

TAMIL NATION



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"We are confident that the world will sooner or later realise the intransigent nature of Sinhala chauvinism and that the sympathy and support of the international community will turn in favour of our struggle."

K Mahendrarajah, Deputy Leader of the LTTE, and President of the People's Front of Liberation Tigers (PFLT)
- Interview on page 3

Prime Minister Bob Hawke meets Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations

Mediation offer to President Premadasa

Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Bob Hawke met with a delegation of the Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations (AFTA) on the 7th of November at the Parliament House in Canberra.

The AFTA delegation consisted of Mrs Mano Navaratnam, Mr K. Ravi Chandra, Mr V. Sureshan and Mr Ana Pararajasingham.

Mr. Hawke informed the AFTA delegation that on his return from the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) at Harare, Zimbabwe, he had written to Sri Lanka's President Premadasa. Mr. Hawke said that he had in his letter reiterated the Australian Government's earlier offer to assist by bringing in the Commonwealth to play a mediatory role in the Sri Lankan Government's conflict with the Tamil People. Mr Hawke told the delegation that it had been his intention to take the matter up directly with Mr Premadasa at Harare but was unable to do so as the Sri Lankan President was not present at CHOGM. Prime Minister Hawke had, however, raised the matter with the Sri Lankan High Commissioner (for the United Kingdom) who was in Harare. Mr Hawke informed the AFTA delegation that he was awaiting the Sri Lankan President's response to his letter and that meanwhile he would seek the support of oth-

er Commonwealth Heads of Governments to the Australian initiative. Mr Hawke expressed his concern for the Tamil People and in particular for the 11,000 civilians killed since the resumption of the conflict in June last year.

In the meantime, a media release dated November 7, from the office of Senator Robert Hill, the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, said:

The Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Robert Hill, today said the Prime Minister, Mr. Hawke, had missed a real opportunity to help the efforts to end the civil war in Sri Lanka by failing to ensure debate on the issue at the recent CHOGM. Senator Hill also criticised the Commonwealth for failing to pursue the issue. He made his comments after addressing a rally of Tamils at Parliament House in Canberra. (see photographs in pages 8,9 inside)

"The Federal Opposition's proposal for the Commonwealth to help end the bloody civil war in Sri Lanka has received support from the Australian Government and non government organisations in Australia and overseas" Senator Hill said. He added: "But the Commonwealth itself has consistently claimed that it cannot pursue the proposal until the Sri Lankan Government approaches it first. This suggests that the Commonwealth



left to right: Hon. Peter Staples M.P., Minister for Aged, Family & Health Services, Mr. V. Sureshan, AFTA, Mr. K. Ravichandra, AFTA, Prime Minister Bob Hawke, Mr. Ana Pararajasingham, AFTA, and Mrs. Mano Navaratnam, AFTA

does not have sufficient confidence to press such an important issue with a member state."

"I am very disappointed by this inaction, and it raises serious questions about how worthwhile the Commonwealth will be in the future. Before Mr. Hawke left for for last months CHOGM, the Opposition urged him to put the issue of Sri Lanka on the meeting's agenda and to raise it with the high level CHOGM group which was examining future roles for the Commonwealth. Sadly, it seems that Sri Lanka was not raised and did not receive one mention in the final CHOGM communique."

Senator Robert Hill's Peace Plan

Under Senator Hill's peace plan for Sri Lanka, announced in August 1990, a high level Commonwealth working party would be established to offer itself to the Sri Lanka Government to: (a) seek to negotiate a ceasefire; (b) examine whether the Commonwealth could contribute by monitoring the ceasefire and thus give confidence to the parties; (c) explore the possibility of a Commonwealth role in peace talks; (d) offer to help the parties by identifying the legal/constitutional, institutional and other changes which might be necessary to ensure a lasting peace; and (e) examine what assistance Sri Lanka would need for its economic reconstruction.

TAMIL NATION

"Truth and knowledge are an idle gleam if they do not bring power to change the world."

Sri Aurobindo

Recognising, that to change anything it is necessary to understand that which we seek to change, the TAMIL NATION is concerned not only with providing information but also with furthering an understanding of the issues that confront the Tamil national movement. Recognising that, in the end, we truly understand anything only to the extent that we have been able to change it, the TAMIL NATION is concerned with changing those material conditions of existence which continue to oppress and discriminate against the people of Tamil Eelam. The TAMIL NATION is rooted in the growing togetherness of the Tamil people and it seeks to participate in the effort to strengthen that togetherness. The TAMIL NATION seeks to focus attention on the unjust relationship between nations without a state and nations that have attained state-hood. And, the TAMIL NATION exists to debate and campaign for the radical changes necessary, both amongst the Tamil people and outside, if the struggle of the Tamil people for national self determination is to be won.

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An interview with a Tiger

புலியுடன் ஒரு சந்திப்பு

நான்: நலமா புலியே? நான் உன் நண்பன்!

புலி: அறிவேன் கவிஞரே! அறிமுகம் எதற்கு? நீர் எமது திசையை நோக்கித் திரும்பிய உடனே செய்தி வந்து விட்டது எம் செவிக்கு!

நான்: வாசகர் சார்பிலும் குமுதம் சார்பிலும் வந்திருக்கின்றேன்...

புலி: குமுதமா? அதற்கு என் குரல் பிடிக்காதே!

(சிரிப்பு)

நான்: சிரித்தால் கூடச் சிறுவது போல் உன் முகத்தில் ஆவேச முகம்!

புலி: அதனாலென்ன... அச்சமின்றி நீர் எம் அருகில் வரலாம். எதிரிகள், துரோகிகள் இவர்க்குப் புலி நான்! தோழமைத் தோள்களில் தொத்தும் கிளி நான்!

நான்: ஊருக்குள் வராமல் நீ ஒளிந்திருப்பது ஏன்?

புலி: பதுங்கி வாழ்வது பாய்வதற்காக!

நான்: நீ நீராடி நீண்ட நாள் ஆயிற்றோ?

புலி: யார் சொன்னது? நித்தமும் குளிக்கிறேன் ரத்தக்குளத்தில்!

நான்: இப்போது நிலைமை எப்படி உள்ளது?

புலி: எப்போதும் போல்தான்... களத்தில் இருக்கிறோம்...

காட்டில் வாழ்கிறோம். குருரத் துப்பாக்கிகளால் குறிபார்க்கப் படுகிறோம். போராட்டம் எமது வாழ்க்கையானது! போர்க்களம் எமது குடியிருப்பானது!

நான்: அருகில் சென்று அதிர்ச்சியுடன் அடடா... உடலெங்கும் காயங்கள்...

புலி: புராணக் கதைகள் படித்திருக்கிறீர்களா? ஆகாயத்திலிருந்து அடிக்கடி தேவர்கள் பூ மழை பொழிவர்! காதையர் இங்கே அப்பாவி ஜீவன்கள் அலறித் துடிக்க தீமழைக் குண்டு கள் தினசரி பொழிவர்! வெட்டிக் குவித்த விறகுகள் மீது பெற்றோல் ஊற்றிக் கொழுத்தியதைப் போல்... திசையெல்லாம் எங்கள் பின்னங்கள்... அதனால் தேசத்தில், நெஞ்சில், ஆறாத ரணங்கள்!

நான்: கூறுக புலியே! உம் கோரிக்கை என்ன?

புலி: சுதந்திரம்! அது எம் இனத்தின் சுவாசம்!

நான்: ஏராளமாய் உமக்கு இழப்புகள்... இல்லையா?

புலி: இழப்பா? எமக்கா? இல்லவே இல்லை! இதுவரை நாங்கள் இழந்திருப்பதெல்லாம் எமது உயிர்களை! எம் ஆயுதங்களை! அந்த நாளிலும் அந்த நிலையிலும் எமது உறுதியை இழக்கவில்லையே!

நான்: கழுத்தில் மரணத்தைக் கட்டிக்கொண்டிருக்கும் தீராத போராட்டம் தேவையா புலியே?

புலி: அமைதிப் புறாவாய்ச் சிறகடிக்கத்தான் ஆசை எமக்கும்! வேட்டைக்காரர்கள் விட்டால்தானே...

நான்: வேங்கைப் புலியே! நீதான் கொஞ்சம் விட்டுக் கொடுத்தால் என்னவாம்?

புலி: எதை விட்டுக் கொடுப்பது? காமாகுனித்தில் கற்புக்கரசி எதை விட்டுக் கொடுப்பது? எமது இனத்தையே அழித்திட எழுந்த வரிடத்தில், எமது பற்களைப் பிடுங்கி டாலரைப் பதித்து அணிந்துகொள்ள ஆசை கொண்டவரிடம் எதை விட்டுக்கொடுப்பது? இயம்புக கவிஞரே... எப்படி! எதை விட்டுக்கொடுப்பது?

நான்: சமரசத்திற்கு நீ இசைந்தால் என்ன?

புலி: சமரச முயற்சிகள் தோற்ற பிறகுதான் சமருக்கு இசைந்தோம்!

நான்: ஒப்பந்தங்கள் ஒவ்வென்றாக உயிர் விட்டது ஏன்?

புலி: வேட்டைக்காரனுக்கும் வேங்கைப் புலிக்கும் ஒப்பந்தம் எப்படி உருவாக முடியும்? அதுவும், அவர்கள் தண்ணீரில் எழுதியல்லவா ஒப்பந்தங்களைத் தயாரிக்கின்றார்கள்.

நான்: சரி... சரி... தொடரும் போராட்டத்தில் இன்றைய நிலைமை தோல்வியா? வெற்றியா?

புலி: துடித்தெழும் வேங்கைகள் தோற்பதே இல்லை. வெற்றி பெறும் நாள் வெகு தொலைவில் இல்லை!

நான்: சிறு வேண்டாம்! சிரிக்கவும் வேண்டாம்... நேரில் இப்போது எதிரில் நிற்கும் நீ நிஜமான புலியா?

புலி: (புன்னகைத்தபடி...) இது உயிருள்ள தேகம்! ஏன் சந்தேகம்

நான்: கொஞ்ச நாள் முன்னர் உன்னைக் கொன்றுவிட்டதாய்க் கூடிக் கூடிக் பேசிக்கொண்டார்களே...

புலி: நல்ல நகைச்சுவை! நானும் ரசித்தேன்! எமை வெல்லமுடியாத வீராதி வீரர்கள் - நான் கொல்லப்பட்டதாகக் கும்மியடித்தனர்! அவர் - தம் ஆசை நிராசை ஆனது! இன்னும் மீசையோடுதான் உலவுகின்றனர் (சிரிப்பு).

நான்: இத்தனை எதிர்ப்பு உமக்கு என்னால்?

புலி: புலிகள் யாரையும் அண்டி வாழ்வதும் இல்லை, எவர்க்கும் மண்டியிடுவதும் இல்லை, அதனால்...

நான்: குதறிக்கிழித்து நீ ஒரு சில உயிர்களைக் கொன்று விடுவதாய்க் குற்றம் சாட்டுகிறார்களே?

புலி: புறநானூற்றைப் படித்த கவிஞரே! கொஞ்சம் பகவத்கீதையையும் படித்துப் பாருங்கள்...

நான்: வன்முறைதான் உன் வாழ்க்கை முறையா?

புலி: வாயில் திறந்து வன்முறை தன்னை வா வா என்று யாம் வரவேற்றதில்லையே... திமிர் பிடித்த துப்பாக்கி முனைகளால் வன்முறை எம்மீது திணிக்கப்பட்டது!

நான்: அன்றாடம் உன்னைப்பற்றி அவதூறு பற்பல எழுகின்றனவே என்ன காரணம்?

புலி: உலக வரைபடத்தில் ஓர் இனம் தன் பெயரை எழுதத் தொடங்குவதை எதிரிகள் கூட்டத்தால் ஏற்க முடியவில்லை. எமக்குப்பின்னே சக்தி திரள்வதைச் சராசரி நரிகளால் சகிக்க முடியவில்லை. அதனால் பொய்யும் புரட்டும் புனைந்த கதைகள் ஏராளமாகவும் தாராளமாகவும் இலவசமாக விரியோகிக் கப் படுகின்றன. இதயம் கறுத்த இருட்டு மேகங்கள் 'சோ' வென எங்கும் சொல் மழை பொழிகின்றன!

நான்: இதற்கெல்லாம் முடிவு எப்போது புலியே?

புலி: கிழக்கை என் நகங்கள் கிழிக்கும்! அப்போது உண்மைகள் யாவும் விழிக்கும்!

[புலி கர்ஜிக்கத் தொடங்குகிறது. ஆகாயப்பாதையில் ஓர் அலறல். விமானத்திலிருந்து எங்கோ குண்டுகள் வீசப்படுகின்றன... வீறுகொண்டு எழுகிறது புலி! வெற்றி பெற வேண்டுமென்று அதை வாழ்த்தி விடைபெறுகின்றேன் நான்.]

- மு.மேத்தா

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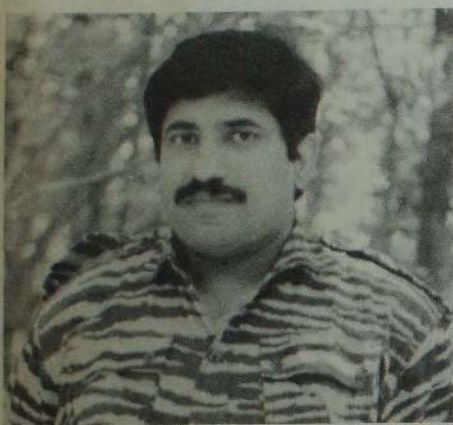
"The Shah of Iran once said that in his role as the gendarme of the region he had two main weapons for dealing with the revolutionary threat which existed in the region. First, was direct intervention. This was applied in the case of Oman in 1973, and also in the case of Baluchistan when the Shah provided armaments and military finance for the Pakistani state's repression in the area. The second weapon was internal subversion of the national liberation movements among the various nationalities. This method was applied in Kurdistan. The goal, of course, was to allow the national movement to grow in a particular direction in order to defeat it. The case of Kurdistan was classic. The Shah said openly that the Kurdistan operation was relatively cheap for him. With 30 million dollars the job was done. He simply supported Kurdistan to destroy it. Such a possibility always exist in Baluchistan." [Murad Khan of the Baluchistan People's Liberation Front, speaking to Raymond Noat - Interview quoted in Tariq Ali's 'Can Pakistan Survive?']

