

**Sri Lanka**

**REIGN  
OF  
TERROR  
IN  
JAFFNA**

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# REIGN OF TERROR IN JAFFNA

MAY - JUNE 1981

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July, 1981

Sri Lanka

# REIGN OF TERROR IN JAFFNA

MAY - JUNE 1981

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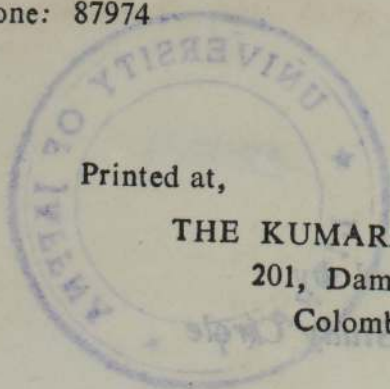
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## A note from the Publisher

The incidents of violence in Jaffna from the 31st of May to the 4th of June have caused humiliation, anguish and distress to the people of Jaffna. The victims of these acts of brutality and senseless violence strongly believe that the facts relating to these incidents should surface, the perpetrators of violence be identified and dealt with in accordance with the law. This concern assumes added significance in the context of efforts by the media to "cover up these events" and to distract the public from an episode of the highest importance in the political history of the Sinhala and Tamil people. It is particularly important that the people of the South become aware of these events and confront the issues of moral responsibility for this outrage.

This booklet, therefore, is a modest attempt to publish within a single volume-statements, reactions, comments and responses to the incidents in Jaffna in May and June of 1981. The Editor of this booklet has endeavoured to reproduce without comment statements by government and the opposition in Parliament, the on the spot investigations and reports of concerned civil rights and non-governmental groups, and reactions by political parties across a broad spectrum of political opinion.

The Editor has endeavoured to ensure a fair and detached presentation of these documents.

It is hoped that the readers would form their own conclusions with regard to the circumstances which led to these events, the perpetrators of these acts of violence and the responsibility of the State to secure to the people of Jaffna their right to life, liberty and property.

**A. S. Moorthy**

(SAMPANTHAN)

Vice President

Federation & Tamil Trade Unions

(On behalf of the Colombo Study Circle)

Upper Floor,  
344, Galle Road,  
Colombo - 6.  
10 - 7 - 81

## A note from the Publisher

*"Since wars begin in the minds  
of men, it is in the minds of men  
that the defences of peace must be  
constructed."*

— UNESCO

*(Preamble to the Constitution)*

A. S. Moorthy  
(SAMBANTHAN)  
Vice President  
Federation of Tamil Trade Unions  
(On behalf of the Colombo Study Circle)

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## SRI LANKA 1958 : A FLASHBACK

(Extracts from EMERGENCY '58: THE STORY OF THE RACE RIOTS by Tarzie Vittachi - published by Andre Deutch, London 1958).

- \* "...At the Government farm at Hingurakgoda, too, the Tamils were slaughtered that night. One woman in sheer terror embraced her two children and jumped into a well. The rioters were enjoying themselves thoroughly. They ripped open the belly of a woman eight months pregnant, and left her to bleed to death. First estimates of mass murders on that night were frightening: 150 - 200 was a quick guess. This estimate was later pruned down to around seventy...
- \* "In Colombo, on that occasion (1956), the police looked on or looked the other way when Tamils were beaten up on the street hardly a hundred yards away from the House of Parliament. They did not move a finger when hoodlums stripped a Federalist politician and chased him all the way across the Galle Face green to the hotel. Police explained that they had been ordered not to interfere..."
- \* "What we are left with? A nation in ruins, some grim lessons which we cannot afford to forget and a momentous question: Have the Sinhalese and the Tamils reached the parting of the ways?"

## *Introduction*

The incidents referred to in this little booklet pertain only to a few days and nights in May - June 1981. To the Tamils, this was not altogether a new experience. They have been victims of political and legal discrimination ever since the time of Independence in 1948; victims of mob violence, off and on, at recurring intervals from 1956; victims of Police and Army terrorism ever since the '70s; victims of racist propaganda at the hands of the Sri Lanka Press even before the Press became Government controlled.

Nevertheless, 1981 stands out as the beginning of a new sordid chapter; this was the first occasion when the Tamils were subject to such brutality in a part of their own traditional homeland by forces and elements specially imported for the purpose, under the very nose of the government's extra-political and military apparatus that was functioning in Jaffna at that time. For example, the burning of the Jaffna Public Library and the office of the Tamil paper, the "Elanadu" took place on the night of June 1, at a time when the President's special high-ranking military envoy was in effective charge of the district. This breakdown in discipline has as many lessons for the government and the Sinhalese people as it has for the Tamils. It is time it is realized that Discipline, like Truth, is indivisible. What happened in Jaffna could well happen elsewhere in the country if the lessons are not learnt correctly.

## Introduction

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The Tamil people in this country  
cannot continue to be treated  
in this way, time after time . . .

*Statement made in Parliament by the Leader of the  
opposition, Mr. A. Amirthalingam on June 9th]*

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam—Kankasanturai)

Sir, I wish to place before this House certain matters concerning the tragic events that have taken place in Jaffna during the last one week or more. To be precise from the 31st of May up to yesterday, a number of events have taken place which call for serious consideration and action by every person interested in peace and harmony. I hope hon. Members will give me the indulgence of permitting me to state fairly fully the events that have taken place in Jaffna.

At the very outset I wish to say that neither we nor any law respecting person will condone certain acts of violence that took place in Jaffna. I take this opportunity to place on record our unreserved condemnation of those acts of violence. Whether they be acts of shooting, or robbery, or violence of any type, we completely dissociate ourselves from such acts and we have condemned them in unequivocal terms.

Mr. Speaker, on 31st May, at an election meeting in support of the candidates of the TULF presided over by the Mayor of Jaffna at a place called Nachchimar Kovilady, a certain incident took place. Unfortunately I was not in Jaffna on that day. I was away in Trincomalee. After I returned to Jaffna on the 3rd I did my best to investigate for myself in order to find out the truth with regard to the shooting of four policemen, two of whom have since died as a result of the injuries which they sustained on that occasion.

There seem to be conflicting versions of that incident. I learnt from the family of Sergeant Kanagasundaram who died that he had stated to them that he was shot by another police constable, and I understand that the statement he made to the House Officer of the Jaffna Hospital—I do not know how far that is true—is to the same effect. But on the other side on hearing of this, from Trincomalee I immediately contacted the I. G. P. at 2 a.m., and he told me that some youth had shot this policeman. I am unable to speak to the veracity of either of these versions, that is a matter that has to be investigated and the truth ascertained, and whoever was responsible for that should be punished.

We do not for a minute condone any person whoever he may be, who was responsible for these incidents, and if it was the action of any civilians, it is certainly the duty of every Member on both sides of this House to see that the offenders are brought to book. Whatever hon. Members may say, I, on behalf of my party, wish to state categorically that we want, and we are very keen, that whoever was responsible for that shooting should be found out, arrested and brought to trial. In fact, no one in his senses will think that we could have been a party to an incident of that nature, to disrupt our own meeting and to disturb the elections to the District Development Councils on which we were so very keen.

The Government is aware that in the teeth of opposition by certain sections of our own party, certain sections of our own youth who even went to the extent of showing their resentment by setting fire to the jeep of the hon. Member for Manipay, we stood firm on our acceptance of the District Development Councils. We were anxious to have democratically elected District Development Councils in our areas and we were putting forward candidates and campaigning for them. But, immediately after that incident what happened was this. Somebody had shot these police officers and one of them rushed up to the platform with a gun in his hand and fired a few shots in the air. The Mayor Mr. Viswanathan who was presiding, asked him "What are you trying to do, Mr. Kanagasunderam?" He said "I have been shot. Ask these people to go away, close the meeting and send me to hospital". The Mayor closed the meeting and the people dispersed. Then he got down a car and saw to it that this officer was sent to hospital. When the crowd dispersed, it was found that another police officer had been



shot and was actually dead. There were two other police officers who had sustained injuries, who had of course on their own left the venue of the meeting. All these people were taken to hospital.

Within half an hour, jeep-loads and truck-loads of policemen, some in uniform, some without uniform, in civilian clothes arrived at the venue of the meeting. They entered the temple itself. They damaged what are called "Vahanams" the figures of animals which are used for carrying the deities (Interruption) - Hon. Members if they do not know, if they are ignorant of it must not shout. Anyone who knows anything about the Hindu religion will tell you that what are called "Vahanams" are figures of various animals on which the images of deities are carried on festival occasions.

These policemen had entered the temple, broken some of those figures, broken the bell, damaged the gate, set fire to the Kopuram and tried to set fire to the chariot. Fortunately only a portion of it was burnt because it was, I think, covered. Then they had run riot in the neighbouring houses and set fire to two cars, including the car which was returning after having taken those constables to the hospital. Another car was also burnt. They had set fire to four or five houses in the vicinity.

Then they had proceeded to the bazaar and commanded a bus driver by a driver named Appiah. They had gone first to a liquor shop belonging to Suppiah and Sons broken it open, consumed large quantities of liquor and removed all the bottles. They had then gone to the bazaar and set fire to the entire row of shops right from Hospital Road to Power House Road, stretching right across the length of the bus stand. All those shops were completely burnt. They had broken open Autos Ltd. broken a petrol pump, taken out a sprayer, filled it with oil (Interruption.) Some hon. Members I will not say that all of them are so unconcerned with what has happened-think this is a matter for laughter, a matter for joking, a matter about which they can make light remarks a spirit of levity. Whatever that may be, it is our duty to place these facts before this House and the country because these events have not been reported and the people at large are not aware of what happened.

As I was saying, they had set fire to a number of shops in the new market. The old market was burnt down. They had set fire to a row of shops next to Ranee Theatre on Power



House Road. Then they had gone in a bus, halted it at the junction—the hon. Member for Jaffna is here and he will speak to the facts in so far as he was personally concerned—got down from the bus, some of them in uniform, Mr. Speaker, some in civilian clothes, fired a shot to open the lock with which the gate to the house of the hon. Member for Jaffna was closed, entered the house of the hon. Member for Jaffna, and set fire to everything in the house. And the hon. Member for Jaffna and his wife had to scale a wall behind their compound in order to escape from the hands of these murderers. (Interruption). These laughing jackals can go and see the damage done:— (Interruption.)

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame - Deputy Minister of Regional Development)

He cannot call hon. Member of this House jackals. He must withdraw the word. - (Interruption)

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I withdraw the word "jackal." (Interruption,)

(Mr. Speaker)

Order, please! Hon. Member, please allow the House to carry on with its functions. I am allowing you to make remarks but not always.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I think hon. Members will realize the gravity of it only when a thing like this happens to them. It can happen to them any day. - (Interruption) We will wait and see.

Anyhow, Sir, I expected hon. Members of this House, when the home of a Colleague of theirs had been invaded in this manner and the whole house reduced to a complete shambles, to ashes—there is not even a doorframe or a window-frame left intact to show some concern. Such a huge house like that! Immediately that night, on hearing of what had happened, I contacted the Hon. District Minister at his residence in Jaffna and told him, "It is reported that this has happened", because I was very worried about the safety of the hon. Member for Jaffna. So I asked the Hon. District Minister to go and see what had happened to him, and he said that he would look into the matter.

Now, Sir, that house was completely burnt down, There were men armed with rifles standing right along the road to shoot down the Member of Parliament for Jaffna if he came out from the front door on to the road. They pulled out his jeep from the garage took it on to the road and burnt it. There was a car belonging to a friend of his which was parked under the porch of the house. That too was completely burnt. The hon. Member for Jaffna and his wife were left, he with his sarong and the wife in her petticoat. Every item of clothing was burnt. Even their jewellery was burnt. Every piece of furniture, every book, every paper, everything that was in the house was completely burnt by these policemen.

Then these same men had proceeded to the headquarters of the TULF and done the same thing: the entire place was reduced to ashes. They stood there with their guns to prevent anybody from coming there to put out the fire.

I am told that the Hon. fair Minister was in Jaffna on this night.—(Interruption) No. I do not expect her to go out in the midst of all this. On the 31st night she was in Jaffna, and I am sure that as a fairminded person she will be able to speak the truth with regard to the crime that was brought on the people of Jaffna by these policemen on that night. (Interruption) One need not be an eye witness to speak to facts. That is an elementary principle: I am not giving evidence here.

(Mr. Speaker)

Please do not get involved in these interruptions.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Very well, Sir

This matter was brought to the notice of the authorities. I myself telephoned the IGP from Trincomalee, and he said that he was already aware of it and that steps were being taken to bring the situation under control. He admitted to me that as a measure of retaliation for the shooting of the policemen the the policemen had gone on a rampage and done all these things. He also told me that His Excellency the President was also aware of these facts.



The next day the IGP himself had gone to Jaffna. I think Brigadier Weeratunga was sent there, and some of the higher-ups from the Defence Ministry also went to Jaffna. The most curious thing is that when the IGP and all these people were there on the night of the 1st these same men got out armed with weapons, armed with torches, and set fire to the public Library of Jaffna, which was only about 50 yards from the police station. I think 95,000 volumes—(Interruption.) They cannot understand the value of books, Sir.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

They do not know what a torch is. It is the *pandam* that you hold !

