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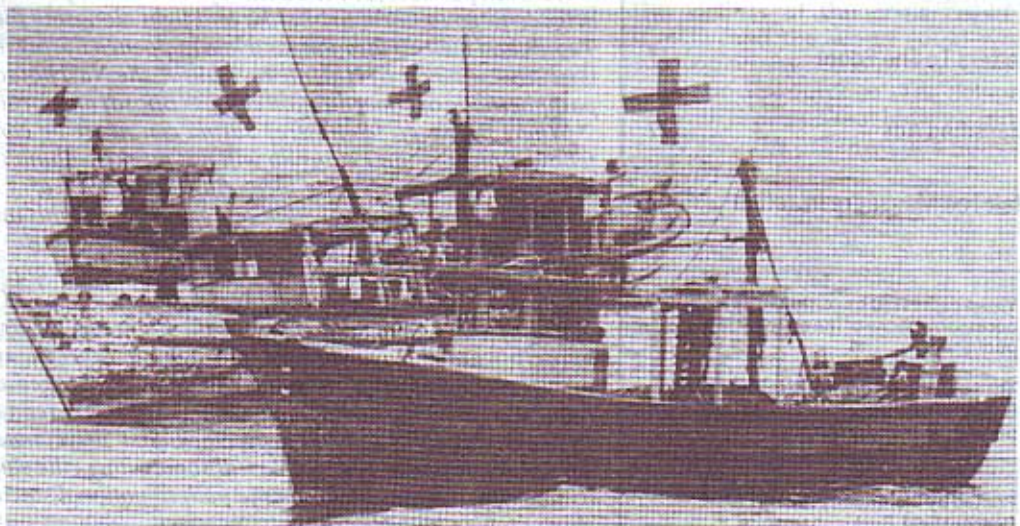
TO NAZI STYLE CONCENTRATION CAMPS

Innocent Tamil Youths Kidnapped By Sinhalese Klaus Barbies



SRI LANKA
confirms its
genocidal plans
by turning back
Indian mercy
boats

When are the
gas chambers
coming?



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WE SHALL NOT SURRENDER

HANNAH ARENDT, the famed intellectual, described Nazi murder and brutality as "the banality of evil". The Jayawardene Government is doing just that with its invasion of the Jaffna Peninsula "by land, sea and air". No civilised Government in the world has ever bombed its own territory or killed its own citizens as President Jayawardene's with such systematic thoroughness. Murder, rape, arson, looting, the burning of libraries, the desecration and destruction of temples and churches, the wanton killings including that of a Catholic priest and a Methodist minister - there are no limits to the ghoulish cannibalising tendencies of Jayawardene and his Ministers. The Special Task Force operating in the Eastern Province under the patronage of Jayawardene's son, Ravi, is reminiscent of what Mussolini's sons did to innocent Ethiopians. Can planes and helicopter gunships flying thousands of feet above the ground accurately strike so-called Tamil militant targets when Ronald Reagan's sophisticated aircraft failed to score direct hits in Libya? Even barefaced lying indulged in by the **heir apparent**, Lalith Athulathmudali, has its limits. And as if to pour fuel to the flames, the **heir presumptive**, Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa makes the most irresponsible and wildest of speeches in Parliament.

Why this blood lust for the Tamils of Jaffna? One obvious answer is revenge. It is revenge not against the Tamil militants but against the Tamil people who refused to vote for Jayawardene in the presidential election of 1982 and refused to condone his fraudulent referendum later in the year to unlawfully extend the life of Parliament. It is revenge against innocent civilians, innocent women and children in order to satisfy the thirst for blood by a wicked section of the Buddhist monks and Sinhala Buddhist mobs. Supposedly the Tamil militants were responsible for the bomb blast in Colombo. But as foreign correspondents have remarked, there is no incontrovertible evidence that the Tamils did it. And the Tamil militants have denied it. In fact, Jayawardene's Sinhalese enemies allege that the bomb blast was "an inside job" to be used as an excuse for liquidating Tamil people and extend Jayawardene's term in his presidential office.

An ageing man of 81 years, aided by ministerial rivals who daily await his demise, have recklessly created the wildest chaos which will only reduce the island to a mere shambles. Jayawardene complains when Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran provides humanitarian relief to starving Tamils. He does not expect a murmur when men from the Keeni Meeni Services of Britain walk out in protest against the barbarism of his undisciplined rabble that passes for an army. And he thinks that the world will wink at his obtaining military hardware and training from the two hated states, South Africa and Israel. The crown prince, Lalith Athulathmudali, pompously pronounces that his reading of the Indian Constitution is that foreign policy is a subject for the Centre. He must re-educate himself to learn that providing humanitarian aid is not foreign policy. There are foundations and organisations all over the world which have provided relief to our hapless Tamils. Their governments have not accused them of taking control of foreign policy.

We are today the sad witnesses of a re-enactment of Pol Pot's butchery in Kampuchea. Tamils all over the world from whatever country must organise to mobilise international opinion against the rebirth of Hitlerism as reincarnated in Jayawardene. International reaction against the murderous brutality of Jayawardene and his henchmen can reduce the intensity of the wanton destruction of an ancient civilisation and its people. International opinion must equally be made to have its voice felt to prevent aid in the guise of assistance for economic development being provided by the Aid Sri Lanka Consortium.

It is even possible for the Tamils of the world to persuade an international legion or brigade to go to north Sri Lanka and fight alongside the Tamil militants to save the Tamils and their civilisation, as it had happened during the Spanish Civil War. Jaffna is a classic instance of Hitlerite revivalism, the Nazi holocaust and the recreation of its paraphernalia of concentration camps (Boosa) and torture chambers.

Where do we go from here? Jaffna can never be conquered in that our 850,000 fellow Tamils in the Peninsula will not meekly submit to 8,000 undisciplined storm troopers. Our brave young men and women will carry on the struggle till victory is achieved. That victory is within our grasp though this might take time. We might not be successful in a battle here and an offensive there. But this by no means is evidence that the war has been won. Sri Lanka's Himmler cannot even expect the peace and quiet of the graveyard. What Jayawardene's gang will secure is not victory or the defeat of the Tamil militants. On the contrary, as Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi himself warned Jayawardene through his special envoy, Dinesh Singh, such precipitate action will cause the war to be prolonged and violence escalated. Any rational man within reach of his senses could have read the meaning of this message. But "Whom the Gods destroy, they first drive mad." Insanity has overtaken Jayawardene and his gang. We will soon witness the ship of state being rocked from its bottom. They have chosen the path to national suicide. Sri Lanka is no longer a single viable political entity.

How much longer will you stand aside?

TULF PRESIDENT — M. SIVASITHAMPARAM

AS I WRITE THIS, the heartening news has come in that the military juggernaut of President Jayawardene has been halted by the brave boys of the LTTE. Just a week ago, President Jayawardene told his armed forces: "I give you full licence to do everything to recapture Jaffna. My Cabinet and I will stand by you". This is reminiscent of that Hitlerite order he gave Brigadier Weeratunga way back in 1979, "I gave you all powers. Go forth and finish the terrorists". Eight years later he has to give even more authoritarian orders. This clearly shows that despite all the economic blockades, all the strafing and bombing from the air, all the shelling and firing of mortars from sea and the brutal massacres of over 11,000 innocent Tamil civilians, the arrests, detentions and cruel tortures of thousands of Tamil young men and women, the spirit of the Tamil people is undaunted. The story of the Tamils for the past few years is the saga of a people who have infinite courage and patience. Have not these people the right to ask the world community "How much longer will you stand aside when this genocide goes on?"

Two significant events took place in Tamil Nadu. The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly discussed for hours the Tamil problem. Every political party, every shade of political opinion, condemned the killings of the Tamil people by the Sri Lankan government, urged the Central Government to take more positive action to prevent these killings, urged the Centre to give up its mediatory role and give succour to the Tamil people. At the end of the discussion, the Food Minister, Mr. S. Ramachandran announced that the Chief Minister was giving 4 crores of rupees to provide relief to the Tamils of Eelam. This announcement rekindled the faith of the Tamil people in Tamil Nadu and Delhi. As was to be expected, the lesser deities of the Sri Lankan Government made the appropriate noises but Delhi, in clear terms, affirmed the Tamil Nadu Government's right to come to the aid of their Tamil brethren across the 20 miles of water. This is a timely gesture to give the necessary signal to the Sri Lankan Government that the people of India, particularly the people of Tamil Nadu, will not look on when their brethren are being annihilated.

The TULF has always recognised one political reality. The militants are certainly the shield for the Tamil people against the marauding racist army of the Sri Lankan Government. But it is only India's intervention in different forms that can save the Tamil people. Therefore, at critical moments,

we appealed to India and India's diplomatic initiatives together and to the courage and tenacity of our boys to stop and push into barracks Sri Lanka's armed forces. So, again, when the situation looked desperately dangerous, a delegation of the TULF went to Delhi to apprise those involved with our problem and of the exact situation and the need for India to act decisively and urgently. The delegation met with Mr. Natwar Singh, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. P. Chithambaram, the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr. K. P. S. Menon, the Foreign Secretary and Mr. Dinesh Singh, the special envoy of the Prime Minister. The delegation reminded these Ministers and others that the Prime Minister had sent a message to President Jayawardene on 9th February that (a) the economic and communications blockade should be lifted, (b) the military operation against Jaffna should be stopped, and (c) a firm commitment to the proposals of 19th December 1986 should be



repeated. The delegation told them that the Sri Lankan Government replied with an evasive response and spoke of a laying down of arms before talks. The Prime Minister, apparently impatient with Sri Lanka's vacillations, spoke of other actions.

In an apparently conciliatory response, the Cabinet decided on 11th March to accede, even partially, to the Prime Minister's message of 9th February. But that this was a mere attempt to deceive became apparent when nothing was done in respect of any of the demands of 9th February and that this Cabinet decision was on the eve of the Human Rights Committee of the U.N. discussing the resolution on Sri Lanka's violations of Human Rights. The delegation recalled that it had become a sickening habit of the Sri Lankan Government to pretend to be reasonable on the eve of Aid

Consortium or Human Rights Committee or American Congress Hearing meetings. The delegations gave full details of the plans of the Sri Lankan Government to launch a major offensive against Jaffna. The delegation pointed out that the oft-repeated excuse of the Sri Lankan Government that the LTTE intended to set up a parallel administration is absolutely untenable for the following reasons:—

1. *The LTTE has often explained that it only wanted to afford certain services to the people which the Government were not doing. Even this was postponed;*

2. *Even if announcements of setting up a parallel administration were true, it was to be in Jaffna; if so, why was the military onslaught started in Trincomalee and Batticaloa from the 28th January;*

3. *As far back as December 1985, President Jayawardene, in interviews to certain journals, spoke about cutting off supplies of food and essentials and flushing out the terrorists;*

4. *In any event no parallel administration was in fact set up; then why continue the military offensive, the economic and communications blockade?*

The delegation reiterated that the real objective was the annihilation of the Tamil people. While thanking the Government and people of India for all their expressions of concern and diplomatic intervention in the past, the delegation suggested the sending of a ship laden with genuine relief goods by India to Jaffna or Mannar. As *The Hindu*, in an editorial pointed out 'Aside from the humanitarian and symbolic aspects related to solidarity, there could be a testing of the waters; there could be a reassertion, at a practical level, of India's concern in a way that the victims of the crisis could feel directly and the world could witness with no secret made of the provider's intention and purpose'. The delegation left with the hope that India would take early steps to organise this humanitarian voyage.

The Sri Lankan Government, with increasing frequency and rising crescendo, puts the blame on the militants for the failure to reach a political solution of our problem. The latest gimmick in this propaganda drive is the story in *The Sunday Observer* of 24th May that Delhi had given the nod for the military operation against Jaffna. The Indian High Commission in Sri Lanka promptly denied the story and described it as

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CONFRONTATION ACROSS PALK STRAITS

The nine Indian Air Force planes that dared the mercy mission to Jaffna from Bangalore on the 4th June carried not merely 25 tonnes of humanitarian aid from our brethren in India but also their goodwill was worth an equal weight in gold for the suffering Tamils in the Peninsula.

It was a moral booster to an entire minority subject to the worst form of inhuman treatment by their own government for no reason other than their ethnicity, and none better to show than pure numerical superiority. It was indeed a "No Nonsense" signal from the super power of the Region proclaiming that moral scruples still do matter in politic and, humanitarian considerations apply equally, irrespective of numerical superiority. To the Tamils all over the world, it was a supreme restoration of faith in humanity and a firm conviction that Human Rights cannot be trampled by military force alone. Force begets force and justice must necessarily prevail. The Jayawardene government must understand it now at least without going for a military solution.