"Imagine a habitual wife beater who has been at it for twenty years. Imagine the little woman protesting arguing, screaming, grappling, and having come to the end of her tether one day, snatching the nearest kitchen knife to defend herself against further attacks. And then she says: 'You have tormented me enough. It is impossible to live with you any more.' With that she files papers for divorce. If you were the judge, what causes would you attribute to the break up of the marriage? The Sri Lankan Government (as probably the habitual wife beater) attributes the causes to the wife snatching the kitchen knife and asking for separation! To any oppressor resistance to oppression is naturally the beginning of the problem..."

- S. Sivanayagam, Founding Editor, Tamil Nation, Head Tamil Eelam Information Unit, 1984

Deputy Leader of the LTTE, and President of the People's Front of Liberation Tigers (PFLT), Mr K Mahendrarajah was interviewed by the Tamil Daily, Uthayan, in Jaffna. Excerpts from a translated version of the interview is published here.

"We are confident that the world will sooner or later realise the intransigent nature of Sinhala chauvinism and that the sympathy and support of the international community will turn in favour of our struggle."



It is true that we are facing very many pressures today. The Indian government and the Tamil Nadu government are acting together to crush our movement. At the same time the Sinhala government also has launched a military offensive as well as stiffened its economic sanctions.

We are not surprised over the Indian stand. The anti

Tiger campaign which has reared its head in India is not something which has started anew. It is the manifestation of the old foreign policy towards Sri Lanka, the objective of which is to crush the struggle for self-determination of the Tamils.

The Indian ruling groups have denied and continue to deny the right of the national formations for self government. They consider that a struggle of the nationalities for self government is a serious threat to Indian unity and national integrity. The Indian government is attempting to enforce this stand in the island of Sri Lanka which is beyond its shores.

It is because of this that we are at loggerheads with India. The Indian government fears that the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam for self-determination is likely to whip up nationalist feelings in Tamil Nadu and pave the way for secession.

The Indian intervention in our struggle began in 1983. Indian imperialism has, from that moment up till now, made Herculean efforts to suppress the Liberation Tigers for they realise that the Tigers are a formidable fighting force who have taken forward struggle of the people of

goats in their power struggles, in the overthrow of governments and in their political squabbles.

The Tiger hunt which started during the Karunanithi regime has today become so intense as to lay hands on the refugees from Tamil Eelam. The real men behind all these actions are the rulers in Delhi. They are the perpetrators of the political farce being staged in Tamil Nadu. Their secret objec-

"Since India cannot intervene directly in Tamil Eelam once again they are attempting to raise an iron curtain in Tamil Nadu. But so long as there is support and sympathetic feelings among the people of Tamil Nadu for our cause, this curtain is not going to be an obstacle."

tive is to somehow or other suppress the Tamil Eelam Liberation struggle.

The tremendous strides made by the Tigers in the armed struggle and the growing internationalisation of our struggle appears to have alarmed the Indian government. Since they cannot intervene directly in Tamil Eelam once again they are attempting to raise an iron curtain in Tamil Nadu. But so long as there is support and sympathetic feelings among the people of Tamil Nadu for our cause, this curtain is not going to be an obstacle.

The ground situation in Tamil Eelam is not adverse to us. We have proved in the course of the Elephant Pass war our capacity to engage in a direct confrontation with a large scale military offensive. This reveals a new development in our military capability. As part of our military strategy the siege has been temporarily relaxed but the war has not come to an end. The enemy has hoisted his flag on his own graveyard. That is all.

It is true that the policy of the Indian Central government, the atti-

"We have already declared that we are quite prepared to consider favourably a proposal for full self-government within a federal set up. ... But we know that the Sinhala government is not going to agree ... (However) we are ready to participate in talks in order to drive home to the international community the fact that the basic demands which underlie the Tamil national question are just and reasonable and the further fact that the Sinhala Government is not prepared to do that which is just and reasonable."

Tamil Eelam for self-determination with great courage, vision and determination. It is in continuation of these efforts that steps have now been taken against the Tigers in Tamil Nadu.

For quite a long time the politicians of Tamil Nadu have been using the Tigers as though they were pawns on their political chess-board. The Liberation Tigers were made scape-

tude of the Tamil Nadu government, the internal war situation, the economic sanctions all-in-all constitute a heavy pressure on our movement and on our people. However, these pressures will not be a set-back to our struggle. They will become the motive force which will carry the struggle forward. These pressures bring home to us the necessity to stand on our own legs, and on our own soil and to fight on our own strength.

Q. The government is saying that the ethnic issue cannot be resolved by military means. The proper course is a political solution through talks and consensus. What is the position of your movement in this matter?

A. This is a political sermon preached by the Sinhala government for a very long time. By preaching non-violence and practising violence, the Sinhala ruling

We are not opponents of peace. We are engaged in this struggle to establish permanent peace in our land, which has been torn to pieces by war. We have not rejected the approach to find a solution to our problem through peaceful negotiations.

But the Sinhala governing groups are not willing to find a solution to the Tamil national question by peaceful means. The Sinhala government wants to occupy the Tamil land through military aggression and to rule the Tamils through superior military might.

Each and every military action of the Tigers imparts a basic truth to the Sinhala state that the policy of aggression will not work. Yet the Sinhala ruling groups have not yet realised the fallacy of their military philosophy.

What shall we do in these circumstances? How shall we face an enemy who believes in oppression and militarism? How shall we deal with an enemy who callously disregards justice, equity and fairplay? How shall we handle a communal demon, who wishes to find a final solution in genocidal destruction?

"It is power that has become the determining factor in our struggle.... We will continue to fight but we have not closed the doors for peace. It is our strength alone which will form the base for both war and peace."

the other and dub both as militarism.

The army of the oppressor functions as the instrument of injustice. The oppressed people wage a struggle against injustice. They are compelled to bear arms and to fight back. The armed struggle of the Liberation Tigers is based on the ideal of human liberation. It is in its essence progressive. It is wrong to hold that both sides are resorting to armed violence without appreciating this distinction.

The people of Tamil Eelam have for long carried out non-violent agitations and protests in a peaceful and non-violent manner against the military oppression of the Sinhala state. All these agitations and protests were put down by armed might. State terrorism was unleashed on our people who stood, unarmed and powerless. It is state oppression that gave birth to the armed resistance of the Tamil people.

We are carrying on an armed struggle in order to achieve a political objective. Therefore, one must view our armed struggle as a mode of expression of a political struggle. We are engaged in this fight in order to enable our people to live in peace and to live with security and dignity and to enjoy all human rights and political freedoms.

There is no other alternative than to continue to fight, for our cause with courage, determination and faith. In order to wage a war with a powerful force we also must be powerful. It is power that has become the determining factor in our struggle. We will be able to meet the challenge of our enemy and achieve our goal of liberation only if we augment our manpower and strengthen our armed power and transform ourselves into a formidable fighting force.

It is people's power that adds strength and vitality to a liberation movement. We will assume the character of a powerful force when people's power takes the shape of national power then converts itself into a combating force and joins hands with the liberation movement. We will continue to fight but we have not closed the doors for peace. It is our strength alone which would form the base for both war and peace.

Q. Even if the government agrees to hold talks it is certain that under no circumstances will it agree to the creation of Tamil Eelam. In that event will you agree to accept something which will fall short of Tamil

continued on page 13

Q. It may be argued that the Indo-LTTE war of 1987 resulted in a set-back to the freedom struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam. Do you feel that a similar situation has arisen now? In India the Tamil Nadu government and the Central government are both engaged in a blatant attempt to suppress the Eelam struggle. The Elephant Pass battle, the critical situation resulting from economic sanctions etc. may lead one to suppose that these factors reflect a set-back to the freedom struggle?

A. The term "crisis" would be more appropriate than the term "set-back". For a long time, in one form or the other, we have faced several critical situations. As a struggle develops and gains maturity critical situations are likely to increase. A people who long for national liberation are compelled to face such situations.

It is a mistake to consider that the Indo-LTTE war resulted in a set-back to our struggle. The contradiction which arose between the Indian geo-political ambitions and the national interests of the people of Tamil Eelam erupted into a war. Some may hold the view that we could have avoided this war. If we had avoided that war, certainly we would have had to forgo the interests of our people to India's regional ambitions.

It is true that in that war losses of lives and destruction were on a big scale. We had to face a very serious crisis because of the intervention of the Indian army. But, we protected the interests of our people. We achieved this objective by shedding blood. Ultimately we succeeded.

Indian historians have commented that that war caused a disastrous set-back to the foreign policy of India. The Indian ruling groups also have had to admit this bitter truth. Therefore the Indo-LTTE war may be considered not so much as a set-back to our freedom struggle but as a set-back to the imperialistic thrust of India. The Indian military intervention has advanced our struggle for self-determination to a new dimension. In this context, we can say that our struggle took a progressive leap.

P. Sivasamy writes Briefly on Burns and Bharathi

People with only a mild interest in English literature may not have taken to, or even stumbled on Robert Burns. He was not even English. He was a Scot, celebrated as the national bard of Scotland. He wrote in English, but his Scot-English vocabulary is somewhat baffling with its mix of words of Scottish origin, the everyday language of the common people. One might even call it the "vernacular", though the word hadn't been born in the 18th century when Burns lived and wrote in the dawn of the French Revolution. His poetry reflects the ideas of the time when democracy was bursting on the world with a lot of violence.

It is not necessary to introduce Subramaniya Bharathiyar to Tamil readers. He is the poet of Tamil nationalism and renaissance and a household name in Tamil Nadu and wherever else Tamil-speaking people are scattered and settled.

He has been the inspiration modern Tamil literature. Burns sang of the ideals of the French Revolution - liberty, equality, fraternity - but Bharathi lived in the midst of another revolution, the movement against colonial exploitation. In 1918 he was jailed for publishing his songs for his country's independence. It was India that pioneered this revolution, and in a single generation, not only India herself, but nearly every other victim of imperial oppression has been freed. The latest in this historical thrust of decolonisation is the empire of the Soviets and today the Croats.

Neither Burns nor Bharathi lived to see the attainment of his hopes and aims. But the two poets who lived centuries and continents apart, one in Scotland and the other in Tamil Nadu, separated by time and space, language and culture, lock hands in their thoughts and ideas and inspiration for human freedom. What is an era of 200 years in the annals of freedom? The story of mankind's release from bondage is still unfolding.

Burns was born to the plough, the son of a Scottish tenant farmer. But the father was wise enough to send him to the village school where he learnt to read and write. With that scrappy education he read every book he could lay his hands on and came to love and write poetry. But life was hard. He had seen his father dying worn out with overwork and poverty on a leased farm that could never pay. He was himself struggling to make ends meet without hope, like a beast of burden. The social injustices and hidebound hypocrisies of the day made him bitter and caustic against the religious beliefs and customs that could tolerate such inhumanity. The young poet's ridicule so incensed the orthodox that they condemned him as an agnostic, even though he went to church occasionally. One churchman was so nettled by Burns' sarcastic songs that he is reported to have viciously quipped, "Robert burns." (in hell, of course.)

His songs and ballads won immediate popularity and he abandoned his plans to migrate to Jamaica and went to Edinburgh instead. There he was lionized by the literary elite of the day who secured him a job in the Excise Service. That was unfortunate. The young poet learnt to drink.

It may be of interest that Bharathi's reputation is also faulted with a hint of addiction to narcotic drugs. The story goes that in a mood of elation he had gone too close to a temple elephant which got enraged for some reason,

picked him up and hurled him away. He died as a result of the injuries. Whatever these taints, the songs of the two poets are timeless.

They both wrote songs, not only poetry; lyrics to be sung, not just read aloud. Burns' songs are sung in Scotland even to this day. In spite of his Scot-English idiom he is considered the greatest song-bard in English literature. His "Auld Land Syne" is still sung all over the English-speaking world. Bharathi also wrote his songs to be sung. Every one of them indicates the tune (mettu) to which it is to be sung. His songs are on the lips



**Bharathi, the poet of
Tamil nationalism**

of even the meanest in the Tamil country and will live as long as Tamil is spoken. The Tamil people have spontaneously acclaimed him as mahakavi - the Great Poet.

Burns' songs are so full of feeling and so simply expressed that it makes for countrywide enjoyment. The common folk are not turned away by the phrasing.

*O Love's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June*

are the opening lines of one of his numerous love songs. Love, after all, has been the main inspiration for the world's greatest poets. All poetry is rooted in human feeling, (or failing?), and love is the most powerful force in all nature.

The wan moon sets behind the white wave,

And time is setting with me, Oh!

are two more lines from another song. The colour and imagery are subtly evocative. The poet's life set at 38 years. Did he have a premonition that he was going to die early?

Bharathi also sings in the everyday speech of his people, and uses popular tunes and measures - like the kummi for instance, a traditional song and dance form handed down through generations. The Tamil classics like Silappathikaram or Kamba Ramayanam, cannot be read and enjoyed without notes. But no copy of Bharathi's poetical works has ever been published with notes. His language is the Tamil of today spoken in the homes and villages. Whoever hasn't been thrilled by these simple and moving lines?

*Senthamil nadenum pothinile - inpa
Then vanthu payuthu kathinile - enkal*

*Thanthayar nadenra pechinile - otu
Sakthi pirakkuthu moochinile*

So simple and moving that the song goes direct to the heart and stays there.

GOGGLES by C.P. Goliard

The Rebel of Rebels

The title of this column, 'The Rebel of Rebels' is a transformed version of the title of a Hollywood movie, 'The King of Kings', released 30 years ago. This movie, told the story of Jesus Christ. In reality, during his life, Jesus was a rebel rather than a 'king'. He was not the first rebel of repute, to make his entry into this world. He have been preceded by quite a few like Buddha and Socrates.

At his time, the total population of the world was only between 200 and 300 million. In this century, when a rebel of equal merit, with the name Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, altered the history of this world, the population of the globe had expanded to almost 4000 million. When Gandhi himself had to lead the 300 million Indians, he gained inspiration from his predecessor who was living in the periphery of the Roman empire two millennia ago.

So much has been written about this Jewish rebel by so many in so different contexts. I found, how Bernard Shaw described the activities of this Bethlehem rebel quite refreshing in many ways to share with.

Wrote Shaw,

"Jesus was from the point of view of the High Priest a heretic and an impostor. From the point of view of the merchants he was a rioter

Historically, goliards were the medieval poets, who wandered from place to place engaging in intellectual duels and bawdy bar room fights. The initials C.P. stands for the place from which this particular goliard comes from - Parithu Thurai/ Cotton Port.

and a Communist. From the Roman Imperialist point of view he was a traitor. From the common sense point of view he was a dangerous mad man. From the snobbish point of view, always a very influential one, he was a penniless vagrant.

