lankans didn't understand this to begin with, but they are coming round to it now," said Dougherty.

But for Dougherty it is almost a personal crusade. The son of a Catholic mother and Protestant father, the thing he remembers most about his seven tours of duty on the streets of Belfast is clearing up after the Oxford Street bus station bomb in 1973.

He said: "They gave me a plastic bag and told me to try not to get bits of more than one body in it."

He went quiet after that. It was only then that one of the SAS men found something to say. He was a Londoner in his mid-forties, called Nobby Clark, which in military circles leaves him virtually anonymous.

He said: "If we went home they'd give the job to the Israelis, they are here already doing it for free because they want to sell arms. But what do the Israelis know about jungle warfare? And if the Israelis couldn't do it, the other side would love to."

He meant the Russians. They would do anything for a naval base in Sri Lanka, he said. The 35-strong KMS contingent in Sri Lanka is commanded by former SAS Colonel Ken White from his office in the heavily-defended headquarters of the STF opposite the president's bungalow in Colombo.

However, speculation that the firm is concerned about the way the task force operates once the training is completed has been fuelled by a visit last week from the joint head of KMS, Colonel Jim Johnson, who is also a former member of the SAS.

At the office this morning, the middle-aged receptionist wearing a sari but speaking fluent English, said Colonel Johnson had left on Saturday and no one else could spare the time to discuss the company's operations.

(Courtesy of London Daily News, 16 March, 1987)

Soldiers in Tamil Protest

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Then Israeli security consultants arrived on the island and, unhampered by restrictions from their own government, began to take over parts of the KMS operation.

EXCESSES

Now senior ex-SAS men have refused to renew their contracts and others have walked out.

David Walker, who is believed to still be in Sri Lanka, is reported to have sacked KMS teams who had been training other specialist army and navy units for the Sri Lankans, in an attempt to save the contract with the Task Force.

The Sri Lankan High Commissioner in London, Mr. Chandra Monerawela, yesterday confirmed that his Government had hired KMS but said he was not aware that any of its men had walked out.

He denied that the British Government had approved the contract and rejected the reports of atrocities.

"There may sometime be excesses or civilian casualties, but when you are dealing with guerrillas, anything can happen. They don't wear uniforms," he said.

A Foreign Office spokesman denied that KMS had been given any Government approval for its work in Sri Lanka. Labour's Foreign Affairs spokesman George Foulkes has tabled Parliamentary Questions asking Mrs. Thatcher about meetings with David Walker and links between the company and Government departments.

NICK DAVIES

(Courtesy of "London Daily News"
4 March, 1987)

Sri Lanka Placed on Probation

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to mislead the Commission with brazen distortions. An NGO representative, in the course of her intervention, accused the Sri Lankan government of extending its term to twelve years through a referendum which, according to the recently published Election Commissioner's Report, was characterised by several malpractices. In reply, a member of the delegation, Mr. Sunil de Silva, who also holds the post of Deputy Solicitor General in the Attorney General's Department, and who excels in the art of scoring cheap technical debating points in true court room fashion, said that he had a copy of the Report of the Elections Commissioner and had gone through it from cover to cover and could not find a single allegation of violation of the electoral law, when in fact what the NGO alleged was true and what Sunil de Silva said was a total lie. Again a representative of another NGO in her intervention alleged that persons had been kept in detention for unlimited periods under the Emergency Regulations. Sunil de Silva replied, "Detention orders issued under the emergency regulations were valid for one month only and detainees could not, therefore, be held indefinitely" (Summary Record, E/CN.4/1987/SR.34*Add.1, page 9). He suppressed the fact that Sri Lanka had been ruled under a State of Emergency uninterruptedly since May 1983, and there are in fact several hundreds, if not thousands, held in detention for unlimited periods.

Suggestion for Compromise

When the Non-Aligned bloc of countries of the Human Rights Commission met during the morning of 11 March, the question of the draft resolution on Sri Lanka was raised by the Chairman and it was suggested that Argentina and Sri Lanka being members of the same bloc should attempt to negotiate with a view to reaching a compromise. Following this suggestion and finding that support for the resolution was gradually building up, Sri Lanka climbed down from its previous high pedestal and initiated talks with the Argentinian delegation. One Sri Lankan delegate later confessed that they agreed to negotiate when those countries which had previously promised to support them were gradually moving in support of the draft resolution. He further added that they suspected that on the morning of 11 March the resolution would have attracted a majority of 12 votes.

During the negotiations which commenced during the afternoon of 11 March and lasted until midnight, the Sri Lankan delegation used every endeavour to remove all the important aspects of the resolution including the reference to the Working Group on Disappearances and ICRC intervention. The countries that had by now agreed to co-sponsor the resolution, namely Norway, Canada and Argentina, gained the impression that Sri Lanka was trying to gain time by unnecessarily prolonging the negotiations. It was known that the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Shahul Hameed, had been despatched to London and Paris to canvass support for his country. Additionally, a Sri Lankan career diplomat flown in from New York and a son of Harry Jayawardene, also a junior diplomat, were pressed into service in addition to the five-member Sri Lankan delegation to lobby against the resolution.

When the delegations of the co-sponsoring countries found that Sri Lanka was not negotiating in good faith, they tabled an amended draft resolution (L.74/Rev.1) by 11 p.m. on 11 March. The resolution on Sri Lanka which was to have been taken up for discussion that day was put back for the following day, the Chairman expressing the hope that there would be a consensus resolution.

On the following day, 12 March, at about 12 noon, all other resolutions had been voted upon and the only one remaining was the one relating to Sri Lanka. At the request of the Senegal delegation, the Chairman adjourned proceedings for further negotiations. When the Commission was reconvened at 4 p.m., it was found that no agreement had been reached, and by now Senegal was acting as the mediator to bring about a consensus. The sessions were again adjourned, but all the delegates, observers, representatives of NGOs and pressmen, numbering over 500, were glued to their seats watching the public display of

the 'negotiations' taking place in small groups. An exasperated Belgian delegate was heard to say, "We now know how Sri Lanka has been conducting negotiations with the Tamils on the ethnic problem".

The public "negotiations" continued for nearly two hours in full view of all those present and with Senegal playing the lead role as a go-between.

Sri Lanka was exposed as an intransigent, unreasonable and difficult customer during the negotiations. At one stage, the co-sponsors threatened to abandon all negotiations and to move the original draft resolution (L74). Eventually, when the Commission reconvened about 6 p.m., Argentina, on behalf of the co-sponsoring countries, moved the resolution and announced that they had agreed to certain amendments to be proposed by Senegal. The Senegalese delegate moved the agreed amendments and finally the resolution was adopted unanimously. Faced with an inevitable defeat by an overwhelming majority, Sri Lanka had abjectly surrendered to a consensus resolution.

After the resolution was adopted, India and Sri Lanka made statements followed by angry exchanges. Harry Jayawardene had disappeared from the scene for the entire sessions that day, and the hard-pressed and obviously broken-hearted Sri Lankan Ambassador, Jayantha Dhanapala, had been left to carry the can and to face an ignominious defeat. His statement following the adoption of the resolution reflected a mixture of bravado and personal defeat. After all he is the Resident Ambassador for Sri Lanka in Geneva attending mainly to U.N. functions. He had, to some extent, salvaged Sri Lanka from dire straits in the past by the application of his personal qualities and charisma. His warm and likeable personality has earned him much personal respect among his fellow Ambassadors. Even such a person could not defend the indefensible happenings in Sri Lanka with much hope of success.

Self-Glorification

The self-glorification in which those at the helm in Colombo indulge and the self-delusion they suffer from were reflected in the Sri Lankan press following the adoption of the resolution. The misrepresentation was unbelievably typical. It did not even mention the Pakistan counter-resolution mooted by Sri Lanka which was unceremoniously dumped by the Commission even without mention. The resolution adopted by the Commission was hailed as a glorious victory for Sri Lanka and as a crushing defeat for India and Argentina against whom there was a torrent of abuse. The much respected President of Argentina was depicted as a puppet in cartoons.