(Mr. A. Amithalingam)

I do not want to cast aspersions on anybody's knowledge of the English language. A torch does not mean an "Eveready" torch. A torch is what is called a *pandam*. If you do not know that I can only feel sorry for you. Anyhow 95,000 volumes of books, both in the reference and in the lending sections of the Public Library of Jaffna, were burnt down. Not one page of these books was left. Of course, one wing where some magazines were kept was not burnt down, but the wing in which the reference books and the lending section of the library were housed was completely burnt down. This library had been built up over the decades by eminent scholars. The Rev. Fr. Long and various others have contributed to the building up of this library. There were some very rare books, copies of which cannot, I think, be found anywhere else. Books which were printed in Tamil and English by the American missionaries early in the last century were all there. They were all completely burnt. And curiously, Sir, this is an indication of the depths to which people in this country can sink.

At the height of the World War, when Hitler went to ravage Britain, when German planes, were bombarding Britain every half hour, strict instructions were given to the pilots that Cambridge and Oxford should not be bombed, should not be attacked. Similarly, the British gave instructions to their fighters that they should not attack or in any way destroy Heidelberg University in Germany. Even in the height of war they realised, civilized men that they were, that the seats of learning, the centres of education, should not be touched, should not be damaged.



But here, with the IGP in Jaffna, with Hon Ministers in Jaffna, these policemen go and set fire to the Public Library in Jaffna. If anyone is trying to find excuses for the policemen who did all this, I think one has only to sympathize with such person.

These men not only set fire to the Public Library. There is a newspaper printed in Jaffna founded by Mr. K. C. Thangarajah, the former Chairman of the Paper Corporation. This was the only daily newspaper published anywhere outside Colombo—in fact the only daily newspaper published in the provinces. This had been in publication for nearly 25 years. They went and completely destroyed it. They had kept tyres under the machines and set fire to the whole place. They had heaped up the bicycles, the motor cycles and other vehicles belonging to the employees of this press and set them all on fire. The manager of that press, a nephew of Mr. Thangarajah and one of the sub-editors, who were working upstairs, were also badly burnt in the process. One has to only see the damage done to this press to realise the extent of the vandalism some of these policemen have resorted to. They would have put the barbarians of 2,000 years ago to shame.

(Mr. Speaker)

The Sitting is suspended for half an hour.

Sitting accordingly suspended till 5 p.m. and then resumed, Mr. Deputy Speaker (Mr. Norman Waidyaratna) in the Chair.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was dealing with the incidents that took place in Jaffna on 1st June. I referred to the burning of the Public Library and the Eelanadu Press office and the entire building. One of the saddest incidents in this connection was the death of Reverend Father David, one of the greatest scholars in Jaffna. He was a disciple and student of Reverend Father Gnanaprakasara, one of the greatest etymologists that this country has produced, in whose memory stamps were issued in Germany in the early thirties. He was such a great scholar. Father David was continuing the work of Father Gnanaprakasara and he was a linguist who knew 32 languages. When he heard news of the burning of the Public Library, this old priest got such a shock that he passed away. He knew the value of books and he was so horrified at the idea of any

human beings setting fire to such a valuable collection of books that he died of shock. That is one of the matters that I am constrained to mention in view of the spirit of levity in which some hon. Members are inclined to treat this horrifying incident which anybody will think is a blot on the history of Buddhist Sri Lanka.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these were not the only two buildings that were burned that night. A row of shops right in front of the Chunnakam Police Station, just across the road, on the other side of the Police Station, were also first looted by the Police and then burned. In fact, we had information, which we passed on to Brigadier Weeratunga who was in charge, that some of the looted articles were there in the houses of certain police officers attached to the Chunnakam Police Station. I do not know what action he took on that matter.

Then, Sir, on the 2nd the same men in khaki went and set fire to a big business establishment called Pillayar Stores on Manipay Road in the Jaffna Town. Two lorries, two vans, one car, a large quantity of grain—he was a dealer in cereals, aerated waters and various other things—and thousands of bottles of aerated water were all completely burnt or broken and destroyed in that house. The following shops were looted and burnt on the 2nd night: Puspa Jewellers, Murugan Stores, a furniture shop, a pawn shop, the petrol shed adjoining Veerasingham Hall, four shops on Hospital Road, including Royal Pharmacy—one of the biggest drug stores in Jaffna—right opposite the hospital—Usha Cream Cabin, a row of seven shops from S. M. Muttiabs to E. A. Bhai, even this Esmailjee Adamijee Bhai's shop was looted and burnt.

(A Member)

By whom?

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

By the police!

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

I rise to a point of Order, Can the hon. Member accuse the police without an inquiry?

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

You hold the inquiry.



(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Order, please! He takes responsibility for what he states.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I take full responsibility.

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

An inquiry is going on, and it is not fair by the police.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

You defend them if you want.

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

We are not going to defend the police. We are not certain whether the police did it.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I say with a full sense of responsibility that all this was the work of the police and none other.

(A Member)

What about the bakery boy who was murdered in Jaffna?

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I will come to that.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Investigate that also.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

On the night of the 2nd — (Interruption).

I do not know. It is for the police to find out. It is for your police to find out. But I know who burnt the jeep of the hon. Member for Jaffna. It was burnt by your police.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

And we also know what happened to our election office.

(Mr. Cyril Mathew)

Your police, police recruited by you.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

We know that all these were burnt by your police — (Interruption). Usurping the functions of the Commissioner of Elections — that is what you were doing.



(Mr. Cyril Mathew)

He is making certain allegations against me.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I will prove them. We are going to move a Vote of No Confidence on you and the Minister of Lands and Land Development. You arrogated to yourselves the functions of the Commissioner of Elections. [Interruption.] Disgraceful episode! Fifty years of universal franchise! — [Interruption.] The Minister of Lands and Land Development has taken a lesson from Hitler. I am surprised that he did this.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

We are going to prove what we say on the Floor of this House.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

The hon. Leader of the Opposition surely knows —

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Why did he open his mouth and interrupt me? That is why I have to come out with all this. You cannot blackmail me as you did Mr. Duraiswamy. He may be your stooge, but, take it from me, I am not a stooge of yours. You two Ministers will be put on the mat in this House.

(Mr. K. Thuraiaratnam)

Democratic world!

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Democracy? What democracy for you? Taking 39 bus-loads of thugs and planting them as SPOs and peons who cannot do anything other than paint the fingers—

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

I rise to a point of Order. The hon. Member cannot make that accusation. He must withdraw that.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Order, please! This must stop. Any allegations made against an hon. Member of this House should not be done in this fashion.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Very well, Sir, We will do it in the proper way.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

I would request the hon. Member to address the Chair, if he does that he will avoid all this trouble.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Sir, hon. Members here should understand the depth of feeling of the Tamil people over what has happened. No doubt we sympathize with the policemen and their families. It is a crime for anybody to have shot them. We do not for a moment deny that. We sympathize with them. In fact, we attended the funeral of Sergeant Kanagasundaram and extended our sympathies to the family of that poor police officer.

(A Member)

How about Punchi Banda ?

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

We have condemned the shooting and extended our sympathies to his widow.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Please address the Chair. Then you can avoid all this trouble.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

On the night of the 2nd, right along KKS Road, between Chunnakam Police Station and Tellipallai Junction, around 8 or 8.30, a number of people were assaulted by the police. One man, a shop-keeper by the name of Navaratnam from Mallakam Junction, died as a result of the assault. Another boy who was returning from the co-operative hospital, the son of a lawyer by the name of Tambirajah, who was the acting Magistrate of Mallakam at that time, was assaulted on the head by the police. He is yet in hospital. Fortunately he did not die.

That same night a person by the name of Attapattu was admitted to the Tellipallai Hospital by one Piyasena with a history of having been knocked down by a motor bicycle. He was then transferred to the Jaffna Hospital and he died. This same Chunnakam Police who were responsible for assaulting these two persons had sent a message here to headquarters that this man was shot or killed by some Tamils. The bed-head ticket at the Tellipallai Hospital may be gone into. In fact, when I was in Colombo on



that day, the 3rd morning when this was brought to my knowledge, I immediately contacted a responsible person, former Senator Nadarajah who lives in Mallakam, and asked him to check up on the circumstances of Mr. Attapattu's admission to hospital. He informed me that he had been admitted with a history of having been knocked down by a motor cycle. So I immediately telephoned the Hon. Prime Minister and told him. "This is what I hear about this incident. Please get them to check on it." I felt that if any such thing had happened, it was a serious matter and one has to take serious notice of it. I also told the Hon. Prime Minister on the 3rd about the other two incidents, namely, the assault on Navaratnam and his death, and the assault on Mr. Tambiratnam's son and his being hospitalized as a result of police attack.

On the 3rd, the Emergency was declared and there was a curfew in Jaffna within the Municipal limits, from 5 p.m. to 6 a.m.

At Kankasanturai a gang of 100 policemen, some with rifles, had gone and set fire to a row of shops. One Chelliah's shop was completely looted and burnt; in fact they can check up on it—a part of the building that was burnt belonged to their UNP candidate, Mr. Balamoorthi, of Kankasanturai. The entire row of shops was burnt. — (*Interruption.*) — Hon. Members may think that they are being very clever when they say that this is the work of the TULF and so on. I think they should make remarks in a more responsible way. I think the Government can find out from Mr. Balamoorthi, their own candidate, as to who was responsible for the burning of those shops. In fact, a studio right opposite the Kankasanturai Police Station was also burnt down on the night of the 3rd.

Now, Sir, I come to a rather interesting chapter which I leave to the hon. Members to decide whether it is important or not. I reached Jaffna only on the 3rd night. Suddenly, at 2.45 a.m., that is early on the election morning, an A.S.P. some army officers and the O.I.C. Chankanai, all came to my house. The A.S.P. Mr. Donald Mendis, told me "I have been told to arrest you." I asked him, "On what charge?" He said, "The Competent Authority has directed me to arrest you on a charge of disrupting the democratic process." So I asked him, "What is this? Under what law is this offence?" He said, "I do not know, Sir. Do not ask me about these things. I have been asked to bring you. I will have to take you. Please do not argue with me." Then I asked him, "Have you brought a detention order?"

Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

Not for our security. That is for your security.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Thank you very much. We will look after ourselves.

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

You would not have been here to tell your story to us if they did not take you in.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Later, a news report appeared under the name of the good, and, I dare say, really honourable Minister for Information which statement I say is absolutely an untruth.

I am surprised that they should have sought to add insult to injury. They said I was taken into protective custody. If that was necessary that officer could have told me "I am taking you for your own protection." He merely said that I was arrested for disrupting the democratic process.—(Interruption)—Why are you shouting?

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

Get down that officer here and ask him?

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I cannot make you understand, hon. Deputy Minister. Please do not interrupt me. Please do not get into fields which you do not understand. Please know your limitations and keep quiet. You should know your limitations. You seem to know a lot about law!

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Order ! Please address the Chair.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

I think that the statement that was issued to the press is an insult to us, not only to me, but to the hon. Members for Nallur, Chavakachcheri and Manipay who were brought to the army camp at Palaly and kept there. Even His Excellency the President who spoke to me on the telephone at 8.30 did not say that we were taken into custody for our protection. You must understand that. You may ask His Excellency if you want to verify that. (Interruption).



When the hon. Member for Point Pedro was not in his house, his house was searched. Every room was searched. In order to give us protection, they wanted to search every room to find out whether we were hiding anywhere.—(interruption). Do not make fools of yourselves. Let not the hon. Members stultify themselves by making remarks like this. They are only making fools of themselves when they make remarks like this.

I will tell you who the people were who took this decision to arrest us. It was not one man who took this decision. There were two responsible Ministers, one Deputy Minister, the Secretary to the Cabinet and Brigadier Weeratunge. They were there when this decision was taken. I want to ask them, and also hon. Members, when the Leader of the Opposition is taken into custody should not somebody at least inform the Head of the State, inform the Hon. Speaker that they are taking him into custody on the eve of the elections? And for anybody to pretend that it was for our protection— (Interruption). How do you know all this? How do you know why we were taken into custody? Do you not know that you are making fools of yourselves by shouting like this? (Interruption). If not for the fact that this is fraught with such serious consequences one might say that the continuance of democracy in this island appears to be a comic matter. But it is a very serious matter if you value the rights of Members of this House. I wish to know from the two Hon. Ministers, who are now present in this House, who were a party to this decision to arrest us.

Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

Not to arrest you,

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Shut up, You do not know any thing,— (Interruption).

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Order, please! I think it is justifiable for hon. Members to make interruptions

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

How many times do the Members shout?

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

I have no doubt the hon. Member will withdraw the word he used, but I request the hon. Member for Ratnapura (Mr. Punchinilame) also to limit his interruptions.

Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Sir, I withdraw the remark, but let the hon. Member for Ratnapura (Mr. Punchinilame) please keep his mouth shut and allow me to speak.

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

There, again he goes on-

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

That is permitted in Parliament.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

The request of the hon. Leader of the Opposition is to permit him to carry on with his speech I dare say that any hon. Member is entitled to make certain remarks, but not to interrupt:

(Mr G, V, Punchinilame)

With due respect to you, Sir, I do not like to be dictated to by another member of this House, So, he should withdraw that remark.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingm)

I have withdrawn it, but I have requested you to keep your mouth shut and permit me to speak. That is all.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

I wish the hon. Member for Ratnapura takes that advice.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

So, We were there in the Army camp and at about 8.30 some Army officers came and told us that His Excellency wanted to speak to me on the telephone. - (Interruption). For breakfast we were given some godamba rotti with sambol. I am glad that somebody thought of my breakfasts

Thereupon, I had to go some two or three bungalows away to speak to His Excellency over the telephone. He said "It has been a mistake. I have ordered the release of you and the other Members of Parliament. I am sorry about it." That is all His Excellency said. Even at the time, let the hon. Members of this House take note, His Excellency never told me that we were taken into custody for our protection. He never told me that Instead of asking us to bring the police officer, they might ask His Excellency about it.