The five Antonov 32 transports escorted by four Mirage fighters left Bangalore with medical and food supplies in the early hours of the morning. In an hour they were over the tiny islands and then into the city of Jaffna and at 1500ft. they were easy targets. But for once Sri Lankan discretion seems to have prevailed. Even the militia at the Palaly Camp were out of sight. The civilians of Jaffna were as usual in their trenches

perhaps. In about 15 minutes the supplies dropped and the mission accomplished, the squadron flew back home with the gesture acclaimed a spectacular success. It was a fitting climax to a venture announced on Monday and the drama staged on the seas off Rameswaram on Wednesday by a rag bag of a flotilla of fishing boats and confrontation by the Sri Lankan naval boats ordering them to turn back which they obeyed without demur.

For once India's show of sympathy a laughing matter to the politically uninitiated, until the mission was actually accomplished the following day. Sri Lankan celebrations over the failure at the first attempt subsided the moment the gifts of mercy were heard to land on Jaffna soil. The sagging spirit of Jaffna began to revive with double vigour, once more. "Outrageous" cried Athulathmudali. "Violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka", shouted Premier Premadasa. A fait accompli sometimes has a strange way of dealing with a crisis.

Among international commentators, some who show only a perfunctory interest in the Tamil problem, could not dissociate themselves from the typical view that it was just a 'Terrorist' problem or a mere

domestic one. However, they all sprang to life with polemics on international law and its obligations. They talked of the aspirations of the British Raj and of "the help that one can do without" and even suggested that "Mr. Gandhi should put his own house in order before meddling so audaciously next door". Few seem to have the patience or even the inclination to learn the full facts of the problem that has dogged the minds of the Sri Lankans and broken the hearts of the Tamils for the last thirty years or more. It is a long tale of woe littered with promises, duplicity and deceit followed by violence and now genocide.

India has witnessed this close at hand and experienced this duplicity as mediator in the dispute. Over the last three years she has only seen massacre and mayhem escalate and civilian life treated with a casualness seldom witnessed in history. "... By merciless bombing of a defenceless people and spreading misery on the basis of only ethnic difference, Sri Lanka was putting its unity and integrity in danger", said Mr. Gandhi. When he again said that, "the cold blooded slaughter of thousands of Sri Lankan citizens by their own Government cannot promote a solution." He certainly knew what the world was denied by the press gag that J. R. has enforced in Sri Lanka and the denial to foreign journalists to visit any of the affected areas of the North or East except for a conducted tour under escort.

THE TAMIL TIMES

is pleased to report that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, our white knight in shining armour came to the rescue of the Tamil people. He did what he had to do to President Jayawardene. He has soundly disciplined the deceitful Presi-



dent and conveyed the message to him that he must watch his step.

The Tamil people in Sri Lanka are grateful to Mr. Gandhi for obstructing the neo-Nazi Jayawardene gang. Mr. Gandhi's kindness will be remembered and his name will be etched in every Tamil heart now and for generations to come.

Mr. Gandhi acted in a statesman-like manner. He first sent a flotilla of fishing boats with food and medical supplies on June 3rd. The Sinhalese navy turned back these boats despite hunger, starvation and disease in the Jaffna peninsula. President Jayawardene and "the other little Jayawardenes" were gloating over our misery, that they had forced the Indian boats to return. Next day, the air lift (5 cargo planes with 25 tonnes of food escorted by 4 mirage jets) arrived to provide relief to Jaffna in its dire hour.

WAR OF TERROR IN TOURIST ISLAND

THE HINDU dominated Tamil community which accounts for a quarter of Sri Lanka's total population of 15 million, have ever since independence been dominated by the Sinhalese Buddhists. The majority of the Tamils have given up all hope of being able to live together with the Sinhalese and have been claiming a separate state for themselves. The Sinhalese dominated state has offered the Tamils a limited amount of self-determination - but has subsequently rescinded the offer made during the negotiations.

The government has now withdrawn official posts in the Tamil regions. This is interpreted as a presage of a major military offensive with air support.

Such an offensive will not break the resistance movement. The Sri Lankan air force is barely capable of bombing with the precision required to blot out the guerrilla strongholds. It will amount to a terrorising bombing of civilians.

The Tamil resistance leaders admit that they cannot conquer the government forces. For the guerrillas, acts of terrorism remain as a means of getting the government to relent - if not, the outside world - foreign aid contributors such as Sweden for example - can bring about an acceptable solution.

By courtesy of Dagens Nyheter (Stockholm)
of May 10, 1987
- translated from Swedish

INDIA MUST ACT NOW TO STOP GENOCIDE

WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE Jaffna peninsula of Sri Lanka is nothing short of genocide – whatever Jayawardene, Athulathmudali & Co. might claim as their “military objectives”. With the Sri Lankan Government’s ongoing “final offensive” dropping the last fig-leaf amidst the ashes and the rubble achieved by the campaign, slaughtering innocent Tamil civilians, including women and children, as war targets, and conducting a massed attack on the ground and from the air and sea that includes heavy artillery bombardment, carpet-bombing and incendiary bomb attacks on human habitations, every option but one has run out for the Government of India – which has vacillated over the practical course of action in a moment of crisis, even while issuing tough statements that themselves seem to argue for direct action.

India must act decisively right now to break the back of the Sri Lankan Government’s offensive against the Tamils which is so patently fascist. Such a course would not be inadmissible under international law; nor need any secret be made of the solidarity and national strategic interest motivating the whole line of action. Equally important, the political, military and logistical capabilities to carry out a swift, surgical humanitarian course of action are very much in the possession of India as the frontline state vis-a-vis the genocidal crisis. The internal democratic considerations or pressures are there for everyone to see.

In his statement, the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, seemed publicly to acknowledge the long-known fact that the Government of India has been taken for a ride by the Jayawardene regime: “While India was patiently and painstakingly working towards a political solution, it is apparent now that the Sri Lankan Government was buying time for pursuing the military option.” The moral-political responsibility implied in the Prime Minister’s statement is heavy indeed. The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran and his close associate on the Sri Lankan question, the Food Minister, Mr. S. Ramachandran, have done their best to impress on the Prime Minister and the Central Government the imperative of moving urgently in order to stop the Sri Lankan Government’s “inhuman, uncivilised” offensive on the ground through some form of direct action and also through extending major solidarity assistance to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) led by Mr. V. Prabhakaran, which has put up a very spirited fight in the face of heavy odds.

A call has been issued for a popular agitation in Tamil Nadu directed against the Centre’s policy on Sri Lanka. A resolution by Congress (I) MPs from Tamil Nadu demanding a severance of diplomatic and economic relations with Sri Lanka and also “the strongest possible measures immediately to stop the

inhuman killings on the island” (whatever this is supposed to mean in practical terms) reflects the gravity of the situation and the nature of the challenge facing the Government of India.

In effect, the Rajiv administration is asked on an urgent, life-saving basis to make up for the opportunities lost and for the mess made of the Sri Lankan policy framework over the 1985-87 period. The highly damaging line initiated, from the very top, during the “Bhandari phase” of compromising diplomacy and carried on in an insensitive, uncoordinated and eventually ham-handed way by other Ministerial-level personnel in the past six months has been criticised repeatedly by THE HINDU and other newspapers.

As a direct result of such policy, the element of solidarity with the victims of the crisis, the Tamils, was weakened tragically at crucial moments. (For example, during the SAARC summit at Bangalore in November 1986, a message was conveyed at the Minister of State-level to the LTTE chief, Mr. Prabhakaran, that the Jayawardene government had virtually threatened to kill “thousands” of Tamil civilians in pursuit of a military solution unless a quick political solution could be worked out; and that India, given its policy perspective, would not be able to do anything about this).

There was no firm baseline to guide the approach to negotiations and to the “two tracks” pursued simultaneously by the Sri Lankan Government. There was no strategic direction worked out vis-a-vis India’s basic national interest and the result was acknowledged by the External Affairs Minister, Mr. N. D. Tiwari, on May 27 when he noted that the “massive assault launched by the Sri Lankan

security forces... against the entire civilian population of Jaffna” signified “the increasing influence of external elements, inimical to security, stability and peace in our region”.

Even in the most recent period, the inept and confused nature of the Centre’s policy on Sri Lanka was expressed in the apparent sidelining of the LTTE – way and ahead the main force engaged in the military resistance of the Tamil side, which has a cooperative relationship with EROS, a smaller militant organisation active in the field – and in the peripheralism of propping up a number of minor militant groups, including their splinter factions, which do not have much of a relevance to the current situation on the ground in the North and East of Sri Lanka. But this is no time for a post-mortem on a failed policy, the results of which are there for the people of India and the whole world to see.

What needs to be done is to get in place a new policy based on firm solidarity values and a progressive articulation of the national interest vis-a-vis the developing danger in Sri Lanka. This policy would need to be implemented with planning, foresight, coordination and sophistication of a high order.

Two major policy statements issued by New Delhi over two days have highlighted the genocidal nature of the Jayawardene regime’s current military operations in the Jaffna peninsula and the serious input made by external elements hostile to the Indian people and Government and indeed to security, stability and peace in this region. Concrete, decisive action following up the implications is what the people expect from those in authority in New Delhi.

By courtesy of *The Hindu*,
May 30, 1987.

TULF President – continued from page 3

mischievous. But everybody knows that stories like this do not get into the Lake House papers without the knowledge of the President. The objective of planting this story at this juncture was threefold – create a rift between Delhi and Tamil Nadu, demoralise the Tamil people and create confusion in the minds of the militants. It is hoped that all concerned will see through this game of the Sri Lankan Government.

It has become necessary for all to recognise certain basic realities. It is the capabilities, spirit, dedication and supreme sacrifice of the militants that forced President Jayawardene to the negotiating table and it is the contingency of continued Tamil militancy that keeps him there. The Sri Lankan Government will continue to vacillate, prevaricate and resile from agreed positions. But those responsible for taking political decisions for the militants must take due note of the

lessons of history. The events of the Indian freedom struggle, particularly after 1939, provide useful lessons. India, for her part, must, as *The Hindu* put it, ‘send a no nonsense signal to President Jayawardene’ and appreciate fully the aspirations of the Tamil people particularly in regard to a single linguistic state. This concept is nothing new to India. Respected leaders like Mahatmaji and Motilalji recognised the validity of this political concept as early as 1927. India must appreciate that the Tamils and their militants are not merely fighting the racist Sinhala army but the Israelis, Pakistanis, British mercenaries and against arms procured from countries that would very much wish to destabilise India in this region. Not merely for the present but for all time a political solution satisfying the aspirations of the Tamil people will serve India’s basic national interest.

Madras
May 25, 1987

THE SRI LANKAN TRAGEDY:

What India Must Do

THE TIME OF troubles for the Tamil people of Sri Lanka has entered a dangerous new phase with the state carrying out a series of barbarous "punitive" strikes from the air against innocent civilians residing in the North and the East – the traditional Tamil areas which have been treated, by official policy and for "reasons of state", as enemy territory. It speaks volumes for the ethical-political conscience and judgement of the UNP regime that having failed – through its own duplicity and also in response to the chauvinist political dynamic of the island's mainstream politics – to make a negotiated settlement possible and having landed the Sri Lankan people, Sinhala, Tamil and others, into a fratricidal mess, it is now seeking to prove its credentials by unleashing the punitive resources of the state's armed forces against targets that no one in possession of elementary commonsense and fairness would recognise as "terrorist" or armed militant ("LTTE and EROS") targets.

Official propaganda and crude attempts to manipulate information cannot succeed in diverting attention from what is happening in Sri Lanka. Using air force planes and helicopters to bomb from the air and using the sanctuary of army camps for blind artillery shelling and mortar bombing speak to the nature of the "two track" strategy pursued by the Sri Lankan

Government towards the Tamil question in Sri Lanka. To add gross insult to long-festered injury, the Athulathmudalis are telling India and the world that a limited military option is being pursued to pave the way for a peaceful political settlement. As if this were not enough, Mr. R. Premadasa, the Prime Minister, has just informed the Sri Lankan Parliament that the Government has decided, in effect, to suspend all efforts to find a negotiated settlement and that proposals for a political solution would be considered only after "peace" was restored...

In the Sri Lankan Parliament, interestingly, an SLFP M.P., reported suspicions among the people that the bomb blast at the Colombo bus-stand was an "inside job" with Israeli help. Wherever the responsibility for these actions lies, there is no doubt that from a democratic standpoint a vicious circle has been on from 1983, violence has escalated in the most recent period, chauvinism and extremism have deepened their hold and the island's polity and society are in full-fledged crisis. Specifically, the alienation of the besieged and battered Tamil people has been matched on the other side by growing anti-Tamil feelings as a political and social phenomenon and anger and bitterness against the Jayawardene Government – which must be deeply worried about its future. But why has the

Government of India, which has lately come up with some selective reactions to atrocities, failed immediately to condemn the Sri Lankan Government's actions? Opposition MP's have rightly been exercised over this question in Parliament.