"From the police point of view he was an obstructor of thoroughfares, a beggar, an associate of prostitutes, an apologist of sinners, and a disparager of judges; and his daily companions were tramps whom he had seduced into vagabondage from their regular trades. From the point of view of the pious he was a Sabbath breaker, a denier of the efficacy of circumcision and the advocate of a strange rite of baptism, a gluttonous man and a wine bibber. He was abhorrent to the medical profession as an unqualified practitioner who healed people by quackery and charged nothing for the treatment.

"He was against the priests, against the judiciary, against the military,

nobleman. Clearly, the poet was no worshipper of any blood line.

Nor did Bharathi tolerate the arrant follies of his countrymen.

*Anchi yanchich chavar - ivar
Anchatha potulillai avaniyile;
Vanchanaip peikal enpar - intha
Mataththil enpar; anthak kulaththil enpar;*

Thunchuthu muhaddil enpar - mihath

Thuyara paduvar, ennip payappaduvar.

Bharathi has written 16 quatrains of simple instructions to children in the famous Paapa Song. They are delicious reading for adults too. A few lines are taken out to illustrate the poet's sympathy with living creatures:

*Kothithi thiriyum anthakkoli - athai
Kooddi vilayadu paapa;
Eththith thirudum anthak kakal - atharku*

Irakkappada venum paapa.

But Burns' feeling for Nature goes even deeper and embraces life outside normal human situations. His heart bleeds when his ploughshare turns up a mouse's nest.

*I'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken Nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,*

An' fellow mortal!!

On another occasion his furrow dislodged a common daisy and his pity overflowed in another poem. Such sensitivity to animal and plant life cannot make for successful farming.

against the city (he declared that it was impossible for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven), against all the interests, classes, principalities and powers, inviting everybody to abandon all these and follow him.

"By every argument, legal, political, religious, customary and polite, he was the most complete enemy of the society of his time ever brought to the bar. He was guilty on every count of the indictment, and on many more that his accusers had not the wit to frame. If he was innocent then the whole world was guilty. To acquit him was to throw over civilization and all its institutions. History has borne out the case against him; for no State has ever constituted itself on his principles or made it possible to live according to his commandments.

Bernard Shaw wrote the above cited commentary on Jesus in the preface to his play On the Rocks (1933). It is also interesting to note what Shaw had written in the same preface about the freedom of press then (when India was ruled by the British) seems valid even now, considering what has happened to the founding editor of Tamil Nation

"I have seen too many newspapers suppressed and editors swept away, not only in Ireland and India but in London in my time..." observed the distinguished dramatist.

Burns and Bharathi have written lots of poems too, of an epic quality, but they cannot be considered in a brief study like the present. They have their differences too. Bharathi was deeply religious and many of his longer poems are inspired by the ancient Hindu classics, which are tied up with pious myths. But Burns' faith in God was only skin-deep; nor did he pay much attention to the Puritan restraints of his day. He did not stop with writing love songs and work songs; he wrote drinking songs and what is worse, bawdy songs. The bawdiest songs had to wait till 1965, nearly a century after the author's demise, before they could be published. An over-moral society hadn't come of age to appreciate and accept the fun without being shocked by the sin. But Bharathi has never been accused of any such moral lapses or literary aberration. Even his Kannammah songs which betray deep passion, cannot be condemned as unconventionally erotic.

There is a haunting melancholy in the song of the defeated Jacobite rebel whose hopes for freedom of his native Scotland from English rule, were scattered on the field of battle.

*Now a' is done that man can do, all
And a' is done in vain:
My Love and Native Land farewell;
For I maun cross the main, my dear, must*

For I maun cross the main.
This wrenching goodbye echoes the sad tragedy of so many other boys and girls around the world today ready to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of their Native Land. But not always in vain is the reassuring verdict of history.

Hugo Gurdon rode a rickety bicycle over rough terrain for nine hours to join Tamil Tigers in a hideout near Batticaloa and reports in the London Daily Telegraph of October 30:

The army cannot operate at night and it cannot hold the territory it captures

Excerpts from the Daily Telegraph Report:

When dusk falls in eastern Sri Lanka, artillery shells begin falling too. The onset of night in the dense thicket and mangrove swamps is accompanied by the crump of guns.

The army lobbs its ordnance apparently aimlessly, into the parched rice paddies which now await the north-east monsoon.

Peacocks screech with alarm, but the Tamil Tiger guerrillas merely laugh and shrug. Relaxing in the growing gloom of a copse which

The army cannot operate at night and it cannot hold the territory it captures. An hour before sunset, government troops abandon their check-points, even on major roads, and the Tigers take over.

Teenage rebels who emerge from the shadows in the late afternoon usually have little more than Chinese or Indian automatic rifles. These, along with home-made mines and mortars and the occasional stolen bulldozer converted with armour-plating into a makeshift tank, are not enough to win militarily.

It is a low-intensity war, but one characterised by hideous atrocities.

...General Denzil Kobekeduwa, commander of northern operations, says his men are consolidating recent gains in preparation for an attack on Jaffna town itself.

"Our goal is to retake Jaffna," he said. "And one phase of that major operation is complete."

There are also suggestions, however, that the army is merely trying to create as strong a bargaining position as possible so that President Ranasinghe can announce a willingness to talk peace when the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation meets in Colombo on Nov 7.

"We should be able to rule our Tamil land. Until we achieve that we are not going to give up our fight. We are totally sure that the government is not going to give us what we want because that is the history. For 40 years, Tamils have been given promises and have been deceived. The government has had time..." Karikalan, LTTE Commander in East

conceals the Tigers' eastern headquarters, Karikalan, their political leader, says: "It happens every night."

Around him, 16-year-olds cradling automatic rifles nod approvingly at his bravado.

But the bombardment is increasing. After eight years fighting for an independent Tamil state in Sri Lanka's north and east, the Tigers have taken a beating in recent months.

To draw fire away from their northern stronghold of Jaffna, which the army cut off last week, the rebels have escalated their eastern campaign. For its part, the army wants to show it can pin down the rebels on two fronts at once. But this suddenly-intense round of fighting cannot disguise the probable truth that neither side can win.

The Tiger headquarters where I spent last weekend is no more than 15 miles from Batticaloa. Shrouded in dense vegetation and approached from the town across a crocodile-infested lagoon, the camp has lain undetected by the army for more than a year.

Day and night, the camp's 150 Tigers fan out across paddies and scrub, attacking army positions and gathering information from villagers about troop movements.

The army has only a dozen helicopters, and their daytime search-and-destroy missions have little success.

They certainly do not stop Tiger operations. Last week-end, rebels killed 21 soldiers near Batticaloa, ambushing a convoy and attacking an army post at Welikanda. The army responded by bombing a village.

Colombo is unlikely to get more helicopters or night vision equipment from the West because, as one diplomat said: "We're not going to sell them kit knowing they are likely to use it to strafe civilians on the streets."

This summer, after two soldiers were killed by a Tiger landmine, the army massacred 110 Tamils in a nearby village.

Meanwhile, Muslim refugees in the northern town of Madhu say the Tigers drove them from their homes by hacking villagers to death and scattering the pieces on fields as a warning to others.

But the two sides are far apart, and any talks would be little more than an opportunity to regroup for further fighting.

As the shelling continued behind him, Karikalan, a former civil servant, explained their position.

He said: "We should be able to rule our Tamil land. Until we achieve that we are not going to give up our fight. We are totally sure that the government is not going to give us what we want because that is the history. For 40 years, Tamils have been given promises and have been deceived. The government has had time."

Quislings turned spies?

Douglas Devananda, Secretary General of EPDP, was among the group of officers of the armed forces and the Deputy Defence Minister visiting the Sri Lankan troops in Karainagar, in a bid to encourage and boost morale among the Sri Lankan Armed Forces. It is reported that his assistance was sought to locate places, map out routes and spy on the activities of the people there.

Civilians listening to FM radio bands have heard instructions broadcast in unmistakable pure Tamil, helping the Sri Lankan Air Force. People travelling through Thandikulam have been harassed by these quisling groups, guns pointed at them and the food which people had to journey for to obtain, snatched from them. Some have been tortured and ordered to reveal the whereabouts of the Tigers.

Tamil quislings are acting as guides and navigators for the Sri Lankan armed forces to advance into the interior, from Kayts and the surrounding islands. In October, three fast boats in which the Sri Lankan forces attempted a landing at Araly were sunk by the LTTE. One of the guides who accompanied these boats was wounded severely and is now in the custody of the LTTE. He disclosed that many members from the quisling groups are leading the Sri Lankan army through the Mandaitivu areas and are also pointing out civilians to be arrested, as LTTE collaborators. These Tamil traitors have been sent not only from Colombo but have been brought from India also. Two spies were recently captured by the people and handed over to the LTTE in Chavakachcheri.

A fifty minute television documentary on the Liberation Tigers titled 'Suicide Killers' was featured by BBC, London on its Channel 1, on October 3 at the prime time of 9.30 p.m. The Socialist Weekly's comments on the programme appeared under the heading -

Tiger, tiger...

Suicide killers might sound like something from the video shop, but this 50-minute documentary in BBC1's Inside Story series is the result of what television publicists like to call unique access.

When the people in anoraks took their cameras and fluffy microphones into 10 Downing Street, it was billed as unique access. When they filmed inside the Maze prison last year, the public relations people shouted unique access long after that curiously tame film faded from our screens.

Unique access of course means that someone has at long last agreed to grant an audience to the TV cameras because they want to tell us something. Whether their message will be relayed convincingly depends on who they are and who's making the film. The British government is unlikely to let BBC television crews into sensitive establishments without having some confidence that the result will be to its liking. But how likely are the Tamil Tigers to get a fair hearing?

Uniquely, Suicide Killers takes us right into Sri Lankan jungle camps where Tamil separatists train their army of men, women and children.... we are left in no doubt as to the separatist's case and their justification for arguing that case with AK47s. The argument against discrimination in education is eloquently put by young recruits who, after two weeks' basic training add to their uniforms a glass tube containing cyanide, to be bitten in the event of capture. Problems of linguistic discrimination are forcefully explained by the woman who lost both her arms in battle but who fights on, using her mouth to write and her legs to throw bombs. Employment discrimination is criticised by the mother of a dead soldier who tells her sobbing husband: "Shut up. Don't cry. We're not worried about her death. She died for the nation."

Star billing goes to the Black Tigers, an elite rank of volunteers who insists on delivering explosives in person. They are the suicide killers of the film's title. And you won't find it in the video shop. (Courtesy: Socialist, October 23 - November 5)

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The Emerging Multipolar World

The influential US think-tank, the Heritage Foundation says:

Given the economic potential that Prime Minister Rao could unleash, the U.S. should welcome India's economic reforms, increase its leverage over New Delhi, and in this way more effectively pressure New Delhi on issues like nuclear non-proliferation

The Heritage Foundation, a conservative US think tank which had considerable influence during the Reagan administration, has praised Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's economic reforms.

"In his first month in power, Prime Minister Rao mounted a frontal attack on India's four-decade experiment with socialism," said the report, a backgrounder from the Asian studies Center of the Foundation, entitled "responding to India's welcome economic reforms".

While socialism had been discredited elsewhere, said Kenneth Conboy, Deputy Director of the Center, "yet nowhere has the combination of socialist economic and anti-trade policies proved more of a failure to more people than in India," where people have had to make do with mainly domestic products "of inferior quality and inflated price."

"Throughout these recent dramatic reforms, the US largely has been

silent," Conboy points out in the backgrounder released yesterday. In fact, he said, Washington traditionally has paid scant attention to the Indian subcontinent and only two American Presidents had visited the country.

Tracking this ambivalence to India's non-aligned but largely pro-Soviet stance, Conboy further added that India "was a favourite conduit for Moscow-inspired disinformation that, for decades, spread lies about the U.S." Though the U.S. remains the largest investor in India, its investments are relatively small - \$639 million - or one-sixth of what American investors poured into tiny Singapore.

"Given the economic potential that could be unleashed by Rao in India, the U.S. should not continue ignoring South Asia," Conboy warns. Instead it should assist in the economic reforms. And in doing so, the Heritage Foundation asserts, "the U.S. may be able to increase its leverage over New

Delhi," which in turn, "could enable Washington more effectively to pressure New Delhi on issues like nuclear non-proliferation."

The Foundation recommends that to encourage the economic measures initiated by New Delhi, the Bush administration should arrange visits to India next year by Secretaries of State and Commerce; President Bush should praise India's economic efforts during his trip next month to northeast and southeast Asia; urge India to adopt effective patent and copyright protection; and continue joint Indo-U.S. military programs like production of the Light Combat Aircraft; and the Department of Commerce should organize delegations of American businessmen to visit India in early 1992.

But the report cautions that the Rao government, remains the product of a "weak political coalition which may have only one year before being challenged in parliament by the opposition."

Mrs Bandaranaike looks to China?

Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, left for a three week visit to China in late October. Although she has quit the leadership of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, political sources said that she would not give up politics completely and would play a major role in bringing about a strong opposition alliance. Over the years, the Sinhala political leaders have sought to maintain links with China as a way of balancing India's hegemony in the region. Political observers point out that China was the first country that President Premadasa's Prime Ministerial nominee, Mr.D.B. Wijetunge visited, soon after accepting office.

US must stop wishing for the good old days

Fighters for a Ukraine free of Russian imperial rule are still smarting at Mr.Bush's speech in Kiev this summer blasting "suicidal nationalism" and touting the Gorbachev centre. That misreading of the forces of history in his "Chicken Kiev" speech not only made one American President appear anti-liberty, but jeopardized the U.S. relations with an emerging European power... Complex? You bet. But with Ukraine as a player, Washington will have to stop wishing for the good old days of union dictatorship. (Courtesy: William Safire, International Herald Tribune)

British Labour MP supports Kashmiri and Sikh claim for self determination

Mr.Max Madden, Labour Party M.P. for Bradford West speaking at the opening of the Washington Chapter of the Punjab Human Rights Organisation (PHRO) with headquarters in Ludhiana, said that 'the people of Punjab and Kashmir should be given the right to determine their future'. It should be left to them to decide what options they prefer, whether to 'stay with India' and be afforded 'greater autonomy' or become an entity of their own 'and break away from central rule' by Delhi.. He said this freedom of choice is their birthright. He promised that when Labour comes to power in Britain, 'human rights and the rights of minorities in India will be a top priority in our international human rights agenda.' Mr.Madden was accompanied to the function by Dr.Jasdev Singh Rai, a rights activist who heads PHRO in London.

Democracy - Indian Style?