Then, I asked in all earnestness from the Hon. Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs and the Hon. Minister of Lands and Land Development, who, to the best of the information that I had, were parties to this decision to arrest the Members of Parliament of the TULF on the eve of the election, whether they deny that or whether they admit that they were parties to this:- (interruption). I know that the Hon. Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs loves me more than anybody else.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

He is the dearest friend we have in the world!

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

After being the guests of his Excellency's Government for six hours from 3 o'clock we were released and allowed to go.

I would request the Hon. Minister of State who is in charge of Information and who is a fair-minded person, to tell us whether the Government admits that it had made a mistake. They must not try to tell the world—

(Mr. Anandatissa de Alwis-Minister of State)

That was a mistake, I admit that.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Thank you.

(Mr. Anura Bandaranaike)

The only honourable Member on that side!

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

This attack on people had continued throughout the night of the 3rd, on the eve of election, and a number of people had been killed on the roads in Jaffna. At Kopay one Parameshwaram, a Cultivation Officer, was taken into custody by the Police at about 8.10 p. m. on the night of the 3rd. His body was found shot a few hundred yards away from the place where he was taken into custody, on the Kopay-Neervely Road. That is on the Point Pedro Road.

Shortly before that, a dhoby and a boy were returning after work on a bicycle on the Urumpirai-Kopay Road. The police threw the bicycle on a side and took these two men into the jeep. The body of the dhoby was found thrown on the road with gunshot injuries, and the body of the boy was recovered at a different spot very much later

The same night at about 2.45 or 3 a.m. some army personnel had got into the office of the hon. Member for Nallur (Mr. M. Sivasithamparam). There were some young men, election workers who were sleeping on the verandah. A boy by the name of Balajothy who had completed his training as a seaman in the Hon. Minister's training school at Trincomalee and who had just got back, was there sleeping on the verandah of the hon. Member's office. These army men had rushed in at 2.45 a.m., jumped over the parapet wall and entered. These boys had run in all directions. The army men shot, and on the verandah of the office of the hon. Member for Nallur this boy Balajothy was killed by a rifle bullet which had gone through his head.-(Interruption) I do not know whom they were looking for.

Anyhow Sir, this does not complete the tally of deaths that were caused on the night of the 3rd, on the eve of an election. What was that purpose? Was it to further democracy? Was it to inspire confidence in the democratic process among the people that all these shootings and killings were done on the roads of Jaffna four or five hours before polling was due to start?

I do not want to speak of what happened in respect of the polls. I will tell you, Sir, that we intend giving notice of a Vote of Censure on certain responsible Ministers for the way they interfered with the functions of the Returning officer and the Assistant Commissioner of Elections in Jaffna and destroyed democracy as far these elections went. I will not speak on it today because the results of that election have not yet been declared. I understand that the Commissioner of Elections has now decided to ask the Returning Officer to count those votes. Of course, the bulk of the votes had been counted in the respective polling stations, but about 40 to 45 boxes had been taken without counting in spite of requests by counting agents that they should be counted. Whatever that may be I do not want to deal with that aspect of it. That is a very, very serious matter, not for us alone but for everybody in this country who values democracy and the elective process as a means of changing or installing governments in a democratic way. I will not deal with that now, Sir.

Even on the following day, with army patrol, a liquor shop was broken open at Inuvil. One can verify from the employees of the Inuvil Hospital that was done by army personnel. They



broke open the liquor shop, which is opposite that hospital, and removed the liquor that was there. They have done the same thing at Nelliaddy in Point Pedro- (interruption) I know that is the raw material for your type of elections.

Now Sir I do not want to narrate at length all these things but I would like to say that the - Tamil people in this country cannot continue to be treated in this way time after time. This was not the first time that this has happened. So, on behalf of our people we have to place certain demands before this Government to punish the offenders and to guard against a recurrence of events of this nature. These are the demands that we are placing before this Government.

(1) that the police force responsible for this havoc be sent out immediately and the Government should see to it that at least 75 percent of the police force and all officers in charge of police stations and senior police officers in the Tamil-speaking areas are Tamils or Muslims;

(2) that a system of home guards be established in each district under District Development Councils to act in conjunction with the police to safeguard the lives and the property of civilians;

(3) that the army responsible for the killing and looting be withdrawn immediately, and whatever limited number of armed personnel are necessary for purposes of security be confined to barracks;

(4) that the Government should permit an appropriate international organization like Amnesty International or the International Commission of Jurists to make a full inquiry into the events of the last few days, from 31st May to 8th June, and the violations of human rights in Jaffna and to report on what action should be taken on them and to prevent a recurrence of similar events;

(5) that the miscreants be identified and punished adequately and immediate redress be given to the victims.

On behalf of the TULF I wish to say that we are placing these demands for the serious consideration of the Government and hon. Members. We ask that an international organization like Amnesty

International or the International Commission or Jurists should inquire into these incidents because we have lost all confidence in Select Committees and Commissions of Inquiry which go on for years and years and produce nothing but abortions.

Sir, unless and until adequate measures are taken to meet these demands the TULF Members of Parliament will not attend the Sittings of Parliament and will not participate in the legislative process except to expose the Government on a Vote of Censure on the conduct of the District Development Council elections in the Jaffna District which we intend giving notice of in conjunction with other Opposition parties.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we have committed any offence, I invite Government to put us on trial. We are prepared to face any trial anywhere. Let the normal process of law be complied with. In the same way, in the case of these policemen who committed these murders, arson and looting, merely because they are in uniform let not the Government condone these actions and for all time keep the Tamil people at the receiving end of these heinous attacks and crimes.

Thank you.



‘You have let loose on an unarmed people,  
violence unparalleled in any civilized  
country during peace time . . . ,

( *Speech by the M.P. for Jaffna, Mr. V. Yogeswaran  
in Parliament on June 9.* )

(Mr. V. Yogeswaran-Jaffna)

Mr. Deputy Speaker, from 1977 onwards I have participated in a number of debates on the Floor of this House. Today my voice is my own but my clothes are all borrowed. The *verti* I am wearing is a gift from the Member for Trincomalee, the national banian is borrowed, the banian I am wearing under it is my fathers. So, as I told you at the outset only my voice is my own;

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the last few days I have had plenty of time to think to myself on the events and the incidents that had taken place. I thought to myself that the Tamil community, the Tamil nation must learn certain lessons from the events of the 1st to the 8th, and the Sinhala nation must learn certain lessons from the incidents from the 1st to the 8th. I learned some lessons from the incidents from the 1st to the 8th.

As regards the Sinhala nation, after listening to the reactions of the House to the speech of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, I think they have learned nothing, they have forgotten nothing.

As regards the Tamil nation, I assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and everyone in front of me that the Tamil nation has learned the lesson correctly. They have drawn the correct conclusions and the correct inferences from these actions. I assure you of that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today I am left with nothing I have no worldly possessions of my own except my heart which is beating within me. It is working quite correctly, quite firmly. And I am more than ever convinced, more than ever determined, more than ever resolved to free my people of this tyranny, this tyrannical rule. I am more than ever determined about that.

I told you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the lessons the two nations must learn, which one nation, bitterly, has not learned and the other has bitterly learned. As for me, before I could recount the incidents which happened at my residence, they have been detailed graphically by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. As far as I am concerned, the lesson I have learned is this.

You have let loose—the Government, one half of the Government has let loose—on an unarmed people violence unparalleled in any civilized country during peace time. My personal view is, God wanted me to live, and miraculously I escaped. Even that day as I was running I told my wife, “This is the end of the story”. But God has willed that this should not be the end of the story. Perhaps, he has burned all my clothes, he has burned my house. I have no worldly possessions, nothing of my own. Perhaps, He has told me. “You speak eloquently of freedom for your people but sometimes you dress too flamboyantly; do not do that. You live to a certain extent luxuriously; do not do that.” I have learnt those lessons. These two nations must learn. I have learnt the lesson.

As I told you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the fateful 31st night I never expected to survive. I never expected my poor wife to survive. Standing here today I sometimes wonder whether I am taking part in my own obituary reference. I force myself to say, “No I am addressing this House on a very important debate.”

The hon. Leader of the Opposition has described graphically the events that took place. I will only tell you about the bastardly attack on my house. This must be a unique instance of a parliamentary representative living in the electorate with his people, living among the people whom he loved and perhaps loved by them in return, having had to hide, to hide from house to house. From whom? The custodians of law and order!

(Mr. G. V. Punchnilame)

*rose*

(Mr. V. Yogeswaran)

I will deal with you before I conclude!

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

You wanted Rs. 30 lakhs from the Government for 17 perches. Just now you said that you did not have anything.





Mr. V. Yogeswaran)

That is my father's. He bought that property with his sweat.

(Mr. G. V. Punchinilame)

It is written in your name.

(Mr. V. Yogeswaran)

It is my father's hard-earned money. He has honourably made that money. You are backing the racketeer, the tenant. I know, I will deal with you!

(Mr. Deputy Speaker)

Order, please! Please address the Chair.

(Mr. V. Yogeswaran)

I am sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I was telling this House about the incidents of the 31st, I had gone to three or four meetings, the last meeting at a place called Tellipallai to support the TULF candidate, and I was returning home. I went to one of the meetings in the Jaffna Electorate, and the meeting was over by a quarter to nine. I questioned one or two persons standing there. Nobody else was there. They told me that the police had come and disturbed the meeting. I came home and wanted to attend another meeting. My wife told me there had been some trouble and asked me not to go as most likely the other meeting had also been abandoned at that stage. From my house I could see the flicker of flames from the bazaar area. Immediately my wife told me, "I think they will attack our house". Of course, being a parliamentarian, I thought they might come and shout but would not enter the house as I was a Member of Parliament who was elected by the people and lived with them. I tried to contact the District Minister. He was not there. I telephoned his Private Secretary and told him, "the police are burning some portions of the town"—(Laughter.) Mr. Deputy Speaker, while they are laughing the whole world is laughing at them! You have burnt a part of a great city and you show nothing but your derisive laughter! Those who read this Hansard will look down upon you. Do not do that. Do not laugh. This is a serious matter.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I tried to contact the G. A., Jaffna, also but I could not get at him. I booked a few calls, one the Deputy Minister of Defence with whom I had talked over this matter even earlier. I even wanted to talk to the Hon. Prime Minister. I booked a call to Trincomalee where my leader was, I was waiting for those calls.

Just opposite my house there is a fairly important junction—the Point Pedro-Hospital Road Junction. From the junction I could hear loud noises. My wife told me that they would definitely attack our house. I said, “No. They might shout and go away. Let me get through to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Deputy Minister of Defence and tell them what is happening” She was adamant that we should go away, but I did not go. I opened my office door. Through the office window I could see my front gate. I saw 50 to 100 people, some in khaki uniforms, some in white banians and khaki shorts, some in sarongs, some armed with rods, some with swords and some with rifles, standing near the gate. I really could not comprehend what the situation was. They tried to open the gate that was locked at that time. Those people were terribly intoxicated. Before they came to my house they had looted foreign liquor shops and consumed “White Horse” whisky and “Hennessy” brandy. This was liquor that was alien to them and it had gone to their heads. They could not open the gate. They pushed the gate. It did not open. I saw an officer shoot at the lock. Then I told my wife that it was not safe to wait there any more, and we both ran. We jumped over two or three walls and got to safety. Then they opened the gate. They poured something on all the doors and set fire to them. I climbed over the wall and escaped. My wife also climbed over the wall. After that I missed her.

Forty five minutes after I had hidden in my neighbour's house I scaled the walls and wanted to look where my wife was. There was one police officer in banian and khaki shorts. He got hold of me by the hand, but as he was intoxicated—I told you earlier that most of them were intoxicated—I was able to wrench myself away and again scale over the wall and escape. Till about 3 or 4 o'clock nobody knew where my wife was. Then we went and searched in the neighbourhood and found her.



In my premises the jeep was securely parked in the garage, and the garage was locked. They pushed the jeep out of the garage, hammered the jeep with iron rods, pushed it on to the road, poured petrol on it and set it on fire. The jeep was reduced to cinders. There was a Peugeot 404 car which a friend of mine had parked there. They set fire to that car too. I presume they must have looted some jewellery, but all the jewellery was burnt or missing; I have not seen a single item yet. The typewriters and all the office equipment I had were completely burnt. I am an attorney-at-law and a Notary public. All the deeds, protocols and originals or hundreds of deeds were also burnt. About 12 or 13 young boys had given me their passports to alter them from "Middle East" to "All Countries". I told them that I would attend to it when I came to Colombo on the 8th or 9th to attend Parliament. I had told them that they did not need to come. All those passports were burnt. Really, my wife was left with the gown she was wearing and I was left with the yellow sarong I was wearing at that time. That is all I have in my possession now. Mr. Deputy Speaker., that is the protection some hon. Members spoke about.

That morning I went to my father's house. He is a doctor. He lives about 300 yards away from my house. My father and mother live there. I have had to live incognito in my own electorate and among my own people I went and stayed elsewhere. That day at 5 p. m. some army men had gone to my father's house and wanted to know where I was. He had told them: "I do not know where he is. You have to give me one or two days' time. I can contact him." They said: "No need. If we want we will come tomorrow morning". At 2 a.m. about 7 or 8 officers had come and scaled the walls of my father's house. Both my father and mother are very old. These policemen had scaled the walls, banged at the door and shouted, "Open up; we are police officers." They opened the door and policemen asked, "Where is your son?" They had said, "We do not know where he is. He is staying with some of his friends." Then they asked, "Can we search the house?" They searched every room and under every bed on the first night they had come to offer protection. What did they want? They were searching under the beds. They wanted to give protection, not at my house, but at my father's house. They harassed these poor people. I feel sorry that I entered politics and gave room for my parents to be harassed at this age. But there are certain duties and rights that we have. We also do our duty by our people. So that is that Mr. Deputy Speaker, they went and harassed my father. My father had said, "I do not know where he is." They searched every inch of the house and they went off.