Despite the internal preoccupations, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet must treat the present danger in Sri Lanka as a high priority problem for India and the region. They must honestly take stock of the results of the 1985-87 policy and come up with a serious modus operandi for bringing an end to the senseless hostilities – while continuing to rule out any truck with either the Eelam demand or any madcap idea of finding any kind of "military solution" to the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict. If necessary, they must bring about a change of official players and upgrade the mediating effort: the option of involving someone with foreign policy and political experience combined with the qualities of patience and perspective must be examined. In addition, the person entrusted with the responsibility must be given all the policy and organisational support and must be allowed to work more or less full time on the problem. Along with the bodies and the rest of the mess, the negative results of the 1985-87 Indian policy performance must be cleared up. Above all, Indian policy-makers must realise that this nation has a deep strategic and democratic interest in finding a lasting solution to the Sri Lankan crisis and that it is big enough and resourceful enough to handle the challenge.

Excerpts from The Hindu, April 27, 1987

CHURCH CALLS FOR CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES

Text of the joint statement of the Commissions For Justice And Peace Of The Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference And The National Christian Council.

The Commissions for Justice and Peace of the Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference and the National Christian Council at a joint session held on 18th March, 1987 reviewed the present spate of violence now prevailing in the Northern Region resulting from the ceaseless attacks and counter-attacks both by the Militant Groups and the Security Forces causing severe damage to life and property.

We are deeply grieved with the continued loss of life of youth on both sides and non-combatant civilians, specially the children, women and elders. The damage caused to school buildings and medical institutions, and the occupation of some of these places

for defence purposes have further aggravated the situation by the disruption of access to freedom of education and health facilities which are basic human needs.

As a Christian Group dedicated to a United Sri Lanka and the cause of Justice and Peace, we deplore all forms of violence which inevitably hinder the progress for peace through a negotiated process, and we therefore appeal to both the Government and the Militant Groups to: – Take all essential steps for the cessation of hostilities in order to work towards a negotiated political settlement. Vacate any public buildings presently under occupation allowing their free use for the purposes they have been intended. Do everything possible with the aid of the Media to create an atmosphere conducive to peace and restore normality throughout the country without further delay.



VELUPILLAI PRABHAKARAN, Leader and Military Commander, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, faces threats to his life from the Sinhalese army. General Cyril Ranatunga told John Elliott of *The Financial Times* (1 June) "we will finish, when we get Prabhakaran."

John Elliott reported in *The Financial Times* of 6 June that, Prabhakaran "escaped" from his home town, Valvettiturai, when the army sacked the town. The latest British press reports as of going to press (9 June) are that the military leader "escaped" to India.

ELEVEN DAYS IN A HELL-HOLE

"WHAT WE SAW WAS TERROR . . . making people afraid. We saw bombers coming, houses getting destroyed and people running into trenches. Big bombs – 25-kg bombs – and rockets. The Sri Lankan Army wants the people to react against the LTTE. But they will not. They have no choice. They know that, if the Tigers leave Jaffna, they will get killed. People are determined to fight completely because they have no choice. They have no possibility other than fighting and helping the boys."

That was a word-picture from two journalists, Mr. Michel Philippot of a Paris-based photo news agency and Mr. Thomas Johnson of the French newspaper, *Actuel*. They had spent the last 11 days in Jaffna, clicking several rolls of photographs to show the world what is happening there – after the Sri Lankan Armed Forces began their new offensive. They reached Tamil Nadu from Jaffna in a boat. Two Sri Lankan naval boats chased and fired at them. But they were "lucky to survive" and narrate their tale to THE HINDU.

Special mixture: In Jaffna, the day begins with the Sri Lankan Army shelling the town from about 6 a.m. Helicopters appear at the same time, turning, circling and reconnoitring the town. "In the evening, bombers and helicopters come . . . Sia Marchetti and Chinese twin-engined planes for carrying soldiers. (But) they carry petrol bombs. Barrels of special mixture. I do not know what they put into them (barrels). It is supposed to burn for half an hour. The bombing lasts for 30 minutes to two hours. In the last two days, the bombing lasted the whole day," says Mr. Philippot.

The two journalists themselves were victims of the aerial bombing. The house of Mr. K. P. Ratnam, former TULF M.P., at Velanai, Kayts Island, where they stayed, was bombed and "razed to the ground."

"We were living in this house; the house was bombed. I was in another house, interviewing a doctor," recalls Mr. Johnson. Two Sia Marchetti aircraft bombed the place for about 15 minutes, dropping four bombs and firing two rockets. Two ponies in the house were killed. The attack took place at 5 p.m.

Asked how he escaped, Mr. Philippot, who was in the house at that time, said cryptically: "Running." What did the inmates of the house do? "The inmates of the house ran."

When they were informed that Mr. Ratnam was living in Madras, Mr. Johnson said: "You can tell him the house was razed to the ground. We are very sorry." The library in the house, where Mr. Johnson read a book of Shakespeare's plays, went up in flames.

They were also witness to another horrendous incident. They had gone to the seafront to meet Tamil refugees. A child had just been attacked in a strafing mission. The child and its mother were completely frightened.

"They are not military targets. I can assure you. They were shivering," recalls another reporter (unidentified) and he proceeds to act out the entire terrifying incident.

"A murder": They can never erase another incident from their memory. A delegation including the Government Agent for Jaffna and a top official from Colombo were to meet officials at the Army camp at Kankesanthurai to get the Kankesanthurai Cement Factory opened. "The delegation was coming by road. The military knew the delegation was coming. They knew the number of the car, its colour, its make, etc. They shot at him when he (the official from Colombo) was coming in the car . . . a direct shot in the head. He died two days ago. It was murder. It was really a murder," says Mr. Johnson. (The incident was reported in THE HINDU on May 23).



Michel Philippot

Mr. Philippot and Mr. Johnson reached Colombo on May 10 but they were denied permission to go to Jaffna. Then they tried to reach Jaffna via Vavuniya. But the Sri Lankan Army stopped them at Vavuniya and asked them to go back to Colombo. Later, they reached Madras and took a boat back to Jaffna about 11 days ago.

In Jaffna, Sri Lankan Air Force helicopters twice followed them overhead when they were travelling in their cars. On one of these occasions, they had reached Jaffna from an island off it. Five minutes later, a similar-looking car was fired at by the helicopter. The man driving the car – a 65-year-old baker – was shot at from the helicopter. The two journalists did not visit Valvettiturai in Vadamarachi area.

Return journey: Their return journey

last night by boat from Jaffna to the shores of Tamil Nadu was as bone-chilling and harrowing as their stay in Jaffna. Three days earlier, they had left the island of Delft by boat but had to return because of the presence of Sri Lankan naval boats.

According to Mr. Johnson, "last night, we took a boat. The sea was very rough. We saw the Sri Lankan navy around the island of Katchaitivu. Later, we were in international waters. First, we saw five fishing boats . . . they were not military boats, suddenly, we were surrounded by these five boats. We were scared. Twenty minutes later, we saw two boats of the Sri Lankan navy.



Thomas Johnson

One was small and the other big. One had a radar. They had communication flashlights . . . tut . . . tut . . . tut. Once they flashed the lights, we changed the direction. We turned and went towards Mannar. When we turned, both the boats shot (at us) at the same time. Our boat sped away very quickly. The little one followed us."

Recalls Mr. Philippot: "The sea was extremely rough. We were jumping . . . jerks and enormous shocks." The shock was so intense that Mr. Philippot lost his memory for a short while, according to his friend.

Mr. Johnson completes the picture: "We speeded and speeded. We changed direction. We turned left. Then we went round the boats. The small one lost us. When we turned back, we saw the boats. But they had lost us because the night was very dark. We are lucky we got here."

Only solution: What is the assessment of Mr. Johnson of the situation in Jaffna? According to him, the Sri Lankan army was behaving as if the Tamils belonged to a foreign country. "The separation of the two countries exists already in the population's mind. They do not see any solution other than separating."

The entire population stand behind the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

By courtesy of The Hindu
May 30, 1987

Minister Thondaman Warns Of

"DANGERS OF ARBITRARY ARRESTS OF TAMIL YOUTH IN PLANTATIONS"

Excerpts from the Presidential Address of Minister S. Thondaman at the 29th Convention of the Ceylon Workers Congress, held on 15th March:

THE CWC is pained and concerned that even as declarations are made about the need for an early solution, there is unabated death and destruction in the North and East. We fervently appeal for an immediate cessation of armed action by all parties and resumption of negotiations.

While welcoming the initiatives of the Government of India to end the ethnic conflict, we feel India whose good offices are accepted by the Government of Sri Lanka and the militants should work out a limited time frame for resolution of the problem and if need be even spell out its own formula.

The situation prevailing in the North and East is having repercussions in every part of the country. In the plantation areas, the indiscriminate arrest of youth by the police has created unnecessary tension and a fear psychosis. Even after repeated discussions and demands that the consent of trade unions and managements be sought whenever there is a problem, the police act arbitrarily.

It has often been said in some sections of the daily press, that in objecting to arbitrary arrests of estate youth, the Ceylon Workers Congress was obstructing the forces of law and order. This is not correct. The CWC has at all times co-operated with the police in legitimate

activities to maintain law and order, but we are anxious to prevent a situation of social and political disequilibrium as a result of indiscriminate arrests and detention of plantation youth who are released after long months of detention allegedly for conducting investigations. It is one thing to take into custody youth against whom there is verifiable evidence, but to detain youth on tip-offs and secret information furnished by mischief-makers is to pave the way for creating a situation such as in the North and the East. I have drawn the attention of the Government many times in the past to the dangers of indiscriminate and arbitrary arrests of youth, and I do so, once again.

It is also well to remember that plantation youth have been, and still are, the most neglected and most disadvantaged among the youth of this country. They have been denied education all these years and a scant and meagre start is being made today. If at this time, the even tenor of their lives is disturbed and disrupted by arrests and detention on grounds which cannot be sustained, they cannot be blamed if they take to the path of violence to obtain redress.

Forces which had exploited the backwardness of these people are now irked that a serious attempt is being made

to uplift them and bring them out of the situation and find a place for them in the mainstream of national life. That the plantation youth should be concerned about the legitimate grievances of those in the North and East is not beyond the pale of comprehension. Nor is this phenomenon peculiar to the plantation youth. Even in Tamil Nadu concern is expressed about the legitimate grievances of Tamils in this country.

The CWC has been able to contain the feelings of the estate youth to expression of sympathy only and keep them out of violence. It is important that the actions of the CWC in this direction are not vitiated by the hamhandedness of the police. It is also more important that the hands of the CWC are further strengthened to keep the youth within limits.

The most positive way to wean the plantation youth from going astray is to provide them with opportunities and avenues in the national mainstream where their talents, ability and spirit could be fully used by making available industrial, vocational and professional training, so that they would be an asset to the community and country.

I would suggest for this purpose that the Government should create a division in every appropriate ministry to be in charge of upgrading the conditions and quality of plantation workers and thus show that it is really interested in the welfare of plantation youth and in improving their quality of life.

Testimony Before Congress Committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs

**Stephen J. Solarz, Chairman,
Sub-committee on Asian and Pacific Affairs
Committee on Foreign Affairs
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515**

March 5, 1987

Dear Congressman Solarz:

Thank you for your letter of February 17, 1987. You showed such kind interest in the human rights situation in Sri Lanka which has caused the death of thousands of Tamil lives. These are some of the key questions in my mind about the situation. Perhaps they will help and, I hope you will put forward these concerns to your Sub-committee hearing at an opportune time.

1. If it is an "ethnic conflict now gripping Sri Lanka" as your letter says and the government of Sri Lanka, are countries like Pakistan, Israel, South Africa and our own United States all involved directly in supplying arms to the Sri Lankan government? I have basis for saying this.

2. Sri Lanka had always voted against Israel in all political deliberations. Israel embassy in the United States (includes also the Israeli officials in our U.S. embassy in Colombo, Sri Lanka) should be able to understand the

Tamil problem better. Do they know about the similarity between the Jews and the Tamils? Why don't they show more understanding for the plight of Tamils?

3. I want to point out to you, as far as deaths are concerned, during the past four years, deaths of Tamils in Sri Lanka are more than the number of deaths in South Africa. I wonder why our media and government, while highlighting the apartheid in South Africa (which they should do) have failed to show the "grave matter" of Tamils in Sri Lanka to the American public?

It is absolutely clear to me, considering the events since 1948 alone, the Sinhalese government's only aim is to eliminate Tamils in Sri Lanka, not in Nazi style, but in the Sri Lankan style which is a slow but steady genocide. The Sinhalese government's determined annihilation of Tamils is not just bad for the Tamils, it is bad for the Sinhalese as well and for the whole country. Time will tell. We Americans must not knowingly partake in such "grave" acts of injustice and violation against human lives.

At this time, you are the only help for Tamils. I pray that your efforts at the March 12th hearing may pave the way to stop the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Rev. Angelito Peries, C.Ss.r.