Booth Capturing and Murder in Uttar Pradesh, India's most populous state

The posters around the district jail here bear a noble message: "Vote for D.P.Yadav, the symbol of truth, non violence, and justice." Mr.Dharam Pal Yadav, a leading candidate in the Bulandshahr bye election for the Uttar Pradesh state assembly, is unfortunately unavailable for interview. He is inside a jail doing a three month stretch under the National Security Act. His release next month will depend on whether the authorities press charges which include extortion, kidnapping and murder.

The Bulandshahr bye election one of 15 parliamentary and 57 state assembly polls due to take place on 16 November, was brought about largely by Mr.Yadav's robust approach to democracy.

In the general election in May, his team of campaign workers included some 200 armed goondas or professional hooligans, who terrorised polling officials and voters alike, and fought pitched battles with opponents. The orgy of booth capturing (the Indian electoral science of taking over polling stations and stuffing the ballot boxes), intimidation, and violence left around 14 people dead, and scores injured. The authorities had no option but to nullify the election.

It seems almost incidental to note that D.P. Yadav represents the Samajwadi Janata party and that P.P. Yadav is the candidate of the plain Janata Party. Ideological differences, so far as they can be detected play little part in the contest. The same in less lurid terms, could be said of most of the other bye elections taking place in the November 16 'mini general election'. (Courtesy: Guardian)

Gangster war lords to ensure victory for Narasimha Rao in Andhra Pradesh?

Prime Minister P.V.Narasimha Rao's nomination to the Nandyal seat in Andhra Pradesh at the November 16 bye election has served to focus attention on what has been described as India's modern day 'Wild West' where violence is a commodity easily purchased and life is cheap.

Complete with gangster war lords whose sole motive is the annihilation of their rival, the region is notorious for faction fights. Reports of kidnapping and torture of rival candidates allegedly by Rao's party workers have cast a shadow over the election. Rao, who is contesting from the Rayalaseema region for the first time in his political career, has been accused of willingly put himself in the hands of gang lords who would ensure a victory even at gun point. Complained M.Narsimhulu, an independent candidate contesting against the Prime Minister: Rayalaseema is known for its culture of booth capturing and preventing voters from coming to the polling booths.'

There reports of a local astrolger, G.Bandrinarayana Murthy, having been prevented from filing his nomination papers by some Congress Party workers. Murthy was reportedly beaten up when he tried to enter his nomination as an independent candidate. Murthy later died of cardiac arrest. The cynical joke about Rayalaseema is that the only factories it boasts of are 'bomb factories'. Bomb making is a big business here with practically every other household engaged in it (Courtesy: India Abroad).

Moscow support for Pakistan jolts India

The Indian Foreign Minister, Madhavsingh Solanki, left for the Soviet Union on November 14 for talks on ways to improve relations. Moscow's support, earlier in the week, for a Pakistani resolution at the United Nations calling for a South Asian nuclear free zone jolted Delhi policy makers. Mr.Solanki is expected to take up the nuclear issue on a four day visit, the first high level contact between the countries since the Congress government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao came to power in June. (Courtesy: Guardian)

David Scheffer, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace says

US should publicly affirm the international legal right of self-determination for the peoples of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Tibet

Writing in the Washington Post, David Scheffer, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace says: "The Chinese tirelessly invoke the principle of noninterference in the internal affairs of nations to shield their domestic conduct from foreign scrutiny. The principle is codified in the United Nations Charter and remains the beacon of China's long love affair with the 'Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence' - the modern equivalent of 'Don't Tread on Me.'"

China has turned a blind eye to the new balance being struck in international law between the sovereignty of nations and the universal protection of human rights, including recognition of new rights of self-determination.

Mr. Bush cannot remain loyal to his own pronouncements about the new world order (with its "just treatment of all peoples") and prop up Beijing's "one China" policies. Presidents Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan may have bought the "one China" line, but the world has changed far too much in recent years for Mr Baker to drag that old dog along. At a minimum, Mr. Baker can publicly affirm the international legal right of self-determination for the peoples of Taiwan, Hong Kong and Tibet.

Sikh - Muslim Joint Platform?

The meeting of Akali Dal leader Mr.Simranjit Singh Mann had with Mr.Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait, President of the Indian Union Muslim League and Syed Sahabuddin, Janata Dal Leader and Convener of the Babri Masjid Movement Cordination Committee has evoked widespread attention because of its far reaching implications.

A sinister twist to politics, an 'unseemly alliance' a needless provocation - these were some of the comments that the event brought forth. Fundamentalists Hindus and parties like the BJP were quick to express serious concern. They said that sections of Sikhs and Muslims were planning to come together on one platform. Mr.Mann said later that he was all for a joint front of the 'minorities' to face majority fundamentalism. 'A sword respects a sword. If one sword sees another it remains in its sheath' he said. (Courtesy:Hindu International Edition)

Indian Region

"India does not need SAARC - there is no SAARC without India"

The summit meeting of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which was scheduled for November 7th to 9th in Sri Lanka was scuttled by India at the last moment.

The SAARC rules provide that only heads of state or government may attend the summit. The King of Bhutan, Jigme Singye Wanchuk, said he could not attend the Sixth SAARC Summit because of "pressing domestic problems".

At first, it was put out by Indian sources in Colombo that the King was "miffed" by the fact that the Sri Lankan government did not deliver the invitation, but that it was despatched to Thimpu on the ground that there were no convenient flights.

But it later transpired that the King had twice confirmed his acceptance of the invitation to the summit by President Premadasa and that the King changed his mind on the 1st of November. Initially, Sri Lanka had not been unduly perturbed. After all, Sri Lanka had not been represented by its Head of State at the 1990

summit and India had not objected. But this time round, with President Premadasa taking over the Presidency of SAARC, India insisted on strict adherence to the rules. This has served to put Sri Lanka in its place - and may have even 'torpedoed' SAARC altogether. An enraged Sri Lanka official is reported to have said: 'This is the end of SAARC'.

Mr. Narasimha Rao, the Prime Minister of India and Mr. G.P. Koirala, the Prime Minister of Nepal, both cancelled their visits. It is reported that the Presidents of Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Maldives responded to President Premadasa's agitated appeals and came to Colombo for a couple of days each to save him further loss of face.

The State controlled Sri Lanka Observer said that 'India was peeved that the IPKF was asked to quit'. It added: 'Indians waited a long time to get even on this score and finally they got their chance in sabotaging the sixth SAARC summit. India is a big man with a small mind. India's foreign policy is more attuned to dominate the region with arrogant

force rather than with consensus.'

Indian officials have not concealed their satisfaction at the turn of events. It is an open secret that India used its influence over Bhutan and Nepal to keep their leaders away from the summit.

Indian officials point out to President Premadasa's anti Indian stance during the past several years - that he did not attend the SAARC summits in 1988, 89 and 90 though the Indian Prime Minister did; that President Premadasa was the only head of a regional government which did not attend Rajiv Gandhi's funeral; that in 1989 he had ordered the IPKF out though it had come at the invitation of Sri

Lanka; that Sri Lanka had not uttered a word of thanks or sympathy to India, though India had lost over a thousand lives to 'help' Sri Lanka; that the Indian High Commissioner had been searched by the Sri Lanka customs at the airport in violation of usual diplomatic practise; that the All India Radio correspondent had been expelled from Sri Lanka on the eve of the summit; and that the Indian High Commission in Colombo was under surveillance by Sri Lanka, its telephones tapped and the car numbers of its visitors noted down by the police. Informed sources say that Indian diplomats have privately declared: "India does not need SAARC. There is no SAARC without India"

The Tamil national liberation struggle is not taking place in the stratosphere. It is taking place on the ground - and in the Indian region. The political impact of much that happens on the Indian sub continent is also felt by the people of Tamil Eelam.

Madras muzzle on freedom of speech

The refusal by the Tamil Nadu Police Commissioner to give permission to the Dulesepan Welfare Group host a seminar in Madras, Tamil Nadu, was found to be unlawful by the High Court in Madras. The High Court said that freedom of speech was the most important freedom in a democracy and as such it should not be muzzled, curtailed or tampered with. The Judge condemned the action of the Police Commissioner and said that if they feared disruption of law and order because of the seminar, it was the duty of the police to provide extra protection for the duration of the seminar.

"We are against LTTE's Tamil Eelam demand - we are hurt that Sri Lanka has not honoured IPKF dead", says Indian High Commissioner Jha

In an interview to the Sri Lankan Sunday Times, the Indian High Commissioner Mr. Narendra Nath Jha, reiterated that India never wanted a divided Sri Lanka and was always against the LTTE's demand for Tamil Eelam. He said that it was at the express invitation of the Sri Lankan Government, that the IPKF was sent to Sri Lanka and that 1165 Indian soldiers had lost their lives to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. He said India was hurt that Sri Lanka had so far failed to honour the IPKF for its invaluable service to Sri Lanka. He urged the Sri Lankan authorities to at least honour the memory of the 1165 IPKF men who had lost their lives in North East Sri Lanka.

DMK launches campaign in Tamil Nadu against revival of Brahmin dominance

The Dravida Munetra Kalagam has launched a campaign against the ruling All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kalagam (AIADMK) for seeking to revive Brahmin dominance in Tamil Nadu. The DMK have started calling the AIADMK Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha Jayaram 'Papathi' (a derisive term for a Brahmin lady). Both the DMK and the AIADMK owe their origins to the Self Respect Movement initiated in the early 1920s, by the late Ramasamy Naicker, affectionately known as Periyar. Periyar's social reform movement was directed strongly against casteism and against Brahmin dominance in all walks of life in the South. Periyar's demand for Dravida Nadu was an agitation directed against which he regarded as an oppressive Aryan Brahmin rule. DMK activists point out to the irony of the AIADMK which claims to be a Dravida movement being led today by a Brahmin.

P.M.K. Reiterates Support for Tamil Eelam

Dr.S.Ramdas, the leader of the increasingly influential Pattali Makkal Kadchi (PMK) in Tamil Nadu, speaking to pressmen in Madras, following the Party's delegates Conference, reiterated his support for the Tamil Eelam demand. He said that in Tamil Nadu, only Congress(I) and the AIADMK were opposed to the LTTE.

Tough Cop Back in Punjab Police

Kanwar Pal Singh Gill, who flushed out militants from the Golden Temple in 1988, is back in Punjab as the Police Chief. Gill has a reputation for ruthless handling of Sikh militants. His appointment comes within a week of the assassination of a senior Marxist leader Sarwan Singh Cheema, who was gunned down with his half dozen bodyguards in Jalandhar district.

Derek Brown writing in the Guardian says

Censored video tape shows victims of torture by troops in Kashmir

A short news video containing allegations of horrifying torture by Indian troops in Kashmir has been withheld from circulation. The 13-minute video was made for Eyewitness, one of several monthly news magazines on tape which have become a popular alternative to the abysmal government television service.

All such magazines have to be submitted to censorship, and are regularly cut or amended. In the case of the Eyewitness - video on Kashmir, the censors have passed the buck. It has been referred to the ministries of home and external affairs and, even more disturbingly, to the Indian army. Without their approval, which is thought highly unlikely, the video will never be shown.

By Western standards, the Eyewitness piece is hardly a scorching indictment of Indian policy in Kashmir, where for nearly two years security forces have fought an ugly counter-terrorist campaign against Muslim separatists. But the video does include two sickening accounts of torture, by the victims themselves.

A shopkeeper, Manzoor Ahmed Naikoo, was filmed in his hospital bed, swathed in bandages and fitted with drips and drains to treat multiple perforations in his intestines, stomach, liver, and lungs. He tells reporter Savvasaachi Jain what soldiers did to him: "After tying me down they removed my pyjamas. They tied some cloth round my penis and set it on fire ... Then they laid me face down. One man stood on my back. Another brought a rod and inserted it deep through my rectum. He kept thrusting it forward and back."

Another alleged torture victim, Muzaffar Shah, tells a similarly sickening story. He too has ruptured intestines, liver, and even lungs.

These interviews are followed by the bland comment of the Kashmir army commander Lieutenant-General S. Nath: "There is no torture. We have given very strict orders to our interrogators that they will not use any third degree methods."

Dixit Appointed Foreign Secretary

New Delhi - Jyotindra Nath Dixit, 56, India's High Commissioner to Pakistan and a diplomat with several sensitive appointments behind him, has been appointed the new Foreign Secretary.

Dixit, popularly known as "Mani", is superseding three officials for the top post, and for the first time in many years the foreign secretary would be able to complete at least two years in office.

Dixit will be retiring only in 1993. The other contenders, Chinmoy Gharekhan, India's Permanent Representative at the UN, L.L. Mehotra, Secretary in the External Affairs Ministry and N.N. Jha, High Commissioner to Colombo, have less than a year left for retirement. Dixit has served in every country in the neighbourhood giving him a sound first-hand knowledge of the region's politics and government.

As India is playing a larger role in the subcontinent Dixit's exposure to the region will help give the foreign policy a decisive direction, foreign policy analysts feel.

His term as High Commissioner in Colombo was marked by the despatch of Indian troops to Sri Lanka. Dixit played an assertive but highly controversial role as Indian envoy that earned him the sobriquet of "little viceroy" in the Sri Lankan media. (Courtesy: India Abroad)

Eelam Tamils



Over three hundred Eelam Tamils resident in Australia assembled before the Parliament House, in Canberra on November 7 and called upon the Australian Government to persuade Sri Lanka to end its genocidal campaign against the people of Tamil Eelam. The rally was addressed amongst others by Senator Robert Hill, the Australian Shadow Foreign Minister.



