

TAMIL NATION



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International Secretariat of LTTE initiates consultations on steps

Towards a Just Peace

The International Secretariat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam has initiated consultations on the issues that confront the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam and the need to concretise the steps towards a just peace. In response to this initiative, the International Federation of Tamils (IFT) has planned a series of seminar discussions, in London and elsewhere. A preliminary meeting was held by the IFT in London, on Sunday 29 December 1991, with a representative cross section of the Tamil expatriate community in the United Kingdom. The consensus view was that there was a need to examine in depth the features of associative structures where both the Tamil nation and the Sinhala nation can coexist and in certain areas cooperate for the freedom, peace and prosperity of both nations. Broad agreement was reached on the agenda for a proposed seminar to be held in early February 1992. The London Seminar will be jointly sponsored by the IFT and other Tamil community based organisations in the United Kingdom. Similar initiatives are being taken by the expatriate Tamil community in Australia and the United States. The International Federation of Tamils has called for contributions from both Tamils and Sinhalese in the form of papers on the agenda items and on step wise proposals to secure a just peace. Contributions may be addressed to the IFT, P.O.Box 417, Cambridge CB3 9LZ, U.K.

Lawrence Thilagar at Seminar in Italy says:

"A permanent and lasting solution can be achieved only by recognising the traditional homeland of the Tamil people, by recognising that they constitute a nation and by recognising their right to self determination. On this basis, it should be possible to agree on a framework where the Tamil nation and the Sinhala nation can coexist, and cooperate in certain spheres for the welfare, peace and prosperity of both nations"

Mr. Lawrence Thilagar, Central Committee Member of the LTTE addressed a seminar on 'A War Fratricidal' organised by Mr. Luigi Merlo, the President of the International Association for the Friendship among Peoples at Palermo in Italy on 14 December 1991. The participants at the Seminar included several prominent academics and researchers. A video highlighting the situation in Tamil Eelam was shown. Mr. Thilagar commenting on the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam said:

"You may ask: Why do our people struggle, and strive? The

short answer is that they struggle and strive to end their suffering - a suffering caused by the oppression perpetrated by successive Sri Lankan governments and by the chauvinist forces within the Sinhala nation during the past several decades. It was an oppression that was intended to erase the Tamil national identity. Instead it has served to consolidate the growth of the Tamil nation. The actions of successive Sri Lankan governments for the last forty years, which were intended to destroy the Tamil national entity, have in reality solidified it. The discrimination in relation to education, employment and

TOWARDS A JUST PEACE Seminar Agenda

the political reality

parties to the conflict - armed conflict, its legitimacy and/or lawfulness - ethnic conflict or national liberation struggle? - multi ethnic plural society or two nations? - muslim minority - plantation Tamils

the political solution

negotiations; piece meal 'practical' approach or radical conceptual approach - legal framework to accord with political reality - associative structures, confederal, commonwealth - separation

towards a just peace

time table for steps towards a just peace - confidence building - ceasefire - monitors to supervise ceasefire - lifting of blockade - role of mediator - parties to the talks - roundtable or square table - venue for talks - ratification by referendum

language, the colonisation of the Tamil homelands and physical attacks amounting to genocide have made the Tamils resist alien Sinhala rule as one people - as one nation. We are today a people with a deep rooted political consciousness of our national identity. Nobody can deny that the people of Tamil Eelam constitute, today, a national formation. Why do our people struggle and strive? They struggle and strive to safeguard their national identity. They are ready to fight and sacrifice, so that they may protect their contiguous traditional homeland, their distinct language, their rich culture and their social economic and political life.

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"It is for Sri Lanka to decide whether it wants a negotiated settlement or a military solution"

At a meeting held in Jaffna to commemorate Heroes Day, Mr V Prabhakaran, the leader of Tamil Eelam said that whether the conflict with Sri Lanka was to be settled by negotiation or by military action depends entirely on the Government of Sri Lanka. He added that the LTTE was always ready for talks without any preconditions. But if the Government wanted to find a solution militarily, the LTTE was prepared for that too.

Pongal Greetings

சென்டி சூளி எண்ணம்
சென்டி சூளி மேன்மை
வாழ்வு சூளி தீபம் - என
வாழ்த்து பல கோடி...

எண்ணம் சூளி துன்றம்
மேன்மை சூளி தோன்றம்
மேலும் சூளி வேண்டும் - என
வாழ்த்து பல கோடி...

வாழ்த்துக்கள் கொண்டு வரும்.
சென்டி...



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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Views expressed in the paper are not necessarily those of the Interim Editor, the Editorial Advisory Board or the Publishers. TAMIL NATION welcomes reader responses in the form of letters or articles. Contributions should be brief and typed on one side of the paper only.

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Sivanayagam incarceration without trial enters six month



On the 1st of January 1992, Mr. Subramaniam Sivanayagam, the Founding Editor of the Tamil Nation, entered his 166th day of incarceration, without trial, in an Indian jail. He was taken into custody on the 18th of July 1991 and he is in his sixth month of detention. 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 CR9 6AB, United Kingdom. Each contribution will be individually acknowledged.