So, Sir, this whole question of offering protection is all eye-wash. As I told you earlier, it was really a miracle that I escaped. They had gone to my father and harassed him.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is another small matter which I want to refer to since the Hon. Minister of State is here. During this period my father-in-law died of a heart attack. This incident also contributed to his heart attack. The newspapers did not publish his death notice. My father in law's relatives thought they would make a radio announcement about his death. In that announcement they had said, "So-and-so, father of so-and-so and father-in-law of so-and-so, M. P. for Jaffna." But what did the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation do? They cut "M.P. for Jaffna". The people are electing a Member of Parliament for Jaffna, but the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation deletes the words "M P. for Jaffna". They did not like it. But I think they would have charged for the total number of words—I do not know.

So, Sir, one arm of this Government had unleashed terror on unarmed, innocent people—violent, unprecedented terror.—(*Interruption.*) They will teach you (*Interruption.*) You laugh now. But they teach you.

I ask the Hon. Minister of Land to see what trials and tribulations the British soldiers are subjected to in Ireland. But do they go and burn the houses of Members of Parliament or of the ordinary people? (*Interruption.*) Your duty is to restrain them. They must be a disciplined force. Let the police force be disciplined.

I have my own idea of the reasons why these persons were sent to Jaffna that day. I will deal with that later. There are a large number of speakers to follow me. I only related the incidents concerning the attack on my house. There are a number of incidents which have to be placed on record. Perhaps, other speakers will do so.

The Hon. Minister of Lands and Land Development said, though belatedly, that he was extremely sorry for what happened in Jaffna. I accept that, speaking for myself, as I told you earlier, one arm of your Government has tried to do untold damage to property and to myself, but it has failed. What future plans that arm of your Government has in store for me I do not know. Whatever plans they have, I think somebody above will foil such plans. I have full confidence in that. In spite of all the trials and tribulations we have a commitment to God which we will pursue with determination and resoluteness.

Thank you.



# Movement for the Defence of Democratic Rights oppose State Terrorism

The Movement for the Defence of Democratic Rights, having considered the shocking events in Jaffna during the week beginning May 31, resolves as follows:

1. We hold the Government responsible for the lawless acts committed by sections of the police and other armed State personnel as well as hired thugs imported into Jaffna. We vehemently condemn these acts, which included large-scale arson, demolition and looting of about a hundred private homes, shops and other buildings, as well as at least three arbitrary killings. We denounce in particular the burning of the Jaffna Public Library, with the deliberate destruction of 95,000 books (including the children's Library) and the burning of three bookshops as a fascist attack on the culture of a people, comparable to the Nazi book-burnings. We denounce also the murderous assault on the home of the M.P. for Jaffna as well as the destruction of the TULF office and the premises of the **Ealanadu** newspaper, the only provincial daily in the country.
2. We condemn the organised attempt by the Government and its agents touring the District Development Council Elections in the Jaffna district through the replacement of over a hundred Senior Presiding Officers on the eve of the polls by handpicked party stooges, and the numerous and flagrant violations of election law and procedure at many polling stations. These illegalities represent a massive attack on the right of free and fair elections, on a scale never before experienced in this country, which makes farcical the Government's celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of universal franchise this year.
3. We warn the people as a whole that the violence in Jaffna represents a further advance in the State terrorism practised earlier by the Government and its agents in the attacks in various parts of the country on strikers, pickets, students and other sections of the people engaged in exercising their right of peaceful and democratic protest. We urged the people to be alive to the fact that this resort to State terrorism, coupled with the anti-democratic laws

enacted by the Government (such as the Essential Public Services Act and the Prevention of Terrorism Act) represent a programme of repressive action directed against the rights of all sections of the people, whatever their ethnic character, religion or language. We warn the people against being misled by any racist cries raised by Government politicians and propagandists whose intention is to divide and disarm the people in the face of the Government's repressive policies. We further point out that the massive rigging of the District Development Councils Elections in Jaffna, and indeed the very conduct of the polls under emergency and curfew, is an ominous and sinister trend which, unless resolutely opposed by the people, will prepare the way for the denial in 1983 of the right of the people to elect a Government of their choice at a free and honestly conducted election.

4. We call for full compensation for all persons who have suffered loss of property or personal harm at the hands of the armed personnel of the state or gangs of thugs working in collaboration with them as well as for the families of those killed. We demand at the same time that all persons who directed or participated in the arson, destruction and looting the killings, or the rigging of the elections, be identified and punished.

5. We express our willingness to co-operate in setting up an independent non-governmental committee to inquire into the violence in Jaffna and the conduct of the polls so as to help in achieving the ends of compensation of victims and identification of the guilty. We reject the Government's proposal to appoint a commission of inquiry since the Government has a direct interest in concealing the truth, as is confirmed by the fact that the terminal date of the scope of its inquiry stated to be the declaration of emergency on June, 2, thus excluding the killing by armed personnel and the conduct of the elections from the commission's terms of reference.

6. We demand the continuing problems of harassment, intimidation and violence created by the fact that preponderant sections of the police in the North are not drawn from the area, as well as of the inability of many of them to communicate with the people through their ignorance of the language, should be at least partially eased by drawing a substantial majority of the force stationed in the North from the local communities in the North and making them subject to the control of these communities.



7. While holding the Government collectively responsible for the events referred to above, we state that a direct and special responsibility for the indiscipline of the police and the breakdown of the state apparatus of law and order falls on the Minister and Deputy Minister in charge of the police as well as on the Cabinet Ministers who were present in Jaffna during these events as the highest accredited representatives of the Government on the spot. We point out that in democratic countries there is long-established tradition by which Ministers take responsibility for the misconduct or failures of their subordinates and resign, even in much lesser circumstances than the events in Jaffna

Reggie Siriwardene.

On behalf of the Movement for Defence of Democratic Rights.

## Joint Statement of opposition parties

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Lanka Samasamaja Party, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna and the Ceylon Communist Party do strongly protest against the arrest of Leader of the Opposition, members of the Tamil United Liberation Front and others in the course of the recent tragic happenings in Jaffna. We condemn the violence both official and unofficial that has been unleashed in the Northern Province and in other places. We condemn the use of the Emergency to suppress the democratic right of press and platform to Opposition Parties.

The U.N.P. Government failed to enable a peaceful election to be held in Jaffna. The murder of Dr. Thiagarajah which occurred in the midst of the election deserves universal condemnation.

There is reason to believe that some of those who were entrusted with the maintenance of law and order were themselves responsible for the looting, burning and destruction that has taken place.

These tragic events are further proof of the total failure of UNP policy in regard to the settlement of majority-minority relations in Sri Lanka. This failure is added to the consequence of UNP rule since 1977. UNP rule has resulted in an economic and financial crisis that has brought to the common man the intolerable burden of inflation, and now, increasing unemployment. The attacks on the working class and the erosion of democratic rights continue unchecked.

It is also clear that the UNP confronted with the bankruptcy of its own policies has resorted to fanning communal hatred in order to stem the growing opposition of the mass of the people. From this it is an easy step to the inworking of special powers and the establishment of dictatorial rule.



## Statement by the Communist Party of Sri Lanka

"It condemns the widespread arson and the attacks on persons and property in the Jaffna District committed on May 31, and June 1st—on the eve of the DDC elections in Jaffna by a section of the additional Police force that the Government sent to Jaffna to augment the security forces already there.

"What is especially reprehensible is that these outrages should have been committed by security personnel which the Government had sent to Jaffna in the name of guaranteeing law and order and peaceful Development Council elections, and that they should have taken place when several UNP Ministers and their security chiefs were personally in Jaffna directing affairs.

The wanton burning and destruction of Public and private property on these days is far worse than what was experienced in 1977.

"Among the premises gutted by fire or otherwise destroyed are Jaffna's Public Library with its 26,000 books, many irreplaceable; the T.U.L.F. headquarters and the residence of its Jaffna MP; the office and printing press of the ELANADU daily newspaper, the Chunnakam and Jaffna markets; over 100 shops and boutiques; and many vehicles and bicycles.

"Some killings by members of the security forces have also been reported".

"The Communist Part condemns those who seek to justify or excuse these outrages as a necessary collective punishment of the people of Jaffna for the killing of a UNP candidate and a police sergeant by a person or persons unknown. While rejecting such acts of individual terrorism, the Communist Party is firmly of opinion that collective terrorism by the state or its security agencies is no answer to individual terrorism.

“The Communist Party draws the attention of all democratic forces and public organisations to the need to be vigilant concerning and to oppose, the growing trend towards state-sponsored and state-patronised terrorism. This trend, which began with the killing of the trade union martyr Somapala during the 1980 picketing campaign, has now been repeated on an even bigger scale in Jaffna.”

“Unable or unwilling to curb a section of its security services that had got out of hand, the Government instead imposed a state of emergency—first in Jaffna and later throughout Sri Lanka. As a result, normal life and essential supplies have been seriously disrupted in Jaffna for many days.

“The Communist party is convinced that it is impossible to restore conditions of normality in Jaffna as long as this part of our country is treated by the Government like the occupied territory of an enemy state. It is also impossible to restore normality as long as the state of emergency exists and while those responsible for these outrages remain members of the security services in charge of maintaining law and order in Jaffna.

It therefore calls for the complete withdrawal of the additional police forces that the Government sent to Jaffna, and for the lifting of the state of emergency both in Jaffna and throughout the country.

“The Communist party further demands that:-

- (a) a public inquiry is held into the Composition, political character and method of selection of the so-called “volunteers” included in the augmented police force sent to Jaffna.
- (b) those responsible for encouraging and committing these outrages and breaches of the law are apprehended and punished.
- (c) the victims of these outrages are fully compensated for the losses they have sustained and



(d) the Government gives a full and public account of the activities of the Ministers and supporters that it sent to Jaffna to conduct the UNO's DDC election campaigning including the persons responsible for ordering the arrest of the Leader of the Opposition and other TULF MPs on the morning of these elections.

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"The sporadic acts of violence that have marred the traditionally tranquil atmosphere of Jaffna did not crop up spontaneously. They can be related directly to gross political discrimination meted out to Tamils and the reign of police and army terror unleashed on them in the post-1970 period....

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— EMERGENCY '79 a MIRJE publication (May 1980)

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## Governments' attempt to rig the Jaffna election

A grama sevaka an office messenger (Peon) several village level cultivation officers, junior clerks and assistant teachers were amongst those who officiated as senior presiding officers and counting officers at the elections to the Jaffna District Development Council held on the 4th of June. These were not officials duly selected by the Commissioner of Elections but were handpicked by the high command of the United National Party. Altogether 150 officials picked by the Commissioner of Elections were replaced by nominees of the ruling party just before the poll.

For the first time in the this country the conduct of an election was wrested from the control of the duly constituted authority and exercised by a political party. Thus has the ruling United National Party celebrated the golden Jubilee of universal adult suffrage in Sri Lanka.

The 'Nation' learns from reliable sources in the administration that the Commissioner of Elections Mr. M. A. Piyasekera may tender his resignation as a protest against this Government attempt to rig an election. Commentators observe that the exercise in Jaffna was a test run for similar plans for future elections to Parliament and to the presidency, plans calculated to destroy the electoral franchise of the entire nation. Even in Districts such as Colombo the principle of secret ballot was violated by senior presiding officers, under UNP political direction, so to place the voting cubicles that they could observe the manner in which voters marked their ballot papers.

In Jaffna, the political picked senior presiding officers, neither knew the procedure for the conduct of the poll nor were they able to perform their duties as counting officers.



Their very incompetence and the resistance of impartial public officers who could not be removed by Government leaders posted to Jaffna made the UNP assault on the franchise an ignominious failure. The UNP got only 7.37% of 315,999 ballot papers available on the count which took place 12 days after the date of the election. Six ballot item of the Jayawardenepremadasa celebration of 50 year's Universal adult Franchise In countless general elections and bye elections in the past fifty years, to the State Council to Parliament, to the National State Assembly to numerous local bodies, not one ballot box has ever been lost or even been out of sight of responsible persons from the beginning of a poll to the end of a count.