The Plight of the Political Detenues

A POLITICAL DETENUE is not a convicted political prisoner. He has not been charged in a court of law.

Very often, he is one who has been arrested on the flimsiest of excuses and detained on mere suspicions. In most cases there are no inquiries held for years. They are virtually forgotten by those who were responsible for their arrest and allowed to languish in camps under miserable living conditions. Only their relations and friends are interested in them and even in such cases, the interest is not sustained over a long period, due to many reasons.

In Sri Lanka today, there are thousands of political detainees. Most of these are Tamil youth and they are held for the most part at what is called the Boosa camp – a former racecourse in the southern capital and which has become today notorious as a virtual concentration camp. The Sinhala youth who have been recently arrested on charges of conspiring against the Government are not held at Boosa. They are held in the various prisons or in police stations.

The Boosa camp is said to hold more than 2,500 detainees. The reason for the arrest of large numbers of Tamils was apparently the Israeli (Mossad) advice of collectively arresting large numbers of suspects and thereafter finding out the guilty rather than arresting only those who are suspected of being guilty. For instance when the army goes on its search and destroy missions and comes across some young men playing volleyball, all players and spectators are rounded up, put into Jeeps or trucks and sped away to a camp in Sinhala territory where they are held, apparently for inquiries. The time taken by the bureaucrats responsible for these inquiries is unimaginable.

Recently I spoke to a number of Tamil detainees from the Boosa camp and was shocked to hear about the living conditions in that camp. I was also a political detainee in 1971. I was detained for ten long months by the United Front government of Mrs. Bandaranaike in the immediate aftermath of the attempted JVP insurrection. As detainees, we were entitled to be treated as remand prisoners. But the Government got over that by cancelling by gazetted notification all the concessions that were available for remand prisoners; e.g. daily visits, food and clothes from homes etc. But, despite this, the conditions under which we were held were far superior to the conditions that now seems to prevail at Boosa.

The Tamil detainees at Boosa are held in several semi-walled halls (like school rooms) with the upper part closed by wire netting. Apparently, each hall accommodates about 200 to 250 detainees. If they all stand up there is sufficient room. But the problem arises when they have to sleep. I was told they have to sleep shoulder to shoulder, and no one can move without

disturbing another. One mat is provided for four or five detainees. There are, of course, no bed sheets or pillows.

Once the camp is closed at six o'clock in the evening for the day, no one can get out, whether it is for a drink or for a call of nature. I wondered what they did if anyone had an urgent call of nature. The only answer I could get was that some kind of polythene bags were being used. What a dreadful state of affairs. I also found out that there was hardly sufficient water to wash their backs. Some of them in desperation had got down some toilet paper, but that was not permitted to be taken in.

For a long time these Tamil detainees were not permitted visits by their relations or friends. When, after about a year, visits were allowed, relatives were shocked to find that most of the detainees were wearing the same verti or sarong which they wore at the time of their arrest one year previously. I remember how these relatives came back to Colombo, and there took place a bout of activity among the Tamils in Colombo to buy as many verties and sarongs as they could for these detainees.

BY N. SHANMUGATHSAN

Now they are allowed weekly visits but the time permitted for each visit is only five minutes – and that with the CID officers standing by. Imagine the unreasonableness of this procedure. The camp is in the deep south at Boosa. Most of the detainees are from the North and the East. This means that the relatives of these young men have to travel a long distance before they can come to the camp, and all that they get is five minutes audience with their loved ones. When, during my detention, they allowed visits after about 3 or 4 months, we at least had 15 minutes of time and sometimes more.

No detention camp anywhere boasts of good food. Boosa is no exception. But I was amazed to hear that because they could not eat the rice and subsidiaries supplied, some of the detainees get down sugar and Nespray from home for mixing with their rice!

Amnesty International has done some good work in exposing some torture by documenting affidavits from ex-detainees. I have not the slightest doubt that torture on a large scale is being practised at Boosa. This is the most gross form of violation of human rights.

It is a welcome sign that the Government has served indictments and brought to trial at least one group of Sinhala youth (one such group includes a Tamil) accused of conspiracy. But why is there such a delay in finishing the inquiries into the Tamil detainees and either charging them in court or releasing them? Obviously the Government cannot maintain any charge against most of them. It recently released about 80 Tamil detainees who were either over 40 or against whom no charges could

be preferred. This itself is an admission that they have been arresting people without proper investigation.

The sad fact is that the public as a whole, both Sinhala and Tamil, are taking no interest in the plight of these detainees.

Where are the so-called left parties? Why don't they pay a visit to Boosa and find out for themselves the living conditions there and expose them to the public? Let not these detainees become the forgotten men of Sri Lanka.

It is imperative that progressive opinion, both Sinhala and Tamil, should be mobilised to demand the immediate trial or release of all these detainees and they be given all the concessions available to remand prisoners.

Facts To Know

1. Mrs. Thatcher sent a message to President J. R. Jayawardene expressing concern over the Pettah bomb blast.
2. Mrs. Bandaranaike expressed the view that the Pettah bomb blast could well be "an inside job".
3. Why didn't the Sri Lankan intelligence investigate the Pettah bomb blast and apprehend the perpetrators?
4. Why were police dogs not utilised to find out who were responsible for the "massacre of Buddhist priests"?
5. Bomb blasts and massacres of Buddhist priests as a pretext for genocidal attacks on innocent Tamils are similar to notorious techniques used by Israelis against Palestinian Arabs.
6. Mr. Nonis Ratnakara of Media Centre disinformation notoriety who earned a one-year M.Sc from the London School of Economics and became Professor of Economics was a former member of the Communist Party of Ceylon (Moscow).
7. Mr. Bradnock, lecturer at the London School of Economics who had spent three weeks in Colombo and New Delhi stated among other things in an interview, in early June, with the BBC, that the Tamils of Sri Lanka had felt increasingly threatened by the Sinhalese after Sri Lanka obtained independence and that there is no parallel between Sri Lanka's Tamils and the Sikhs. India, he said, had tried to avoid ethnic strife. Its survival as a state depended on this fact.
8. Dr. David Taylor, lecturer in the London School of Oriental and African Studies interviewed by the BBC during early June expressed concern over the growing confrontation between Sinhalese and Tamils and its implications for the stability of the South Asian region.

INDIA'S MILITARY OPTIONS

EVEN AS PRESSURE mounts for the Government of India to intervene militarily to halt the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka, sources say that militarily there would be virtually no problems for India to bring the Sri Lanka offensive to a halt in a short time. The most likely scenario is an Indian military move to threaten the Sri Lankan main line of communication to Jaffna by positioning a naval task force off the Elephant Pass as well as a direct move to send a relief force comprising coast-guard ships to Kankesanthurai, the main port in the Jaffna peninsula, to assist the civilians and help evacuate Indian nationals stranded there.

This could be accompanied by an air and naval blockade of the Jaffna area to prevent supplies reaching the Sri Lankan garrisons involved in the fighting there. The problem that the Government faces is its inability to gauge the possible international reaction. However the reports of genocidal attacks on the civilian population indicate that there are considerable humanitarian grounds for an Indian intervention to halt the bloody Sri Lankan army campaign.

The only power that could come to Sri Lanka's assistance is the U.S. But its difficulties in the Gulf make its presence in the area unlikely. Secondly, a limited action such as the one contemplated above would in no way go beyond India's statements and efforts to convince the Sri Lankan Government that the attempt to resolve the Tamil issue through a military solution would be counter-productive and result in needless slaughter of civilians.

Bloody campaign: As the Sri Lankan

army continues its bloody campaign to crush the Tamil militants in Jaffna, the Government of India has finally run out of options to mediate the crisis in a peaceful fashion. Signs are visible in New Delhi following Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran's visit here yesterday, and the Prime Minister's tough message to Sri Lanka, that Mr. Rajiv Gandhi may be contemplating a show of force to compel the Sri Lankan army to call off its genocidal campaign. Should the blockade of Jaffna to prevent supplies reaching the Sri Lankan forces not prove sufficient, other military options before India are to blockade the main Sri Lankan ports of Trincomalee and Colombo and at the same time supply the Tamil militants with essential air defence equipment like portable surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft guns. This 'soft' option could be enhanced by sending in Indian combat fighters, Mig-21s or Jaguars and 'buzzing' Colombo and Trincomalee with sonic booms to bring home to the Sri Lankan leadership the possibility of more drastic action.

The hard and final option, however, is an Indian military intervention on the ground through a combined arms operation involving a two-pronged thrust, one from a point near Mannar and another from a point near Trincomalee and cutting the Sri Lankan army's main forces in the North and providing protection to the Tamil minority.

This can be done by landing an amphibious brigade which theoretically can be landed anywhere with its flat-bottomed vessels as well as an airborne landing of a brigade on one of

the 20-30 disused World War II airstrips. This action will have to be preceded by knocking out the Sri Lankan Air Force which in any case is not designed to counter an Indian thrust which could meet these objectives in 48 hours.

Superiority: According to a statement of Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali on March 13, the Sri Lankan army now has an overwhelming superiority of 10 to 1 over the Tamil fighters. According to him, the militants have a hardcore of 1,000 fighters and 2,000 second level personnel. The Sri Lankan forces, therefore, total some 30,000 personnel, including para-military forces. In fact, it is believed that the regular forces total some 13,000-15,000 with an equal number of active reservists. There are some 15,000 para-military forces equipped with rifles and handguns. The army is divided into five Task Forces equivalent to Indian brigades, two reconnaissance regiments, two field artillery (one reserve) battalions, other support units and a Special Task Force numbering 4,000 of which the 60th Special Task Force is trained by the British ex-SAS and the Israeli Shin Bet personnel. Roughly half these forces are involved in the current operations with another 5,000-6,000 personnel in the eastern districts. The others are distributed across other parts of the island. Assessments are that the forces are of doubtful fighting quality.

The Sri Lankan Air Force has a strike force comprising six Sia-Marchetti, light attack counter-insurgency aircraft armed with rockets or machine guns (7.62) or free fall bombs; there are also

continued on page 17

Latest Communique by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

(before going to press)

In Madras, 31 May, 1987, more than six hundred innocent Tamil people have been senselessly slaughtered and hundreds of them injured, as the invading Sri Lankan troops rampaged the villages and towns, indiscriminately firing at civilians for the second consequent day in the Vadamaradchi area of the Jaffna peninsula. Heavy casualties occurred when Sri Lankan air force planes bombed and destroyed school buildings and temples where civilians were told to take shelter. Armoured columns which advanced with a human shield of Tamil hostages have encircled the Vadamaradchi area and has consolidated positions of strategic locations. The advancing troops left a trail of mass murder, looting, arson and rape.

Roads were littered with dead bodies indicating the scale of the massacre by the invasion army.

Sri Lankan troops are now consolidating their positions at Thondamannaru, Manthihai, Vallipuram Temple, Manal Kadu, Kudathanai, Maruthankeni, Uduppiddy, Valvettiturai, Polikandy, Thikkam, Nelliyaady, Viyapari, Moolai and Point Pedro. The siege of the Vadamaradchi area has prevented the population from escaping the region. The majority of the civilian population have taken shelter in Hindu temples, churches and schools where they faced the threat of the aerial bombardment.

In the mean time bomber planes and helicopter gunships bombed and strafed

the residential areas of the rest of the peninsula, where a heavy barrage of mortar and artillery shellings continued unabated from various army camps today. Civilian casualties are mounting as the injured died without medical treatment, since vehicular mobility is paralysed by curfew and the main Jaffna Hospital has become non-functional.

With the round the clock curfew running for the fifth day with all shops, business establishments, food stores, cooperatives have been razed to the ground by the continuous and systematic aerial bombardment and shelling, the entire population in the peninsula are facing starvation and slow death. The economic blockade that has been in effect since January, the ban of fuel, the destruction of fishing, the physical isolation of the peninsula by the military siege, all these Government imposed measures have aggravated the food crisis. If the present grim situation continues it is feared that thousands of Tamil people will die of starvation.

DEATH AND DESTRUCTION IN JAFFNA



This woman, an innocent victim, was killed in the Vadamarachi area by the Sri Lankan Government's bombing from the air.



What remains of Sarammah Manickam's home. She also perished in the aerial bombing.



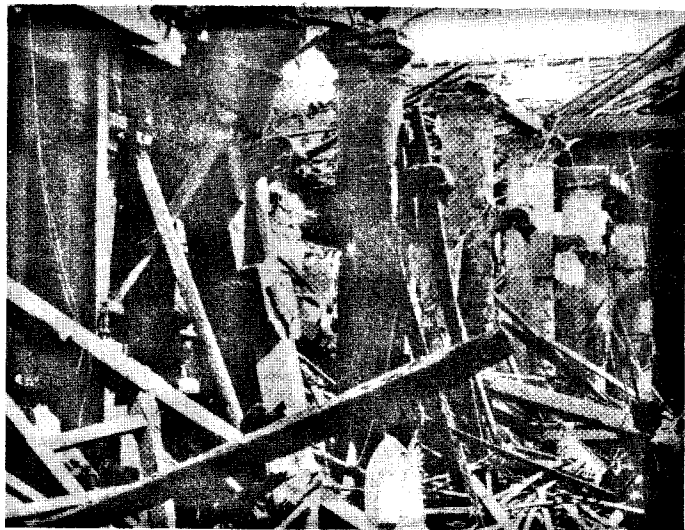
This is some of the extensive damage to human habitations and property caused in the Jaffna peninsula by the Sri Lankan Government's military offensive.