Before the resolution was adopted, 'The Island' crowed about "... a massive international support for the Sri Lankan government's handling of the ethnic crisis had been committed to Sri Lanka according to firm indications received by the Sri Lankan delegation in Geneva..." The same paper on 13.3.87, under the heading "Indian Move to Condemn Sri Lanka Fails" reported, "All Indian efforts to condemn Sri Lanka for violating Human Rights at the United Nations Human Rights Commission failed last night... What was most significant at last night's historic decision was that the whole Indian campaign failed... India could not muster a single Asian country or a single Arab country to support its resolution". One could note the deliberate omission of all the three co-sponsors, Canada, Norway and Argentina. From this report. (After the vote, a senior Sri Lankan delegate abusing the African countries, said, "Even those African pariahs like Mozambique let us down and turned sides".) 'The Island' of 13.3.87 reported a tirade against Argentina and India by President Jayawardene under the heading, "Countries with Ailments Trying to Cure Others". Speaking at a public meeting in Colombo, President Jayawardene was quoted as follows: "The President said that a visit to either India or Argentina would manifest 'ailments' they suffer from. The problems in India and the jails in Argentina show the 'sicknesses' that exist in these countries... these countries should first cure their own 'ailments' before attempting to heal the 'sicknesses' of others". What the President failed to mention was that the jails of Argentina are presently filled with those of the former Military Junta convicted for grave abuses of human rights during the 'dirty war' they conducted against the Argentinian people; and that in Sri Lanka

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THE KOKKATTICHOLAI MASSACRE

ON JANUARY 28, the government launched a major military operation, ostensibly directed at a Tamil guerrilla base at Kokkatticholai near the eastern coastal town of Batticaloa. An estimated 2000 commandos of the Special Task Force supported by bomber planes and helicopter gunships were involved in this operation. Commandos surrounded six villages covering an area of 25 square miles. As the helicopters began machine-gunning the villages, the inhabitants fled into the nearby jungles for cover. Commandos moving in South African-built armoured 'Buffels' fired heavy machine guns into the villages. In the course of this operation, an armoured vehicle with some commandos in it was blasted by a landmine presumably planted by a Tamil guerrilla group. The government claimed that 13 commandos died as a result of the blast. Within three days of the launching of the military operation which began on January 28, according to the Batticaloa Citizens' Committee, an estimated 150 to 175 civilians were killed by the STF commandos. The victims included 23 employees of a prawn culture farm run by Serendib Sea Foods Ltd, a fifty per cent American owned Hong Kong based company.

The employees were rounded up, herded onto a tractor and trailer, taken to a road junction and shot dead. Seven of the victims were boys aged 12 to 14. Forty others who had sought refuge in the farm were also shot and killed. The bodies were later burnt on piles of old tyres obtained by the security forces from the town's bus depot. Subsequently, the commandos rounded up nearly 83 people from the villages of Mudalikuda, Munaikadu, Ilupadichenai, Thandiady and Mahiladitivu and deliberately killed them. Another 12 people were reported to be

missing and are feared dead. The operations zone had been virtually sealed off. Some escaped by swimming across the lagoon, but several others who tried to cross by boat were killed when they were attacked from helicopters.

The government denied the massacre at the farm but the Managing Director, Mr. Victor Santhiapillai, who is a former Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (a United Nations body) and the Company's former Manager and the present Consultant, Mr. Bruce Cyr (an American national) rebutted the government's denial and confirmed that the massacre in fact took place. They also contradicted the government's claim that those killed were either terrorists or that they died in the crossfire. Rejecting the government's Media Centre's claim, the Managing Director, Mr. Santhiapillai, said,

"I totally reject the Media Centre's charge that the 22 Serendib Seafoods staff mem-

bers (plus 12 still missing) who were shot by the security forces were terrorists. The Centre must find some other more intelligent and plausible ways of handling such incidents."

(The Island, 4 February 1987).

Angered by Mr. Bruce Cyr's revelations about the massacre, the government first announced that he was going to be prosecuted under the Emergency Regulations for making 'false statements' about the killing of the Company's employees, but later retracted following representations from the American Embassy in Colombo.

In an appeal sent to President Jayawardene calling for an independent judicial investigation, the Batticaloa Citizens' Committee alleged that "young Tamils are being systematically killed", and that the "security forces were going into houses in the area ordering out males between the ages of 11 and 45 and shooting them".

SINGAPORE REFUSES TO FERRY ARMS

ACCORDING TO a news item in the local Tamil daily Eelamurasu of 25th February, the Captain of an Airliner belonging to the Singapore Air Lines had refused to fly a unit of police commandos to Palaly airport when it had touched down at Katunayake International Airport for a brief stop-over. The pilot had indicated the security risks involved in a flight to Palaly when Sri Lankan officials requested him to do so.

The plane was delayed for more than an hour until Sri Lankan officials contacted the Headquarters of the Airlines in question

over the telelink. Authorities in Singapore too, politely refused to comply with the request of the Sri Lankan Government officials and gave specific instructions to the pilot not to fly to Palaly.

Thereafter the Airliner left Katunayake airport with a complement of 125 passengers. This is the second rebuff the Sri Lankan authorities have had in the continuing ethnic conflict. Earlier the crew of a Danish ship refused to work in a ship ferrying arms and ammunition to Sri Lanka, from Spain.

Violations by Sri Lankan Security Forces

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Mr. Chairman, in this forum, we are primarily concerned with human rights. It is a legitimate concern because these rights are independent of pros and cons of ethnic situations. They are not a luxury or prerogative for some countries. These rights must be observed. Negotiations must be pursued seriously if the ethnic conflict is to be settled peacefully.

The violations of human rights in Sri Lanka are genuine and widespread. The fact that negotiations are going on, is not sufficient ground for tolerating these violations. Nor is the international concern for human rights a mere luxury reserved for certain parts of the world. That would be an unfortunate interpretation of one of the most positive achievements of the United Nations and the worldwide movement for the protection of human rights.

India's position is very clear. There is an ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka which has taken heavy toll of life. It is a problem between two sections of the Sri Lankan population, not a dispute between Sri Lanka and India. We had offered our mediatory role to keep the process of negotiations going. This process had made sufficient progress till last year end but has come to a halt because of certain steps taken by the Sri Lanka Government. It is difficult

for India to continue the process as long as violent conditions in Sri Lanka prevail. Violence must end. The Sri Lankan Government must show the will to negotiate.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I would like to quote our Prime Minister's statement in the Lok Sabha yesterday, 3rd March, 1987:

"In South Sri Lanka, we have offered our good offices. Much progress has been made which culminated in the final clarifications of 19th December. The clarifications of 19th December relate to proposals which go back many months and are a consolidated lot of proposals. Unfortunately, certain steps that the Sri Lankan Government have taken have caused us great pain and they have brought this process to a halt. We find it difficult to continue the process as long as the violent conditions in Sri Lanka prevail. Violence must be brought to an end before we reopen the issue on our side. We have made this very clear to the Sri Lankan Government. We are clear that there can be no solution with violent means. Only non-violence and negotiations can bring about a solution. We have made this also very clear to the Sri Lankan Government. We hope that they will respond positively by reducing the level of violence and coming to the negotiating table."

No one speaks up for the Tamil!

Diane Alexander certainly does in her letter to Father Brian Hyhir of the United States Catholic Conference

REGARDING the devastating events in Sri Lanka we spoke about last week by phone, the situation there deteriorates daily. Now it is no less than a cold-blooded policy for the extermination of the Tamils.

In this country a well-funded disinformation campaign has won the allegiance of the American press which now offers the Sri Lankan genocide the same news blackout they gave the Nazis. No one spoke out then for the Jews. Today, no one speaks up for the Tamil. Silence permits massacres to continue.

The need for your church to speak out against today's slaughter is doubly urgent since Catholic churches have been turned into 'The Killing Fields' in recent massacres. Catholic priests have been singled out by the army for quite cold-blooded murder.