The 'Nation' has learned the identities of the UNP nominees who replaced the appointees of the Commissioner of Elections as Senior Presiding officers and counting officers. The names of some of them and the polling stations they were incharge of are given below:

1. Lekamlage Rupasinghe Grama Sevaka Galamula G. S. Division No. 298, Kurunegala District-Senior Presiding officer and Counting Officer, polling station No. C20, Kankesanturai.
2. S. B. C. Gunaratna Banda, Cultivation Officer, Kurunegala District-Senior Presiding Officer and Counting Officer, Polling Station No. C42, Kankesanturai.
3. M. A. Nihal Piyatissa, peon, Kurunegala Kachcheri-S. P. O. and C. O. Polling Station No. C39, Kankesanturai.
4. Warnakulasuriya George Sunil Tissera, punch Car Operator Department of Census and Statistics SPO C.O Polling Station No. 12. Udupiddy.
5. J. M. Abeyratne, Cultivation Officers Kuliyaipitiya, Kurunegala District-SPO and C/o, Polling Station No. C39 Kankesanturai.
6. A. M. Wimalasara, Clerk, Judicial Service Commission-S. P. O. and C. O. Polling Station No, C37, Manipay,

Several senior Presiding Officers make frank revelations in their statutory reports to the Returning officer, Jaffna District. A. C. Kumarasinghe, S. P. O. Polling Station No. 7, Kankesanturai reports that he could commence the poll at his station only at 11.30 A. M. and that often the closure of the poll, he despatched the ballot box to the Kachcheri without counting the votes as he had no instruction on the procedure. K. Mathiyaparanam, S. P. O. of a polling station in Myliddy reports that he could not complete the count at his station as he was not permitted to do so by security personnel. S. B. C. Gunaratne, the Cultivation Officer from Kurunegala also reports that he sent ballot box from his station to the Kachcheri without sent the ballot box from his station to the Kachcheri without conducting the count. As 40 of UNP replacements for the appointees of the Commissioner of Elections were got down from Kurunegala in the morning of the election day. It is understandable that they did not know the procedure laid down in the law and in the instructions issued to proper appointees by the Commissioner. They could have known only the instructions they have received from their political instructors,

The first prong of the UNP strategy to gain at least one DC seat in Jaffna District was the direct interference reported above. The second prong was inhuman both in conception and its consequences.

Several hundred men picked for their readiness to do anything were sent from UNP electorates to Jaffna a few days before the poll. According to informed sources they were deliberately dressed in such a manner as to deceive people in to believing that UNP mobsters were policemen in plain-cloths. The UNP thus not only revaged the area, but also sought to throw the blame on the Police Reports from Jaffna indicate that public have not been deceived.

The UNP campaign directors posted to Jaffna for the election were Caluwadewage Cyril Mathew, Landed Proprietor, Lionel Gamini Dissanayake, Attorney at law. Matthew is after referred to as the "Bete Noir" of the Tamils. The question is, was he in Jaffna to win the hearts of the Tamil voters and help the UNP defeat the TULF with his appeal to the people of Jaffna? If so he did not succeed, not even with the assistance of Lionel Gamini and Michel Festus Wenceslaus,



## Withdraw Sinhala Forces from North — NAVA SAMASAMAJA PARTY

The Government replied the mass mobilisation in the North during the District Development Council Elections with a reign of terror. Apart from the police and the forces, communalist goondas from the south were deployed in the terror campaign. While massive destruction was caused to private and public property untold numbers were subjected to grievous hurt and many brutally murdered. All this took place while two prominent anti-democratic machinery In no way could this Government be allowed to wash it's hands clean in these atrocities.

Invariably the struggle of the Tamil Speaking people for their rights and emancipation in the North will develop in leaps. The Tamil Speaking People are commonly experiencing the fact that this side of taking the administration into their hands, there is no alternative in facing this brutal type. They have now realised that the main and the most important fact is to unite with the anti-Government forces in the South to throw the Government.

Our party has strove to show that unless the Tamil Speaking people are given the right for self-determination, by removing the determination of the Sinhala forces there is no solution. It is notwithstanding any basic democratic teneurs to use the Sinhala Police and other administrative officers to rule the Tamil Speaking People in the North and to let lose the Sinhala Forces on the other hand it is down-right crime to send Bandas and Silvas to an unknown place to oppress those people and subject them to death.

The Government which is caught in international debts has thrown the weight of it's crisis and has let loose a reign of oppression. The Government intervention in destroying the election in the North shown clearly it's tendency to crush anti-Government mobilisation. This indicates that the 83 election will be an amplification of the 81 elections in the North. Therefore it is necessary to unite all anti-Government forces on issues like Communalism, destroying of jobs, rise in cost of living and erosion of civic rights.

Although the demands put forward by the TULF is not adequate we are committed to support all demands of the TULF. What is now necessary is a Committee of inquiry consisting of Trade Unions democratic and civil rights organizations. We call upon all democratic elements to join us in appointing such a committee.

**Dr. Vickramabahu Karunaratne.**  
General Secretary.

# Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka

Bishop's House,  
Kurunegala.

24 June 1981.

His Excellency J. R. Jayawardene  
President, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka  
Janadhipathi Mandiraya  
Colombo

Your Excellency,

## **The events in Jaffna since 31st May 1981**

You will have received communications from the Civil Rights movement of which I am Chairman, regarding these events. I have been to Jaffna early this month and have seen things for myself, and would therefore wish to bring to your notice the following matters.

First the exact facts regarding the shooting at the meeting near Nachchimar Kovilady temple on 31st May, as a result of which Sergeant Punchi Banda died on that day, and a constable Kanagasunderam died subsequently, still remain a mystery.

In the interests of all concerned and in view of contradictory rumours, may I suggest that an independent inquiry be made soon by some persons of known integrity, and its report be published without delay.

I note from a press announcement that the appointment of a Commission of inquiry is envisaged by your Government. What will be crucial is that this Commission is one which is accepted nationally as both trustworthy and competent. Both its composition and terms of reference should be agreeable at least to the TULF, and if possible be agreed, upon by all parties represented in Parliament.

All those responsible for violence or terrorism from any quarter should receive due punishment after fair trial by the normal legal process. The victims of such violence or terrorism should be duly compensated.



Secondly, the burning of or other damage to (a) public buildings of value to the people of Jaffna such as a portion of the Nachchimar Kovilady temple, the whole section of the public Library which contained its valuable books and priceless manuscripts, the premises of Eelanadu which is an independent regional daily newspaper for the Tamil-speaking people (b) the property of political opponents such as the TULF party office building and house with vehicles of Mr V. Yogeswaran (TULF) M. P. for Jaffna (c) shops in the Grand Bazaar, near Rani Theatre, in Chunnakam Kankesanthurai are stark and painful facts.

These were seen to be done by persons both in uniform and in civil clothes, and on most occasions they carried rifles. I received many reports that those in civil clothes were members of the Police Force, Police Reserve Force or Sinhala thugs from elsewhere, and that the persons allegedly not belonging to the security forces were either encouraged or given the opportunity to go on the rampage and do the damage aforementioned, by the security forces, and especially by the police. The damage aforementioned, by the security forces, and especially by the police. The damage done can be seen by anybody who visits the peninsula. Evidence can be provided by those who saw when and where such damage was done.

These acts of counter - terrorism by the aforesaid persons cannot, to my mind or the mind of any impartial person, be excused as justifiable acts of retaliation for the murders of Dr. Thiagarajah and the death of Sergeant Punchi Banda. They have caused humiliation and damage, and produced a deep sense of insecurity in the Jaffna region as a whole. The physical and psychological damage which I saw for myself (and I have been an annual visitor to Jaffna for many years) made me deeply ashamed, of such acts of revengeful brutality.

May I suggest to your Excellency that the people of Jaffna be allowed to form a Citizens voluntary Security force of their own as a legitimate form of self-protection against terrorism from any quarter. The personnel for this could be enlisted with due circumspection and it could work in cooperation with a reorganised police force which should be predominantly Tamil-speaking and preferably non-Sinhala.

It would be useless to expect the people of Jaffna to have confidence now in predominantly Singhal security forces intended to preserve law and order, and criminal to expose them to future acts of such vengeance. The envisaged Citizens Voluntary Security Force would also involve the Jaffna folk in their own protection against acts of terrorism by individuals or gangs. It is vital that they be provided with facilities protect their lives, their homes and their public buildings at this critical point in time. These are their democratic rights which the Constitution of 1978 guarantees to them.

Thirdly, the reports relating to irregularities in connection with the election to the Jaffna Development Council held on 4th June are widespread. In a press announcement I note that your Excellency is reported to have stated that certain ballot boxes were either received late, not received or later found in a hotel. The allegations that malpractices occurred during this election because the orders given by the Commissioner for Elections were over-ruled and the officers trained and sent by him were intimidated in Jaffna, on the orders of certain senior personnel in your government who have your confidence, is disquieting, to say the least. Whatever may have been the unforeseen circumstances the allegation that such representatives of the Government in power used these circumstances to interfere with due electoral procedures is something which must be investigated impartially, in order to safeguard the operation of the democratic process in the future, and especially in 1983 when the general elections are due to be held.

In view of the damage done and the alleged electoral malpractice all of which relate to the period after 2nd June, I cannot see the justification for restricting the probe of the envisaged Commission of Inquiry to incidents up to 2nd June, as stated in a press announcement. To leave out significant days from the probe of any commission of inquiry, is to undermine confidence in the due operation of the democratic process in the future and in the impartiality of such a commission of Inquiry probes also into the incidents which took place during the days 2nd to 4th June. I was in Jaffna 5th June 1981 and know personally the significance of the aforementioned days as a subject for an impartial inquiry.



As I mentioned to Mr Amirthalingam in person while in Jaffna and to Mr Ranil Wickremesinghe on the telephone from Jaffna in spite of whatever criticisms I have to make of certain policies followed by your Excellency and the present Government I personally am among those who believe that among the present Sinhala leaders it is you who at this critical juncture in our island history has both the sagacity and the capacity to ensure a stable settlement between the Sinhala and Tamil communities.

It is for this reason that I am taking the liberty to write you this letter.

Yours faithfully,

*The Rt. Revd* **LAKSHMAN WICKRAMASINGHE**  
Chairman, Civil Rights Movement,

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## **'Forwards' View of Government Appointed Commissions**

No one can have confidence in the Commission that the government intends to appoint to probe recent violence in Jaffna.

It will be a repeat performance of the Sansoni Commission-only worse. What is not whitewash will be witch-hunt.

The government's own role in the disgraceful state terrorism and election rigging in Jaffna between May 31 and June 8 this year is so suspect that any Commission it appoints unilaterally will be automatically tainted. Only a Commission whose members and terms of reference are also approved by the Opposition parties, and especially the elected representatives of the Tamils, can inspire the confidence that so serious a probe requires.

*(From the Editorial of 'The Forward,' the Communist Party Journal July 1, 1981)*

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## Library: an appeal for expiation

The Citizens Committee for National Harmony has launched an appeal to "persons of all walks of life to contribute towards a fund for the rebuilding of the Jaffna Public Library ... We think that the nation as a whole should expiate this crime by our forces of law and order". The signatories are: Mr. Godfrey Goonetilleke, Tissa Bala-suriya, C. M. I, Prof. E. R. Sarathchandra Bp. Leo Nanayakkara, O.S.B., Dr. Gunadasa Amarasekera, Dr. Carlo Fonseka, Mr. Norbert Mawalage, Mr. G. Kurukulasuriya, Ms. Kusala Abhaya-wardhana, Mr. Victor Gunawardena, Rev. Celestine Fernando, Sr. Helene Marguerite H. F., Mr. S. Nadesan, Q.C. Mr. A. Samara-jeewa, Mr. H. A. Ian Goonetilleke, M. H. Mohideen, Ms. Bernadeen Silva, Rev. Yohan Devananda, Mr. Hector Abhayawardhana, Mr. K. Kanthasamy, Sr. Rose Fernando, P.H.D. Dr. B. Kaneshalingam, Mr. Rex Wanigaratne, Mr. Donovan Moldrich, Mr. Richard Dias, Ms. Manel Fonseka and Al-Haj S. M. A. Raschid.

A statement by the Committee also notes: "We are distressed that persons, so far undetected, have had recourse to the killing of some political leaders and police officers 19 of them since 1977.

"It is even more sad and condemnable that the forces of law and order have also been the agents of killing and mass destruction particularly in this present instance.

"The Government itself must take its due share of the responsibility for this brutal assault by the agents of the State, even if "the police force in that area was on the verge of a virtual mutiny" as reported to Parliament by a Minister. No Government may renounce responsibility for the actions of its agents. The country would appreciate a more responsible and sympathetic attitude from the members of the government than has been hitherto forthcoming.

"We urge the Government — to extend the terms of reference of the Commission of inquiry that it intends to appoint to include the period up to the end of the recent Emergency and the acts of murder and destruction caused by all parties. We, further recommend that the Commission to be appointed consist of at least three members who are judges of the Supreme Court or of the Court of Appeal or retired Judges of the Supreme Court.

"**LANKA GUARDIAN**"—July 1st, 1981



# Tamils in Sri Lanka

Sir,

While congratulating you on your coverage of the recent police atrocities in Jaffna I, nevertheless cannot help being struck by the extremely unrealistic tone of your editorial (June 20) on the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

The Tamils, who constitute 30 percent of the Island's population have faced gross discrimination in education and employment under successive Sinhalese-dominated governments, since Sri Lanka's independence. They have also faced, simultaneously, steady erosion of their political and linguistic rights, what with the disfranchisement and/or statelessness of the plantation workers on the one hand, and the planned Sinhalese colonisation of the traditional Tamil homeland in northern and eastern Sri Lanka, on the other. To cap it all, they have also been the helpless victims of repeated arson, loot, rape and murder. Indeed, anti-Tamil riots have been a regular feature in independent Sri Lanka. These riots have been invariably inspired by Sinhalese political parties inciting racial hatred among the Sinhalese population. Ominously, such rioting which was initially confined to Sinhalese areas with the police as silent onlookers, has over the past fifteen years taken on the character of unchecked atrocities in Tamil areas by the police and armed forces, which have always been Sinhalese dominated.

What exactly has the Jayawardene government done about it all? The president has, since 1977, been mounting platitudes about a "Dharmistha" society with equal rights, and has pronounced off and on the pointlessness of a police Security force stationed in Tamil areas, but unable and unwilling to conduct its business in Tamil. The present constitution of Sri Lanka which came into force in 1978 enshrines certain linguistic rights of the Tamils, on the basis of which you have so enthusiastically endorsed the bonafides of the present Government. It is interesting to recall that very similar 'reasonable use of Tamil acts' have been enacted in 1958, 1968 and 1972, which have all remained a dead letter. The present provisions also remain unimplemented, with uncooperative Sinhalese public servants, police and military personnel continuing to be the dominant elements in the administration of the Tamil areas. Indeed the President and Prime Minister have acknowledged that the provisions are very difficult to implement.