Mr. Ted Grace, M.P. and Chairman of the Australian Parliamentary Caucus Committee on Foreign affairs, in discussion with officials of the Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations at the rally before Parliament House



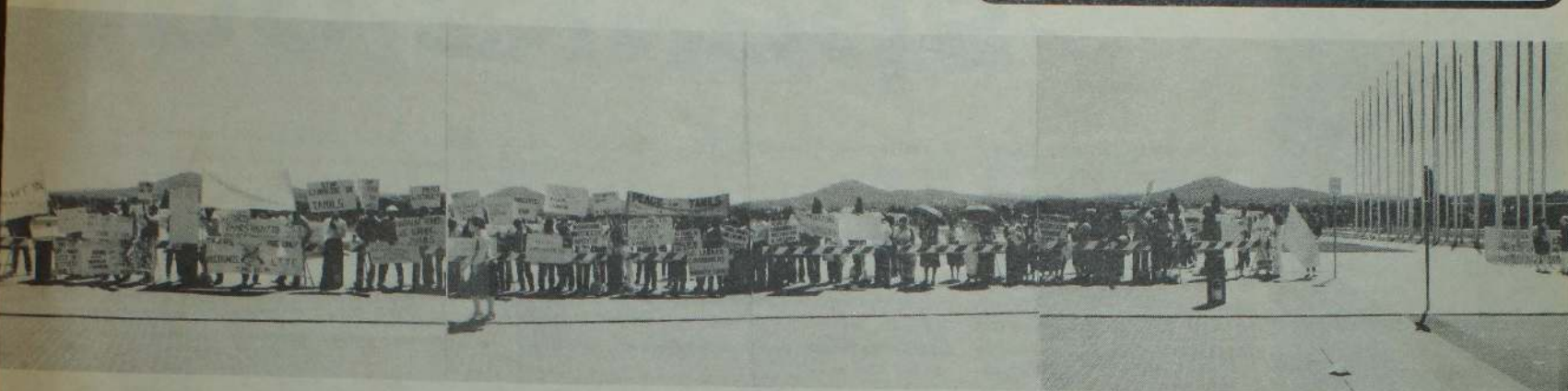
The Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation organised a six hour vigil before the Ceylon Tea Centre, near Piccadilly Circus in London on November 2. The vigil was in protest against the continued aerial bombardment of Tamil civilian centres and intensified military offensive launched by the Sri Lankan armed forces against the people of Tamil Eelam. Faced with the demonstration at its doorstep, the Ceylon Tea Centre was compelled to close down for the duration of the vigil.

in London



Protest

in Canberra



in Melbourne



"there is no excuse for any government to shell, bomb or in anyway attack innocent women, children or others in any conflict. I will be raising the matter personally with the Prime Minister and Senator Evans."

Mesage to the Rally at Melbourne City Square on October 26 from Hon. Peter Staples M.P. Minister for Aged, Family and Health Services

Hundreds of Eelam Tamils marched to a rally at the Melbourne City Square on October 26 to protest against the military offensive unleashed against the Tamil people in mid October. Speakers at the Rally included Senator Barney Cooney, Federal Senator for Victoria, Mr. Eddy Micallef, Secretary, Victorian Caucus and Mr. Bright Nyondo, President Australian African Association. "You have my support" said Senator Sid Spindler in a message to the Ceylon Tamil Association (Victoria). Professor C.J. Eliezer, Chairman of the Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations declared in a Press Release:

"During the last seven days the densely populated Jaffna peninsula has been subject to continuous aerial bombardment and heavy shelling from Army camps located in the periphery of the peninsula and by gun boats. The attacks have been particularly directed at civilian centres, churches and temples where many people have sought refuge. Coupled with the ongoing blockade of food and medicine imposed by the Government since June last year, the present onslaught is a calculated effort to beat the Tamil population into submission by causing high civilian deaths. The Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations calls upon the Australian Government to intervene by exerting diplomatic and economic pressure on the Sri Lankan Government which is clearly engaged in a genocidal attack on the Tamil people."



Lord Avebury speaks out

All over the world people are rising to overthrow their oppressive alien rulers. If the 1950s and the 1960s were the decades of the anti colonial liberation movements then the 1990s will prove to be the decade of the post colonial national liberation struggles. Lord Avebury in a forthright and hard hitting address to the Kurdish Workers Association in London examines the parallels between the Kurdish and Kashmiri struggles. Much of that which Lord Avebury says is also relevant to the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam for national self determination. Lord Avebury is right when he says that, 'there are momentous changes beginning to take shape all over the world' - but it is not only India that cannot insulate herself from the new dispensation - neither can Sri Lanka.

Lord Avebury, Chairman, United Kingdom Parliamentary Human Rights Group speaking to the Kurdish Workers Association in London on August 25, 1991 declared:

"The Kurds and the Kashmiris have this in common: both are 'peoples under colonial and alien domination', to use the phraseology of many United Nations Resolutions, yet neither are recognised as a people, qualified to assert their right of self-determination in accordance with the Charter and with the Covenants on Civil and Political, and on Economic Social and Cultural Rights. At least, they are not on the list of territories remaining to be considered by the UN Decolonisation Committee, and the fact that the United Nations have designated the nineties as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism is a further indication that they are blind to the imperialism of non-European powers. The Kurds and the Kashmiris share another characteristic as well: that at one time there was general recognition of their right to independence, but this had been allowed to fade until quite recently when both peoples renewed their claim to a hearing."

Lord Avebury continued:

"In the case of the Kurds, President Woodrow Wilson's famous

address to Congress of January 8, 1918 promised that 'nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development', and this assurance was followed by the Treaty of Sevres of August 20, 1920, which provided that if the Kurdish population of the areas defined in the Treaty demonstrated a wish to be completely independent, then Turkey would comply with their demands.

As for Kashmir, assurances were given by Lord Mountbatten, the post-war Viceroy, by Mr Nehru, the Prime Minister, and by the Indian representative at the United Nations, that a plebiscite would be held to determine the wishes of the people, and the UN Security Council itself endorsed this proposal.

I do not want to press the analogy too far, because there are at the same time great differences between the problems faced by the two peoples in formulating and pressing their demands. The Kurds have to deal with five different oppressors, while the Kashmiris have only one. The historical processes which led to the process of self-determination being aborted were also quite different.

The rise of Kemal Ataturk, and the British determination to attach the Vilayet of Mosul to the artificially created state of Iraq under their puppet Feisal, so that they would control the oil already known to exist there, effectively scuppered the faint chance the Kurds had after 1919, though it must also be said that the divisions among the Kurdish people made it easier for the great powers to sweep their claims under the carpet.

History is unfortunately repeating itself now, with the wide difference of political outlook between the PKK and the Iraqi Kurds, and the absence of any coordination

join forces with the tyrants against their brothers....

The Kashmiris, on the other hand, although they naturally have some political differences amongst themselves, are united behind the principle of rejecting Indian rule, and have tacitly agreed to leave

Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States.

... but for the most part the armed struggle is one component of a strategy that embraces political action at the level of states, groupings of states and the United Nations.

If the Kurds and the Kashmiris want to plan ahead, they 'should now be talking to people like Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia, Lennart Meri of Estonia, and Vitautas Landsbergis of Lithuania.

Obviously, whenever human rights considerations are raised in the for-

"...Kurds and Kashmiris are both 'peoples under colonial and alien domination', qualified to assert their right of self-determination in accordance with the UN Charter..."

the exact details of a constitution and policies for an independent Kashmir to be worked out only after the people have gained control of their own political affairs.

This if I may say so respectfully to my Kurdish friends is the strategy most likely to succeed, because it readily commands the support of the whole population.

One has only to recall the huge demonstrations of early 1990 in Indian occupied Kashmir, which could have left no observer in any doubt about the strength and unity of the people.

The Kashmiris have also decided, wisely as it seems to me, that it would be hopeless to confront the 400,000 Indian troops and paramilitary forces on the field of battle, but to follow instead the tactics of the intifada.

The Kashmiri resistance never

The political action of the Kashmiris is based firmly on the principles of the United Nations, and they have a case which can only be denied by the world community on the grounds of expediency.

In the 19th century heyday of European imperialism, there was no real challenge to the notion that Britain and other west European states were entitled to conquer and rule the whole of Asia and Africa.

In the late twentieth century, there had been very little challenge to the 'colonial and alien domination' of their neighbours by Moscow, Beijing, Jakarta, New Delhi and Addis Ababa, and the reason for this was that nobody wanted to pick a quarrel with states with military, political and trading clout.

We may well be facing a new line-up soon, however, as a result of developments in eastern Europe and the Soviet union. First the nations outside the Soviet Union which threw off communist rule are likely to be more sympathetic to the claims of others for self-determination.

President Havel of Czechoslovakia, for instance, received the Dalai Lama of Tibet when he was cold-shouldered by John Major and Douglas Hurd.

Second, in Yugoslavia it looks as though both Slovenia and Croatia will become independent, and again they are going to understand the aspirations of other peoples under colonial and alien domination.

Third and most important of all, the disintegration of the Soviet Union into its constituent Republics will inject some totally new thinking into the UN concerning the rights of nations.

eign ministries of potential critics, including considerations of the right of self-determination, they have to be weighed against other factors, and we have to overcome the natural inclination to put human rights fairly low down in the list of priorities.

On the other hand, if we fail to act on gross violations of the UN Charter and of a host of Resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, it brings the United Nations into disrepute, and undermines the rule of international law.

Who can doubt that Saddam Hussein was encouraged to believe that his aggression against Kuwait would remain unpunished, by the spinelessness of the international community in the face of other acts of aggression, such as the annexation of East Timor by the Indonesians in 1975? He thought that because he was such a good customer for the arms merchants, and because the world needed his oil, he was immune.

Probably the Indians reason in much the same way. Their country is always being described as 'the biggest democracy in the world', and the friends of democracy elsewhere are reluctant to face the unpleasant truth that flawed elections and a half free press are no protection against some of the most grisly atrocities to be seen anywhere on the planet.

At the same time India is a major trading partner of many countries; it possesses extremely large and fairly efficient armed forces, and it has a great deal of influence in the United Nations, and other world bodies. Smaller states would hesitate before making an enemy of such a powerful nation. How else can one explain the silence

...If the Kurds and the Kashmiris want to plan ahead, they 'should now be talking to people like Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia, Lennart Meri of Estonia, and Vitautas Landsbergis of Lithuania...

between them. Disunited as they are, they can be crushed separately by the military juggernauts of Ankara and Baghdad, just as they were in 1925.

Often in the past, the Kurds on one side of a frontier have been seduced by the blandishments of tyrants on the other side, and have agreed to

engages in set piece battles with the occupation, knowing they would be crushed by the superior weaponry and manpower of the oppressors.

The United Nations have conceded the legitimacy of the use of armed force in the struggle against colonial and alien domination, as for example in the Declaration on

"...there are momentous changes beginning to take shape all over the world, and India cannot insulate herself from the new dispensation..."

and myopia of the world in the face of gross and persistent violations of human rights, not only in Kashmir but also Punjab, Assam and the rest of India?

Today, however, our attention is being drawn to Kashmir by the Kashmiris themselves. You will have noted that for the first time, Kash-

The future of Jammu and Kashmir was disputed, because the state was predominantly Moslem but was ruled by a Hindu Maharajah, Hari Singh, the successor of an adventurer who paid the British 7.5 million rupees to install him as ruler in 1846.

There was much agitation and popular feeling against the Maharajah,

stan, superseded the previous decisions of the Security Council.

The two states would have had no power to override the United Nations, if that had been the meaning of their pact.

The Security Council Resolutions continue in force, and since the two

The provision in the Simla Agreement which says that both sides shall respect the cease-fire line of December 17, 1971 was of a temporary and military nature, pending the further discussions which the Agreement envisages on the establishment of durable peace, based on, inter alia, 'a final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir'.

If the Simla Agreement itself had been the final settlement, notwithstanding the incompatibility with the Charter, there would have been no reason to schedule these further discussions.

So the arguments are clear, and Kashmir is now calling on the world to uphold the rule of international law. Why then have the United Nations not pursued the matter over the last twenty years?

Over this period, India has been able to count on the friendship of the Soviet Union to block further action by the Security Council.

Nor could the Kashmiris have raised the issue in the Committee on Decolonisation, in all probability, since it would require that a member state formally ask for the question to be put on the agenda. Up to now, it has been assumed that no state would brave India's displeasure by taking the initiative. Ultimately, as a Foreign Office Minister conceded to me in another context, questions of self-determination are settled on political rather than legal arguments.

But there are momentous changes beginning to take shape all over the world, and India cannot insu-

late herself from the new dispensation.

South Africa was forced to yield possession of her neighbour Namibia. Ethiopia had to give up Eritrea. Morocco is having to give up Western Sahara, as a result of a referendum to be held in December. Yugoslavia has virtually agreed to relinquish control of Slovenia. And who knows what may happen ultimately in the Soviet Union. When the dust has settled, it is unthinkable that all the Republics which had already declared their independence, will meekly accept a renewal of their subjection to hardline Moscow communism.

There was a false dawn of self-determination 70 years ago, when after the first World War the subject peoples of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires seemed to be leading the way, including the Kurds. That was an age of lost opportunities, when the high ideals for which millions had died were trampled in the mire of political expediency. We must not let it happen again today. It is time to fulfil the words spoken by that great American prophet Woodrow Wilson in his famous address to Congress of January 1918:

"National aspirations must be respected, peoples may be dominated and governed only with their consent. Self-determination is not a mere phrase. It is an imperative principle of action, which statesmen will henceforth ignore at their peril."

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miris have appeared before a United Nations body to argue their own case, when they addressed the Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities in Geneva this month.

Perhaps you will have read of a Kashmiri delegation which attended the recent Islamic summit in Istanbul. You may know of a conference held in Washington recently, at which Kashmiri experts gave papers. You may have read of the big demonstration held at the Indian High Commission in London on Indian Independence Day.

So far, these events, the intifada in Kashmir itself, and the atrocities committed by the Indian occupation forces, have not been given the coverage they deserve, but gradually, the public in other countries is becoming more knowledgeable about Kashmir. Let me attempt to summarise the case.

In 1947, under the Indian Independence Act, the British withdrew from India, and the princely states reverted to their former sovereign independence. The independent Dominions of India and Pakistan were established by the Act, and it was assumed that each of the princely states would accede to one or other of them... Mohammed Ali Jinnah set out the position correctly when he said:

"With the lapse of paramountcy, all Indian states would automatically regain their full sovereign and independent status. They are, therefore, free to join either of the two dominions or to remain independent."

whose sympathies were felt to be with India.

Armed units from Pakistan invaded the territory on October 22, 1947 and on the advice of V P Menon, the Maharajah fled the capital Srinagar. Under Menon's influence, the Maharajah was 'persuaded' to cobble together an instrument of accession to India the following day, though it should be noted that he reserved to himself the right to internal sovereignty, and to negotiate future constitutional arrangements with India, so much for Attlee's advice to 'take your time'.

But the Governor General, Lord Mountbatten, in accepting the Maharaja's accession, recognised its provisional nature, and wrote on October 27 that

'as soon as law and order have been restored... the question of the state's accession should be settled by a reference to the people'.

This emphasis on a plebiscite was repeated by Mahatma Gandhi on October 30 and by Mr Nehru on November 2. As late as January 2, 1952, Mr Nehru was still repeating that

'We have ... given our word of honour for a peaceful solution. As a great nation we cannot go back on it. We have left the question of final solution to the people of Kashmir and we are determined to abide by their decision'.