A tender victim of the Sri Lankan Government's anti-Tamil military offensive, which happened on 27 May at Vannarpannai Vaitheeswara temple in the Jaffna peninsula.



Two children struck by mortar shelling, died instantaneously on 23 March.



This temple, one of the 18 places notified by the Sri Lanka Government as civilian shelters, was devastated by aerial bombing.

WHAT THE WORLD THOUGHT

April – June 1987

OF THE THANKLESS task in present day communal diplomacy, and there are many, Mr. Gandhi, his efforts answered by one atrocity upon another, has one of the worst.

If it comes to a confederal state, or an island divided like Cyprus or Ireland, that may be a less disastrous prospect than the intensified drift, *sine die*, into civil war. But semi-autonomy seems a more natural development, if the Sri Lankan and Indian governments can bring themselves to the long haul against the out-and-out separatists which it would entail.

(The Guardian, 23 April)

The insurgency now has moved into a stage where the Tamils, operating in an environment in which they have overwhelming support from the local population in the north and north-east, can be expected to defy Colombo's counter-productive military efforts indefinitely. The situation can be resolved only by negotiation, but much more innocent blood seems certain to be shed before this can be considered even remotely likely.

(The Herald, (Australia), 23 April)

The first and undoubtedly the worst act of discrimination was the legislation pushed through by Mrs. Bandaranaike in 1956 making Sinhala the official language. Then, in 1972, Buddhism was given a "foremost place" in the new constitution introduced by Mrs. Bandaranaike. That was a symbolic rebuff to the Tamils, most of whom are Hindus – and, to other minorities, such as Christians and Muslims.

Of far greater practical effect, and recalling the 1956 official language legislation, was the introduction of "standardisation of marks". This was a device to give extra marks to Sinhalese candidates and had the immediate effect of excluding significant numbers of Tamil students from university studies. As well, and indirectly, it almost certainly helped swell the numbers of young Tamils who now believe in a violent solution to their political goals.

It is difficult to be optimistic about the future of Sri Lanka.

(The Sydney Herald, 24 April)

A GOVERNMENT has to be desperate or brutal, or both, to order the aerial bombing of its own territory and the killing of its own citizens. That extreme action was taken this week by the Sri Lankan Government and it is the measure of the chaos now ruling in a country that was once regarded as an Asian paradise. Over four days the island's security and self-confidence had been shaken by a series of terrorist attacks resulting in the death of more than 300 civilians.

The Air Force was ordered into action against Tamil strongholds in the northern peninsula of Jaffna and the warning went out that the aerial bombardments would continue until the attacks on civilians ceased. This government's announcement glossed over an obvious paradox in that the Air Force, however unwittingly, was itself

attacking civilians. There is no way a bomb released at 3000ft. can discriminate between a ruthless Tamil guerrilla and an innocent mother and child. And, indeed, civilians have been killed or wounded in the aerial attacks.

(The Advertiser (Adelaide), 25 April)

Increasingly, the Tamils saw no future under a political regime that offered them only further repression and so began the moves for secession. The elder Tamils tried political ends to this means; when that failed, the younger Tamils took to the gun. Now the country is caught in a spiral of violence.

Shaken by the damage this is causing to the social and economic structure of the island, the Jayawardene Government has recently made tentative offers of limited autonomy to the Tamils. These have been spurned by the increasingly militant Tamils who now see secession as their only salvation. This will never be conceded, says the Government...

But there is no unity if one part of the nation is considered so much the enemy that it must be bombed. Better for all – and more realistic – to treat it as totally alien and give it its own frontier and territory.

(The Advertiser (Adelaide) 25 April)

Fuel Embargo Lifted!

During the three day bombing escapade the SLAF's AVRO – usually the troop carrier, also attempted to show its colours.

Moving ghostly over the areas of Mallakam, Chunnakam and Tellippalai this shabby Avro threw out several barrels of petrol filled with a small device meant to ignite the barrel. A Sri Lankan brand Napalm, of course. And it went off-course! The 'appropriate' technology used so ineffectively by the Air Force, left only a small portion of the Mallakam Palam Pillaiyar Temple burnt.

(Saturday Review, 29 April)

OSAKA – Sri Lanka's Finance Minister, Ronnie De Mel, said in Japan yesterday that the Tamil insurgency would help drive the country's economic growth this year to its lowest level for over a decade, Reuter reports. Mr. De Mel said that because of the conflict, defence expenditure would absorb about 20 per cent of the 1987 budget.

(The Independent, 30 April)

A MILITARY SOLUTION – if such a thing exists at all – is unlikely to be swift. This is not so much because the Sri Lankan forces are badly trained, experienced or equipped. Rather it is because what they face is classic guerrilla warfare, in which the adversary is dispersed throughout the densely populated Jaffna peninsula, and not easily visible or identifiable. Such wars, as history has shown, are invariably protracted.

(The Straits Times (Singapore), 30 April)

For Junius Jayawardene this is the worst of times. His dream of leading a prosperous, settled and fast-developing Sri Lanka has

been transformed into a nightmare. Today, as if the terrorist war was not enough, new threats are emerging to haunt him.

It is difficult to imagine that such a wily king of the political jungle could be cornered. But Mr. Jayawardene is plainly running out of options... The war against the Tamil terrorists is his chief pre-occupation. But, if he looks over his shoulder, other dangers loom.

(Daily Telegraph, 1 May)

India's Foreign Minister, Narayan Datt Tiwari told Parliament in Delhi that "any victory through violence would be short-lived and illusory." He had appealed to both sides to "eschew violence" and cooperate in finding a peaceful solution. If Sri Lankan Prime Minister Premadasa's latest statements are anything to go by, peace will be a long time coming. He has identified India as an enemy, having recently taken General Zia's counsel in Islamabad. The much touted South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC has become a convenient platform for anti-Indian diplomacy.

(India Weekly, 1 May)

Sharp criticism of India's handling of the Sri Lankan policy came from the most qualified professional quarter – India's former Foreign Secretary A. P. Venkateswaran. He told The Hindu in Vijayawada that the Government of India was not as sensitive to the problems of the southern states as to those of the northern heartland. Had any linguistic group of North India been persecuted like the Tamils of Sri Lanka, the Centre would have certainly reacted more decisively.

The aspirations of the Tamils in Sri Lanka were not understood by the Government of India, he regretted. Venkateswaran's assessment was that the Indian foreign policy on Sri Lanka lacked consistency and credibility as quick solutions and instant fixes were attempted. "Everything is still being sought to be done in fits and starts, leading to a general state of drift in the situation." This indecision and haphazard approach had helped Colombo to ignore the feelings of the Tamils in India.

He blamed the Centre for removing G. Parthasarathy who had understood the problem. Hastily arranged meetings between Rajiv Gandhi and Jayawardene only added to the confusion and convinced the Sri Lankan side that it could act with impunity and need not take the Government of India seriously.

(Frontline, 2-15 May)

My Lai syndrome: Though many – perhaps most – Tamils oppose the use of violence, they maintain that they have been driven to it because of Sinhalese brutalities. Tamil intellectuals allege that some 2,800 Tamils are being held as political prisoners in Sri Lankan jails and that they are frequently tortured. They also claim that the Army, which is predominantly Sinhalese, suffers occasionally from a My Lai syndrome – killing innocent Tamil villagers in retaliation for the death of a comrade from a sniper's bullet... While the Tamils see themselves

as a persecuted minority in Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese, applying somewhat questionable logic see themselves as a minority as well.

Seeds of rebellion: Whether the Tamil insurrection can be crushed by force alone is doubtful. "The Air Force's bombing only perpetrates the vicious cycle of violence," said one Tamil. "These air raids will only lead to Tamil reprisals and more terror." In fact, the Sri Lankan Army probably is strong enough to crush the rebel forces in the north and to subdue the civilian supporters of the guerrillas. But that would not necessarily end the war or crush the rebel movement. Indeed, anti-Sinhalese animosity would be likely to grow among the 800,000 Tamils in Jaffna.

What's more, the insurgents themselves could simply leave the villages and take to the hills, spreading their terror campaign further afield. The LTTE could also move into the tea-growing estates of central Sri Lanka, spreading the seeds of rebellion among the 1 million Tamils in the central area of the island.

Although some Tamil rebels claim to be Marxists, U.S. officials who have followed the conflict in Sri Lanka doubt that the insurgents have any deep-set political ideology — only a desire for a state of their own. There is no evidence of Soviet support for the rebellion. And while there have been isolated reports of Tamil guerrillas being trained by the Palestine Liberation Organisation, possibly in PLO camps in Libya, such reports have never been confirmed. Despite its location alongside the Indian Ocean sea lanes, Sri Lanka is not of vital strategic importance, according to U.S. officials; as one said, the island is no more than a "convenient anchorage." U.S. Navy ships have been occasionally put into the deep water port at Trincomalee. But Washington officials hold that in geopolitical terms the only country that fervently needs stability in Sri Lanka is India. (Newsweek, 4 May)

In Colombo, a group of Buddhist priests today sent a petition to the Sri Lankan President Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, calling for his resignation. (The Hindu, 6 May)

Premadasa went a step further, saying: "What we want today is to defend our country and our state. What we are now trying to find is not a political solution but a solution for the safety of our country. Therefore, as our main intention is to halt the violence, we will not change the decision taken by the government whatever any friend or enemy would want us to do. Anyone who wants us to find a political solution, outside the decision of the government, will be treated as an enemy of ours, an enemy of the people and the country." (Far Eastern Economic Review, 7 May)

It is impossible to know whether Sinhalese or Tamil settlers arrived first; and it is in any case possible that the island was already inhabited by aboriginal Dravidian stock, who some Tamil historians have claimed as ancestrally their own.

It was the deeply-rooted intransigence of the Sinhalese over the language issue which, many observers believe, provided a rallying point for Tamil separatists. The Sinhalese community is quick to desert any group which fails to place their narrow interests uppermost as Chandrika Kumaratunga, the daughter of former Prime

Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, has found. "We can't talk of peace now or else we will get mauled in the streets by the Sinhalese people," she said.

(The Independent, 7 May)

Relations between the ruling United National Party (UNP) and the opposition have deteriorated sharply in recent weeks with President Junius Jayawardene accusing his principal opponent, former prime minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike, of devising "a direct action plan" to topple his government. Bandaranaike, in turn, told a May Day meeting of her Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) that the government's leaders will soon suffer the fate of the ousted Philippine president Marcos.

A statement by Jayawardene that if the terrorist problem was not settled, he may be compelled to further extend the term of his government after a second referendum, has not helped relations between the UNP and the opposition.

A Buddhist monk who leads a trade union of nurses said in a funeral oration that "people will soon stone the residence of President Jayawardene." A university lecturer said in another speech: "the guns that were brought to fight the Tamil terrorists are now turned against us."

(Far Eastern Economic Review, 14 May)

WITH NO AUTHENTIC PROOF that either the LTTE or EROS was involved in the killings at Trincomalee or Colombo, the Sri Lankan Government began on 22 April a series of savage "punitive" air strikes against Tamil civilians residing in the North and the East — the traditional Tamil areas which Colombo had been treating, by official policy and for "reasons of State," as enemy territory. (Frontline, 2-15 May)

In one spectacular raid recently, a JVP unit raided Pallekelle army camp near Kandy and seized some automatic weapons. A number of soldiers at the camp were later interrogated by the authorities for JVP links — reflecting government concern that the JVP has appeal also among lower-ranking soldiers.

The army announced recently that 37 soldiers were being discharged because of alleged links with the JVP. "It's all fairly bleak — we are all sitting tight and seeing how it will play itself out over the next few weeks," commented one diplomat.

(Far Eastern Economic Review, 21 May)

Indo-Sri Lankan relations slumped to a new low yesterday as the New Delhi Government condemned the latest military moves "against the entire civilian population of Jaffna."

In the statement, the Foreign Minister, Mr. Narayan Tiwari, said the Sri Lankan offensive against the Tamil stronghold also signified "the increasing influence of external elements inimical to security, stability and peace in our region." This was a barely coded reference to the military and intelligence training and aid supplied to Colombo by Israel, Pakistan, South Korea, and others, including the Channel Islands-based organisation, Keeny Meeny Services, whose ex-SAS experts have helped to train the much-feared police Special Task Force.