Over the decades, the Tamil leadership has demanded successively. Tamil participation in the administration of Tamil districts, and later, regional autonomy for the Tamil areas in a federal structure. A succession of such extremely moderate and conciliatory stances by the Tamil leadership has, however totally failed, for pacts concluded on such bases with Sinhalese leadership have invariably been broken unilaterally by the Sinhala leadership. The Sansoni Commission, which was set up by the Government to inquire into the August 1977 anti-Tamil riots, has itself been constrained to point this out. Such unilateral abrogation under pressure of Sinhalese chauvinist forces is to be contrasted with the enlightened view taken for instance in Belgium recently. With the spontaneous adoption of a federal structure with regional autonomy for the French and Dutch speaking people.

It is against the backdrop of such continuing discrimination in employment, education, language rights etc., and in the face of persistent government-sponsored Sinhalese colonisation thrusts and armed atrocities by the police and security forces that the Tamil leadership of Sri Lanka has resolved to establish the Free, Sovereign State of Tamil Eelam. There is clearly no other rational and honourable solution to the problem, given the fact that three decades of chauvinist Sinhalese leadership has created in the minds of the Sinhalese population an instinct of hatred towards the Tamil race, as attested to by French observers from the International Human Rights Organisation following the riots in August 1977.

Meanwhile, the only way to keep Sinhala chauvinism at bay and ensure the survival of the Tamil people of Sri Lanka is to take the issue to international forums such as the United Nations and secure the intervention of governments committed to human rights. For, after all, the Tamils of Sri Lanka are the victims of the worst kind of racialism and are fighting nonviolently for a cause which is ever so similar to the PLO's

**M. N. Selvan**

Madras.

**INDIAN EXPRESS**

Madras: Friday-June 26, 1981



# Extracts from the Report of the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality [MIRJE] delegation to Jaffna ( JUNE 6 - 9 )

## Origin of the Incidents

With the arbitrary arrests of April and May 1981 with no reasons given by unidentified police and armed state personnel and the persons arrested being held incommunicado in secret detention, the atmosphere was a tense one. As our last Report indicated, there was fear, anxiety and insecurity in the minds and hearts of the people of Jaffna and its environs. It was in this atmosphere that the campaign for the DDC Elections or for its boycott was being conducted. Mr. Thiagarajah, who headed the UNP list, was assassinated on 24th May 1981.

"On Sunday 31st May in the evening there was a TULF election meeting at Nachchimar Kovilady, Jaffna. When the Mayor of Jaffna was addressing the meeting, a scuffle broke out around some policemen who were on guard duty at the meeting. The Delegation was not able to come to any clear conclusion about the exact origin or nature of the scuffle. A Sinhalese policeman succumbed immediately to gunshot injuries, a Tamil policeman succumbed later and a Muslim was wounded. Within ten minutes of the incident, at about 8.30 p.m., all hell broke loose in the area around the Kovil. The Delegation spent much time in the area on Saturday, Sunday and Monday and saw for itself the extensive damage done: 5 shops and 4 houses were attacked. With kerosene oil taken from a shop that was smashed, there was quite considerable arson 2 cars, a scooter, a motor bike, 2 bicycles and a generator were burnt. Flames seemed to have reached the outer walls of the Temple but the Temple fortunately was saved from serious damage, though two Temple chariots were burnt.

"This was the beginning of the damage. The question which the Delegation asked itself was who started the attacks on property and the arson. The Delegation after careful inquiries has now no doubt that the attacks and the arson were the work of some 100 - 175 police personnel. They were supposedly enraged by the death - at hands still not known with certainty - of their Sinhalese Colleague. However, some information which the delegation collected leads it to wonder whether the attacks on persons and property had been in some way pre-planned. If this were true, the death of the policeman at the meeting of Sunday 31 May would only have hastened the carrying out of these plans. This information concerns the Police harassment of persons already at 6.30 p.m. on that day and the bringing of busloads of extra police personnel to Jaffna even before the day of the Meeting.

### **The Priest's tale**

"The President of the Delegation had independent confirmation of the authorship of the arsons and the brutal attacks on persons and property from a Sinhalese priest colleague who arrived in Jaffna quite unsuspectingly at about 9.30 p.m. on Sunday night. He was on his way from Kandy to Kankasanturai to purchase cement in a lorry driven by a Sinhalese driver with a Sinhalese cleaner and another Sinhalese man. This party was attacked about 2 miles from Jaffna on their way to Kankasanturai by a group of three persons in banians and trousers behind whom there was a policeman in uniform. One of the group of three smashed the front windscreen of the lorry to bits with a rod and hit the driver who fell unconscious. Another with the butt of his rifle assaulted the cleaner on the face. The third in the same way assaulted the Sinhalese man who later discovered that he had also been relieved of Rs. 3000/- which he had on his person. For some unaccountable reason, the priest, even though he was in civil clothes, was not assaulted. When the group finally believed their victims' claim that they were Sinhalese outsiders to the area, led by a Sinhalese Christian priest, on their way to purchase cement, one of them merely told the priest in English, "Father we are sorry", and drove off with the others in their jeep. The priest has no doubt that



their assailants were Sinhalese police personnel, because they spoke native Sinhalese, had rifles and there was a policeman in uniform in the rear.

"What is even worse, in Jaffna, where the priest returned, the Police who seemed to the priest to be all Sinhalese persons refused to take down his complaint. Some police persons in Jaffna Police Station however helped the priest to take the injured persons to the hospital in a police jeep where the matron, the doctors and the nurses (all Tamil, but for the Sinhalese matron) were extremely kind. From the hospital the priest heard shooting and saw Jaffna ablaze from about 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

"In the morning he returned from the hospital to the Police Station to take charge of the lorry and to make another attempt also for the purpose of the insurance claim, at registering his complaint. He noticed that the policemen in the station did not bear their numbers. The person who looked like the Officer in Charge of the Station, refusing to take down the complaint, told him, "The best thing you can do it to get the hell out of here with these three bastards."

"The priest returned to Kandy on Monday and registered his complaint at the Kandy Police Station. (GC IB II 308,09 1.6.81)

### **The Horrors of the First Night**

"What followed the wicked assaults and attacks in the Nachchimar Kovilady area is only a continuation of that sordid tale of plunder, arson, assault, destruction, shooting to wound sometime to kill.

"The Delegation visited the areas and saw for itself the havoc created and the damage caused by police personnel who seem to have lost all control over themselves and to have been outside the control of their superior officers - if indeed it may still be hoped that not all the superior officers encouraged or condoned the rampage let loose by their men.

"Most dastardly of all on this first night was the complete destruction of, and the senseless arson on, the house of the Member of Parliament for Jaffna and the offices of the Headquarters of the Tamil United Liberation Front. It was

fortunate that the MP for Jaffna was able to escape with his life, for the Delegation has on its findings no doubt that the police persons came to kill him. The motive was most probably that of all the MPs of the North it was the MP for Jaffna who had most frequently to make complaints to the Police and others of arbitrary police arrests and harrassment. As for the office of the TULF, the motive seems to have been one of political hate and humiliation. Not satisfied with turning the office to a shambles of rubble and lonely and deeply scarred pillars, the marauders took the portraits of Messrs S. J. V. Chelvanayagam and G. G. Ponnambalam and burnt them on the road.

"Illustrative of the type of damage caused to private houses and shops is the statement of the eye-witness resident of a house that was attacked close to the TULF office. The statement was made available to the Delegation. The attackers were persons dressed in shorts carrying guns and iron rods and were all speaking Sinhalese. The loss caused to the house is estimated at over Rs. 1 Lakh. The particular statment - there could be hundreds like it all over the North today ends with the wry postscript.

"This is third communal riot in which I have suffered.

1st - 1958 in Kandy	: No loss
2nd- 1977 in Kandy	: 7 lakhs
3rd- 1981 in Jaffna	: Rs. 105,700 "

## **The Horrors of the Second Night**

"In a sense the story merely adds further links to the chain of terror with which it was hoped to bind forever the people of the North on the first night. To the extent, despite the humanitarian concerns involved, it would not be necessary to go on with it in a Report of this nature. But two events of that second night in Jaffna need to be specially recorded here.

"The first is the destruction by arson of the Jaffna Public Library. If the delegation were asked which act of destruction had the greatest impact on the people of Jaffna, the answer would be the savage attack on this monument to the learning



and culture and the desire for learning and culture of the people of Jaffna. Some 95,000 books were reduced to ashes. While the Delegation was moving over the debris, a person with a smile brought up to one of its members a charred index card of a book and said, "Here, take this away with you. It is a relic of the martyrs of Jaffna". Many students, even at Advance Level stage, used the Library for reference and study. It is a very revealing of the motives of those who attacked the Library that only the book sections (including the Children's Library) were burnt; the auditorium remained intact. Even Brigadier Weeratunga whom Fr. Caspersz and Mr. Reggie Siriwardene met on the last evening of their stay in Jaffna said that he fully understood the feelings of the people of Jaffna as he himself during a previous period of some 'four years' service in Jaffna had used this Library and was aware of what it meant to the people. There is no doubt that the destruction of the Library will leave bitter memories behind for many years.

"The second is the destruction of the Eelanadu office and printing press. Its paper, **EALANADU**, is the only regionally published daily newspaper in the island. This act of destruction as also the probably selective destruction of three of the best bookshop in Jaffna - is interpreted by the people of the North as an attempt to destroy forever the culture of the region.

## DEATHS

"While there will may have been more, the Delegation was able to obtain reliable information about 3 deaths at the hands of the armed personnel of the State.

## THE DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS

"Already on Sunday and Monday the people of Jaffna had reason to fear that the developing situation of lawlessness and disorder created by the very forces meant to uphold law and order would be ideal for the mass rigging of the elections by the government. The elections were to be held on Thursday 4 June, on Wednesday - as the Delegation had reliable information even before it left for Jaffna - goon squads numbering several hundreds were loaded into the train and buses at

Kurunegala and sent to Jaffna. Each squad member was given an allowance of Rs. 100 per day. On the morning of the elections, the commissions of several Senior Presiding officers (reportedly over a hundred) were revoked and new officers, obviously beholden to their masters and pliable by them, were appointed. It is therefore no wonder that around 40 ballot boxes were found not to have been in order when the voting was declared over on Thursday evening. I had not even been taken to the polling booth, were found to contain over 600 ballot papers all marked for the UNP, and 3 were found to be missing. An understanding of the appointed or self-appointed role of the Ministers who were in Jaffna during the days immediately preceding the Elections and on Election Day can be best left to the intelligence of the readers of this Report, especially when it is known that one of the Ministers is the most racist, vituperative, slanderous anti-Tamil Minister of the present government. Whatever else the government may have done, it should never have permitted this Minister to be in Jaffna during this crucial week.

## **ROLE OF THE POLICE**

"We have already stated our findings that the police were responsible for the destructive forces unleashed upon the people of Jaffna on Sunday night. Neither can the police disclaim responsibility for the continued destruction of the succeeding nights. The Public Library is only a stone's throw away from the Police Station. What was the Police doing when the Library was being attacked and burnt? The answer is that they themselves were attacking and burning it, probably with the assistance of imported goon squads,...;

**Sgd. Paul Casperz**

**Reggie Siriwardene,**

On behalf of the Delegation.

12 June 1981.

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The Movement for Inter.-Racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE)  
6, Aloe Avenue, Colombo 3.



## “The Police Force in Jaffna was on the Verge of A Virtual Mutiny....”

*(Statement by the Minister of Lands and Land Development and Minister of Mahaweli Development, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake in Parliament on June 9, 1981)*

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition in the course of his speech referred to the conduct of the poll in the Jaffna Development Council elections and he said it was the intention of his party, in concert with the other Opposition parties in Parliament, to introduce a Motion of No Confidence against the Hon. Minister of Industries and myself. I take it that on that occasion we would be in a position to discuss this matter fully, and I certainly shall adduce before this House certain facts which I do not intend to refer to now but which I would have if this No Confidence Motion was not going to be introduced, because I think they are relevant to the discussion today.

I wish to place on record certain matters leading up to the incidents which were referred to by the hon. Leader of the Opposition. The hon. Leader of the Opposition referred to certain dates. He mentioned the 31st May when four policemen were shot at a Tamil United Liberation Front meeting. Then he said that of the four policemen shot at, two succumbed to death and the other two have survived. Then the hon. Leader of the Opposition referred to the fact that on the 1st of June the house of the hon. Member for Jaffna was burned down.

(Mr. V. N. Navaratnam—Chavakachcheri)

On the 31st May, early morning.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

Sorry. He said that the hon. Member's house was burned down on the 31st May and on the 1st night the Public Library was burned down, and on one of these dates, I think, the headquarters of the TULF—

(Mr. K. P. Ratnam)

On the 31st night.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

I wish to say this: I saw the house of the hon. Member for Jaffna, and whatever views that were expressed in the House in the course of debate, I wish to say how sorry we are that this sort of thing could have happened to a Colleague of ours in this Parliament. I hope that this will not happen to any Member of Parliament of any party in this country. So, if the hon. Member for Jaffna seeks an apology from us, I wish to tender an apology for what happened to him, and I hope that it will never happen to any Member of this House, whatever his political views may be.