... (The) wholly specious argument used by India today is that the Simla Agreement of 1972, which followed the conflict between India and Paki-

states expressly bound themselves to seek a solution of any dispute within the framework of the Charter, the Agreement reinforced and reiterated their commitment to the several declarations by the Security Council as well as the UN Commission on India and Pakistan.

...and neither can Sri Lanka

At the forty seventh sessions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in February 1991, at Geneva in Switzerland the non governmental human rights organisation, Liberation, declared:

"The systematic violations of human rights by the Sri Lanka government over a period of four decades are well documented and are, clearly, no accidental happenings.

They constitute evidence of the resolute and determined effort of an alien Sinhala majority to subjugate and assimilate the people of Tamil Eelam within the framework of a unitary Sinhala Buddhist Sri Lankan state. The people of Tamil Eelam have suffered enough and have waited long enough for their human rights. Today, they are a people who

can no longer be denied their right to self determination. The views of Dr. Hector Gros Espiell in his report for the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination of Minorities in 1980, deserve our renewed attention:

"Every people subject to any form or type of colonial or alien domination possesses the right to self determination, and no distinction can be drawn between one people and another for the purpose of recognising the existence of this right if there is evidence of colonial or alien domination of the people or peoples in question"

We also urge the Commission to give careful consideration to the comments of Professor Leo Kruper in the Minority Rights Group Report on International Action against Genocide in 1982:

"...genocide continues to be an odious scourge on mankind... there are also at the present time

many immediate issues related to genocide which call for the most urgent action... (such as) the communal massacres in Sri Lanka... some of these genocidal massacres arise out of struggles for greater autonomy, and might be regulated by recognition of the right of self determination..." (Minority Rights Group Report: International Action Against Genocide)

We believe that it is a matter of immediate importance that the Sri Lankan government should be called upon to respond in a constructive manner to the peace initiative of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and to secure a political settlement of the conflict within the framework of human rights and the right of self determination of the people of Tamil Eelam."

Refugees in their own homeland



Ilankai Tamil Sangam USA - Fund raising telethon to help displaced in Tamil Eelam

The Ilankai Tamil Sangam of USA held a fund raising telethon on October 4 for refugees in Tamil Eelam. About 15 volunteers, in two locations, (Poughkeepsie, NY and Livingston, NJ) sat in front of telephones on this Friday night and made hundreds of phone calls. Despite occasional rebuffs and excuses, the experience on the whole was a rewarding one for those volunteers, both in terms of money collected and personal satisfaction. Cheers went up when the first thousand dollar pledge came in. As the pledges rolled in, nervousness disappeared, and euphoria set in. At the end of the day, the pledges totalled almost twenty thousand US Dollars.

Tamil Voice, the Sangam Newsletter, edited by Rajan Srisankarajah commented editori-

ally: "The response to the Sangam's fund raising effort for the refugees in Eelam has been marvelous. The volunteers who took part in the telethon on October 4, were thrilled with the response to their calls. In one night alone we had pledges totalling almost twenty thousand dollars. Those of you who donated so freely - those who pledged a thousand dollars or more, those who donated thirty dollars, and the many in between - one and all made us proud to be Tamils. And we thank you for it.

The need, the penury and the destitution in Eelam is tremendous... (The refugees) are fair game to the Sri Lankan armed forces and the government's own death squads in their killing spree. Even the international relief organisations caring for them are not safe from this murder-

ous lot. The cost to provide basic life support to refugees (despite the lower cost of living in Eelam) is enormous. The tab to maintain 15,000 families for 3 months is about 2500 dollars @ 13 dollars a family - and there are over five hundred thousand refugees there. Obviously the ten thousand odd Eelam expatriates in US alone cannot foot this bill, but what we can do goes a long way.

Those of you who had excuses, please think - can you skip that trip to McDonalds this week or forgo the Indian sweets you wanted to buy today, or give up some such thing just this week, and use that 10, 20, or 30 dollars saved so that a poor destitute family in Eelam may live to see another day. We know your heart is big enough for this."

Tamil refugees in Costa Rica

Seventeen Tamil refugees intending to seek asylum in the United States, made a stop over in Costa Rica. The authorities there detained them and intend deporting them to Sri Lanka.

Racist attacks on Tamil Refugees in Germany

Tamil refugees who moved to east Germany after the unification of the two sections, have been subjected to greivous physical assault and verbal abuse. Reports received from some parts of Germany suggest that Tamil refugees are frightened to move out of their residences or camps. The refugees fear that this is spreading to other parts of Germany.

Shankaran Radhakrishnam, a Tamil refugee in Germany, was forcibly dragged into a car from a bus stop by three neo-Nazi round-heads. He was injected with potent drugs and left on a railway line. He lost his legs as a result of this atrocity. Germany is the foster home for over 40,000 Tamil Refugees who have fled the North East of Sri Lanka, due to the ongoing war.

Cover of Amnesty Journal October/November 1991



New proposals for asylum seekers in the UK shock Refugee Agencies

Richard Dunstan writing in the Amnesty Journal October/November 1991 says: "The Home Secretary's announcement had been expected for some time, and had been preceded by a series of scurrilous articles about "bogus refugees" in the Daily Mail and other newspapers

. It sets out drastic proposals which AI believes will prevent many people fleeing serious human rights violations from seeking and gaining asylum in the UK.

Most disturbing of all is the plan - endorsed by the Lord Chancellor - to end asylum seekers' right to legal aid, described as "an action of which the Government should be ashamed" by the Bar Council Chairman, Anthony Scrivener QC. If implemented, this measure will deny asylum seekers access to the knowledge and expertise of the several hundred solicitors currently providing invaluable advice and assistance with asylum applications - expertise which in recent years has been crucial to the correction of numerous unfair decisions by the Home Office.

On 31 July the United Kingdom Immigrants Advisory Service (UKIAS) - an independent charity which the Home Secretary proposed should take over the work currently done by solicitors - rejected the plan as "a denial of natural justice", and the Home Office is now reported to be looking for another organization to take on the role.

As a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees, the British Government is legally obliged to provide asylum to those fleeing serious human rights violations. This is not to say that it should open the doors to large numbers of people who do not qualify for asylum - the very purpose of asylum procedures is to distinguish between those that do so qualify and those who do not. The essential point is that the government can fully meet its international obligations only if its asylum procedures are fair and effective, and if those fleeing persecution have effective access to the procedures. Increased numbers of applications cannot justify an erosion of these principles."

UK Race Equality Commission attacks new asylum curbs

The Commission for Racial Equality is preparing a legal challenge to Home Secretary Kenneth Baker's proposed crack-down on refugees. Confidential legal advice to the commission says the plans are illegal, amounting to a clear breach of the Race Relations Act. The dispute centres on the removal of asylum seekers' right to legal aid and representation. Michael Day, the CRE chairman, has written to Mr Baker saying his proposals would 'eliminate access to the provision of finance for legal services by reference to a race based criterion' (Courtesy London Sunday Observer).

Iqbal Singh from Sikh Human Rights Internet says

The only real solution to the refugee problem is to support the people's struggle for self-determination

The Asylum Bill will bring more hardship and misery to genuine refugees. It will fail to solve the real problem, as all the Acts since the Immigration Act 1962 have failed. The solution involves more open discussion, reassessment of policies and bold new initiatives.

The legacy of migration has its origins in colonial days. Sovereign states were conquered or annexed and turned into one big monolithic unit for administrative and economic reasons. The end of the second world war saw the transfer of power from western capitals to local capitals, to the people who were educated in the West or believed in the western culture and its values. Those leaders continued to follow the same policies of creating uniformity by destroying and suppressing local cultures and traditions.

Steadily the euphoria of freedom started to evaporate under the burden of poverty and social, economic and political crises. The result was corruption, nepotism and hypocrisy.

While people were becoming more conscious of their rights, the IMF, World Bank and Western governments poured in aid and loans to sustain the most corrupt and repressive regimes, mainly to service their debts. The civilised world has connived for a long time in the gross violation of human rights in these countries.

India is a classic example. The only real solution to this refugee problem is to support the people's struggle for self-determination. Then there will not be a need to run away from the tyrant system to be ridiculed and humiliated in a foreign land.

RaRa claims responsibility for Hague bomb blast on immigration office

The Dutch 'Radical Anti-Racist Action' group claimed responsibility for two bomb blasts in the Hague in Holland which destroyed the residence of Ad Kasto who was in charge of Holland's immigration and asylum policy and also damaged a floor of the interior ministry where the new Dutch asylum laws were drafted. It is thought that the bombs may be the first reaction from the extreme left to the recent attacks by right wing neo fascists.

UN Group on Disappearances visits Sri Lanka

Representatives of 2,000 families whose husbands and sons "disappeared" in the brutal three-year struggle between the Army and the Sinhalese Marxist People's Liberation Front (JVP) gathered in Tangalle on 14 October to petition a five-member team from the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on a ten-day visit to probe Sri Lanka's human rights record.

Over 60,000 people have vanished in the wake of the Army-JVP conflict. Around 15,000 are detained under emergency laws although the Government claims to have released 6,422 after rehabilitation in the last 18 months. Human rights workers say some of those released have disappeared shortly afterwards and detainees who engage lawyers to assist their release have also vanished.

A sustained attack on Christian NGOs accusing them of conversion activities and fraud dominated this month's hearings of the Presidential Commission of Enquiry on NGOs (Courtesy: British Refugee Council publication, Sri Lanka Monitor)

Tamil Nadu Government struggles to contain LTTE

Over 1,000 south Indian police took part in Operation Flamingo launched in late September to clear LTTE bases from 500 kms of coastline south of Nagapattinam. The 110,000 Sri Lankan refugees in government-run camps in Tamil Nadu have been moved away from sensitive coastal areas to 25 new reception centres in the interior. Another 110,000 Sri Lankan Tamils live with friends and relatives or on remittances from abroad. So far less than 30,000 have registered with local police and the others are now regarded as LTTE suspects. Another 2,060 identified as LTTE in the roundups since Rajiv Gandhi's assassination in May are kept in high-security isolation. The LTTE retains sophisticated links with the former governing DMK party, as well as the south Indian Tamil fundamentalist Dravida Kazhagam (DK) and a range of new revolutionary groups. Dindigul police arrested seven ringleaders of the hitherto unknown Tamil National Liberation Army (TNLA) in late October. Police allege the LTTE gave TNLA leader Ravichandran, \$25,000 to foment a separatist revolt in south India and to restore secret radio links with Jaffna, severed since August. (Courtesy: Sri Lanka Monitor)



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NEWS WATCH

JVP TRYING TO RAISE ITS HEAD AGAIN

Police are investigating reports that those JVP members, who escaped capture in 1988-89 are hovering around university campuses, busy recruiting new members. They conduct social evenings at which chicken, liquor and cigarettes are handed out to those attending these functions, which last from dusk to dawn. They are then given transport to their residences, around dawn. Recruitment is both for men and women.

FRAUD AT FORT RAILWAY STATION

Three young men posing as security officers are reported to be robbing innocent passengers of their money and valuables near the Fort Railway Station.

One unsuspecting victim was N. Sivaratnam who came for a departmental examination to Colombo. He is an employee of the Jaffna Branch of the Bank of Ceylon. They flashed an identity card, searched and relieved him of about Rs 6,500 in cash.

SRI LANKAN NAVY PATROL CRAFT SINKS

When returning from Nainathivu to Karainagar naval base, on October 27, seven navy personnel including two officers were killed and eight were wounded including the Commander of the Northern Naval area, Captain H.R. Amarasena. Their in shore patrol craft struck a series of mines and sank.

ARMY PATROL AMBUSHED AT WELIKANDE

Fourteen Sri Lankan soldiers were killed when the LTTE ambushed an army patrol at Welikande in the East on October 28.

ORDER TO EVACUATE JAFFNA TOWN

Leaflets are being dropped over Jaffna town on October 21 and broadcasts made over the radio, ordering the civilians to evacuate Jaffna town.

Following this order, people have moved out to safe areas, patients have left the Jaffna hospital and most of the shops in Jaffna have closed.

"It is the intention of the Sri Lanka Army to capture Jaffna, but before that

can be done, we must strengthen our hold on the islands" said an army commander in the North.

In the meantime, the LTTE has requested the people of Koddady to move to other areas. The LTTE has now strengthened its forces in this area.

PRESS CONFERENCE IN PARLIAMENT BUILDING

This is a report of a Press Conference given by Colonel Sarath Munasinghe, Joint Operations Command spokesman on October 24.

Reporter(R): Who is in charge of Jaffna hospital?

Colonel(C): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

R: Where is Prabhakaran?

C: In the Jaffna Peninsula

R: Was a building in which food was stored damaged by bombing?

C: The ICRC has complained that a food store has been damaged by the action of the Sri Lankan Air Force. This is being investigated. An order has been issued by the Joint Operations Command that such buildings should not be bombed.

R: Under whose control is Kilinochchi?

C: Under LTTE's control.

R: What is your ultimate objective?

C: To weaken the LTTE militarily. If we can achieve this, the need to capture Jaffna wouldn't arise.

SCHOOLS DESTROYED BY BOMBING IN VADAMARACHCHI

Due to constant bombing of the Vadamarachchi area by the Sri Lanka Air Force, during mid October, several schools, homes and a food store has been damaged.

Among the schools destroyed are Velayutham Maha Vidyalayam, Pt. Pedro and Puloly Maha Vidyalayam.

BOATS CARRYING CIVILIANS CAME UNDER HELICOPTER ATTACK

The Armed Forces operations in the Northern Islands have caused such severe hardship, that inspite of curfew regulations and helicopter strafing, thousands of residents of the islands around the Jaffna Peninsula are leaving their homes, to reach the mainland - Jaffna.

Those arriving at Ariyalai, Passayur and Colombuthurai are being housed and helped by the Tamil Refugee Organisation (IRO) right round the clock.

On Sunday, October 20, night helicopters shelled several boats carrying civilians, with the help of lightning flares. Two boats sank as a result of this strafing, killing fifteen people. Only two people survived this attack.

HUNGER STRIKE BY PRISON DETAINEES

Over 200 people detained in a Sri Lankan prison have begun a hunger strike in protest against being held without trial. Most of the group who are Tamils are being held in Kalutara prison. They are suspected of having links with the LTTE and are being held under emergency regulations without any inquiry or formal charge.

2250 TROOPS KILLED IN THE NORTH EAST WAR

1750 Armed Service personnel and 500 policemen have died in the North East War so far, according to Defence Ministry statistics.