Communications have been cut off to Jaffna and may already be cut off to Batticaloa, still I urge you to keep trying to contact your representatives there—**NOT IN COLOMBO!** Please! — but in the besieged part of the land. Those Catholic lives are in very great danger, and they have told us that their outgoing calls are monitored, so do be entirely discrete in talking about them. Still, they desperately need a conduit to the outside world, both to appeal for help and to testify to the barbarous events they experience and see.

There is another role the Catholic Church urgently needs to play.

Tamil parts of the country are suffering greatly as a result of the cut-off of food and fuel (both for transportation and cooking). Hospitals have no medicines. The violence has uprooted more than 500,000 (when has the media informed us of this?) refugees, who huddle, malnourished and with totally inadequate sanitation in Sri Lankan and south Indian camps.

Recent urgent communications from high Christian officials in Sri Lanka charge that at least 500 Tamil civilians were systematically killed on February 12th in two towns near Jaffna in a stepped up government campaign against the Tamil minority population.

Eyewitnesses state that army officials told civilians that soldiers were beginning a sweep to round-up Tiger anti-government guerrillas. Civilians were assured that if they gathered in churches, schools and community halls, they would remain safe. The army then shelled and bombed these buildings.

The Jaffna massacres follow by exactly two weeks a round-up in the region of Batticaloa where soldiers went into two work places, ordered all Tamil male employees into trucks, then took them to nearby Catholic churches and machine-gunned them. Over 200 Tamils were killed in this round-up.

In the Batticaloa killings, neutral outside observers to the atrocities insist that the victims were well-known to them and were completely innocent of any involvement with the guerillas. One such eyewitness was an American consultant, Bruce Cyr of Maine, the other was the owner of one of the raided work establishments, a former Trade Centre Commissioner. Subsequently the American was imprisoned by the government.

Since 1983 the anti-Tamil policy of the Sri Lankan government has become increasingly cold-blooded as the army is allowed to kill Tamil men, women and children indiscriminately, the air force to bomb their villages, the navy to shell their fishing boats. In response to the stepped-up government campaign, small bands of Tamil guerrilla groups have sprung up in the north and east of the country to engage in defensive and retaliatory acts.

Amnesty International, in its most recent survey, "SRI LANKA: DISAPPEARANCES", reports indisputable evidence that large numbers of Tamil men arrested "were

secretly shot in custody, or died under torture, their bodies being disposed of in secret." The Human Rights Commission of the U.N. brands Sri Lanka as one of six countries where torture is "more or less a normal element of daily life."

Operation California (which has provided emergency relief supplies to so many refugees and disaster victims in the past) was refused permission by the Sri Lankan government to bring relief supplies and vitamins in to the victims. This basic, minimum humanitarian need was refused!

Protest must be made!

Relief supplies must be delivered!

While people are being brutally wiped out from this island nation, we must not keep grand silence. Please! Speak out against this outrage on the Tamils' behalf.

Los Angeles

21 February, 1987

Don't Rebuff Tamil Fugitives

U.N. Commissioner for Refugees considers that Tamil fugitives should be allowed to remain in Sweden. The stiff attitude adopted by the Department of Immigration towards the Tamils must now be rescinded.

SOME HUNDRED Tamil refugees have been waiting for more than a year for asylum in Sweden. They have come from Sri Lanka where a bloody civil war has been raging between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamils for the past three years. International observers have described the civil war against the Tamil minority as a process of genocide.

The U.N. Commissioner for Scandinavia has stated, in a letter to a Tamil seeking asylum in Sweden, that Tamil refugees should not be sent back to Sri Lanka. "They would face serious difficulties and are in need of protection against such return", states the U.N. medium.

In Sweden, however, the Department of Immigration has a different opinion. "The Tamils arriving from Sri Lanka are not so badly affected that we need to consider them. The Tamils might get the idea to settle down here permanently" (ref. Marie Andersson).

"As a Tamil one is not welcome in Sweden." (ref. Inger Franzén).

"It is only the Northern and Eastern provinces which are dangerous for the Tamils. The South of Sri Lanka is secure for them." (ref. Björn Weibö).

The above attitude has resulted in 29 Tamil refugees being deported from Sweden while a further 70 were repulsed at the border.

It is regrettable that the Swedish authorities have failed to realise the magnitude of suffering and the tragedy which have befallen the Tamils. If the Immigration Authorities cannot bother to acquaint themselves with the plight of the Tamils they might at least consult those who have the knowledge — i.e. Amnesty International, Diakonia and Minority Rights Group, or journalists who have published articles revealing the tragedies of the Tamil refugees.

According to the Lankan Newspaper "Daily News" patients suffering from Cancer in the Northern Province are now dying, as they are unable to travel to the

only functioning Cancer Clinic which is situated in Colombo.

Asthmatic patients choke to death due to a shortage of drugs and doctors in the North of Sri Lanka. The respected newspaper "Tamil Times" in London reports that hundreds of Tamil youths held in detention in army camps in the South are used as guinea-pigs for testing dangerous drugs. This is being done with Israeli aid and the camps have certain resemblances to the German-Nazi extermination camps.

Any Tamil wishing to leave this limbo, which Sri Lanka now represents, in order to seek asylum in Sweden is required by the Swedish authorities to produce a visa — which can only be obtained at the Swedish Embassy in Colombo.

Should any Tamil from the Northern or Eastern Provinces or from the up-country estates in the Central Provinces manage to find his way to Colombo without being arrested as a "terrorist", he may have to wait for several months before getting a reply in regard to the visa.

Stockholm

Dr Aru Sandanam

Heli's Blind Fury

Vigneswara Vidyalaya at Puttur, 10 miles from Jaffna was the target for cannon-fire by two helicopters which had encircled the area on the morning of 5th March and attempted to land on the playgrounds. At this time the students of Vigneswara Vidyalaya were holding their athletic meeting. Two brothers, Rasiah Jeyaruban (9) and Rasiah Jeyakaran (6) and Retham Saraswathi (52) were among the seriously injured. The condition of one is stated to be causing concern. In another incident in the same area near Veeravani Nachchimar Kovilady some persons who had jumped into a well to avoid helicopter fire were machine gunned from the air around 10 a.m. in the morning. Two members of a family were injured.

SRI LANKA'S CIVIL WAR

Innocent die in shelling that never was

AS MANY as 20 innocent people died when mortar bombs fell in the crowded streets of this northern city in Sri Lanka a week ago. The figure varies but the lowest estimate is 20.

The shelling was the worst example of random civilian killing that Jaffna has experienced in the four-year-old civil war between separatists fighting for an independent Tamil state in the north and east of the country and the armed forces.

But a government communiqué from the media centre of the National Security Ministry insists that the shelling did not happen.

The communiqué issued last week refers to reports published in Indian newspapers and says firmly: "No such incidents of killing and damage to property took place on the date or dates mentioned. All the reports are figments of the minds of terrorist propagandists picked up by correspondents not always wedded to the balanced reporting of news."

Outside the Rajah cinema, a few hundred yards north of the main bazaar in Jaffna, the gate pillar is deeply pitted by shrapnel. The ground round the foot of the pillar is still blackened where a young man selling petrol in bottles was incinerated when the shells struck. Petrol is sold like this in Jaffna because a fuel embargo by the Government has reduced supplies drastically.

The shopfronts around, are also pockmarked by pieces of flying metal. In the little hardware store owned by Mr. Shabir Hussain across the road, the floor is darkly stained with blood. Mr. Shabir himself died. His brother lay on the floor with blood pouring from a wound in his leg, but he is

alive in a Jaffna hospital.

Altogether eight Muslims died as a result of a conflict in which they took no part. The quarrel is between the ethnic Tamils, mainly Hindu, and the majority Sinhalese, mainly Buddhist.

The shelling began, the guerrillas admit, while they were firing mortars at the old Dutch fort by the sea front in Jaffna.

But they are adamant that they were not firing from anywhere near the cinema. "Our mortars are locally manufactured; they can't go that far," Mr. Balasubramaniam Kanakaratham, who is known as "Rahim," explained. He is the local spokesman for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, the most powerful guerrilla group.

The cinema projectionist, hearing the shelling, stopped the picture and advised the audience to go home. They were caught densely packed in the open when three mortar bombs fell.