"Inhuman and degrading treatment" says Dravida Kalagam leader Veeramani

Mr. K. Veeramani, the General Secretary of the Dravida Kalagam speaking at a Seminar in Madras on 24 December 1991, declared: "Tamil Nation's Editor, Mr. S. Sivanayagam, who has been detained without trial for the past several months, is brought to the Magistrates Court at Saidpet once in two weeks. Mr. Sivanayagam is a writer who is well known through out the world. He is a diabetic. He is 60 years old. But he is brought to court manacled from Vellore. (see picture alongside) Are the authorities afraid that this 60 year old diabetic, with a wife and two children, will somehow run away? What meaning can we give to this inhuman and degrading treatment meted out to Mr. Sivanayagam?"

He continued: "We do not propose to ignore actions such as these. Such actions are a gross violation of human rights. If the authorities so wish, let them arrest us as well and put us in jail. We too are ready to go to jail. We will be happy to face the hangman's rope. Rather than die from some illness or accident, we will consider such death a matter for pride." The occasion was Ramasamy Naicker's Remembrance Day and the seminar was organised by the Dravida Kalagam to condemn the genocide of Tamils in Eelam.

Lawrence Thilagar at Seminar in Italy

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In historical terms, when the first colonial power came to the island, there was a Tamil kingdom. This kingdom spread from Jaffna to the River Waluwa to the West and upto the Manikka Ganga in the East. In 1798, the British Colonial Secretary noted that there were two nations, Tamils and Sinhalese in the island called Ceylon. We as a people are sovereign - we have the right to self determination and the right to decide our own political destiny. This right is legitimate, lawful, inalienable and cannot be denied and it is to protect and secure this right that the Tamil people are ready to fight, suffer and die. This is a fight of a nation for survival.

Here in Europe we notice that many governments as well as non governmental organisations have begun to look at matters in a correct perspective. They have begun to see the need to recognise the national aspirations of a people and the need to address national questions before conflicts erupt into war. This is particularly true of recent events in Eastern Europe. We ask: why do you look at our problem differently? Why adopt two standards and two different approaches to that which is after all very similar? Why do you look at the national questions in the third world differently?

In the case of the Tamil struggle, the conflict has today transformed itself into a full scale war. However, the international community does not seem ready to accept that the basic character of the conflict is that it is a conflict between two national formations. But surely any solution to the conflict must address the basic issues of the conflict. Otherwise, we will end up with stop gap measures - and there will be no permanent solution.

The struggle of the Tamil people has today become a matter of international significance. The gross, consistent and continuing violations of human rights for the last 40 years have today led to a clear genocidal situation. During the past several months there has been a continuing economic blockade with intent to conquer and subjugate our people. The war has gone on for several years with increasing ferocity and has resulted in thousands of refugees seeking asylum in India and several European countries. Again, this war is being

conducted with the money obtained by Sri Lanka from donor countries for the purpose of economic development. Without that money, from the international community, the Sri Lankan government cannot carry on the war even for one day. The international dimension is therefore a matter of real and immediate significance.

We believe that the resolution of the conflict requires international mediation and the application of international standards. The Tamil people recognise the existence of the Sinhala nation. We recognise their full rights. We recognise their history and their traditional homeland. We accept their separate national identity. The Tamil nation seeks to cooperate with the Sinhala nation. The Tamil nation seeks to freely associate with the Sinhala nation. We wish that that Sinhala nation should prosper and live in peace and harmony with us.

But when one nation seeks to dominate the other, conflict erupts and degenerates into a full scale war. This is natural. This is inevitable. The history of humankind is the history of liberation. No people will accept subjugation. They will struggle to liberate themselves from domination. For peace and stability, there must be equality and freedom amongst nations as well as individuals. If this truth is recognised there will be no conflict and there will be no war in our island as well as in the world. Therefore our struggle has become a struggle to redeem truth.

In practical terms what do we have to do? We have to sit and talk with each other. The parties to the armed conflict namely the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam should try to resolve the problem by talking with each other. One party is trying to destroy the national identity of the Tamil people and the other party is trying to assert it. Both parties should probe and find out how the two nations can coexist in the island and cooperate with each other rather than confronting each other.

There must be international meditation. First conducive conditions should be created to have proper talks. We must

formulate mechanisms to secure that parties to the conflict abide by the international humanitarian law of armed conflict.

Again, there must be a ceasefire during the talks. We cannot talk while civilians continue to die as a result of aerial and artillery bombardments. While disappearances, massacres are taking place, it would be idle to pretend that we can engage in talks. We must work out an international monitoring mechanism to supervise the ceasefire. Finally, there must be an international guarantee to secure the implementation of that which may be agreed at the talks. The talks can be held outside the island, maybe in one of the European capitals.

The LTTE leadership announced an unilateral and indefinite ceasefire in January 1991. The Sri Lanka government rejected the offer and intensified the war, saying that LTTE is in weak position and that that is why they are calling for a ceasefire. It seems that in the government's twin track policy the military solution is the ultimate track.

Even recently LTTE leader, Pirabakaran has said the LTTE are ready for negotiations without preconditions. But the Sri Lanka government believes that the LTTE is in a weak position, that militarily it can be defeated, that its leadership can be liquidated, and that after that there will be no problem. The logic of this thinking stands condemned when one sees that over one hundred thousand Indian troops could not subdue or extinguish the flame of freedom; when one sees that today, there are vast areas of the Tamil home land under LTTE control and that in the island, there are two armies with the capability of carrying on conventional warfare.