Mr. Tiwari's statement continued: "The Indian Government expresses its grave concern and sorrow at the widespread civilian suffering and casualties which are bound to be caused by this action of the Sri Lankan Government."

Lankan Government, adding to the already large toll of civilian deaths, which, even by the Sri Lankan Government's own admission, amounts to over 4,000 deaths."

India said Mr. Tiwari, was also concerned that the new offensive would result in more refugees. About 130,000 Sri Lankan Tamils have made their way to India in recent years.

There is a widespread view among government officials and supporters that India lacks the will and the ability to intervene. In particular Colombo is furious about New Delhi's apparent inability to stem the flow of cash and verbal aid to the Tamil rebels from the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu.

The 55 million Tamils of Tamil Nadu, whose leaders have often flirted with their own form of separatism, are a formidable anti-Colombo lobby in India.

(The Guardian, 28 May)

INDIAN Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi yesterday warned the Sri Lankan government to halt its offensive against Tamil guerrillas in the Jaffna peninsula immediately.

"The time to desist from a military occupation of Jaffna is now. Later may be too late. From the rubble and the ashes there can only arise the total alienation of an entire people; a more determined militancy and more extreme options," he said. Mr. Gandhi claimed that "hundreds" have died in the last few days and the death toll would rise quickly as thousands of defenceless civilians in Jaffna are strafed from the air and subjected to carpet-bombing.

(The Independent, 29 May)

Reacting to the growing account of civilian deaths and to a visit from the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi the Indian Prime Minister, urged the international community to "impress on the Sri Lankan authorities the imperative need for restraint".

Perhaps fearing possible Indian intervention, and also to give themselves an added weapon against the well dug-in separatist rebels, the Sri Lankans are negotiating to buy tanks, according to a senior official. Reports from the Jaffna peninsula suggest that as much as three-quarters of the population of Jaffna have moved to more rural areas.

(The Times, 30 May)

RAJIV GANDHI, the Indian prime minister, was under increasing pressure yesterday to intervene militarily in Sri Lanka where fighting between government forces and Tamil rebels has continued. Unconfirmed reports in Delhi suggested that several hundred Indian paratroopers had already been airlifted to the southern city of Madras in readiness for an attack.

The reports, which a senior Indian government source refused to confirm or deny, said the paratroopers would be used if Sri Lankan forces continued to bomb the Tamil city of Jaffna. The source told The Sunday Times: "The Sri Lankan government has behaved in a deliberately provocative manner. We are considering what our options are in the situation. Naturally we cannot just sit back and watch."

(The Sunday Times, 31 May)

The flotilla of boats due to sail this morning is a message that, after 40 years of the two countries' independence from British rule,

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WHAT THE WORLD THOUGHT

April – June 1987

India's patience with Sri Lanka's policies on the Tamils is exhausted. What India might do next is not known, but Sri Lanka is supposed to understand that the 20 boats carrying food, kerosene and journalists are merely the first step of a new era, from which there is no going back.

(The Financial Times, 2 June)

A government spokesman admitted that another objective of the military action, the capture of a Tamil military commander, Velupillai Prabhakaran, had failed. Journalists were not permitted to travel to the region to verify the situation.

(International Herald Tribune, 2 June)

No presidential election until J. R. decides

While addressing a meeting at Bollagala on Sunday, 31 May, Mr. Jayawardene assuring the crowd that the unitary and democratic framework of Sri Lanka would always be protected and safeguarded. He said he had reached the top of what he termed the "grease pole" despite many obstacles including attempts to shoot him, and "I intend to stay there until the correct time comes".

(The Hindu, 2 June)

The Tamil Tigers yesterday denied involvement in the massacre of bus passengers, mostly Buddhist monks travelling from the south-eastern town of Amparai for an ordination ceremony in the ancient Buddhist centre of Kandy... The Tamil Tigers said their policy was "absolutely opposed to the killing of innocent civilians." They said the Government was trying to discredit them at a time India was sending in aid.

(The Guardian, 3 June)

The Colombo government has made errors. With 6,000 already dead, it cannot allow the violence to continue unabated.

(The Times, 3 June)

A flotilla from India carrying relief supplies to the Jaffna peninsula turned back Wednesday after a four-hour stand-off with a naval patrol outside Sri Lanka's territorial waters. The government refused permission for the 19 fishing boats to enter its waters to deliver food and medical supplies to Jaffna. It threatened to arrest crew members and complained to the United Nations about interference in internal matters.

India said it was shipping the supplies because the recent military offensive against Tamil separatist guerrillas in the northern Jaffna peninsula have caused widespread civilian deaths and "prolonged suffering and agony."

Sri Lanka's minister of national security, Lalith Athulathmudali, said the flotilla had remained just outside the island nation's territorial waters and more than six miles (10km) from the northern city of Jaffna during four hours of radio exchanges. "At last good sense has prevailed," said Mr. Athulathmudali, who was with Defence Ministry officials at naval headquarters in

Colombo when the news arrived that the ships were returning to India. (A statement from the External Affairs Ministry in New Delhi said India, "strongly condemns the action by Sri Lankan gunboats in forcibly preventing the convoy" from proceeding to Jaffna, Reuters reported.)

(The International Herald Tribune, 4 June)

THE GOVERNMENT OF the erratic President Jayawardene has, for its part, decided to wage war against the Tamil north of the island. The regional capital, Jaffna, has been bombed and blockaded and a military offensive aimed at seizing control of the Jaffna peninsula was launched last month... But the logic of President Jayawardene's offensive points to an outcome closer to occupation of enemy territory than it would be to the restoration of law and order and the reconciliation of fellow citizens with genuine grievances...

(The Independent, 4 June)

They wear heavy, US-style steel helmets, covered with sacking and sport camouflage flak jackets. They look small and fierce and tired. Though the soldiers have won the admiration of the Sinhalese public for their action in seizing control of this area, the Tamils are busy demonstrating that they have not been defeated.

A bloody massacre of Buddhist priests this week marked the re-opening of hostilities in the east. In the north a bold assault on the old Dutch fort in Jaffna city itself reminded its inhabitants that the war was far from over. The Tamil rebels pushed a vehicle packed with explosives close to two telecommunications buildings outside the 200 year-old fort, and shattered them both. Three soldiers died and 40 were injured. According to Lieutenant-Colonel Asoka Jayawardene, the fort commander, 75 or 100 militants then broke into the perimeter and were driven off only after four hours of fighting.

The colonel was keen to continue the recent military offensive in the peninsula by taking the city of Jaffna itself. But on the day he spoke I flew over the little smuggler's port of Velvettithurai a few miles down the coast from here. The streets there show what could happen to Jaffna if the colonel had his way.

Though we were a thousand feet up in a helicopter it was plain to see that most of the main streets had been devastated, especially along the seafront. There was a great deal of recent damage, which was done by shelling from the sea, by aerial bombing or by guerrilla mines and booby traps; most probably all three. The commanding general of the Sri Lankan armed forces, General Cyril Ranatunga, insisted that he and his field commanders always had in mind the principle of the use of minimum force.

On the issue of a second phase to the military offensive, he said: "It is not a question of moving from place to place. It is a question of getting a political solution."

(The Times, 5 June)

NEW DELHI – Indian Air Force transport planes escorted by jet fighters parachuted relief supplies on Thursday to ethnic Tamils on Sri Lanka's Jaffna peninsula. The Sri Lankan government, which is fighting separatist Tamil rebels based on the peninsula, protested the move as "a naked violation of our sovereignty and independence."

"We have no military or other means of preventing this outrage," said Bernard Tilakaratna, Sri Lanka's High Commissioner in New Delhi. "We will take this up in an appropriate forum." Prime Minister Ranasinghe Premadasa of Sri Lanka called for an emergency meeting of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation to discuss India's action.

The state-radio quoted him saying New Delhi's action was "a deadly blow to regional cooperation" and the regional association should discuss it. The association links Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. On Wednesday, Sri Lankan gunboats had blocked Indian fishing boats attempting to bring the supplies to the Jaffna peninsula.

However, Sri Lanka's military is no match for that of India, which has more than a million troops and an air force that includes the MIG-29, the most up-to-date Soviet fighter, as well as MIG-27s and French-made Mirages. The Sri Lankan Air Force has only a half-dozen Italian Marchetti trainer aircraft converted to carry bombs, several Chinese-built transports, and American-made bell helicopters. The country's air defenses are thought to consist only of anti-aircraft guns of World War II vintage.

In Colombo, President Junius R. Jayawardene called his security council, including the chiefs of the armed forces, into emergency session. Tamil groups in India have urged the government of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to intervene after the Sri Lankan Army opened a new offensive against the Tamil rebels on the peninsula.

India has demanded an end to the military assault. On Thursday, the day after it turned away the Indian supply flotilla, Sri Lanka said it was cancelling plans for a second stage of the offensive. (Asian Times, 5 June)

The Sri Lankan Rural Industrial Development Minister and Ceylon Workers' Congress President, Mr. S. Thondaman described the present conflict in the North as very unfortunate and reasserted his earlier view that the Indian Government should find a formula acceptable to all concerned and impose it finally.

Speaking to The Hindu, he said the CWC and he had in recent times stated that the Indian Government should not continue with its mediatory efforts which have proved ineffective and that it should play the role of an arbitrator and enforce a fair and just settlement acceptable to all sides. He further said "although the situation is now bleak it is not too late for India to do something constructive and bring about a permanent peaceful settlement."

(The Hindu, 6 June)

continued opposite

WHAT THE WORLD THOUGHT

April – June 1987

THE POLICY STATEMENT ON SRI LANKA, which was hammered out between Rajiv Gandhi, the Prime Minister, and all leading opposition politicians, gives the government particular satisfaction as it has effectively depoliticised its handling of the affair... The statement claimed that the air drop was "a token of India's deep and abiding concern for the suffering of the Tamil people of that area" and "our consistent wish that the ethnic discord in Sri Lanka be resolved through a political settlement".

A senior Indian official told *The Independent* that, there was a very specific message intended by India's violation of Sri Lankan air space and the dropping of supplies to the Tamils in the Jaffna peninsula. "We hope this rather unorthodox approach by us will act as a form of shock treatment in Colombo. Its aim is twofold – firstly, to persuade them to give up their military campaign in the peninsula and, secondly, to resume the dialogue with us for a negotiated settlement to the problem," the official said.

(*The Independent*, 6 June)

MODERATES IN THE GOVERNMENT were last night urging President Jayawardene to "cool it"... There is little doubt in Colombo that if President Jayawardene orders his small air force to resume bombing in the north, and tells the army to push westwards along the peninsula, India will step in... Whatever the world thinks, India believes its credibility as the power in the sub-continent is on the line. It has frequently made clear its concern for the 850,000 Tamils in the peninsula... In Colombo, police broke up a demonstration in which people called for troops to be withdrawn from the Jaffna peninsula...

(*The Daily Telegraph*, 6 June)

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, made it clear that he would not be deterred from continuing to aid the victims of State terrorism on humanitarian grounds. He strongly condemned the response of the Sri Lankan President to the well-intentioned appeal of the Prime Minister of India to end military action in Jaffna.

The statement issued by the Chief Minister read: "Tamils are our blood brothers. Solely out of humanitarian considerations, the people of Tamil Nadu donated liberally. This money was released by the Chief Minister to the refugee organisations. While such is the case, to call it an act of aiding terrorism in Sri Lanka is quite atrocious and unbecoming. That too, such a charge is made by the President of a country which takes money, men and material from all over the world, particularly from those countries which are known to be violators of basic human rights, to unleash unparalleled genocide against its own citizens like Tamils. These kinds of threats, I wish to reiterate, will not deter us from continuing to aid victims of State terrorism on humanitarian grounds."

"On behalf of the Government and the people of Tamil Nadu I strongly condemn the response of the President of Sri Lanka to the well-intentioned appeal of the Prime Minister of India to end the military action in Jaffna."

(*The Hindu* (International Edition), 6 June)

IF SRI LANKA asked for a meeting of the Security Council there is little chance that any member would vote against India on what most countries regard as a peripheral issue. And in any case, the Soviet Union – India's ally – could almost certainly be relied on to exercise its veto.

(*The Guardian*, 6 June)

BISHOP DEOGUPILLAI

'A Voice Against Injustice'

THE GRATEFUL flock of the Jaffna diocese is contributing tribute to their beloved Pastor Rt. Rev. Dr. B. Deogupillai on his 70th birthday on 9th April.

A man of indomitable character, steadfast in his conviction, firm in his actions, always ready to raise his voice against injustice, social and spiritual evils, pleading the cause of the poor and downtrodden and ever ready to breathe in the gentle breeze of loving kindness into the souls of those who seek his presence he had successfully tended the flock for the last 20 years. His quality of penetrating into the deep recesses of human problem has resulted in bringing solace, hope and relief to the otherwise despondent citizens of Jaffna. His forthright utterances, bold exposition of the atrocities perpetrated on the helpless Tamil people has brought him the sense of his brother ecclesiastics. Yet he sails on undaunted, calling a spade irrespective of consequences.