At the hospital a quarter of a mile away, they had problems of their own. "When I heard shells being fired I went to outpatients to see what was happening," Dr. Sivakumar, the president of the Jaffna branch of the Government Medical Officers' Association, said. "There was a large number of people there, because visiting time had just ended. I told them to get right inside the building.

"It was just as well. After most of them had moved, a shell fell where they had been."

As it was, only one person died in the hospital blast, a volunteer social worker in the patients' welfare department.

By this time the whole hospital was in a panic when 50 patients arrived from the

cinema blasts. "We ran out of blood," Dr. Sivakumar said.

After half an hour volunteer blood donors began arriving at the hospital, "but by then it was too late for many".

People's anger at the bloodshed has combined with their feelings of undue persecution because of the fuel embargo and the cutting off of telecommunication links with the rest of the country. It has undone much of the work that certain elements within the armed forces have been attempting while trying to win Tamil hearts and minds.

"It has been a real setback," admitted one military man at Palaly camp, the biggest military installation in the Jaffna peninsula.

COLOMBO

India has threatened to send humanitarian aid to besieged Tamils unless Sri Lanka's Government lifts an economic blockade against the rebel-dominated north, government and Tamil sources said yesterday (AP reports).

The warning was reportedly given by Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's special envoy, Mr. Dinesh Singh, to President Junius Jayawardene on Saturday.

Sri Lankan government officials reacted with alarm, saying any Indian relief supplies sent to island Tamils would have to cross Sri Lankan blockade lines, giving the operation military implications.

Highly placed sources said the embargo might be lifted at a Cabinet meeting on Wednesday.

(Courtesy of The Times, 16 March 1987)

Sri Lanka Placed on Probation

continued from page 14

the perpetrators of these crimes are not punished, instead they are promoted and hailed as national heroes, and even sent abroad as Ambassadors.

Triumph for Sri Lanka

The government owned 'Daily News' published a report datelined 14 March under the heading, "Lanka 'hijacks' Indian Resolution". The report said, "Anti-Lankan Indian diplomacy suffered a further setback in Geneva on Thursday when Sri Lanka 'hijacked' what originated as an Indian inspired draft resolution tabled by Argentina and co-sponsored later by Canada and Norway, to turn it into what political observers described as a major diplomatic triumph for Sri Lanka".

This type of self-congratulatory news management, while reflecting the self-deception those in authority in Colombo indulge in, also keeps the mass of the people from getting to know the reality of the depths to which Sri Lanka's international standing and image had sunk. The people are being fed with an exaggerated version of the glories of the past and a caricature of the reality of the present.

The fact is that the resolution adopted on the situation in Sri Lanka is historic for more than one reason. Firstly, never before in the history of the United Nations, a resolution submitted by a single country was eventually adopted unanimously. Secondly, Sri Lanka is the first new country to have been made the subject of a resolution for the last three years at the U.N. Human Rights Commission. Thirdly, Sri Lanka can no longer parade its false image of innocent virtue, and it has joined the league of the worst violators of human rights in the world. Fourthly, as one senior

delegate observed, the resolution on Sri Lanka was like a bomb placed in every bloc - Western, Eastern, Latin American, African and Asian bloc of countries. By attracting support from countries of every bloc, it broke the traditional voting pattern on a bloc basis. The opportunist role hitherto played by Sri Lanka in the U.N. of running with the hare and hunting with the hound did not save it from certain defeat. Fifthly, and most importantly, never before in the history of the U.N. Human Rights Commission had there been an instance when "negotiations" took place publicly in the presence of all members, observers, representatives etc. and that too, for nearly two hours. In other words, for the entirety of two hours, there was only one subject engaging the attention of all those present in the hall, although the Commission was not in sessions. That subject was the situation in Sri Lanka. It was more or less an educative process in itself.

The Verdict

Following extensive discussion on the situation in Sri Lanka during the 1986 sessions of U.N. Human Rights Commission, this correspondent concluded his commentary as follows: "Although no judgement was pronounced by the Human Rights Commission this year, there was no doubt that Sri Lanka was on trial. And those concerned with human rights and fundamental freedoms would appear to be determined to prosecute this trial to its logical conclusion in the coming period". The verdict was delivered by the Human Rights Commission this year in the trial which commenced last year. And the verdict is unambiguous.

No longer can Sri Lanka escape international scrutiny for its persistent and gross violations of human rights. Sri Lanka is now placed on probation for good behaviour, failing which it will face stiffer penalties for its accumulation of villainy. Past conviction will no doubt be taken into account in any future proceedings.

OTHER OPINION

THE HOME OFFICE should not be allowed to get away with its attempts to deport the 64 Tamils who won a temporary reprieve to stay here on Tuesday night. Sri Lanka is still in the grip of a civil war between its governing Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority. This month there have been fresh international attempts, notably from India (which has close connections with the Tamils), to pressure Colombo into a cease-fire which would allow peace talks to take place. But President Jayawardene's Government is deeply split on the question and the new year military offensive against the island's Tamil separatists has not yet been called off, for all Delhi's efforts. That leaves the essential realities of the Tamil predicament unchanged. **Wherever they live in Sri Lanka, Tamils and their families remain in real, serious danger from the army and from inter-communal violence.** That is the fundamental reason why so many of them are so willing to leave, for other countries in Asia in the first instance, and then for Europe and North America. That is why, for example, so many Tamils were prepared to risk the dangers of the cold seas round Newfoundland last summer (a desperate escapade that is threatening to repeat itself this spring). That is why hundreds of Tamils have been trying to get into Western European countries for the last three years. That is why they entrust themselves to shady profiteers. That is why they travel on forged papers. That is why they will strip to their underclothes at Heathrow.

As far as Whitehall is concerned, this is all a charade. The Tamils, say Home Office ministers, are not true refugees. They have not satisfied the United Nations test of providing evidence of a "well-founded fear of persecution." They are simply trying to trick their way round British immigration control. They are only looking for a more comfortable billet. Well, perhaps. But, for the most part, what the Home Office is saying is nonsense. They assume, preposterously, that the Tamils are desperate to come to Britain. They aren't at all. What makes the Home Office so confident that people positively want to

come to a cold, run-down racist place like this? They don't. **They want to get out of Sri Lanka, where they are in danger, and they will go to any country which they think may have them.** The British act as though the entire Tamil exodus is focussed on Heathrow. Nothing of the sort. Tamils are trying to get into any country they can. Britain is low down the list, as other European nations can confirm.

Faced with a genuine migration of frightened people, the British reaction has been typically ungenerous. Very few refugee visas are available. Some Tamils who have initially obtained them have subsequently been deported. Now the Home Office has decided to by-pass the

parliamentarians and even its own UK immigrants advisory service and to hustle out would-be refugees without appeal. This is entirely the wrong approach. By refusing to treat the Tamils as the refugees which they are, we are directly contributing to forcing them to behave in ways which we then highmindedly condemn. Our refusal to develop an internationally coordinated and humane refugee policy is forcing people like the Tamils into the hands of unscrupulous racketeers who rip them off and dump them in the world's airports and shipping lanes. It is a nasty, grubby policy and it is making things worse, not better.

By courtesy of *The Guardian* (editorial) of February 19, 1987

The Tamils On The Doorstep

ARMS AND THE MAN

MILITARISATION advances steadily, while militias proliferate, many of them, having 'political bosses'. The result is not more Law and Order but greater violence, more intense, brutal and widespread. The US State Dept. report, based largely on official information (see NEWS) puts the 1986 toll at 2,000. (A non-government source cited in the same report has given a much higher figure, 2,700).

While body counts are revealing, far more significant is the breakdown of discipline within these law enforcement agencies, and the steady spread of corruption. Three recent incidents can be taken as symptomatic of this menacing trend.

The police in the NCP have arrested two Army officers and several soldiers, said the ISLAND. They were allegedly engaged in a new racket - breaching the Government's fuel embargo by selling petrol to 'contractors' who were running a thriving business in fuel-starved Jaffna. There have been unconfirmed reports of petrol being sold at sea to Tamil rebels.