GRANARY IN PT. PEDRO DAMAGED BY SRI LANKAN AIR FORCE

ICRC has complained to the Sri Lanka Govt. about the serious damage caused by the Sri Lanka Air Force's bombing the only granary in Pt. Pedro. This building had been used to store food unloaded from ships at Pt. Pedro harbour.

In the meantime, because of curfew being reimposed in the Jaffna Peninsula, the unloading of food from ships at Pt. Pedro has been suspended.

THE ONE AND ONLY BAKERY IN MANNAR FORCED TO CLOSE

Only one bakery in Mannar produced the much needed bread. The bakery owners were arrested by the Sri Lankan security forces on the charge that they were involved in smuggling diesel. As a result the bakery was forced to close.

NGOs IN JAFFNA

Officials from non governmental organisations from Switzerland and London have travelled to Jaffna in order to acquaint themselves with first hand information and assess the present situation in the North.

continued from page 3

Mahendrarajah Interview

Eelam? Or will you act on the basis that the only course open to you is to fight for the achievement of our objective till the bitter end?

A. We firmly believe that the only lasting solution for the Tamils is the creation of an independent state of Tamil Eelam. We are engaged in this struggle in order to achieve this political objective. At the same time the international community advises us to consider a solution other than an independent state of Tamil Eelam - a substantial alternative scheme of self government.

The international community has also suggested that we should spare no efforts to find a political solution through a peace dialogue. We do not reject this idea. That is why we are prepared for peace talks.

We are fully aware that the Sinhala government will never agree to the creation of an independent state of Tamil Eelam. This is not a matter for a bargain. We know only too well that this is an objective that has to be

won through struggle. We are equally aware that the Sinhala Government will not consent even to a substantial alternative scheme.

We announced that we were ready to participate in talks in order to impress on the international community that the Sinhala chauvinistic forces are not ready to mete out justice in any form to the people of Tamil Eelam.

We have already declared that we are quite prepared to consider favourably a proposal for full self-government within a federal set up. But it does not appear that the Sinhala government has even given thought to it. However, we are not surprised over it. Leave alone the issues of Tamil Eelam and federalism. The government is even refusing to acknowledge the fundamentals of the Tamil National question.

The Sinhala government continues to deny that the people of Tamil Eelam constitute a national entity, that they have a homeland with a

history of its own and that the people of Tamil Eelam, as a people constituting a national formation are entitled to the right to self-determination.

Even today we are prepared to consider a viable alternative based on a recognition of these fundamental aspects of our national question. But the Sinhala government is not going to agree to all this. Yet we do not reject the idea of holding talks.

We are ready to participate in talks in order to drive home to the international community the fact that the basic demands which underlie the Tamil national question are just and reasonable and the fact that the Sinhala Government is not prepared to do that which is just and reasonable. We are confident that the world will sooner or later realise the intransigent and reactionary nature of Sinhala chauvinism. It is on the basis of that realisation that the sympathy and support of the international community will turn in favour of our struggle.

BOOKS

Nationalist Thought & the Colonial World - A Derivative Discourse by Partha Chatterjee

In this book on 'Nationalist Thought & the Colonial World', published by ZedBooks Ltd for the United Nations University, Professor Partha Chatterjee criticises Western theories of Third World nationalism - both liberal and Marxist. He demonstrates how Western theorists, with their emphasis on the power of reason, the primacy of the hard sciences and the dominance of the empirical method, have assumed that their presuppositions are universally valid, and, through the impact of Western education, have imposed concepts of nationalism on non-Western peoples to the detriment, if not destruction, of their own world-views.

The author explores the central contradiction that nationalism in Africa and Asia has consequently experienced: setting out to assert its freedom from European domination, it

yet remained a prisoner of European post-Enlightenment rationalist discourse. Using the case of India, Professor Chatterjee goes on to show how Indian nationalism did effect significant displacements in the framework of modernist thinking imbibed from the West. Yet, despite constituting itself as a different discourse, it remained dominated by the very structure of the power it sought to repudiate. And so the historical outcome generally has been the transformation of Third World nationalism by ruling classes into a state ideology legitimising their own rule, appropriating the life of the nation, and propelling it along the path of 'universal modernisation'.

But the spurious ideological unity proclaimed by these classes, and their failure to subsume completely the life of the nation in the life of their

new states, raises the historical prospect that a critique of state nationalism will emerge. Professor Chatterjee questions the legitimacy of the currently predominant formulations of nationalist ideology in the Third World. He anticipates a new generation of popular struggles that will redefine the content of Afro-Asian nationalism and the kinds of society people wish to build. For scholars, it will make uncomfortable reading because of its radical attack on the fundamentals of Western bourgeois thought, an attack always couched, however, in the rational tones of Western scholarship.

Professor Chatterjee trained in the United States, and has taught at many institutions including the Universities of Rochester and Amritsar. He has held visiting appointments at St Antony's College, Oxford, and the Australian National University.

Prostitutes in Medical Literature by Sachi Sri Kantha

Eelam Tamil, Sachi Sri Kantha's book *Prostitutes in Medical Literature: An Annotated Bibliography*, has been recently published in the USA by one of the leading reference book publishers, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut. This 256-page reference book represents the first bibliography since the AIDS epidemic began to unite scientific literature about prostitutes, and contains 1440 entries. Sachi Sri Kantha is a Research associate for the Department of Physiology and Biochemistry at the Medical College of Pennsylvania. According to Sri Kantha, the inspiration for writing this book came after he presented a research paper at the 5th International Tamil Research Conference held in Madurai (1981), on Arunagirinathar as the Adiguru of Carnatic Music. He believes that the spread of syphilis, after the landing of Portuguese in South India could have resulted in Arunagirinathar's ardent campaign against prostitutes in his Tirupugazh hymns. Sri Kantha has published over 50 scientific papers and more than 200 popular articles, commentaries and letters predominantly on Tamils of Eelam and India in magazines and newspapers published in the USA, UK, Japan, Hong Kong and Sri Lanka. The book is priced at \$49.95 (ISBN 0-313-27491-6) and may be ordered by calling: 1-800-225-5800. Review copies are available by calling (203) 226-3571.

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Obituary Augustine Saverimuttu



The sad news of Lourdes Augustine Saverimuttu's death on Saturday, 28th September 1991, has come as a rude shock not only to me but to numerous others who counted him as a close friend. It was only a month ago, that I met him on a visit to Canada. He was active, vivacious, full of numerous stories, anecdotes, jocular interjections, and fond recollections. The news that he has passed away is almost unbelievable - it is also sad and depressing.

Lourdes Augustine Saverimuttu was born in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, on the 12th of February 1920. He studied throughout at St Patrick's College, in Jaffna, where I came to know him closely and developed a friendship that lasted till he passed away. In school he showed an abiding interest in English and English literature. This was to become his main interest throughout his later life. He was a sincere friend and never manifested jealousy or envy. He became a very successful journalist and was much sought after in Sri Lanka and later in

Canada. During the last few years, he has published many Appreciations in reputed newspapers in Sri Lanka, U.K. and Canada. One of the more recent ones was the appreciation he wrote about my brother, Anton, without even notifying me - it was a kind act.

Because of unstable situation in Sri Lanka, Augustine moved to Dubai in the mid 1980s, for two years and thereafter retired permanently to Canada, in 1988. He leaves behind two children, the elder is Shyamala in Toronto and the younger is Rajakumar in N.Y., U.S.A. His dear wife, Mary Rane always supported him in every way and encouraged him in his writings. On that fateful day he woke up hale and hearty and carried out his usual exercises. Soon after, he complained of chest pain, was rushed to Mississauga Hospital by ambulance, where it was found that 'the bell had tolled' and his days on earth were peacefully over.

Augustine Saverimuttu was the embodiment of courtesy and humility. There were very few in Sri Lanka who did not know him, at least by name. The Mississauga newspaper rightly said, 'he was a proud supporter of his adopted country and his contributions to the newspapers were read, enjoyed and appreciated by many'. Ever indulgent and courteous, almost to a fault, he endeared himself to

friends and strangers alike. He always said that he would wish his body be cremated and the ashes be buried in his dear homeland, Eelam.

"a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted." (Ecclesiastes - chap 3, verse 2.)

Dr. John St. George, Sydney

Note by Interim Editor: - Augustine Saverimuttu was an enthusiastic supporter of the Tamil Nation and he was one of our regular contributors. He was a committed supporter of the Tamil cause and Eelam Tamils everywhere will mourn his death.

Tail piece

"The would be conqueror is always a lover of peace, for he would like to enter and occupy our land unopposed. It is in order to prevent him from doing this that we must be willing to engage in war and prepare for it." [Clausewitz quoted in *Philosophers of Peace and War*, edited by Professor Gallie]

Dr.(Mrs) C. Ambalavanar who is an obstetrician in Jaffna, and who is currently in Britain on a short visit says

The people in the North and East long for peace, and the right to live as free people without fear

Dear friends,

I bring greetings from the Jaffna Diocese of the Church of South India. I would also like to thank you on its behalf for your concern and your generous donations for its work among the refugees in the North and East of Sri Lanka.

The North has been without electricity, public transport and communications since June 1990. There is curtailing of supplies of fuel, medicines, food stuff, soap and all sorts of things including printing paper. School examinations are not held in the North and East.

So the situation continues to remain much the same with intense fighting in areas from time to time. Occasionally there is bombing and indiscriminate shelling from the main army camps. I am sure it will be difficult for most of you to even imagine what it is to live constantly in fear. As there is no communication people outside the North or outside the island are unaware of the real situation.

As a result of the continuing military offensive more than 6000 civilians have died, a million made refugees while a million are without jobs. Thousands of young women have been made widows and thousands of children made orphans. Between the ages of 15 to 30, males to females are in the ratio of 1:7.

When we celebrated the 175th Anniversary of the American Ceylon Mission we were reminded that the North must have been in a similar situation with no electricity, public transport and telecommunications when the early missionaries arrived.

But just as the situation then gave great opportunity to the missionaries and like the challenges the early apostles faced the present situation has offered numerous challenges to the Church in the North and that is to help the poor, the homeless, the oppressed and marginalised people. The Church has been challenged to break out of its four walls. People come all the time for help of all kinds because they know the Church is really concerned about them.

The widows and their children have been helped with sums of money, orphans have been taken into children's homes, and dry rations of food stuff given to hundreds of families. But all this is not enough.

What surprises us who live there is that the rest of the world seems so unconcerned about the plight of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The western world screams when even small nations like Lithuania and Latvia are attacked or harassed. There was such

a hue and cry over the Gulf war and the attack on Kuwait and recently at the plight of the Croats. In Sri Lanka since June '90 thousands have died and are still dying because of the continuing military offensive by the ruling Government against a section of its own people and no one is concerned.

The people in the North and East long for peace, normalcy and the right to live as free people without fear. The refugees must be able to go back to their houses in their own districts and must be rehabilitated. But first the military offensive must be stopped and peace talks take place.

You can help by first praying for us and for the offensive to stop, for negotiations for a just settlement to be commenced, the embargo on fuel, food, medicines etc to be lifted, electricity to be restored, recognition of the traditional homelands of the Tamil people and the aspirations of the Tamil people of their right to self determination.

You can help by telling others and especially people of this country about the real situation there, and along with your friends to urge your local members of parliament to use their influence on the British Government to mediate with the Sri Lankan Government to call off the military offensive and establish peace and restore normalcy in the North and East of Sri Lanka. Your continued generous contribution for relief work will also be greatly appreciated.

Your Prime Minister has just said that he will work for universal peace, security and freedom from fear. He and others in power must be reminded that so long as people like the Tamils of Sri Lanka continue to suffer injustice this hope cannot be fulfilled.

Please continue to support us in your prayers.

With best wishes, Dr. (Mrs) C. Ambalavanar.

13 October 1991

Army conspires with LTTE to transport soap and aspirin

Thirteen army officers are likely to be charged for conspiring with the LTTE for issuing permits to transport dangerous goods (!) soap, candle, matches, aspirin etc. to the North East. Punishment for this offence is death or 20 years imprisonment and the forfeiture of all property.

It is reported that the police have substantial evidence against these men and this will be forwarded to the Attorney General, who had earlier advised the police that the conduct of these suspects may be bordering on treason - by abetting in waging of war against the state. The thirteen have been suspended from the army while investigations take place.

PEOPLE & EVENTS

Eelam Tamil elected to County Council in Norway

Mr. Kanapathipillai Sivarajah, an Eelam Tamil resident in Norway, has been elected as an alternate member of the County Council of Troms at the elections held in September. Mr. Sivarajah was born in Point Pedro and educated at Hartley College. He works as Fisheries Adviser with the Norwegian Directorate of Fisheries. He is the first immigrant from the Third World to be elected a County Councillor in Norway. Mr. Sivarajah recently attended the Sacramento Conference on "Tamil Eelam - a Nation without a State" and presented a paper entitled Fisheries Development of Tamil Eelam.



He has taken an active interest in ROOT - the Research Organisation of Tamil Eelam. He chairs the Tamil Development Network of Norway.

Nupura Kendra's Aadhi Parasakthi

Nupura Kendra's School of Dancing which has thus far produced sixteen brilliant dancers by completing their Arangetrams - both in Sri Lanka and in London, demonstrated on Sunday the 20th of November, that it has about 50 more excellent students waiting in the wings ready for their Arangetram/Graduation ceremony.

About 75 girls and one male dancer (aged about 8 - Seyanthan Sivapalan) thrilled the audience of South Western London when they staged a Benefit Show comprising two full length Dance Dramas and six separate dance items at the Surbiton Assembly Rooms in Maple Road, Surbiton. The proceeds were in aid of Pathirakaali Amman Temple in Sangarathai, Vaddukodai - with its miraculous healing powers. Ironically, this show was scheduled to take place on the 30th of July 1983 at the Kathiresan Temple Hall in Bambalapitiya in Colombo but due to an "Act of God" was cancelled three days earlier.

The show had a Dance Drama "Kumara Sambavam" depicting the Birth/Creation of God Murugan during the first half of the programme and a longer Dance/Drama "Adhi Parasakthi" during the second half of the programme. There was also a Folk Dance, Pinnal Kolattam, Thillana and a Pathirakaali man Pathiham.

Six tiny tots, not older than 8 years performed as six Murugans in "Kumara Sambavam" and stole the show - seated in the laps of their foster mothers and jumping to perform the tiny bit of their dances - holding the shining "Vel Ayuthams" in their hands.