As a priest he had ably chartered the ship of education and fashioned the character,

discipline and career of many a youth who adorns a profession as well as other careers. He was Rector of St. Joseph's College, A'Pura, Sacred Heart College Karaveddi, St. Henry's College, Ilavalai and had guided the destinies of the members of that noble profession as the Rector of the Teachers Training College, Colombuthurai.

Providence had destined Bishop Deogupillai to mount the higher rungs in the ecclesiastical stairways. This resulted in his being elevated to the pedestal of auxiliary Bishop of Trinco-Batti on 9th February, 1967 and subsequently he became Bishop there on 11th May, 1967. When the Episcopal Chair in Jaffna fell vacant after the demise of the eminent and ever loving Pastor Rt. Rev. Dr. J. Emilianuspillai no worthy successor could be found other than Bishop Deogupillai.

The grateful, faithful and the public of Jaffna implore all heavenly blessings on him on his 70th birthday in order that he may give of his services for many more years to come. Ad multos annos. M. B. Gnanaratnam

VILE KILLINGS OF TAMIL YOUTH



Tamils taken prisoner by the Sri Lankan Army

WE ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED about the plight of Tamil detainees, particularly those in the Boosa camp. More than 3000 are being held there. Seven of them are reported shot dead yesterday by the security guards and over 25 others injured according to BBC World Service. It is alleged by the authorities that the victims had tried to escape. It is very difficult to believe that an escape attempt would have been made from the camp situated as it is in Sinhala territory totally unknown to the detainees and more than 100 miles away from the nearest point of the Tamil homeland, particularly in the kind of tense situation prevailing throughout the island. Considering the current developments we particularly draw the attention of readers to the words of President Jayawardene: "If India invades Sri Lanka... then all the Tamils in the south will be finished."

(*India Today*, December 1985).

IN 'THE TIMES' OF JUNE 6, Michael Hamlyn writes from Valvettiturai, Jaffna, "virtually a whole generation of young men have been taken away by the security forces for screening. The authorities now estimate that 4,000 have been carted off in boats to the southern detention and investigation camp at Boosa." These 4,000 were arrested during the military onslaught in Jaffna last month. There were already over 3000 detainees at Boosa.

SEVEN PRISONERS WERE SHOT DEAD by guards with machine guns in a detention camp in southern Sri Lanka yesterday. The government said the prisoners were hard-core Tamil terrorists killed while trying to escape. A policeman and four soldiers were injured as the prisoners fought to break out... Mr. Robert Kilroy-Silk and Mr. Roger Sims, two British MPs who visited Boosa two years ago, reported that detainees looked healthy. But they also said that "the prisoners were cowed and afraid and it was clear that many had been ill-treated." The MPs said they saw the "terrible scars" left by beatings.

The MPs said that many detainees were obviously innocent of terrorism.

(*The Sunday Telegraph*, 7th June).

OTHER OPINION

IT IS UNWISE of the Government to go all out for a military solution to the present crisis. The need of the hour is to end the present phase of violence for which a truce is essential... As Prime Minister, Mr. Premadasa has a more responsible role to play. He is only deceiving himself when he says that Sri Lanka is not fighting for a political solution but to protect and preserve its unity and integrity. Can the Government ensure the unity and integrity of the country by bombing the Tamil areas and wiping out the civilian population?

Mr. Premadasa should know that it is still not too late to strive for peace and once peace is restored, resumption of talks is possible. He should also realise that New Delhi can play a major role in arranging a dialogue between his Government and the representatives of the Tamils. His remark that "we could not betray our people because we want friendship with India" is most uncharitable to New Delhi. Whatever his stand, the fact that President Jayawardene had a 30-minute telephonic conversation with the Indian Prime Minister on Friday is an indication of the importance which Colombo attaches to New Delhi. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's consultations with the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M. G. Ramachandran, also are an indication of the interest which New Delhi is taking in the

Colombo's Over-reaction



developments in Sri Lanka. It is convinced of the need to exert pressure on the militants and that is why MGR's services are being sought. The crux of the matter is that

unless negotiations are resumed, the ethnic crisis will not be resolved...

The Overseas Hindustan Times,
May 9, 1987

LESSON FOR SRI LANKA

THE PROSPECT of military victory over well-organised guerrillas is a chimera which has led numerous governments in recent world history ever deeper into the desert of fruitless violence. This is a lesson which the Sri Lankan Government should have learned by now, but it appears to have passed it by entirely. The current offensive launched yesterday against the Jaffna peninsula and the city of Jaffna by Government forces is an almost classic case in point. It may nominally recover large areas of land and Government soldiers may be able to patrol cautiously through the no doubt battered city streets, but it will be surprising if the determined Tamil guerrillas are not there somewhere, nipping at their heels, ambushing, bombing and generally adding to the misery of an already dispirited population. Large areas of land will be difficult to hold and, little by little, the guerrillas will creep back, increasing Government frustration and leading to more reciprocal violence.

This depressing prospect may not materialise, but it must be said that **most counter-insurgency experts nowadays give the purely military option little chance against determined guerrilla opposition.**

The Sri Lankans are advised by, among others, the Israelis, whose instinctive reaction to the sight of an enemy is to hit him. There is a better way. It is much harder, requires real patience, intelligence and an almost superhuman resilience, but it works. Put simply, the population in guerrilla areas must be protected from intimidation and their assent for Government policy won. It is too late for this approach at the moment for those who might have been won over, the innocent men, women and children, are being killed. It must be tried in the future.

(Glasgow Herald, May 27, 1987)

In the Lair of the Tamil Tigers

NINE HOURS after the car bomb exploded in Colombo on the evening of 21 April, the calm of the night was shattered in Jaffna as rebels and government forces began exchanging artillery fire. Before dawn, air force helicopters took off from their base in Jaffna Fort and strafed the town supported by a mortar barrage.

When I met Raheem at noon, he described how his rebels had attacked an army post at 2 a.m., killing 18 soldiers

with only four deaths on his side. "It was a commando-type attack. We used lorries to batter the sandbags (and once inside the camp) we went from building to building dropping explosives."

The real name of this slightly built man of 26 is Canagaratnam Balasubramaniam, but he is simply known as Raheem, a feared name in Sri Lanka for he is the Jaffna commander of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, commonly called the Tigers.

Raheem denied that the Tigers were involved in the Colombo bombing, but admitted that they had killed civilians in one operation in the past - at two farms where the army had forced out Tamils and settled armed Sinhalese ex-convicts. The Tigers want to drive out the army from Tamil areas, said Raheem, adding: "To defend Jaffna we will use anti-aircraft guns, heavy machine guns (which are), American-made. They are bought on the black market, not from India."

Raheem reiterated his group's demands: "First of all the government should recognise the Tamil forces and that the Tamils are a distinct nationality. They should also accept Tamil as the official language. I don't consider any of these points negotiable, but we are ready for talks without any pre-conditions."

"The talks can be in any country, provided the Indian Government mediates. We are fighting for our rights. Whether the Sri Lankan Government likes it or not, the Indian Government will participate."

By courtesy of Far Eastern Economic Review,
May 7, 1987



RAHEEM

Letter to the Editor

FOR A NUMBER of years now terrible atrocities and human rights violations have been going on in Sri Lanka, but the United States papers and T.V. reporting, have given a paucity of reports on this. I have always wondered why. Recently our papers have had much to say about these atrocities, but they have one-sided information. They should surely know that the Sinhalese government has had strict censorship on all that is going on over there, and what little they release is always slanted in favour of the Sinhalese, the majority ethnic group. The Tamils are always the culprits.

I have had two visits to Sri Lanka and have covered almost every part of the island and lived with the people and saw many of the problems the Tamils have. There is no justice or equality for the Tamil people. If the government would be fair and grant equal opportunities in jobs, opportunities for college education, upkeep of roads in all areas, including the Tamil areas, and if they would recognise the Tamil language which has been the language of the Tamil people for over 2000 years they have lived on this island, they would have no fear of Tamil terrorists.

These young people are no different than the young people all over the world today – Korea is currently in the news now – Young people today will not suffer discrimination and injustices as their parents did, they want change and want it now.

I received a letter last week from a nun in Sri Lanka who wrote: I happened to be in Jaffna the weekend of March 30. It was a day of unspeakable horror! At 6.26 am the best male ward of the Jaffna Hospital was

subject to heavy explosions due to a shell fired from the Jaffna Fort (Sinhalese). Eight patients were simply smashed to death in their beds, two more died on the floor, more than 20 were injured. Eight were smashed to death on the children's wing, 2 more died and many were injured. On March 7, 1987, 21 were killed and 100 injured, all innocent Tamil civilians. This incident was reported by BBC, March 30.

Rone Tempest reported that there were 5000 lives lost in the past 4 years, but he did not say how many of these were Tamil civilians, men, women and children, well over the majority community's death toll.

A Government Minister in Sri Lanka said, "in 14 minutes we can wipe out every Tamil in the country." This is the real aim of the government. Total annihilation of Tamils. In January 1987 the Sri Lanka armed forces, without cause, launched a military attack in Batticaloa and Trincomalee districts killing over 200 Tamil civilians and destroying property.

In February in Mannar, Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts over 300 Tamil civilians were killed and their house and other property 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 were killed. The Sri Lankan Government didn't tell us this, did they? Starvation stalks the Jaffna peninsula. Practically all transport and economic activity have ground to a halt. Hospitals are short of even life-saving drugs. I could go on and on.

I want to thank you for informing the Americans that South Africa, Israel, Britain and West Germany are all involved in the crisis in Sri Lanka and all are supporting this terrible government.

M. H. Ruddick
CA. 95901, USA

The Tragedy In Sri Lanka

IT IS TRAGIC to see such a beautiful country like Sri Lanka slowly bleeding to death by the ethnic violence that prevails there. The persons responsible for this tragedy must wake up to reality, and shed the blinkers that obscure their vision.

They must realise that if the Island is to remain united, peaceful and prosperous, every Sri Lankan, irrespective of caste, creed or ethnic group, whether he be Sinhalese, Tamil, Buddhist, Hindu or Muslim, must feel at home in the land. He must have the security of a **Human Being** entitled to the **Rights and Freedoms** guaranteed by civilised societies to their citizens.

In such a society, there is **Equality** before the law. There is no room for "favoured", "privileged" and "special place" for sections. There is no place for cultural domination or chauvinism. This Equality before the Law must be enshrined in a Constitution that reflects the genuine aspirations of a democratic society – not a constitution that is tailored to serve the interests of a party in power.

This constitution must not consist of mere high sounding principles which are **Administratively Nullified**. Provision must be made that anyone guilty of flouting any section, whatever be his status, be made **Answerable** before a Court of Law.

Unless and until these basic conditions of a democratic society are fulfilled, the deep wound of the present will become a malignant cancer that will ultimately disintegrate the Island.

A. Raja Kumar

P.O. Box 15645, AL Ain, U.A.E.

I AM SURPRISED that three Muslim states, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives should protest against Mr. Rajiv Gandhi's gracious act of humanity. Not a dog barked when President Reagan bombed Libya and killed Gadhafi's child. The three Muslim states fail to understand the fact of a strong Israeli "advisory" presence in Sri Lanka. Which country ever protests the supply of food to starving humanity?

Air space has been violated by the United States in their incursions into Nicaragua.

A. Mohamed

Wimbledon, London SW17

INDIA'S MILITARY OPTIONS – continued

20 Bell 206 and 212 attack helicopters procured through Singapore which are armed with machine guns and grenade launchers. Six Chinese Yun-12 Turbo Panda Light transport aircraft have also been modified to carry 200kg and 50kg bombs. The numbers 1, 3 and 4 squadrons are basically equipped with a variety of transport and utility aircraft. The main Sri Lankan bases are China Bay (Trincomalee), Batticaloa, Palali, Katunayake and Anuradhapura as well as a number of reactivated airstrips of the World War II period especially in the northern and eastern area. The Sri Lankan navy based in Trincomalee, Karainagar, Colombo, Tangalla and Kalpitiya comprises basically of large and coastal patrol craft as well as six fast attack craft equipped with guns and some amphibious landing craft.

According to specialised sources, the last time there was a possibility of direct action (April 1984) two brigades plus one mechanised battalion were earmarked and some troops actually embarked on ships. With the current Sri Lankan force levels, the minimum forces required now will be one division plus an airborne brigade along

with their supporting equipment, artillery, infantry combat vehicles and light tanks. In the past two years, the Indian military forces have been trained in brigade-level amphibious operations in terrain similar to Sri Lanka. The main Indian Air Force stations are at Trivandrum, the current headquarters of the newly created Southern Air Command aircraft, and the Bangalore base with Jaguars and Salur (Coimbatore) with a squadron of Ajits. The main combat base for the South is yet to be readied in Madurai, but aircraft could operate from civil airports in Tamil Nadu. The V/STOL Sea Harriers could operate anywhere.