Nine Home Guards were also taken into custody for a far graver crime in the Welikanda police area. They will be charged of murdering three Tamil passengers in a State-owned bus bound for Trinco. Police

say they were dragged out of the bus, taken into the shrub jungle a few hundred yards away and shot dead.

The Police are looking for other "Home Guards" involved in this incident, the ISLAND reported.

Meanwhile, the Opposition Leader Mr. Anura Bandaranaike has asked for an inquiry into an incident in the heart of the city where some young lads playing a game of holiday cricket were assaulted by uniformed personnel, who had chosen to enjoy the 'Poya' holiday in the customary manner!

There has been a 70% increase in the armed services between 1985 and 1986, says the State Dept. report, and the number of 'Home Guards' have doubled. No mention is made of hundreds of youths being 'militarised' by the special courses conducted by the Manpower Mobilisation Ministry. And now, the Mahaveli minister has announced a weapons training course for Mahaveli settlers.

"Terrorism" of the separatist groups is taking a deadlier and more enduring revenge from Southern society than anything it inflicts through the barrel of an AK47.

(Editorial, "Lanka Guardian" 1 March, 1987)

IN AN IMPASSE

The Jayawardene government's military offensive launched in the Jaffna peninsula on January 28, rested on a set of assumptions which appear to be falling apart. It reckoned, in the first place, that the offensive, preceded and accompanied by an economic blockade, would rapidly bring the Tamil militants to heel. This has not happened.

With the force of their superior numbers and fire-power, the government troops have doubtless succeeded in rattling the militants both in their camp base in Kokkatticholai and along the three routes leading towards the Elephant Pass.

But the militants, refusing a frontal confrontation, have switched to guerilla tactics and moved virtually *en masse* into the jungles where the government troops are likely to be bogged down in a long-drawn conflict. Moreover, given their past record, the Sri Lankan forces can hardly be expected to keep up their pressure if the militants succeed in dealing isolated but

hard blows on them. Secondly, the government had hoped to carry out the military operation with a minimum of civilian casualties. But here again the figures tell a different story.

Such casualties, coupled with the distress caused by the economic blockade, makes it that much more difficult for the government to win over the civilian population.

As civilian deaths mount in the Jaffna peninsula, there is every risk that opinion in Tamil Nadu, which had turned against the militants in recent months, could switch in their favour. Mr. Karunanidhi can be trusted to whip up popular sentiments on this score for narrow political considerations, which, in turn, is bound to push the ruling party as well as the Congress into supporting the LTTE activists.

New Delhi cannot then fail to so act as to ensure at least a pause in the military operations and a lifting of the economic blockade. Ironically, the militants appear to be in no mood to facilitate the supply of

humanitarian assistance to the beleaguered peninsula offered by New Delhi. In plain words, its leverage, both among the militants and in Colombo, has shrunk. Under the circumstances, India can do no more than to exert as much pressure as it can on both sides to persuade them to start negotiations on the basis of the December 19 proposals.

But it is significant that following reports that New Delhi is about to harden its stand on Sri Lanka, Colombo has moved to partially lift the fuel embargo on the Jaffna peninsula, release Tamil detenus over 40 years who have no cases against them and to hold by-elections to vacant parliamentary seats in the northern and eastern provinces (other than Jaffna).

This country must keep up the pressures with due regard to Sri Lankan susceptibilities for that alone can prevent the deterioration of the situation on the ground which, in turn, could strain Indo-Sri Lankan ties to an inadmissible extent.

*Times of India (editorial),
March 13, 1987*

Middle Course In Sri Lanka

New Delhi Must Regain Initiative

THE COUNTRY will await with interest the outcome of the Union government's review earlier this week of the Sri Lankan situation. Last week, the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, spoke cryptically in the Rajya Sabha of taking some action the nature of which, however, he would not reveal prematurely. So far, beyond reiterating its request to the Sri Lankan government to halt the armed offensive against Tamil militants in the north and east and to lift the economic and communications blockade of the Jaffna peninsula, both preparatory to resuming negotiations based on the December 19 proposals that are still on the table, New Delhi has not done very much.

Its plea has been so much water off Colombo's back, although the 70-day-old fuel embargo is being reviewed to "provide relief to civilians" in such a way as not to "assist the terrorists". In the absence of the application of any other modes of persuasion, New Delhi has been unable to dent Colombo's confidence that it will be able to bring the militants to heel and impose on them the kind of political solution it wants. To that end, it has been gradually stepping up the military pressure on the militants; a senior Sri Lankan military official told the Tamil daily, *Veerakesari*, that the operations would be intensified.

Although public reaction in Tamil Nadu to the prolonged assault by Colombo on militant strongholds has so far been rather muted, it is likely that, as the screw tightens, fellow-Tamils there will pressure New Delhi to go beyond merely exhorting Colombo to return to the negotiating table. While it is true that some of the militants based in Madras did not behave with the local people with the discretion their situation called for, the tension between the two groups, which contributed to alienating sections of Tamil Nadu opinion from the guerrillas, has since subsided.

In any event, whatever the misdeemeanours of the militants, public opinion in Tamil Nadu is again turning in their favour. The Tamil Nadu chief minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, has urged Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to "save the citizens of the Jaffna peninsula from starvation" and to protect them against Colombo's onslaught. Another well-known public figure in the state, Mr. C. Subramaniam, has made the same appeal. The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) has also called on Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to act at once to save the lives of 800,000 civilians in the Jaffna peninsula. Hundreds of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees fasted for a day on Marina beach in Madras to protest against Colombo's armed action.

The plight of hundreds of men, women and children, fleeing from areas near Jaffna which have come under sustained shelling over the last few days, is also stirring up indignation among the people of Tamil Nadu. Where are these refugees going? While they do not seem to be coming to this country, the extension of Colombo's military operations to most of the north leaves very few places that are safe against attack. Their hardships, coupled with the privation of those in the Jaffna peninsula, where daily life has been crippled by the blockade, will sooner or later have repercussions on Tamil Nadu.

The question is what New Delhi can do so

late in the day. It has allowed Colombo to seize the political initiative and will not find it easy to wrest it back. Even if the December 19 proposals are the starting-point for fresh negotiations, Colombo wants any agreement reached within that framework to be under-written by New Delhi. It also wants New Delhi to get the militants to cease their hostilities before it will call off its own offensive. Further, it wants New Delhi to deliver the militants to the negotiations without their attaching any pre-conditions. In other words, it is calling the shots and wants to be seen doing so.

It is most unlikely that Colombo will now have any reason to go beyond the limited, purely administrative, linkages that it seems prepared to concede between the Tamil-majority northern province and a second Tamil province carved out of the east with the Sinhalese-majority areas excised from it. While both the TULF and the militants are adamant on the northern province and the prospective eastern one merging into a single Tamil unit, Colombo remains averse to the idea on the ground that it would prepare the ground for the emergence of a fully-fledged Tamil Eelam.

Colombo's View

But between what the militants and the TULF seek and what Colombo is prepared to grant, there is a range of possibilities. These need to be spelt out in detailed negotiations, with New Delhi playing the role of a non-partisan mediator. That role has been affected so far by the pressure exerted on it by both sides. Colombo wants it to tame the militants by denying them such facilities as Colombo believes are given to them by Tamil Nadu (with, in Colombo's view, New Delhi's at least tacit consent) and without which it is convinced their guerrilla campaign would grind to a halt. The Sri Lankan president, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, has only just reiterated his belief that India can play a positive role in devising a ceasefire and in bringing the militants to the negotiating table "in view of the fact that they are based in India".

The militants, for their part, as well as the TULF, want New Delhi to lean on Colombo to get it to call off its military offensive, lift the blockade of Jaffna and resume talks in all earnestness, while leaving open the possibility of a merger between the northern and eastern provinces.

The task for New Delhi is to steer a middle path between these two courses of action. Its leverage over the militants is more limited than Colombo imagines, just as its influence with Colombo is not as considerable as the militants and the TULF think it is. If it had the clout with either side that both of them attribute to it, the situation in Sri Lanka would not have come to the present sorry pass. What is more important, and more difficult, for New Delhi is to regain the confidence of both sets of protagonists. Rightly or wrongly, each thinks that New Delhi is biased against it and partial towards the other. While the militants recall New Delhi's arm-twisting of them not so long ago, Colombo points to what it believes is New Delhi's reluctance to crack down on militant bases in Tamil Nadu.