A permanent and lasting solution can be achieved only by recognising the traditional homeland of the Tamil people, by recognising that they constitute a nation and by recognising their right to national self determination. On this basis, it should be possible to agree on a framework where the Tamil nation and the Sinhala nation can coexist, and cooperate in certain spheres for the welfare, peace and prosperity of both nations.

India Abroad reports

LTTE will hold series of seminars in Jaffna to discuss Thondaman proposals

The Tamil Tigers recently held a seminar in the north to exchange views on proposals presented by the lone Tamil Cabinet Minister S. Thondaman giving wide ranging powers to the Tamil majority northeast. LTTE deputy leader Mahendrarajah said that the LTTE would hold a series of seminars to discuss the proposals in the Jaffna peninsula, a Tiger stronghold. The LTTE had said earlier the proposals were under consideration as they surpassed previous proposals in their effort to solve the problem. Thondaman is scheduled to visit Jaffna after the Tamil festival of Thai Pongal on January 14. He said that he will have discussions with government and opposition leaders before going to Jaffna. Meanwhile Sinhala Buddhist leaders came out strongly against the Thondaman proposals. Former Minister Gamani Jayasuriya who resigned from the cabinet in 1987 over the Indo Sri Lanka agreement, denounced the Thondaman proposals warning that they would dissect the nation. Erudite Buddhist leader Walpola Rahula Thero appealed to the "entire Sinhala race to rise against implementation of Thondaman proposals". (Courtesy India Abroad, 3 January)

Tamil Leader Nedumaran in Europe

Mr. P. Nedumaran, leader of the Thamilar Thesiya Iyakkam and Joint Secretary of the Tamil Eelam Supporters Organisation, who is on a short visit to Europe, took time off from a busy schedule to answer some questions of interest to Eelam Tamil readers:

Q: What is the purpose of your visit to Europe?

A: I have come to participate in the Heroes Day celebrations, to acquaint myself with the plight of Tamil refugees in Europe and to canvass support for the Tamil Eelam cause among European organisations.

Q: What is your opinion of the Indian Government's decision to send back Eelam Tamils who had sought refuge in Tamil Nadu?

A: To send Eelam Tamils back to Sri Lanka at this juncture is an inhuman act. To send them back before a peaceful settlement is reached is equivalent to condemning them to death.

Q: Do you think that this intransigent attitude of the Indian Government will be a set back to the Eelam struggle?

A: The action of the former Indian Government of Rajiv Gandhi to suppress the Eelam struggle by sending its armed forces ended in utter failure. So, the high handed actions of the present Indian Government will

not affect the Eelam struggle to any great extent.

Q: You visited Tamil Eelam in 1985, 1987 and in 1990. Did you notice any change in the attitude of the Tamil people between the last two visits?

A: What I saw and experienced in 1990 was quite different from my experience during the first two visits. In 1985 and 1987, the people were doubtful whether the LTTE could fight the Sri Lankan Army in a direct confrontation. But in 1990, the Tamil people felt that the Tigers who fought the Indian Army successfully could definitely defeat the Sri Lankan Army. The Tamil people also realised that the LTTE was the only true liberation movement and that the other groups were all traitors to the cause. In the past the Tiger recruits were mainly from the urban areas. This situation has changed and I could see boys and girls from the villages joining the LTTE in large numbers and undergoing training.

Q: You have been an indefatigable supporter of the Tamil Eelam struggle. What do you wish to tell the expatriate Tamil community?

A: The Tamil Eelam liberation struggle is an integral part of the struggle of the Tamils living today in many lands. They must realise this and help the Tamil Eelam liberation struggle in every way

Jaffna Diocesan Human Development Centre Situation Report

We see the escalation of war and experience greater degrees of hardships month by month. Sporadic unpredictable shellings from the camps fall in all directions on non military targets to a distance of 17 miles. Large portions of the population are exposed to the terror of destruction and severe economic blockade of goods and services (food, water, textile, electricity, medicine, liquid cash, industrial goods, communication and transport facilities) so that the civilian morale could be damaged.

Curfew was again imposed in the Northern Districts of Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Mullaithivu. The whole population within these districts faced death by starvation. The flow of essential goods by lorries from Colombo had ground to a halt. Even the pedal cyclists had halted their transport activities. The ICRC ships were unable to unload their cargo of humanitarian aid. The people in the islands off the Peninsula had no supplies of provisions and those who had come to the peninsula were stranded.

The refugee situation is very fluid and changes monthly or even weekly. There are now 40724 families (140058 members) in 209 welfare centres in the Jaffna district. In May there were more than 80000 refugees in the Jaffna town itself. Further 49205 persons are without any

means of income. 4398 families are refugees who had come into Jaffna from other districts. Only 27 weeks of dry rations had been provided to the refugees during the 53 weeks of the war. 15 weeks, 13 weeks and 6 weeks of provisions were provided to the refugees outside the welfare centres, those who had lost their means of income and those with a salary above Rs 1500 respectively during the above mentioned period. The government had threatened to stop its meagre assistance to the refugees living outside the welfare centres. Fishermen, farmers are unable to earn to live not to mention thousands of others deprived of their means of income for more than a year.