I wish to refer to a statement made by the hon. Leader of the Opposition and reported in HANSARD of 6th May 1981. He says this in the course of his speech dealing with the conduct of the armed forces in the Jaffna Peninsula:

"I wish to say, however, that the local police, the Jaffna Police are not giving any trouble to the people."

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

At that time.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

This was on the 6th of May—approximately 26 days before the incidents complained of occurred, unfortunately, in the Peninsula. Then, who were these people? Who were the officers? Who came there?

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

May I interrupt you? About 300 men were brought and housed in the Durayappah Stadium, probably for election duty. It was this army that moved into action.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

I do not want to contradict in any way. I wish to say that therefore, these people who were responsible for the activities complained of on the 31st, and on the 1st, 2nd and the 3rd were people who were not within the category mentioned by the hon. Leader of the Opposition, in the debate which took place in this House on 6th May. In other words, they were not men of the Jaffna local police. They were men who were brought from outside thereafter for whatever the reason was.



Then. Sir, after this incident took place on the 1st, His Excellency the President sent, among others, his Secretary for Defence, Colonel C. A. Dharmapala; the Additional Secretary for Defence, General Sepala Attiygalle; the Secretary to the Cabinet, Mr. G. V. P. Samarasinghe, to Jaffna to report back to him the matters on which very serious representation has been made to His Excellency the President by the hon. Leader of the Opposition and other Members of Parliament. I think, on that occasion this team was accompanied by the Hon. Minister for Fisheries, Mr. Festus Perera. Sir, they visited Jaffna on the 1st. They went to, I think, the police barracks and what they saw was a sorry sight of indiscipline, of discontent and complaints. They had apparently said that 19 police officers from 1977 had been killed, and those who were responsible for it had not been brought to book! I do not want to dwell on this matter any more. They had found that they were living in fear and the team that visited Jaffna on the 1st asked His Excellency for further time till the 2nd. They promised His Excellency that they would come on the 1st night, but they had asked for a further date so that they would be able to meet these people, discuss matters with the Commander of the Armed Services, Brigadier Weeratunga, discuss matters with the D. I. G. of the area, and then recommend to them a certain course of action.

Let me assure you, Sir, and the hon. Members of this House that there is no doubt whatever that there was a very serious situation in Jaffna because the Police Force was on the verge of a virtual mutiny. On the 2nd or the 3rd, virtually 200 policemen had deserted their posts, and since they were responsible for some very serious events which needed an answer. His Excellency the President ordered—one possibility was that these people were going to attend the funeral of Police Sergeant Punchi Banda who was shot in the head that any of these constables or police officers who are proceeding to this funeral should be apprehended so that they would be made to answer as to what happened in the course of the 31st and the 1st. Not all were apprehended. In fact, some had got news that the I. G. P. had given such an order, and we still do not know their whereabouts!

But, Sir, what the Secretary, Defence; Secretary, Cabinet; the Army Commander and the Additional Secretary, Defence, reported to His Excellency the President on the 2nd was interesting. They

said that according to them the conditions necessary for the conduct of a poll did not prevail in Jaffna. Please understand that. It may be something that you can laugh at. But the fact is that Dr. Thiagarajah whom I had come to know as an hon. Member of Parliament from 1970-1977, a very old man—[*Interruption*]. I have no respect for you also if you ask me. I will tell this House what you told me some time ago. You just listen. The question of my respect or no respect does not arise in this matter because that man is not alive now, and I hope I can join with you in the sentiments you have expressed about this late Dr. Thiagarajah.

Dr. Thiagarajah lived in the Jaffna peninsula even after his political defeat in 1970. There was no serious objection to his living in the Jaffna peninsula till 1977. There was no serious objection to his living until 1981. But the moment this gentleman is sponsored as a candidate of the United National Party and placed number one on the list he is not fit to live the few years that are left to him. He is shot dead. [*Interruption*] I do not want to impute any *mala fides* to the hon. Leader of the Opposition when he says that he unreservedly condemns shooting, robberies and violence. I am glad that, though belatedly that unmitigated condemnation has come from the hon. Leader of the Opposition.

That is not all. It is not only Dr. Thiagarajah who had been shot dead. I visited the Jaffna peninsula a few months ago and I had the courtesy of having a very friendly discussion with the hon. Leader of the Opposition. They might get up in this House and censure me. I will defend myself. The Hon. Minister of Industries and Scientific Affairs will defend himself. I have gone out of my way to do everything possible in certain emotional, social and political matters which come within the purview of my Ministry. Never have I turned them away even where I had to reverse the decisions of the previous Government, even where I had to postpone certain development matters. I had accommodated these hon. Members because I feel that they mean well and that they are seriously trying to work out a methodology of working together with the Sinhalese people. I know that.

As I said I visited Jaffna on a particular day. What happened? The previous day a certain young Tamil boy—I will not call him a man because he was in his early twenties—crossed over from the



TULF and joined the U. N. P. He used a phrase in the Tamil language and said, "If I can live with the wife why should I live with a mistress?" What happened to this man? He was decorating the road when he was shot dead. He was killed. Up to now the killers have not been caught.

Then I was told by the security personnel not to come to Jaffna. My entire itinerary was arranged. I was to be there for four days. I discussed the matter with His Excellency the President said, "Gamini, you must go," and I went. When I went to Jaffna I was told, "The situation is so tense, Please do not go to the house of the man who had been killed." But, I thought that this man could have been shot dead because he believed in our party. However ignorant or however clever he was, I felt I should go to that funeral house and I did go. Similarly, when Mr. Thiagarajah was shot dead that wound hurt the heart of every United National Party member in this country. Are you seriously saying that we in the United National Party cannot contest elections in the Jaffna Peninsula?

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Who said?

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

Not "Who said?". Are you seriously saying that?

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Yes. And you will lose your deposit. You will see the result.

(Interruption.)

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

My honourable Friend should remember that in politics the fashion changes; that their followers might not be with them for ever.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

They do not change to green.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

Are you so sure about that?

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Yes.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

May be so. But Please give them the option of changing, which you do not give.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Very gladly we will give. [Interruption.]

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

Therefore, Sir, the fact is that there has been a build up in the Jaffna Peninsula over the years in which it was no longer possible to practise the tenets of democracy as we know it, because those who take to politics opposed to the Tamil United Liberation Front, run the risk of death. Unfortunately that is the situation which we have to face.

Then Sir, this report from the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, the Army Commander, the Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, was presented to His Excellency the President, wherein it was stated, "Please do not go through with the poll". On the 2nd of June a conference was called at which the Secretary of the Jaffna District Ministry, the Government Agent, was also present. He said that nearly 300 medical certificates had been sent by people who have been assigned election duties, saying that they are physically unable to go to Jaffna. Then His Excellency wanted to know whether the large number of people who go to Jaffna—2,000, 3,000, 4,000 may be, and ultimately there were about 4,000—can be housed and fed. It was the view that they cannot be fed because Jaffna had become a deserted town. No shop was open.

(Mr. K. Thuraiaratnam)

There were no shops to be opened.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Thanks to what happened. Why do you not say that also? They were looted, they were burnt.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

You say "Thanks to what happened" But I say "unfortunately for what happened". Of course they were looted, they were burnt. I know it. I accept what the Hon. Leader of the Opposition said.

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

Say it well.



(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

I do not want to enter into an argument.—[*Interruption.*] Please, we do not want to enter into polemics on this matter. We are tracing back certain matters which happened. We got to work from that point onwards. And I say that it is not for us to discuss today whether 'X' did it or 'Y' did it. But the fact is that it has happened and I agree with the hon. Leader of the Opposition that some damage had been done by the police. We do not deny that and we cannot contradict when he says that the house of the hon. Member for Jaffna (Mr. Yogeswaran) had been burnt by the police. It is subject to inquiry. We do not know who did it. We cannot contradict him when he says that the TULF headquarters was burnt down by the police. But, Sir, we do not wish to be pontifical about this matter. I cannot say 'X' 'Y' or 'Z' did it. All I can say is that I did not go to Jaffna to have a holiday. A very serious situation prevailed there. They said that it would not be possible to conduct the poll, it would not be possible to give food. But His Excellency the president decided, "We must go through with the poll. We are not going to postpone this."

Then, Sir, His Excellency the President was also concerned with the morale, the psychology and the behaviour patterns of the police. Two hundred police officers had left the station. We do not know who was with the government, who was against the government and I do not say government, politically, but in relation to the overall objectives of conducting a peaceful Poll in Jaffna. Now in that situation, it was correct that the Secretary and Additional Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, the Secretary to the Cabinet and I went to Jaffna.

I want to ask you, hon. Members of the Opposition, "Can you make an allegation here that anyone of us who went from Colombo was responsible for killing anybody, for burning a house, for looting, for stoning?" On the contrary it was only after we visited Jaffna that we were in a position to tell the Army Commander, "Do not expect any more trouble from the Police" because I myself went and addressed those people, and they were not easy people to talk to. The Hon. Minister of Fisheries will explain that when he went to the barracks he was welcomed by a loud hoot. What they said will be the subject matter, perhaps of what we would say in this

House when you bring this Motion of No Confidence. I do not think, Sir, that either of us is in any way afraid to meet this Motion of No Confidence because we have nothing to hide.

I have got here the documents which were legally issued by the Secretary to the Ministry of Defence, wherein he gave certain instructions. The mayhem in Jaffna is something which you should know. There was no transportation, there was no food. The Jaffna Kachcheri was not in a position to give a single packet of food, because even the caterer who had undertaken the catering order to give packets to the regular people who came to conduct the poll, had packed out saying that he had no provisions. Thanks to my Hon. Colleague, the Minister of Trade, we were able to airlift the food that was necessary.

Therefore, Sir, I do not wish to be emotional about thier matter b—about the poll. I will defend myself and the Hon. Minister for Industries and Scientific Affairs will defend himself, but in relation to b, what the Leader of the Opposition said, I wish only to say that thos C who ride the back of the tiger very often end up inside the tiger. Please remember that. If any one of these crimes was happening in may electorate—if people were killed—my party branches would be in a position to provide the information to the Government.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Because they must be the people who did it.

Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

That may be one reason. I do not want to enter into Polemics with you. But, Sir, if a hub cap of a car, a wind screen viper or a dust cap for that matter, is stolen in Panchikawatte, in half an hour the man is apprehended. Here, nineteen Police officers have been killed; anyone who joins the UNP is also killed.

Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Not all.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

No, not all.—[Interruption] That is something which they would like to forget—the death of Mr. Duraiappah, the attempt on the life of Mr. Kanagaratnam—

A Member)

Mr. Duraiappah was not UNP.



(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

But he was not TULF either. Therefore, Sir I do not say that these hon. Members are responsible for any of these things in any way.— [*Interruption.*] Please do not say that. But the point is, some how, over the years, there has been a hard core of people built within the framework of the political process in the Jaffna peninsula where they have become so intolerant that they reward with a bullet those who oppose what they consider to be their Eelamist Policies,

It is in this context the election for the Development Council of Jaffna was contested. I am happy to say that we were in a position to inform His Excellency the President that in so far as the police was concerned, we have brought the situation under control. Whatever the hon. Leader of the Opposition has mentioned by way of demands from the Government, I think could be considered by His Excellency, the Hon. Prime Minister, the Cabinet of Ministers and if necessary by the Government as a whole. But I wish the Hon. Members of the Opposition to understand that in as much as they are concerned about the situation in Jaffna we are also concerned about the situation in Jaffna because Jaffna is not a separate Eelam yet. It is part and parcel of our country. And every man in this country has right to go to Jaffna and to come back from Jaffna. He has a right to work there, he has a right to live there, just as they come here from Jaffna and go to any part of the country. And, a citizen of this country, whatever his political beliefs, has a right to live there until he dies by natural causes.

It is in the background of these deaths - the deaths of the United National Party candidate who was No. 1 on the list, the death of the police officers—that these unfortunate incidents have taken place. We do not wish to minimize in any way the gravity of what has been done, the untold damage that has been done, to the hon. Member for Jaffna (Mr. Yogeswaran) because no amount of house building is going to give him back the house in which he grew up, the house in which he lived and the house from which he had to run away like a criminal. I saw it and I was shocked. That is why I say in all sincerity that I hope that this kind of thing will never happen to anybody in this House. But the fact is that if you

visit Jaffna you will see terror, the atmosphere that prevails in Jaffna. I met a Jaffna Tamil who said, "What is this nonsense? We cannot be supporters of any other party here because we live in fear." They do not blame the TULF Members of Parliament. That is not a matter I want to discuss here. I think it is a very serious problem and I think that this terror group, whoever they are, wherever they live, whether in the North or in the South, must be removed ever.

And all I am saying is that, although verbal formula have been offered in this House, there has never been a condemnation of their activities until today by the TULF. And I also say very regretably that amount of co-operation which is absolutely necessary from an organised political party to deal with a situation like this, has never been forthcoming from the Tamil United Liberation Front. I am sorry to say that,

(A Member)

Shame!

(Mr. Gamini Disسانayake)

I am not blaming anybody, I know the situation that prevails in Jaffna because I saw the dead body of that young man who joined the United National Party and who was shot the day before I went. That is the situation that prevails in Jaffna. And I think that people who are emotionally charged, these police officers who fall outside the category of those who are regular officers of the Police, have run berserk. There was a virtual mutiny situation in the police, and I hope that we will be able to bring that situation under control. The Secretary or Defence is going through the records of all those officers who were sent to Jaffna, because some have very devious backgrounds. Some were recruited by the hon. Member for Attanagalla (Mr. Lakshman Jayakody) when he was in office. Some have been recommended by certain Members of Parliament in the previous Government, whose connections with well known ultra-leftist movements are well known.