What is necessary now is for both sides to agree to a mutual cessation of hostilities,

MEDIA FILE

arranged with New Delhi's blessings through negotiations in the Indian capital. At the same time, Colombo must lift the economic and communications blockade. Only when a ceasefire is in place will it be possible to get the December 19 proposals taken up again in the search for a via media between the militants' maximalist demands and Colombo's minimalist concessions.

The question is how a ceasefire is to be effected and supervised. Here, New Delhi will have to speak more bluntly than it has been prepared to do. It will have to tell the militants to suspend their guerrilla operations against Sri Lankan forces. Should they fail to cooperate, it must be prepared to withhold the diplomatic and political support it has consistently given them. Colombo, too, must likewise be told in no uncertain terms that, unless it gives up its search for a coercive solution, New Delhi's mediatory services will not be available and, what is more, that India will regard the pursuit of further military operations against the Tamils as a hostile act likely to destabilise a crucial part of India itself.

Fortunately, Indian diplomacy has been able to keep the issue a sub-continental concern. Although Colombo has often tried to internationalise it in one way or another, New Delhi has been able to frustrate these attempts. That, however, does not mean that external powers are uninterested in the eventual outcome of the ethnic dispute in Sri Lanka. In view of the overall security environment in the subcontinent, with Pakistan's nuclear abilities now all but proven and with American munificence to Islamabad a virtual certainty despite that capability, tension in the sub-continent is on the rise.

Sino-Indian Ties

Deteriorating Sino-Indian relations on the border question the dispute with Bangladesh over the return of 49,000 Chakma refugees (25,000, by Bangladesh's count), and Nepal's insistence on declaring a "zone of peace" throughout its territory, are among some of the issues in the sub-continent with a direct bearing on India. It is in this perspective that the Sri Lankan challenge has to be met.

India can neither throw its weight around nor allow itself to be pushed around. It has frequently been accused in the past of the first, but it cannot afford to become the victim of the second. If it is able to resolve the Sri Lankan dispute to the satisfaction of both Colombo and the Tamil minority, without have to coerce either party, it will be nothing less than a diplomatic triumph. But to be able to do this, it must win back the initiative, which is now in Colombo's hands.

Only when it is clear that no military solution will work because New Delhi will not let it work will Colombo take up again the December 19 proposals on a realistic basis. Similarly, the militants should be left in no doubt that New Delhi's support for them is conditional on their displaying a sense of realism as well in terms of their objectives and the means of attaining these. It is a difficult diplomatic task, but not an impossible one. Time, however, is running out. New Delhi will have to act fast.

A. S. ABRAHAM

By courtesy of The Times of India,
March 13, 1987

NEWS IN BRIEF

THE GOVERNMENT'S defence and security budget for 1987 which already amounts to Rs. 10 billion will be enhanced by a further supplementary estimate of Rs. 2 billion. Defence-related expenditure is also expected to amount to about Rs. 3 billion pushing defence and security spending by another Rs. 5 billion, it is reliably understood.

This would mean that about 35 per cent of the domestic budget excluding foreign aid and local loans will have to be allocated for defence and security this year.

Faced with this quandary the Government will have no alternative but to reduce the capital expenditure this year by re-ordering and re-phasing its debt priorities.

Finance and Planning Ministry sources estimate that an immediate 12½ per cent cut in capital expenditure will be necessary to meet this defence expenditure.

The situation is said to have been further

Defence goes up to Rs. 15,000,000,000

complicated by the fall in prices of our principal export commodities like tea, rubber and coconut which has seriously eroded Government revenue.

While the prices of our export commodities remain depressed, the prices of some of our major imports such as crude oil has risen sharply. A barrel of crude oil which was selling at nine US dollars last year has now doubled as a result of the recent OPEC Agreement.

The severe drought now prevailing will have further adverse repercussions on agricultural production, incomes and personal consumption. It is expected that this would reduce anticipated collection of revenue from Income Tax and BTT.

There will also be additional expenditure on drought relief which will further reduce funds available to the Treasury.

The repayment of commercial loans raised by Air Lanka, the Shipping

Corporation, the Cement Corporation and others will also cost the Treasury a further Rs. 2 billion.

Most of these loans were raised against the advice of the Finance Ministry. Due to the Tamil conflict and the drought, Sri Lanka's growth rate which had been maintained at a very impressive five per cent may also come down to three per cent this year, the lowest growth rate recorded since this Government came into power.

The debt service ratio is also rising and is likely to be around 30 per cent this year due to the bunching of the repayments due on commercial loans. This means that 30 per cent of foreign exchange earnings of Sri Lanka will have to be utilised for repayment of these loans.

The Finance Ministry is now preparing the Public Investment Programme 1988 to 1992 which has to be presented to the Aid Group meeting in Paris in June this year.

MADHU CHURCH – NO BASE FOR OPERATIONS

Text of the statement issued by the Catholic Bishops' Conference in Sri Lanka on recent military attacks in the Madhu Area.

We wish to express our shock and surprise at a news item that has appeared in some newspapers, 11th February, 1987. One newspaper, quoting the media centre in Colombo, states that "the Madhu Church also was used for the last three years by the LTTE as an operations base, came under full security forces control."

Another newspaper says that "the Gajabahu Regiment had taken over the Madhu Church."

We wish to state very clearly that neither the Madhu Church nor the Pilgrim area around the Church has been used as an operations base of the Terrorist groups."

The Bishop of Mannar, The Rt. Revd. Thomas Savundranayagam, to whom I spoke soon after I read the news item said that he personally visited the Madhu Church, along with General Ranatunga and Brigadier Kobbekaduwa, both of whom had been most gracious and respectful. One of them had expressed surprise that there was

no terrorist activity in the area surrounding the Church and the Pilgrim Centre.

The Bishop further stated that leaflets had been dropped the previous day requesting all the people in the surrounding areas to assemble at the Madhu Church. After they had assembled there, from among them 22 men between the ages of 16 and 25 had been arrested. One wonders at the reasoning behind these actions.

We wish to state, once again, neither the Madhu Church nor the Pilgrim centre has been an operations base of the Terrorist Groups.

We wish also to state that no regiment has taken over the Madhu Church. Madhu Church is the most sacred national shrine in Sri Lanka – for Catholics – of the Mother of God. This shrine is under the administration of the Bishop of Mannar. It is unthinkable that a democratic Government would allow its Security Forces to take over a shrine – let alone a national shrine – of any religion.

We would, at the same time, commend the Government for moving in the direction of searching for peace and the establishment of its authority in the country. We need this badly.

Army Prelude to Mahasivarathiri

The Security Forces stationed at the Harbour View Hotel who were on the move towards Maviddapuram were confronted by 'Tiger' and 'Eros' militants on 26th morning. Helicopter fire damaged the world-famous and historical Maviddapuram temple. The damage was extensive. The top floor roof of Union College, Tellipallai was ripped by gunfire and hundreds of tiles damaged.

Three civilians were killed and many injured, soldiers among them.

Among the dead were Maniam, 60, a labourer, Subramaniam, a refugee from Vasavilan and 23-year-old K. Suvendrarasa.

Many civilians were injured. Damage to the temple, Union College and houses has yet to be assessed.

Jaffna Hospital:

Shortage of Fuel, Oxygen and Surgeons

The Director of the Jaffna General Hospital (Teaching) informed the Hospital Committee at its meeting on 19th January the difficulties they had to face, due to the fuel restriction. He said that although it was announced a week back over the State Media, that fuel could be obtained from Kilinochchi Army Camp for the ambulance, it still has not materialised. He said that his telephone calls to the Brigadier had not been answered by any army officers other than the telephone operator. We do not have petrol or diesel for the ambulance or lorry. As a result we are unable to transport patients to and from the hospital and secondly, we are unable to transport officers at night if there is an emergency call.