"Adhi Parasakthi" dealt with the appearance of Goddesses Durga, Luxmy and Saraswathy from their Supreme Mother Adhi Parasakthi. The dancers chosen to perform these difficult roles namely, Danusha Lohendran as Durga, Vathanee Srinivasan as Luxmy, Lakshmi Jaybalasingham as Saraswathy and Thulasy Thillainathan as Adhi Parasakthi, performed extremely well. The casting of these dancers to the roles they performed and in particular, the casting of Durga Sakthys, Luxmy Sakthys, and Saraswathy Sakthys - 8 each (total 24 Sakthys), was very brilliantly done. The costumes with the traditional colours should be particularly mentioned. The Dance Director, Srimathi Subathra Sivadasan (nee Kumarasooriyar) of Colombo 6 deserves the credit for organising such a mammoth production of two Dance Dramas and six other dances and generally managing, training and presenting a cast of 74 dancers, is a great task indeed. Of course, she had the full co-operation of the Parents of these dancers without which this show would not have been possible.

Another unusual feature in this performance was the use of a massive Orchestra consisting of two violins, one Veena, one Flute, one Mirudangam, one Morsing, one Ganjeera and three vocalists (excluding the teacher doing the Nattuvangam). The melodious voices of the three singers - Smt Vijayakumarai Thavasiingam, Smt Kamalini Manoranjan and Smt Priyadarshana Yogarajah - blended beautifully and was a treat to the ears.

I liked the song "Janani-Janani-Jaham-Nee" sung by all three female singers and joined by two male singers Sri Sivashankar and Sri Kirubakaran (who were already on the violin and Mirudangam respectively). A Novel experiment that was no doubt successful. The presentation of "Adhi Parasakthi" during the season of Sakthi (just after Navarathri) was an appropriate choice. The show was presided by Mr T Sangaralingam, a former Principal of Colombo Hindu College and a Trustee of Pathirakaali Amman Temple. The Nupura Kendra should be congratulated on successfully undertaking this colossal venture.

Reviewed by Wimal Sockanathan

Thamil Amutham Radio in Paris

"Thamil Amutham" a radio service in Tamil began broadcasting from Paris on Sunday, 20th October. The well known radio artist Mr S.K. Rajan from Jaffna, is in overall charge with Mr R. Gunapalan to assist him.

Sydney Tamil Study Centre Sports Meet

Students attending the four Tamil schools run by Sydney's Tamil Study Centre met on the 3rd of November to participate in a combined sports meet. The Lord Mayor of Paramatta, Mr. John Hines was the Chief Guest. The Principal of Darcy Public School, Wentworthville, Mr. John Nelen, was the Guest of Honour. The days proceedings began with the hoisting of the Australian Flag by Mr. John Darcy, followed by "Thamil Vaalthu". Over 250 students participated in the event, which attracted a large number of Tamils and well wishers. (reported by Victor Rajakulendran)

Heroes Day Cultural Variety Entertainment

Saturday, 4th January 1992 at 6 p.m.

Waltham Forest Assembly Hall

ADMISSION FREE

Nadesaiyer Centenary in Germany

The Centenary celebrations of Sri K. Nadesaiyer will take place in Berlin, Germany on 29th of December. Sri Nadesaiyer was a pioneer in the plantation Tamil trade union movement.

Bharata Natya Arangetram in Orange, California, USA



The Bharata Natya Arangetram of Eelam Tamil, Ahila Gulasekeram, and Deepa Krishna, disciples of Ramya Harishankar of the Arpana School of Dance, took place at the Chapman Auditorium, Chapman College, N.Glassell, Orange, California recently. Twelve year old Ahila Gulasekeram, was introduced to Bharata Natyam at the tender age of three and a half. Ahila has entered the 8th Grade at Carmenita Junior High School in Cerritos. She is keenly interested in carnatic music, both vocal and violin. Both Ahila and thirteen year old Deepa Krishna have received nine years of meticulous training from their guru, Ramya Harishankar, a leading exponent of Bharata Natyam in the Vazhuvoor tradition, who has enthralled audiences all over the world. In recent years, Ramya's Arpana School has grown to become a premier school of Bharata Natyam in South California.

South London Tamil School presents Ramayana Dance Drama



The verdant forests of Dandakaranya and the royal court of Lanka's Ravana were transported to the London suburb of South Norwood for nearly an hour on Saturday, November 9. In the forests the asura women danced with gnashing teeth and hordes of monkeys gambolled with gay abandon. The occasion was the staging of an episode in Ramayana by the tender young students of the South London Tamil School.

It was the third episode in series of four - the first two episodes were staged last year. It was heartwarming to watch. It was even more heartwarming to hear the impeccable Tamil pronunciation from the young actors and actresses - despite the fact that their schooling had been in English in the United Kingdom. The enticing charms of Surpanaka, her eventual disfigurement by Lakshmana, the abduction of Seetha by Ravana, Jadayu's timely help, the killing of Vali by Rama, the escapades of Hanuman, and the valiant

support promised by Sugriva and his army to defeat the king of Lanka and retrieve Seetha for Rama - all these scenes were enacted with dedication and skill by the children of the School. Though it would be invidious to pick out some for individual comment, amongst the dozens of little ones who executed their parts with verve and enthusiasm, one cannot forget the special appeal of the young actress who played Seetha - the superb fluency of her diction and the emotional impact of her acting. Rama and Lakshmana were calendar-picture-like on the stage - and so were the other leading characters, Surpanaka, Hanuman, Ravana, Jadayu, and Vibishina. The dances between the dramatic episodes served to embellish the performance.

The compere was Dr. Sivakumar. The producer and director of the series was Mrs. Gnanatheepam Sivapathasundaram, a veteran veena and jalatharangam player and a leading radio personality of Radio Ceylon and the BBC of yester-years. She served as the Director of Prasannalaya a well recognised Bharatanatyam school in Adyar, Madras for nearly ten years - a school started by her late daughter, Prasannavadini, who herself was a postgraduate and lecturer at Kalakshetra. Mrs. Sivapathasundaram has been acquainted with the London stage for a number of years - as long ago as August 15, 1948 she played on the veena and the jalatharangam at the Albert Hall on the first anniversary of India's independence. It was also her own birthday.

reviewed by Siva

Weddings

Carmela, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Silva of Vankalai, Mannar was married to Sivan, son of Mrs. K. Manicam of Neerveli, Jaffna on October 26 at the Church of St. Mary in New Brunswick (NJ). This was followed by a Hindu ceremony at the Hyatt Regency.

Maria, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. F. Depina of Dochester (MA) was married to James Ratnakumar, son of Mr. & Mrs. Ratnasabapathy of Jaffna on November 12 at St. Patrick's Church in Roxbury (MA).

Sivani, daughter of Mrs. S.K. Walloppillai was married to Rajan, son of Mrs. C. Sarvaloganayagam on October 20 at the Queens Hindu Temple, New York.

TAMIL NATION

Sivanayagam incarceration without trial passes 135 th day

Release Sivanayagam Fund

A Release Sivanayagam Fund to help defray the legal and other expenses connected with the campaign to release Mr. Sivanayagam was launched by Tamil Forum Ltd in October. Contributions drawn in favour of Release Sivanayagam Fund may be sent to Dr. Rajan Namasivayam, P.O. Box 373, Croydon, Surrey CR1 6AB, United Kingdom. Each contribution will be individually acknowledged.

On the 1st of December 1991, Mr. Subramaniam, the Founding Editor of Tamil Nation, entered his 135 day of incarceration, without trial, in an Indian jail. He was taken into custody on the 18th of July 1991.

Mr. Sivanayagam, an aggressively independent journalist of more than 25 years standing edited the popular Saturday Review from Jaffna in the early 1980s and was compelled to seek refuge in Madras to escape the wrath of the racist Gov-



ernment in Sri Lanka. During these many years Mr. Sivanayagam's independence and integrity have never been questioned and regrettably, it is this independence and integrity which has now been subject to attack by the Indian authorities. The continued incarceration of Mr. Sivanayagam without trial is a denial of the rule of law. It is also a gross violation of the fundamental right to freedom of opinion and expression. Finally it is an act against a decent and honourable human being who had the courage to stand up for that which was right and just - the national liberation struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam.

Sri Lanka seeks more aid

Sri Lanka will seek a massive US\$1000 million in assistance at the next Aid Group meeting in Paris scheduled to be held during the second week of February 1992. Sri Lanka's total defence expenditure for the financial year 1992 has been estimated to be Rs 15.4 billion. This represents an increase of Rs 3.6 billion over the defence expenditure of 1991.

What is a nation?

"Nationalism is first and foremost a state of mind, an act of consciousness... the mental life of man is as much dominated by an ego-consciousness as it is by a group consciousness. Both are complex states of mind at which we arrive through experiences of differentiation and opposition, of the ego and the surrounding world, of the we group and those outside the group. It is a fact often commented upon that this growth of nationalism and of national sectionalisms happened at the very same time when international relations, trade, and communications were developing as never before; that local languages were raised to the dignity of literary and cultural languages just at the time when it seemed most desirable to efface all differences of language by the spread of world languages. This view overlooks the fact that the very growth of nationalism all over the earth, with its awakening of the masses to participation in political and cultural life, prepared the way for the closer cultural contacts of all the civilisations of mankind, at the same time separating and uniting them." - Hans Kohn: *The Idea of Nationalism*, A Study of its Origins and Background, New York, 1944

LTTE leader asked to voice his proposals

A three man delegation from the London based Quakers Peace and Service Organisation met LTTE second in command K. Mahendrarajah and LTTE theorist Anton Balasingham in Jaffna and told them that their leader Velupillai Prabhakaran should now announce his proposals for settling the ethnic issue. The QPSO informed them that this was a prerequisite for any international assistance to help solve the North East problem

India Today reports from Colombo: India and UNP dissidents apprehensive that Premadasa may settle if Tigers agree to some kind of linkage with the republic

There couldn't have been a more telling indication of the Machiavellian game of realpolitik being played in Sri Lanka today. The vehicle carrying the three peace-makers from the London-based Quakers, who were returning from Jaffna last fortnight after meeting LTTE leaders, was suddenly confronted by a convoy of armoured personnel carriers headed in the other direction. These were 30 spanking new T-85s recently imported from China. Almost to the day, a consignment of Czech T-55 main battle tanks was unloaded at Trincomalee.

The catch was: the Quakers' self-assumed peace mission had the blessings of the Premadasa Government which was also sending in direct peace offers and a high-powered emissary like Cabinet Minister S. Thondaman. And at the same time the Government was inducting armoured muscle into a military assault which gained momentum unprecedented since the early 1987 move on Vadamachchi in Jaffna peninsula. So while the Colombo dailies including the Government-controlled ones, were headlining "victories against terrorists", the diplomatic grapevine was abuzz with stories of mediation efforts.

Analysts and diplomats are reading significant meanings into what look like contradictory signals. President R. Premadasa is playing a shrewd, if risky, game, asking his military to step up pressure on the one hand and encouraging mediators on the other. "The key to his strategy," says a top diplomat, "is to keep both the Tigers and the mediators guessing."

On the face of it this would seem to be a perfectly legitimate exercise. But in the process Premadasa too is riding a tiger, since this army, now plunged headlong into battle, is unlikely to take kindly to the behind-the-scenes negotiations with the Tigers. Particularly at a juncture, say Premadasa's detractors, when the tempo of fighting has gone very high. "An impression is growing that our President will make concessions to the Tigers at the cost of national interest and not listen to reason from even his own party-men," says former minister and party dissident Lalith Athulathmudali.

Significantly, in the past 16 months of fighting, the Sri Lankan Army

has already suffered 4,300 casualties; 1,300 dead and 3,000 seriously wounded. This is more than the total casualties suffered by the IPKF in two and a half years, whose success rate was better. "The Indian Army is 1.1-million-strong and yet 1,200 dead sat on the conscience of your entire nation. We have an army of 62,000 and everyone has lost someone he knew personally," said a senior Sri Lankan army officer, predicting trouble if major concessions were made to the Tigers at this stage.

But, harried by the dissidents whose meetings have been drawing big crowds, Premadasa seems to have made up his mind to buy peace with the Tigers as long as they accept some kind of linkage with the republic. Meanwhile, he will give the army a free hand and if it fails to capture the Jaffna peninsula, which seems likely, ram a peace agreement down its throat.

The peace proposals sent in through Thondaman, widely believed to have his concurrence, imply giving the Tigers everything short of total independence. With this, Premadasa has given up all his preconditions such as the presence of Pirabhakaran at the talks and laying down of arms. He has

also guaranteed the merger of the north and east provinces, one of the more contentious LTTE demands. In addition, Thondaman's proposals acknowledge the LTTE as the only legitimate claimant to power in the Tamil region without even the nicety of an election.

Highly-placed sources say that while the battle rages on, the negotiations are in an advanced stage and even the Tigers feeling the heat in the battlefield after suffering substantial losses at Elephant Pass and then at Mullaitivu, are willing to talk. This has very significant implications for India. "Does someone in South Block realise the consequences of Premadasa handing over the north and the east to the LTTE as a legitimate ruling party? What will it do to your security interests and the future of Tamil Nadu?" asks a ruling party dissident.

Sources in South Block, however, say that they are not oblivious of what is going on and when Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao goes to the SAARC summit, along with the usual diplomatic pleasantries, he will also be conveying India's grave apprehensions to his counterpart. (Courtesy: India Today, Nov 15)

Truth Will Out?

The Jaffna Public Library, the brainchild of Rev. Fr. TMF Long and one of the best in Asia, was burnt by some members of the UNP in 1981. So says, President Premadasa - and presumably he should know. At a meeting at a Muslim College in Puttalam, President Premadasa declared: "During the District Council elections in 1981, some of our Party members took many people from other parts of the country to the North, created havoc and disrupted the conduct of the elections in the North. It is this same group of people causing trouble now also. If you wish to find out who burnt the priceless collection of books at the Jaffna Library, you have only to look at the faces of those opposing us". The question that arises is what made President Premadasa keep his silence all these years?

"With several high ranking Sinhalese security officers and two cabinet ministers, Cyril Mathew and Gamini Dissanayake, present in the town (Jaffna), uniformed security men and plainclothes thugs carried out some well organised acts of destruction. They burned to the ground certain chosen targets - including the Jaffna Public Library, with its 95,000 volumes and priceless manuscripts, a Hindu temple, the office and machinery of the independent Tamil daily newspaper Eelamadu... Four people were killed outright. No mention of this appeared in the national newspapers, not even the burning of the Library, the symbol of the Tamils' cultural identity..." - Nancy Murray, *The State against the Tamils in Sri Lanka - Racism and the Authoritarian State - Race & Class*, Summer 1984