Mullaithivu district has a population of 125000 and only 10% of food supplies have been sent there for the last one year. There are 15858 persons in 10 camps. 23 villages in this district have been vacated by the people

Kilinochchi district saw the displacement of its people due to the war at Elephant Pass. 1974 families from 17 villages had reached Kilinochchi. Further 13 villages had vacated from the AGA's division of Vadamardachchi. Even the barges at Valaipadu and Mullaithivu used to unload the provisions transported by the ICRC ships have been bombed by air crafts.

Jaffna Town Centre in November 1991



Anita Pratap reporting in the Indian Express says

No one in Jaffna mourns the departure of IPKF

Excerpts from Anita Pratap's report in the Indian Express follow:

"Less than 300 yards ahead of the last checkpoint manned by the Sri Lankan Army in the northern province of Vavuniya, is a rickety old bridge with uneven planks crudely nailed together. That is the gateway to a world that appears to have been caught in some bizarre time-capsule... A little ahead of the bridge is a crude wooden pole resting on rusty barrels. That is the beginning of the territory controlled by the LTTE and which the Colombo government, for all practical purposes, has washed its hands off - for the moment. A 16 year-old armed sentry in the LTTE's stripe camouflage uniform prevents one from taking pictures or talking to the people. He is polite but firm...

The road up north from Vavuniya toward Jaffna, the citadel of the LTTE, is empty of vehicular traffic. We are the lone car on the long narrow road. To ward off aerial attacks, we tied huge cloth banner with the legend "PRESS" on it across the roof of the car. The journey was particularly exhausting this time because the direct route to Jaffna from

Civilians have moved out of 35 Grama Sevakar divisions in the Jaffna district leaving their houses to be looted and plundered by the invading forces. Few families have been caught up in these villages and have not been allowed to contact their relations and friends living in refugee centres. Several persons are reported missing and many bodies (human skeletons) had been recovered from the wells after the forces had retreated from Mandathivu..

Transport expenses are very high due to the shortage of fuel, spare parts and lubricants for the vehicles. The transport is slow, dangerous and unpredictable. Even the mercy missions of MSF, ICRC and HUDEC have been attacked by air crafts. Passengers have to walk a minimum of 7 miles to reach the check point on the order of the forces. Lorries reaching Vavuniya are thoroughly searched and detained for 24 hours.

Vavuniya has been closed at Elephant Pass. This meant taking the punishing ride on a horribly rutted, circuitous route that involved taking a ferry across a lagoon at Pooneryn...

The Tigers control the entire northern province, while the Sri Lankan army is confined to the 30 camps located in this area. They don't dare step out. To that extent, people live in safety and move about freely. But only on foot or cycles.. People walk or go on bicycles because there is an acute scarcity of petrol, diesel and kerosene. Petrol costs an unbelievable Rs. 1,000 a litre. Colombo has banned fuel, batteries and soap from being transported to the north because the Tigers use it for their attacks against the army. Batteries are used to detonate johnny mines, soap is used to lubricate their anti-personnel mines, and fuel is needed to run vehicles and lathe machines that manufacture grenades.

Prices therefore are unbelievably prohibitive. Kerosene has shot up to Rs. 2000. Soap has gone up to Rs. 40 a cake. And yet the resident people manage to live on, mainly on remittances sent from relatives abroad. Once a month, a ship brings mail from Colombo. Schools and the Jaffna University are open. Two hotels are open, though one is barely functional after the LTTE took away the mattresses for their cadres injured in the Elephant Pass battle...

Daily, thousands of Tamils cross into Vavuniya town to take back supplies ranging from rice to kerosene. These are tied to the cycles and they have to pedal 50 to 70 kms to their villages.

No one in Jaffna mourns the departure of IPKF. They are glad that phase is over and enormously relieved that their town has been completely cleansed of the undisciplined, uncouth cadre of EPRLF and other minor groups propped up by the Indians. The Tigers are easier to deal with - they are polite and well-behaved. And they follow a system.

The people admire the LTTE for their commitment and courage. Contrary to the expectations, the LTTE's popularity has increased after the Elephant pass battle. People don't see it as a defeat for the Tigers. Instead, they glorify the fact that the Tigers gave a tough fight to the combined defense forces of Sri Lanka for 24 days.

Every citizen who wants to go out of the Tamil areas must take a permit from the Tigers. This, the Tigers, say is for security reasons. They keep a tab so that they know who is going out, for how long and how frequently. They monitor this so that no informants go out to leak details about the LTTE's operations.

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GOGGLES

by C.P.Goliard

The Man from Maruthur and Malai Nadu

Seventy five years ago, a baby boy was born to a migrant couple, Gopala Menon and Sathyabama, in a 'line-room' of a tea estate in Kandy. Later, this baby boy would grow into a leader with the name Maruthur Gopalan Ramachandran (popularly adored by Tamils all over the world with the acronym MGR).

Maruthur was the ancestral village in the Kerala state from where his parents hailed from. Many had ridiculed the uncertainty of his birth date, though MGR had used January 17, 1917 in his personal documents. One should sympathize with MGR on this matter because he was born to an Indian immigrant family in a tea plantation in Ceylon, which was then under British colonial rule. Way back in 1917, the health care facilities available for the plantation workers were atrocious, leave alone the requirements related to birth registration. That he survived into adulthood itself was an achievement.