The Hospital Committee resolved to request the Honourable Minister of Teaching Hospitals to make immediate arrangements with Security Authorities for the supply of petrol or diesel for the use of the hospital vehicles. It was also decided to point out that the information given through the State Media

for the supply of petrol or diesel for the hospital ambulance etc. is not borne out by actual facts. The Hospital Committee represents this with grave concern over the rapidly deteriorating situation by the fuel shortage in the G.H. (T) Jaffna.

The Director also informed the Hospital Committee that he has made arrangements for the transport of cylinders by ship from Jaffna to Colombo. But he is unable to transport cylinders from hospital to K.K.S. Harbour by lorry due to fuel shortage. He further said that he has written for Authority to purchase petrol in the black market at exorbitant prices for urgent use of ambulance in a medical emergency.

The Director further informed the Hospital Committee that there are only two surgeons as Dr. V. Krishnarajah too has left for the U.K. for medical treatment. The Hospital Committee notes with alarm that in a hospital where there were six general surgeons there were the orthopaedic surgeon, neuro surgeon, thoracic surgeon and all these posts are now vacant.

The Hospital Committee requests the Hon. Minister of Teaching Hospitals to send foreign volunteer surgeons (French) who have come to serve in Sri Lanka.

TELLIPALLAI Cancer Hospice

OUR JANUARY 1987 issue carried an appeal for funds to support the construction of the Hospice. Whilst renewing this appeal we also wish to make a correction regarding the extent of the facilities which the Hospice will provide.

Dr. V. Krishnarajah, Vice President of the Northern Province Cancer Society, who is presently in London, has pointed out that the building will include thirteen single rooms (not two) and five double rooms (not four), quarters for doctors and nurses, Shrine room, mortuary, office, etc.

Funds are required not only for constructing the building, but also for the maintenance of the Hospice.

Please forward your contributions to the Treasurer,

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

"Viraj Mendis Will Stay!"

Conference Saturday, April 11 and Sunday, April 12. Church of the Ascension, off Royce Road, Holme, Manchester.

Surbiton Tamils Club

Cultural Evening, Saturday, April 11, 6.30 p.m., Merton Civic Hall, The Broadway, Wimbledon.

Tamil Social Club (U.K.)

Film NINAIVE ORU SANGEETHAM at Wimbledon Odeon, 12 noon, Sunday, 19 April. Bookings 01-646 5432 (evening).

London Tamil Congregation

Easter Service, 3.45 p.m., Sunday, 19 April, Putney Methodist Church, London, SW15.

Tamil Performing Arts Society

Presents "Mukamillatha Manitharkal", 7 p.m., Monday, 20 April. Bharata Vidya Bhavan, London, W4.

S.C.O.T. Tamil New Year Lunch

1 p.m., Sunday, 3 May, Lola Jones Hall, London, SW15.

WEDDINGS

ASOGAN, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Sandrasegeram to **SATHIAKALA**, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. A. Subramaniam, at Sri Ganapathy Temple, Wimbledon, London SW19 on 16th March, 1987. The bride's parents held a well-attended reception later at Lola Jones Hall, Tooting, London, SW17.

SHRIANANDA, son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Kanagasabai (formerly of Upper Balangoda Estate and Ramakrishna Gardens, Wellawatte) and **RENUKA** (daughter of Mr. and Mrs. C. Balasingam) at New Woodlands Hotel, Madras on 9th February, 1987.

OBITUARIES

By Courtesy of "Sri Lankan Situation Report" (Issue No. 23)

SIVANESAN, Sivasubramaniam (Engineer U.K.). Husband of Shanthini, father of Sivarupan and Sivakami. Died Madras. 35 Cowper Road, Hanwell, U.K.

SHANMUGANATHAN, Annapooranam. Wife of late S. Shanmuganathan, mother of Vasanthanathan, Mahendranathan, Shanthanathan, Mrs. Raveendra Ranjithkumar (U.K.), Ramawathy and Nimalanathan. Cremation Kokuvil.

PONNAMPALAM, Thuraiveerasingham. Husband of Sivapackiam, father of Dr. Jeyawickramaraja (Bahrain), Jayabalan (U.K.), Kamaladevi, Giriya and Thanaluxmy. Cremation Manipay.

POORNANANDA, K. Husband of Pathmawathie, father of Gnanakaran (Australia), Usha, Narmatha (U.K.) and Divakaran (Belize). Funeral Sydney. 30/9, Elie House Road, Colombo 15.

By Courtesy of "The Morning Star" (27th February, 1987)

MR. A. K. RAJENDRAM. Principal, Murasumodda Cluster School and President of the Killinochi YMCA died under tragic circumstances on Wednesday 11th, February. The funeral took place at Killinochi. Mr. Rajendram who was returning to Killinochi from Colombo was shot dead by the army during search operations.

Mr. Rajendram took a keen interest in the social and religious activities of the area. He had served on the Executive Committees of his Church, YMCA and the Jaffna Christian Teachers Guild.

MRS. S. ARUMAINAYAGAM. The death occurred in Colombo on 11.2.87 of Daisy Selvaranee Arumainayagam, wife of the late Mr. S. Arumainayagam, a former Headmaster at Tellipallai in the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. Mrs. Arumainayagam was an active member of the Tellipallai Church.

She leaves behind three sons, Jebanayagam, Kirupaharan (Oman) and Dr. Arulrajan (UK) and three daughters, Nancy Kunarajah, Karunavathy Edmund and Aruljothy Sellathurai.

MR. CHELLIAHPILLAI CARPENTER. The death occurred in Norway on 24/2/87 of Chelliahpillai Carpenter (68) eldest son of the late Mr. R. Carpenter Canagasingham and Mrs. Canagasingham of Uduvil and brother of Mr. L. C. S. Canagasingham, Mr. P. J. C. Canagasingham, the late Pathman Canagasingham and Mrs. Balasingham Welch (U.K.). He retired from the Co-operative Department and went abroad last year to join his children in Norway and Canada. He leaves behind besides his wife, Gnanatheepam, three sons and a daughter.

RAJENDRA, son of the late Senator Manickam, formerly of Bank of Ceylon and recently of Midland Bank, died 28 January. He leaves behind his wife, Rajayogamalar, brother Wimalendra and sister Mrs. Kala Thambimuttu (Batticaloa), 99 Hampton Road, Forest Gate, London, E7.

GRACE LEE VANNIASINGHAM, died Bangalore February 6th. Born in 1904, she graduated from Women's Christian College, Madras and taught at Uduvil and later at Udupiddy where she was Principal for several years. Retiring at the age of 50, she served the Church of South India (Jaffna Diocese) at Nainathivu. She later went over to India where she lived till her death, at the Vishranthi Nilayam, Bangalore.

SIVAKOLUNTHU KATHIRAVELU

of "Theivampathi", Atchuvily, wife of late M. Kathiravelu, mother of Maheswari, Ganeshamoorthy, Sivamoorthy, Baskaramoorthy, Thevakaramoorthy, Krishnamoorthy and late Sarveswari.

Cremated on 14th March at Highland Memory Gardens, Willowdale. 171, Angus Dr., North York, Ontario M2J 2W9, Canada.

K. SATKUNAM

Chartered Civil Engineer



died on March 8th at his home in 107B Grand Drive, Wimbledon, London SW209EB, after a very brief illness.

Born in 1939, he had his early education in Kokuvil Hindu College and graduated from the University of Ceylon. He is survived by his wife, Sivanangai (daughter of retired Parameshwara teacher Pararajasingam and Mrs. Pararajasingam) and sons Karnan, Krishnan and Archchunan.

FATHER MARY BASTIAN

A service to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the ordination of my beloved son, the late Rev. Mary Bastian, will be held at Blessed Sacrament Church, 10 Diamond St., Walpole, Massachusetts on Saturday, 30 May at 9 a.m.

Fr. Mary Bastian died at the hands of Army personnel within the Rectory premises of the Vankalai Church, Mannar on 6 January, 1985.