However, as of now the major problem confronting India is to bring a swift end to the fighting that is taking an unusually heavy toll of civilians in the Jaffna area and provide a lasting solution to the vexed issue of the rights of the Tamil minority. The Indian efforts have to be in the direction of applying just enough force to cool the ardour of the hawks in Colombo without in any way embittering a neighbouring nation with whom India has had good ties through history.

By courtesy "The Hindu", May 30

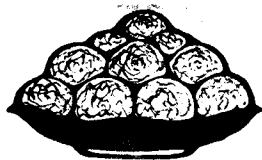
SOME FOREIGN JOURNALISTS have unfortunately been misled on the subject of "carpet-bombing" of Tamil villages in the Jaffna peninsula. The view is that this is not possible with the five planes and the few helicopters that the Sri Lankan Air Force possesses. It is not known that these planes take off and return to an airport within a very short distance from the Tamil villages. The airport is in Palali. Foreign journalists have also overlooked President Jayawardene's threats that if the allies "carpet-bombed" Hamburg, Dresden and Berlin why cannot he act likewise. Minister Gamini Dissanayake has talked of "Nagasaki and Hiroshima" and that there are mountains of foreign aid to accomplish the task of rebuilding.

The fact is that Tamil villages have been razed if not erased. Journalists taken on a flying tour 6000ft. above the ground cannot investigate the desert conditions that prevail in quite a few villages. Cannot the conscience of the world be awakened?

What would the world have said if Mrs. Thatcher even simply bombed Belfast or for that matter Edinburgh if there had been a Scottish Nationalist uprising.

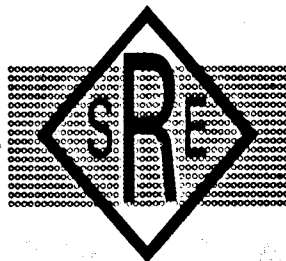
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PANDIT THANGAMA APPACUDDY

a Saiva Pullavar of Tellippalai-Jaffna, presently in London on a lecture tour, is a Tamil scholar, an exponent of Saiva Sithantha philosophy and a messenger of Tamil, language and culture to various parts of the world. Her orphanage, support for refugees and donations to feed patients at Jaffna hospitals during difficult times are well known. Arrangements are being made to felicitate her at a reception at

HIGHGATE TEMPLE
on Sunday, 28 June.

All are cordially invited.

For details please phone: 348 9835 or 550 7489.

OBITUARIES

JEYANAYAGAM, Ramabai, Wife of late S. J. Jeyanayagam (Electrical Engineer), mother of Suthan (U.S.A.) and Ariya (Toronto). Cremation Kanatte, 22 April. 10, Charles Circus, Colombo.

RASANAYAGAM, X. J. S., (Rt. Principal). Husband of Selvaranee, father of Angelo (Geneva), Indrani, Manohari, Lakshman (Australia) Vasanthi (U.K.), late Nirmalan and of Chandiran, Soundari and Amali (Canada). Interment Kanatte, 23 April. 84, Rajasinghe Road, Colombo 6.

KRISHNAPILLAI, A. V. of Urelu East, Chunnakam. Husband of Ponnamma, father of Atputhajothy, Rabindrasothy and Thavasothy (U.K.). Funeral 29 April.

SAMUEL, MAHEN, (Flt. Steward, Air Lanka). Died under tragic circumstances. 16 Canal Lane, Colombo 6.

JEGANATHAN, Sunderam (Rtd. Shroff). Husband of Pathmavathy, father of Rajaluxmy, Sundereswaran, Krishnaveni and Balasunderam. Cremation Kanatte, 1 May. 26, Police Park Avenue, Colombo 5.

CHANMUGAM, PROF. P. K. Husband of late Soundramani, father of Ganesar and Pramila. Cremation Kanatte, 2 May. 37/33, Bullers Lane, Colombo 7.

THANGARAJAH, A.W. of Thunavy, Vaddukoddai. Husband of Thangaratnam (Retd. Principal, Shri Shanmuga Vidyalayam, Trincomalee). Father of Manohari Sivashanmugam (Abu Dhabi), Dr Maheswaran (London) and Nirmalarajan (Brunei). Died April 29. 17, 5th Cross St, Madras 20.

VELUPPILLAI, KANDAPPU, Retd. Dy. Chief Accountant, Ministry of Health. Mappanavoori, Karainagar.

In Memoriam

In loving memory of
Mrs. M. Subramaniam of Tellipalai

who passed away on the
5 June, 1986.



Dearest Amma, the guide and light in our life, you have left us but your loving face is so near and dear. You will live in our hearts for ever. Fondly remembered by your children and grandchildren.

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Suba
Vivekananthan

OUR THANKS

TAMIL TIMES thanks its many subscribers for so warmly responding to its S.O.S. for contributions to prevent us from effecting drastic changes which would only have caused immeasurable harm to the Tamil cause. We are still not out of the woods.

We therefore appeal to our well-wishers to introduce to us many more subscribers and to continue to help us with whatever small contributions they can afford.

*We must stay afloat especially
in this grave hour.*

**Please assist us so that we
will not go down.**

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Mr. A. THAMBIAH
of Petaling Jaya, Malaysia,

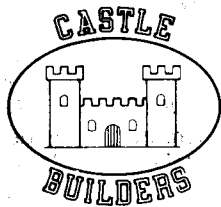
died recently after a short illness. Born in Jaffna he lived the major part of his life in Malaysia and retired from government service as a Senior Registration Officer.

The Tamils' Relief Fund of Malaysia wishes to place on record its deep sense of loss at his death and pay a tribute to his memory because the idea of setting up such a Fund to help Tamil refugees of Sri Lanka was seriously canvassed by him. He further did yeoman service in influencing friends to support the Fund and continued to give it his moral and physical support up to the very end of his life.

Perhaps no greater tribute can be paid to his memory than to quote from a letter dated 23.1.87 received by the Fund from the Tamils Rehabilitation Organization, 4, 21st. Cross Street, Indira Nagar, Madras-20 which says inter alia,

"In the past year the M\$47,000/- that your Organization sent us enabled us to be of great service to our refugees... To say the least, in the beginning we would have lost 25 babies and some of their mothers but for the timely help received from you. Since then we have been receiving help from other countries also... But the start-off for all this came from you."

Mr. Thambiah's life was dedicated to such humanitarian service for his fellowmen. He did not spare himself in raising funds for the restoration, repair and maintenance of the ancient temple at Thiruketheeswaram in Mannar. The Malaysia Pilgrims' Hall that now stands at this temple is a silent witness to his indefatigable efforts and a matter of pride to all Malaysian Tamils.



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TAMIL SCHOOL GOES HI-TECH



NEW TECHNOLOGY is being used to teach Tamil children their mother tongue. When the Mayor of Lewisham, Councillor Norman Smith and his wife Joan, the Mayoress, visited the Tamil Academy of Language and Arts at Kirkdale, Sydenham, the Mayor's name was printed for him in Tamil characters on a computer.

He was told it could be used for the teaching of any foreign language. The Mayoral couple were introduced to parents and children by Project Director, Siva Pillai. They visited a classroom, saw the children's work and watched a display of dancing and yoga and heard Tamil songs.

Mr. Pillai told the Mayor that without outside support, not just good wishes only, the school would not be able to function. He said the Tamil community was growing in the Borough, especially after the recent violence in the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka.

"We are struggling to establish this school with meagre resources and appeal for help from the ILEA and Lewisham Council. As our school grows we face problems of paying for equipment and staff. At present every member of the staff works as an unpaid volunteer."

TAMIL, TOO!

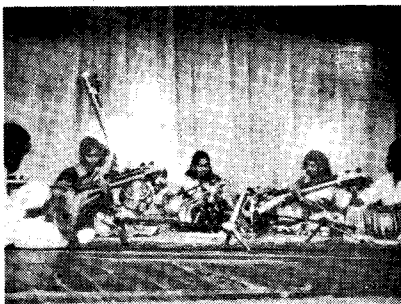


ALTHOUGH ENGLISH is the main language taught at Inverness Central Primary School, some pupils are also well versed in other tongues. The children were taught by their mother and through a distance-learning course, although they were tested locally by an examiner in Tamil.

THE WEST LONDON TAMIL SCHOOL

Celebrates Muthamil Vizha

Brent Town Hall, 31 May, 1987



As the situation in Sri Lanka grows ever more serious for our people in their homeland, this festival of song, drama and music had a special significance for the London Tamil community. As the headmaster of the West London Tamil School, Dr. R. Niththyananthan, said,

"The music and dancing we have had here tonight is a poignant reminder of our homeland in happier days". In memory of those who died for the Tamil cause the entire assembly stood in silence for a minute.

The festival, presented under the auspices of the West London Tamil School, was a memorable display of music, song and drama given by artistes of international repute that the school is fortunate in having on its teaching staff.

Guest of honour was Mr. Trevor Vibert, Director of Greater London Arts, who praised the work of the West London Tamil School in promoting and enhancing the Tamil cultural heritage in this country, and expressed his pleasure in being able to allocate funds to this endeavour.



Part of the gathering at the recent A.G.M. of the Northern Tamil Association.

Tamils of Washington Protest



On 30th April, Tamils demonstrated in front of the Sri Lankan and Indian embassies in Washington DC against aerial attacks in Jaffna.

HALT THE MASSACRE IN JAFFNA

"The time to desist from a military occupation of Jaffna is NOW", declared India's Prime Minister in what has since come to be known as the *Final warning Note to Sri Lanka*. "Later may be too late", he had emphasised.

Thousands of helpless civilians had become victims of the cruel assault: the shelling strafing and the incendiary bombs dropped from the air by the Sri Lankan aircraft at their own will and pleasure. There was no way the civilian could defend himself. It was his own Government to whom he could look up for protection; instead the government turned the gun on him. "It is horrendous, absolutely horrendous," exclaimed a senior diplomat on hearing of the Government bombing its own citizens in Jaffna.

But, what has become of the International community?

Where is the opinion of the Free World?

How many countries have come out against this outrage?

It is indeed a sad commentary that the humanitarian conscience that galvanised itself into a global activity on the noble efforts of an Edmund Burke, a Bob Geldof has been kept in the dark of the large scale tragedy and starvation that its own government has wrought on the Tamils of Sri Lanka. What has been put out to the world in fact is the tongue-in-cheek treatment of the Government Media Centre news handouts which is strangely enough picked up somehow so easily by the media around here, particularly TV. One is wonderstruck about all the graphic detail of how a bus load of passengers, may be Bhikkus, were led up and shot by Tamil terrorists while what we are shown are some of the injured priests in a ward of some hospital.

It is idle to pretend that the Government Media Centre does not want quick publicity. But to ignore the other side of the coin completely and to forget the fact that hundreds and hundreds of defenceless civilians are being starved, maimed and killed every day of the week and that by the State Terrorism of the Sri Lankan Government and its armed forces – is at least not unbiased reporting.

Almost an equal number of civilians had been snuffed to death inside a temple at Vathiri in Jaffna about that time and could have at least deserved mention. May be like the Pettah bomb incident which even the media here so rapidly attributed to the Tamil terrorists (like the Sri Lankan Govt again) has since proved otherwise. At least no incontrovertible evidence has yet been found to implicate the Tamil militants in the matter. Only Mrs. Bandaranaike the sworn enemy of J. R. Jayawardene has openly accused the Sri Lankan Government itself of manufacturing the incident to create

the atmosphere for postponing elections. The Tamils however interpret it as the Government's brainwave (perhaps on the advice of foreign security advisors) to attack Jaffna by air and bomb out its citizens in pursuance of the Sri Lankan policy of GENOCIDE.

Not a foreign journalist has so far been allowed into the affected areas of the North and East to report on the situation in these places. Whatever trickles through out of such rigorous press censorship goes to the credit of the enterprising journalist and the freedom of the press that this great country is esteemed for.

David Selbourne of *The Guardian* was expelled from Sri Lanka as early as the commencement of the ethnic holocaust in July 1983. This was followed by Simon Winchester of *The*

Sunday Times and next it was Trevor MacDonald of the *ITV*. Then Humphrey Hawksely of the *BBC* (and *The Guardian*) was unceremoniously despatched and very lately it was Shyam Bhatia from *The Observer*. All these journalists of established international reputation were found wanting in the sort of "unbiased" reporting that the Sri Lankan Government wanted of them. They were not prepared to submit to the indignities of the average Sri Lankan journalist in being allowed to operate with the Sri Lankan Press Council at his throat.

The press censorship laws in Sri Lanka have put the South Africans to shame.

The recent episode of the Sri Lankan Government in flying some journalists at 7000ft and thereafter escorting them to some safer areas without any activity in the Peninsula is another of those puerile attempts to cheat the world, denied of the true state of affairs in a land under siege.



By courtesy of "The HINDU"