Though as a two-year old he was taken to Kumbakonam by his mother (who had been widowed after the birth of MGR), the destiny would make it that in his last five years of life, MGR would again have close links with the Tamils in the land of his birth. After landing in Tamil Nadu, MGR would rise in his professional ranks with perseverance, hard work and the smile of Lady Luck. He reached the 'top', step by step; 10 years as a vaudeville child actor, 10 years as an apprentice actor with secondary roles in movies, 30 years as an 'uncrowned king' in the Tamil movie land and finally 10 years as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

Having experienced poverty personally during his young days and forfeiting the opportunity to have a formal education, MGR would see to it that at least one song in his movie had some educational value to the average man.

He would take a keen interest in the theme of the song, its musical composition and its exact appearance in the movie. Not surprisingly, it would turn out to be a hit song. I can recollect a dozen of these song-shere:

1. Acheham enpathu madamaiyadah - Anjaamai Dravidar udamaiyadah (on Dravidian glory and heroism)

2. Thoongathe Thambi Thoongathe - Nee somberi enra payar vaankaathe (on the consequences of idling and procrastination)

3. Chinna payale Chinna payale Chethi keladah (on character-building and self confidence)

4. Thirudathe - Paapaa Thirudathe (on prevention of bad habits, especially stealing, while young)

5. Moonrezhuthil En Mooch-chirukkum - Athu mudinthapin thaane Pechehirukkum (on the dignity of duty)

6. Onru Engal Jathiye - Ouru Engal Neethiye (on the unity of human race)

7. Unnai Arinthaal Nee Unnai Arinthaal Ulagthil Pooradalaam (on developing self confidence)

8. Buddhan Jesu Gandhi pirandathu Bhoomiyil etharkaaka (on the dignity of labour)

9. Atho Antha paravai pola vazhayendum (on freedom and liberty)

10. Thaayillamal Naanillai Thaane evarum piranthathillai (on mother love)

11. Chirithu vazhavendum - Nee chirikka vazhnthidathe (on dignity of the labour)

12. Poomazhai thoovi vasanthangal vaaztha oorvalam nadakkirathu. (on sibling love)

MGR would also make sure that he will teach good manners and discipline to the masses through the mov-

ies. Therefore, in the characters he played in 120-odd movies, he would never smoke or use alcoholic drinks. On top of that, he would never physically and mentally abuse women. This self-imposed rigidity restricted the character runs he would play and movie critics ridiculed him for this un-natural style of his characters. But MGR would have the last word and the Tamil masses wouldn't care less about the criticism made by the elitist snobs. Ultimately, he called the respected honorific 'vaathiyar' (teacher) in its proper sense of the word.

MGR's 75th Birth Anniversary

Call it a mere coincidence or the destiny of Eelam Tamils, when the liberation struggle began earnestly in 1977, MGR would become the chief minister of the Tamil Nadu. Though his interest on the problems of Eelam Tamils remained passive till 1982, the ethnic holocaust of 1983 kindled his support for the Eelam cause. 1983 also saw this change in guard among the political leaders of the Eelam Tamils. MGR had never felt comfortable with the TULF leadership since he had perceived them as emotionally more close to the DMK leadership.

When the leadership mantle in the struggle for Eelam needed a change and a boost, MGR became the godfather of the LTTE and made sure that the 'new born baby' would not suffer a premature death in the hands of wily J.R. Jayewardene, the central government of India and the Intelligence Agency of India.

Even to his allies in politics, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, the links MGR had with the LTTE was too embarrassing. But they simply had

to ignore it for their own political survival in the South India. For all this moral support to the Tamil Eelam cause, MGR became the arch-enemy of the Sinhalese power brokers from 1983 till his death in December 1987.

Many Eelam Tamils also did not expect much from MGR after his skirmish with the TULF leadership at the 1981 Madurai Tamil International Conference. But, now in hindsight, one can see how much vital was the support of MGR for the Eelam cause from 1983 till his death.

Only N.T.Rama Rao was able to

as a "three-in-ones". He had the movie magic of John Wayne, the political success of Ronald Reagan and the messianic appeal of Martin Luther King Jr.

How could one explain the extraordinary career of MGR, which began in Kandy and ended in Madras? Though not considered as a native in the place of his birth or in Tamil Nadu where he grew up and called it home, he became the adored leader, who would be envied by any local politician. At least Kavi Arasu Kannadasan (who had been a close friend and sometimes harshest critic of MGR)

had an answer. In 1980, Kannadasan noted that MGR was blessed with an "Asura jathakam" (devil's horoscope). Not everyone would agree with that assessment. But, considering the unfavourable odds he faced in his life and the 'fights' he won, definitely there should have been a blessing from the devil which protected him in so many trials. Like other great leaders and revolutionaries, MGR also had his weaknesses. But these do not detract the good deeds he did to the down-trodden in Tamil



Nadu and to the Eelam Tamils who landed in India as refugees after 1983. MGR was neither an intellectual nor a folk philosopher. But his life-time teaching is short and simple; "Fight for your Rights". That's what he preached in his 100-odd movies. Considering the abuse Eelam Tamils are currently undergoing in Tamil Nadu governed by those who claim to be the proteges of MGR, one can only say "We miss you, Vathiyar".