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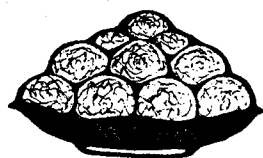
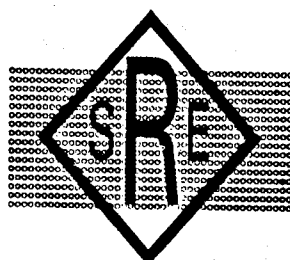
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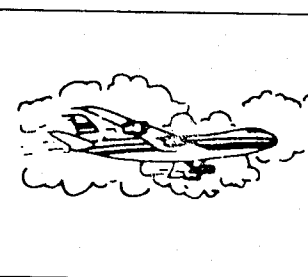
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Taking Jaffna Militarily Means Large-Scale Bloodshed

The following statement was issued by the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Communist Party of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party on 14th March, 1987.

FAILURE to reach a just settlement of the ethnic problem through negotiations has placed our people in the most serious and desperate predicament that they have experienced in several generations. The sharp deterioration of relations between the governments of Sri Lanka and India in recent weeks have complicated matters still further and made the situation even more dangerous.

The present situation is fraught with confrontationalist potentialities that can only affect adversely the peoples of Sri Lanka and India, the traditional good neighbourly relations between them, and the cause of regional co-operation and peace.

All possibilities of resolving this problem peacefully and through negotiations have been placed in jeopardy. Instead, the so-called "military option", which has already brought terrible death, devastation and prospects of economic ruin to this country, is being escalated, despite the fact that there can be no victors in this senseless civil war.

Things have gone from bad to worse in the period since our government escalated its military activities in the northern province and imposed an economic embargo on the Jaffna peninsula and since the government of India, in response, suspended its efforts to help to bring about a negotiated settlement.

The slaughter of uninvolved civilians, in the course of both the stepped-up military offensive of the government and reprisal attacks by the LTTE, has intensified. Uninvolved citizens of the Jaffna peninsula, who are as much citizens of this country as others, have been especially penalised and subjected to severe economic and other privations in retaliation for the government's failure to solve the ethnic problem politically or to settle accounts with the LTTE.

As a result of the embargo against Jaffna, medium and small industries have been crippled, together with fishing and the production of food and other agricultural crops. Shortages of sugar, medicines and infant foods are acute, while the supply of other essential commodities has become so restricted and prices so high that only the affluent can hope to get enough to eat. Many workplaces and schools have closed or function with great difficulty. Public transport is hard to come by. Hundreds have fled their homes in fear.

Nevertheless, our government has announced that it has no intention of stopping its military activities and will shortly introduce supplementary estimates for increased military purchases from abroad that will add several billion rupees more to the one-quarter of the national revenue already allocated for military activities. Even the minor changes that the government has recently announced in the economic embargo, when its activities became the subject of debate at the Geneva meeting of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights, will not lessen in any real way the hardships that the embargo has imposed on uninvolved civilians in the Jaffna peninsula.

In India, too, pressures on the government of India to intervene directly in the Sri Lanka situation are mounting, especially in Tamil Nadu. India's Prime Minister is on public record that his government is considering further steps in this connection. Influential Indian media and public figures are suggesting a variety of options

that they want the Indian government to adopt. The attitude of the LTTE leaders is also adding fuel to the fire. The hardships that the whole country, including the Tamils, have to undergo are being aggravated by their intransigent rejection of any dialogue and their refusal to put forward any proposals of their own.

In this grave hour, our three parties appeal to all concerned to avoid mutual accusations or precipitate actions, to do everything possible to defuse the situation, and to create conditions that will help a return to the process of seeking a solution through negotiations.

Failure to do so now may well lead to a situation where the opportunity for a negotiated settlement may disappear altogether, with all the costly and terrible consequences that must inevitably follow. Our three parties call on our government to help to create such conditions by withdrawing altogether its economic embargo which is unjust, counter-productive and in view of the government's claim that it has effectively re-established its authority in the north, needless.

We ask it to set a short date by which it will implement its assurance to release political detainees who are uninvolved or only marginally involved. We ask it to announce its intention to repeal the Sixth Amendment of the Constitution, without which its declaration of intent to hold by-elections in the north and east soon will be a futile exercise.

As far as a resumption of its military offensive in the Jaffna peninsula, including taking Jaffna town by storm, is concerned, we ask the government to realise that this will involve large-scale bloodshed and widespread destruction, isolate Sri Lanka internationally even further, ruin the whole country economically and do irreparable damage to any further efforts to restore friendly and co-operative relations between the communities. Even if the security forces establish their supremacy in Jaffna by military might, it will not solve the ethnic

problem, which will remain and continue to fester.

Our parties also urge the government of India not to yield to those in its country who are pressing it to take various forms of direct and unilateral intervention in Sri Lanka. We ask it instead to seek ways through which its mediatory role can be resumed.

We further urge the LTTE to re-assess its situation realistically, formulate its proposals for a political settlement and agree to take part in the search for such a settlement through negotiations. We call on all persons in this country, irrespective of their political allegiances, who want to see a viable settlement of our ethnic problem and the other problems that have arisen out of its non-solution, to make similar appeals.

Neither Sri Lanka nor India will gain if imperialist schemes of destabilisation of either country succeed. Only the imperialist circles, who are playing a double game in this matter, who want to provoke a confrontation between Sri Lanka and India and who hope that by doing so they can promote their own selfish ends in this region and scuttle attempts at regional co-operation and at making the Indian Ocean a zone of peace, will benefit if the situation is allowed to develop to a point of no return.

LTTE (London) reports:

"The Army Mini-Camp at Jaffna Telecom Centre was over-run by the Liberation Tigers in the early hours of Monday, March 23.

"Eight soldiers (Tilakumara, Kukala Kumara, Chandrasiri, Udayawansa, Patiniveda, Ubil-koranda, Amarasena & Karunatilaka) were captured, 20 killed and several injured.

A large quantity of arms was seized. LTTE casualties included four killed."

It might be recalled that the Army occupied the Telecom building in January.

Amnesty International Calls For Judicial Inquiry Into Massacre

"Amnesty International is gravely concerned at reports published in the international press, supported by mounting evidence, including testimony from survivors and other witnesses, that at least 150 civilians, nearly all Tamils, have been deliberately killed by members of the Special Task Force (STF) in the Batticaloa area during a three day military operation starting Wednesday, 28 January, 1987. That day, 13 STF men were killed, most of them in a landmine explosion attributed to armed Tamil separatists, at Kokkoddicholai, west of Batticaloa.

"Killings were reported from the villages of Kokkoddicholai, Arulnesapuram, Arasaditivu, Ampalanthurai, where over 45 people were reported killed, as well as Mudalikuda, Munaikadu, Ilupadichenai, Thandiadi and Mahiladitivu, where an estimated 83 civilians have been killed. The Sri Lankan Government officials have repeatedly denied the charges that civilians have been deliberately killed, identifying 23 of the dead as separatist guerrillas, four as civilians and 13 as members of the STF.

"However, survivors of these killings have reported that from 28 January onwards, men, women and children were deliberately killed in helicopter gunfire and that STF personnel entered houses of Tamils in the area, ordered

male Tamils to come out and shot them. In one incident at Mahiladitivu, near Kokkoddicholai, detailed allegations have been made that at least 22 employees of Serendib Sea Foods, a prawn farm which is part of a foreign concern, were taken away in a tractor and truck by three members of the STF to a nearby church and shot dead. Seven of the victims are said to be between 12 and 14 years-old. Another 12 men are reported missing, feared dead, and survivors have reported that dozens of others, seeking refuge in the prawn farm later were also shot. The bodies of the victims were reportedly burned on old tyres collected from the local bus depot. Official reports of the incident stated that those killed were armed Tamil separatists who had occupied the farm after its alleged closure several weeks ago. However, one of the foreign directors of the farm denied its use by political groups, adding that the employees killed were "innocent technicians and casual labour."

"Amnesty International appeals to the Sri Lankan Government immediately to establish a comprehensive independent investigation by persons trusted for their impartiality to investigate these allegations of widespread extrajudicial killings and to search for the "disappeared" people.