In fact, when I spoke to some police officers there, I must say that I found it very difficult to carry on a conversation with them. Some of them were brazenly insulting; they were so heated up that their attitude seemed to be "Well, if you cannot deal with the situation we will do it ourselves." - No Government



can allow para-military forces to function on their own. This is something which His Excellency the President has in mind. And I wish to say that when you bring a Motion of No Confidence, I will address my mind in whatever charges that you bring in this House.

I am sorry for the violence that was perpetrated in the Jaffna peninsula. I think we are all responsible for it. Do not run away from responsibility because when you deal with people who do not believe in the democratic process they behave in a certain way, and every conduct is followed up by a counter course of action which one never contemplates. I do not think the Inspector General of Police when he sent these police officers to Jaffna thought that they would cause him such problems. I do not think that the Inspector General of Police ever anticipated that on 31st at a TULF meeting four police officers would be shot dead. At least, whoever is doing this must realize that till the elections are over their gun-toting activities must stop. It just shows that there is somebody in Jaffna, may be outside the Parliamentary Group of TULF who does not want this poll to go through, who does not believe in the democratic process. And is the hon. Leader of the Opposition seriously saying that those police officers who ran berserk believe in the democratic process? No The hon. Leader of the Opposition will know the mentality of certain police officers who are Tamils. You made very serious complaints about Bastiampillai. Who was Bastiampillai? Bastiampillai was a Tamil and Bastiampillai was gunned down. Guruswamy was shot. They were Tamil officers. Sir, this is not a racial matter.

We have serious political problems. You want Eelam. We do not agree on the principle of Eelam. You say that you do not want the methodology of the gun, the bullet. We say so. But outside the framework of what you and we are discussing there is another group who are letting loose emotion, a series of events, over which unfortunately neither of us seem to have any control. I do not think that you seriously say that those who burnt down the house of the hon. Member for Jaffna are UNP supporters. I do not think that you seriously say that those who burnt down the TULF headquarters are UNP supporters. I think that

from 1977 the UNP has been at the receiving end of this whole exercise. It is our supporters who have got killed. It is the SLFP flag bearer, Mr. Duraiappah who was shot dead. I can remember how the hon. Second Member for Nuwara Eliya Maskeliya was moved about the death of Mr. Duraiappah. I think he was in Nuwara Eliya when he got the news. I know how moved he was because he was a personal friend of his. Whatever it is death moves us. Looting and arson hurt us and these are things that we would not like to tolerate.

But I wish to say on the Floor of this House that whatever you preach about democracy or of your anxiety to conduct a peaceful poll, those conditions did not prevail in Jaffna and do not prevail in Jaffna. If you mean a peaceful poll through the process of terror, people going and marking the cross against the *suriya* of the TULF, I say it is not a free poll; You do not want to have a free poll for that. We will tell His Excellency the President, "Please pass a law and say that only the TULF can represent Jaffna." We will raise our hands here if only to save a few innocent lives. That is something what we can discuss at much more honourable level. I did not go to Jaffna, to get shot by a "tiger" and do not think that I went there for adventure either.

I was given a mission under grave circumstances, great difficulties. Even the Hon. Minister of industries, with whom you have had very serious emotional battles here, charges and counter-charges I must say was very restrained. And let me tell you, the Hon. Minister of State, whatever phraseology he uses cannot judge the circumstances under which hon Members of Parliament were taken into custody. And we certainly were not going to come here and face His Excellency if one single person was shot dead. We were not going to take the responsibility for that. Those who were responsible for Defence were there the Secretary for Defence a former Army Commander, and the present Brigadier who is the Chief of Staff responsible for the peacekeeping operations in Jaffna. They came to certain conclusions were wrong, and if you say that untold hardships have been caused to you

(Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

No, we never complained about the arrests. Please go ahead and arrest as much as you like.



(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

We are not keen to take you into custody, but in the meanwhile you must try your level best to stop this mad wanton murder of innocent people by terrorists.

Mr. M. Sivasithamparam)

You also stop your police murdering people.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

Of course we will do that.

Then, Sir, I wish to place on record some matters which the hon. Leader of the Opposition, who is a good friend of Brigadier Weeratunga, can himself verify. Prior to his being taken into custody, or what I would call protective custody—

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

There was no protective custody, it was arrest on a charge of disturbing the democratic process.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

Do not take too seriously what that man told you. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition should verify why Brigadier Weeratunga's car was shot at. Was that also by the police or the army?

(A Member)

Your People

(A Member)

When?

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

On the 2nd.

(Mr. M. Sivasithambaram)

By the police during the curfew.

Sir, this effort to paint a picture like in a James Bond story is not warranted, I think the fact is that there has been a series of killings in Jaffna from about 1977 right up to the DDC elections, leading to the death of the person who was right on top in the UNP list. Then police officers were killed. Certain incidents took place I joined the hon. Leader of the Opposition in condemning what had taken place. But please do not try to paint a

picture to show that the conditions in Jaffna are such that you can have full freedom to practice democracy in all its glory. That freedom is only for the TULF. It does not exist for any others. That is the situation; that is the truth.

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Hon. Minister, if that is the freedom that we have why should you take into custody to protect me, as you say? Can you not see the contradiction in what you are saying if that is the freedom we have?

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

Why does the hon. Leader of the opposition forget that 200 police officers had virtually mutinied;

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Your men!

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

There in no 'your men' or 'my men',

(Mr. A. Amithalingam)

Is not the control of these policemen the Government taking responsibility for law and order and for the control of these police men?

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

That is exactly what I am telling you. hon. Leader of the Opposition. The duty of maintaining law and order is the responsibility of the Government, and the police force is an arm of that process, but when the Police force is shot at and people are killed the behavioural patterns of those officers who are shot at is something we cannot be responsible for-

(Mr. A. Amirthalingam)

Why not?

Mr. M. Sivasithambaram)

If the police force is a disciplined force, can it behave like that? In what civilized country do you get that.

(Mr. Gamini Dissanayake)

That is exactly why I said that there was so much of tension in the Jaffna Peninsula, there was so much of irrational behaviour



on the 31st and 1st and perhaps thereafter which we were concerned with. And His Excellency the President decided to carry on with the poll. It is in that context that all the incidents in Jaffna must be considered so if there were any irregularities in the poll, let the Commissioner of Parliamentary Elections report on that matter. If the matter has to go to court, let it go to court. If it comes to Parliament by way of motion of No Confidence, we will face it, and I have no doubt that hon. Members of the TULF will make the Charges that they have to make against Ministers or Members of Parliament on that occasion. But I wished to mention the circumstances which led to this unfortunate incident in Jaffna. I wish to say once again before I sit down that having been in Jaffna, having observed what took place in Jaffna, there was no atmosphere there for free polls. The atmosphere was one of terror; the police were not easily confined to barracks, and I think many of us who were there were concerned with the situation. The Deputy Minister of Defence was there, the Secretary for Defence was there, the Army Commander was there, and we were concerned. And if we have made any errors according to you in what we have done, we are prepared to face the consequences and take full responsibility for our actions.

# Seven Trade Unions Condemn Government's Racist Intimidations

G. C. S. U. Building,  
90, Sir Chittampalam A Gardnier Mawathe,  
COLOMBO-2. SRI LANKA.  
30th June, 1981

To All Ambassadors, Hlgh Commissiioners &  
Consulate Generals residents in Sri Lanka,

Your Excellency,

The oppression and the massacre perpetrated by  
the Jayawardene Government of Sri Lanka.

The oppression, economic and otherwise that has been launched by the Government of the United National Party under the leadership of J. R. Jayawardene has reached an acute and intolerable stage with the brutal murders committed in the North.

We presume that you might have already had information of the deaths and massacre caused by the Jayawardana Government of Sri Lanka. While presenting you hereby the true facts behind these happenings we beg of your Government and the people of your country to enforce and implement whatever measures to make the Government of Sri Lanka stop forthwith its brutal massacres and acts of oppression...

The unanimous demand of the majority of the Tamil speaking people in Sri Lanka is to obtain the right of self-determination. Our organisations which accept that as a human right have been building up and unifying solidarity with it among the masses. The Jayawardene Government which came into power in 1977 has been passing repressive laws and acts and has been harassing the Tamil speaking people throughout. The repression launched by the Government expressed itself in these acts of the Government and WE hereby quote a few examples :

1. Adoption of repressive acts which abolish civil rights.
2. Arousal of racialism among the masses.



3. Lock out of more than hundred thousand workers who have participated in the 1980 July STRIKE. (These workers — have been in the forefront for democratic freedoms of this country as a whole.)
4. Brutal murders and torture launched by the forces of the Government on the Tamil speaking people.
5. Holding of the District Development Councils Elections under a state of Emergency and Curfew.

### **ACTS AND LAWS OF REPRESSION WHICH ABOLISH CIVIL RIGHTS**

The Jayawardene Government which came to power in 1977, has implemented the following LAWS curtailing the LIBERTIES of the people. (especially the Tamil speaking people.)

### **ACTS AND LAWS OF REPRESSION WHICH ABOLISH CIVIL RIGHTS**

- (i) Essential Services Act.
- (ii) Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act.
- (iii) The Act of proscription of the 'Liberation Tigers' and other similar Organisations.
- (iv) Workers Councils Act.
- (v) Employment of Trainees Act.
- (vi) Criminal Jurisdiction (Special Provision) Act-1978.

### **AROUSAL OF RACIALISM AMONG THE MASSES**

The Government itself participated in arousing racialisms among the masses in 1977 August, 1978 July and in 1979 August-September. A staunch Sinhalese nationalist Minister Mr. Cyril Mathew has become the instrument in the hand of the Government in this. The hatred of the masses towards the inefficient Government is being diverted shrewdly thus to a hatred between the races.

### **LOCKOUT OF THE WORKERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE STRIKE IN JULY 1980**

The Government has openly defied the International Labour organisation which admits of the right of the workers to strike

by dismissing over a hundred thousand workers who took part in the general strike of July 1980. They did this by using the Essential Services Act.

### **THE MURDER OF MR. SOMAPALA**

Mr. D. Somapala, a trade Union Leader was murdered on 5th June, 1980 by a band of thugs led by two members of Parliament of the Government Party. The court has ruled that Mr. Somapala has been murdered wilfully. Even though an year has lapsed, the Government hasn't taken any step toward taking legal action against the murderers.

### **THE MASSACRE OF THE TAMIL SPEAKING PEOPLE**

As soon as the government came into power, the Tamil speaking people were tortured and massacred brutally. In August 1977 and in August and September 1979 this drama of shame and brutality was staged and in 1981 from the 31st of May to 6th June it was a period of terror in the Jaffna District of Sri Lanka.....

### **HOLDING ELECTIONS UNDER EMERGENCY AND CURFEW**

Amidst the celebrations to commemorate 50 years of universal Franchise in Sri Lanka (which falls this year), the District Development Council Elections on 4-6-1981 were held under the state of Emergency. In the North the state of Curfew was an additional ornament.

It is only too clear that the Government has made the people of Sri Lanka indignant and revengeful. The votes the Government collected at the D.D.C. Elections proves this very clearly. The Government polled only 30% of the registered votes which in numericals is 1,515,000 out of 4,931,887. Under cover of Emergency and Curfew and under the personal direction and supervision of the Government Ministers, Cyril Mathew and Gamini Dissanayake, the Government including in an illicit voting campaign managed to poll only 23,202 votes out of 460,414 registered votes in the Jaffna District. ALAS, the deposits of the Government members had to be forfeited in JAFFNA.....

In these circumstances as citizens of Sri Lanka we earnestly be of you to take every measure to call a halt to the massacre launched



by this hateful Jayawardene Government. We beg of you furthermore to - take this information to the people of your country so as to create a mass opinion against the Jayawardene Government of Sri Lanka. We are eager to assist you any time you need further information on the existing conditions in SRI LANKA.

Our organisations are carrying on an agitation on the  
**FOLLOWING DEMANDS:**

- ✕ WITHDRAWAL OF THE ARMED FORCES FROM THE NORTH!
- ✕ PROTECTION OF THE CIVIC RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE NORTH!
- ✕ IMPLEMENTATION OF CIVIC ADMINISTRATION IN THE NORTH!
- ✕ RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS OF THE NORTH!
- ✕ CONDEMNATION OF THE POLICY OF DESTRUCTION AND MASSACRE OF THE GOVERNMENT
- ✕ DEFEAT OF THE GOVERNMENT ATTEMPT AT RACIST INTIMIDATIONS!

Yours Sincerely,

(Signed on behalf of)

Government Clerical  
Services Union

Federation of Tamil  
Trade Union

Local Government Clerical  
Service Union

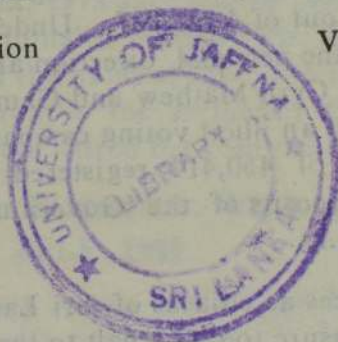
United Federation of  
Labour

Ceylon Teacher's Union

Arasanka Eluthu

Govt. United Federation  
of Labour

Veneyar Sangam







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# CARTOON HEADLINE

SRI LANKA  
POLICEMEN FOR  
MIDDLE EAST

— News item

"Sir, what do you  
Want me to do ?  
Setting fire to  
Public libraries ?  
smashing shops..... ? "

Courtesy — "Aththa"  
(Sinhala daily)