Courage comes to Anura

SLFP All Island Organiser Anura Bandaranaike making what was seen as a far reaching statement on the ethnic crisis, has said that if the Eelam demand is given up, the Sinhala people should concede all other demands of the Tamils, particularly the right to self government. Mr. Bandaranaike speaking at the Sir Razik Fareed auditorium to mark the opening of the Majlis in early December said that the UNP and the SLFP and successive governments since independence were responsible for the ethnic crisis.

"As a member of the SLFP, I have the courage to say that my party also is responsible." He said that the curse of our country was that the every opposition party had made use of the ethnic problem as a communal issue. Mr. Bandaranaike revealed also he had assured the Tamil political parties that the SLFP would not make it a communal issue any longer and that he hoped the ruling UNP would also give such an undertaking to them. Political observers have commented that this belated wisdom from sections of the Sinhala political leadership is a measure of the success of the armed struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam and that the logical next step should be the recognition of the Tamil right to self determination.

"Only MGR helped us" says Yogi

The general secretary of the political wing of the LTTE, Yogi, in his weekly comment over Radio 'Voice of Tigers' in early December said that Chief Minister Jayalalitha and DMK leader Karunanidhi were accusing each other saying that they had helped the LTTE in Tamil Nadu, but neither of them had helped the LTTE. It was the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, the late M.G. Ramachandran who had helped the LTTE and gave all possible assistance for our struggle. Yogi also said that Mr. Karunanidhi who had earlier stood for a separate State in Tamil Nadu later gave up his call for separation and turned a traitor to the Tamil cause. Yogi pointed out that even the members of the late MGR's political party were now struggling for the patronage of the centre by accusing the LTTE. On the current situation in the Jaffna peninsula, Yogi said that the LTTE would not surrender to the armed forces. "We carried out our fight when the huge Indian Army was standing at every door step in the peninsula. Our cadres showed maximum determination by living through hardships and even skipping meals for days. The crisis that we are now facing will only serve to harden our resolution."

Bombing of Omanthai

Following the statement that the Sri Lankan Armed Forces will take steps to oust the LTTE from Vanni area, there has been heavy bombing on Omanthai for 48 hours from 13th November. Shooting from helicopters and raining of rockets on certain parts of Vavuniya have also begun. The Sri Lankan Army is concentrating on destroying the LTTE in Vavuniya District with the help of the Tamil (Quisling) Group PLOTE says a report from Colombo. Reports from Jaffna say that the Govt. has tried out practice raids on Jaffna using its newly acquired jet bombers and the people are in a state of shock and bewilderment. In the meantime, the LTTE has launched a guerilla attack on the Sri Lankan army camp along the Vavuniya-Mannar road and are engaging the army in direct combat at Mullaitivu.

Candidly Speaking

Nadesan Satyendra

Some months ago, an expatriate Eelam Tamil, offered Tamil Nation some advice. He wrote:

"...in this busy life of ours, it is difficult to read two page long articles. After sweating reading whole books for examination purposes, only the very affluent, or those who are retired on an extra large pension would have the time and leisure to go through a single ten column reading matter. Articles of shorter length which highlight the current liberation struggle in Eelam will be read more widely and eagerly..."

In the late 1920s, Adolf Hitler, went even further and extolled the virtues of the graphic image against anything that was written. He wrote in Mein Kampf:

"...there is the fact that the mass of people as such is lazy; that they remain inertly in the spirit of their old habits and, left to themselves, will take up a piece of written matter only reluctantly if it is not in agreement with what they themselves believe and does not bring them what they had hoped for... At most a leaflet or poster can, its brevity, count on getting a moment's attention from someone who thinks differently. The picture in all its forms up to the film has greater possibilities. Here a man needs to use his brains even less; it suffices to look, or at most to read extremely brief texts, and thus many will more readily accept a pictorial representation than read an article of any length. The picture brings them in a much briefer time, I might almost say in one stroke the enlightenment which they obtain from written matter only after arduous reading."

The use that Hitler put to his understanding of human responses is, of course, well known. But to share Hitler's contempt for the 'mass of people' is to encourage the demagogue and pave the way for the advocate of the 'quick fix'. And, quick fixes quickly become unstuck.

Gramsci was right when he said that man can affect his own development and that of his own surroundings only in so far as he has a clear view of what the possibilities of action open to him are. To do this he has to understand the historical situation in which he finds himself; and it is when he does this, that he can play an active part in modifying that situation.

Change will not come simply by moaning about what is. Neither will it come from a simple minded moralising about that which ought to be. The words of Sri Aurobindo in his epic poem Savitri, which have appeared regularly in the second page of the Tamil Nation, have a deep and abiding significance:

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

Theoretical discourse unrelated to action, serves merely as an opium to the intellect, enabling us to live in a fantasy world of our creation - and, not surprisingly, such discourse influences nobody and changes nothing. On the other hand, action divorced from theory, is a mindless reaction which sooner rather than later, leads to the dead end of frustrated endeavour.

Theory and practise are the two legs, on which we walk. The man of action is the true philosopher; and the philosopher must of necessity be a man of action, and in Gramsci's words

'the real philosopher is, and cannot be other than the politician, the active man who modifies his environment, understanding by environment the ensemble of relations which each of us enters to take part in'

During the past two thousand years and more, many a Tamil mother has related to her young child the story of Sivan and Sakthi. Sivan, the active, and Sakthi, the passive, together constituted the whole and from the union of Sivan and Sakthi came the first born - the idea and this was Ganapathy. Later came the second born - action and this was Murugan. And one day the two children, Ganapathy and Murugan were playing around Sivan and Sakthi, who were seated on their celestial throne in Kailasam. It is said that Sivan with a twinkle in his eye, offered the prize of a fruit to the son who went round the universe first. Murugan immediately set out on his journey and crossed many lands and distant seas. He travelled swiftly on his heavenly peacock. But when, having traversed the universe, Murugan returned to Kailasam, he was astounded to find his elder brother Ganapathy already there, contentedly eating the fruit that Sivan had given him. As the story goes, Ganapathy - in modern jargon, 'the idea man' - had merely walked round the throne on which Sivan and Sakthi were seated - after all, the universe was in them and they were the universe. And, it is in this way that Tamil children, for more than two thousand years, have come to learn, whilst seated, on their mothers knees, something about the dialectical reality that theory is a practical thing.

Again, to seek change without being ready to suffer to bring about that change is but to issue ultimatums without sanctions. It is when our words begin to coincide with our deeds, that principle emerges with power and change is brought about. At the same time, we also begin to learn something about our own 'dharma' or own 'way of harmony'.

On the battlefield of Kurushetra, Arujna was assailed with doubts, when faced with the prospect of killing his teachers, and his relations, and he turned to Krishna for guidance. Krishna advised Arujna to fight. It is a story that has sometimes puzzled - surely, it cannot be right for the Divine to advise a human to

kill another human. But Arujna sought advice because he was in doubt - because he had not reached the stage in his own evolution, when he could simply walk away from the battlefield without internal conflict. Despite his questioning, Arujna was still a Kshatriya, a warrior, in his being. Krishna's Gita Upadesam served to clarify for Arujna the confusion in his mind, by identifying Arujna's dharma - the path which Arujna must follow if he were to act in harmony with his own being. It was Arujna's dharma to do battle and it was in battle that Arujna found peace. Any other path would have left him in pain and in conflict.

On the other hand, unlike Arujna at Kurushetra, the Buddha simply walked out of his palace one night. He did not seek anybody's advice, neither did he awaken his sleeping wife and child and seek to explain his conduct. He was not in doubt. On the contrary, he would have been in conflict if he had not walked out - and so to 'renounce' was his dharma.

It was Annie Besant who remarked once that it was far wiser to act in accordance with your own 'dharma' than try 'to act out some one else's dharma better'. In the 1930s, Bhagat Singh, a militant in the Indian freedom struggle, was charged and convicted for dacoity and sentenced to death. In prison, awaiting death, Bhagat Singh said that he regarded himself as a member of the Indian liberation army, and that he should not be hung but should be taken before a firing squad and shot. Mahatma Gandhi visited Bhagat Singh in prison and when asked by newspaper reporters as to why Gandhi, the apostle of non violence, had visited a militant who had taken to arms, Gandhi replied: "His way is not my way. But I bow my head before one who is ready to give his life for the freedom of his people."

Each of us have our dharma - 'our way' which is in harmony with our being. Life is relationship. We would not be what we are if not for our interaction with others. No human is an island unto himself. Today Tamils who live in many lands and across distant seas are inevitably drawn to examine their relationship with the world in which they live. Unsurprisingly, the sense of their own identity as Tamils, quickly emerges within them as they comes across the lines that are drawn by an outside which continues to regard them as 'not quite us'. The struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam to be recognised as

a people, as a nation, then assumes a special significance to the expatriate Tamil. The struggle in Tamil Eelam becomes not only a struggle of a people 'out there'. It is not only a matter of caring for that which is happening to one's kith and kin back in Tamil Eelam. Nor is it simply a matter of a naive nostalgic search for a receding past. The struggle becomes linked with the expatriate Tamil's own present need to live with self respect and dignity in an environment which regards him as 'not quite us'. Our past becomes relevant to our present and in this way, has something to do with our future.

It is true that a time will come when the separate national identities of the peoples of the world will be transcended by a greater unity. But it will be romantic to imagine that we have reached that stage today. We cannot live in a world which has not yet arrived. Today, those who deny the national identity of others are rarely prepared to give up their own. A true internationalism will come only from nationalisms that have flowered and matured. To work for the flowering of the Tamil nation is to bring forward the emergence of a true internationalism. We do not say that we are better than other 'peoples' - we say that we are 'as good as'.

Tamils have no cause, to be apologetic about their struggle to be recognised as a nation. Each expatriate Tamil wherever he lives is a part of that Tamil nation and even if he should forget his national identity, the environment around him will conspire to remind him from time to time, of that which he has forgotten. Every inside has an outside.

Ponraj Anton, Secretary Swiss Federation of Tamils' Association writes to Indian Ambassador in Geneva

Stop repatriation of Eelam Tamils from India

Dear Ambassador,

We like to bring to your immediate attention the disastrous situation prevailing in the North East of Sri Lanka:

- 1) Civilian population and public buildings are under continuous intense bombing by the Sri Lankan forces by air, sea and land since the 19th of October 1991
- 2) The North is under siege. Ordered evacuation of civilians from homes in Jaffna
- 3) Economic Blockade to North and East continues since July 1990

Also if India sets a precedent then all other countries will follow suit. Repatriating refugees at present would violate all International Law and humanitarian obligations. It would be tantamount to driving human beings into a death trap. Repatriation now will result in total annihilation of the Tamil people and destroy all hopes of survival. Agreements reached at present by the Sri Lankan and the Indian government to repatriate the Tamil refugees can be perceived as a genocide of the Tamil people.

We request: please stop on humanitarian grounds all preparation towards the implementation of repatriation of Sri Lankan Tamils from India.

துணி ஒன்றை எறி

துணி ஒன்றை எறி
அவள் மேனியை மறைக்க

கைகளால் பொத்தியும்
கால்களை மடக்கியும்
எத்தனை நாட்கள் குறண்டி இருப்பது

துணி ஒன்றை எறி
தமிழ்ச் சாதி தலைநிமிர்

இராணுவம் பிடுங்கிய
தமிழரின் துணிகள்
வச்சிராக்ஷை விகாரையில்
பெளத்த கொடிகளால்
கெழுது கொடிகளால்
விற்பதைப் பார்

இன்னும் நீ முடங்கி
எதற்காய் உறங்குகிறாய்

துணி ஒன்றை எறி
துணிவுடன் வெளிவந்து

- கோகுலன் -



"LTTE seriously engaged in restructuring Jaffna's system of education"

The LTTE has seriously applied itself to the task of restructuring Jaffna's system of education. They claim in their official publications, public speeches, and radio broadcasts that despite the intensity of the war, they give utmost priority to education.

In the north there is no electricity, food and fuel are very scarce; artillery shelling and aerial bombing have made bunkers normal extensions of civilian dwellings. Yet most schools in Jaffna function regularly. Although hard pressed for manpower for the expansion of their military, the LTTE insist that schools remain open even under the most difficult circumstances; disruption of schooling can easily swell their ranks.

They are doing it because the very nature of their military needs a very highly literate youth force; the blockade has made it necessary for the Tiger to press into service a large number of people with economic, scientific and agricultural knowledge and inventiveness to study and develop alternative means of survival; and above all they want to produce a generation of Tamil youth who would be in possession of historical, geographical, economic and political knowledge imparted to them through a system of education restructured according to the needs and perceptions of the Tiger.

A generation that would take the idea of their Tamil Eelam nationality for granted. This, they hope, will make it impossible for the government to politically defeat them even when it is militarily successful.

The children who were born in the northeast after 1983 have grown up with constant war. The idea that they are citizens of Sri Lanka make very little sense to those children whose families had no means or desire to run away from Jaffna. The Tiger is giving a definite form to the mindset of this post '83 Tamil generations in the north by making changes in the general system of education.

Indoctrination can ensure only a limited number of determined cadre, but education in schools can ensure a whole generation to the ideal of Tamil Eelam. Yogi, in one of his weekly discussions on the Voice of Tigers broadcast discussed the LTTE's conception of Tamil Eelam education and how it is necessary for students to adapt themselves and their methods of learning, to the most adverse conditions of war.

How do the Tigers intend to teach history, geography, political science, sociology, economics and science to the schoolchildren of the north? The contents of some question papers prepared by the Tigers for O/L and A/L Students (1991) may give one an idea of how they intend to 're-structure' education in the north.

On history: question 2.1. There have been few instances when the whole of India came under the rule of one King. There was a certain period when a South Indian Tamil

dynasty established such a pan Indian Empire. What is this dynasty? What was their insignia? Give the name of the king who established this empire? How many years did it last? What were its borders?

The questions presuppose a knowledge of the Chola empire, whose insignia was the leaping Tiger. The Chola dynasty was established by Karikalan according to legend and some historians. Karikalan is the one and only nom de guerre of Prabhakaran. (It is interesting however to note that Sinhala folklore and rituals had preserved the legend of Karikalan as the good King of Soli in the Pathaha myths-referred to by Prof Gananath Obeyesekere while the Tamils came to know of him after the 'rediscovery' of the Sangam Anthologies).

The chola era has been consistently portrayed by popular novelists of Tamilnadu as the Golden Era of the Tamils. The novels depict the Cholan armies conquering Southeast Asian Kingdoms under the Tiger flag.

The arrival of Vijaya as taught in schools was useful in establishing an Aryan connection. The LTTE, by replacing it in school history texts with the history of the Chola empire might hope to impress its symbolic connection with 'the most glorious Dravidian era' when the Tamils had

destruction and grew. What is the name of this civilization? In which part of India did it establish itself? The Tigers, obviously are working on the idea of the uniqueness and antiquity of the Dravidian civilization. Both Aryan and Dravidian myths have their origins in the works of 19th century orientalist (as defined by Said).

The Aryan myths are migration myth, the Dravidian myths are myths of antiquity: That the Dravidian tribes were the first to appear on earth, on the continent of Lemuria submerged by the Indian Ocean. It is not clear whether the LTTE has picked up all these myths to add to history lessons.

In addition to this a different version of modern Sri Lankan Tamil history has been introduced. Ponnambalan Ramanathan is described as a leader who opposed equal seating in schools, voting rights and temple entry for non-Vellala Tamil castes. G.G. Ponnambalam is said to be one who supported the disenfranchisement of estate Tamils. The Jaffna Youth league is called progressive.

Part Fifteen: on South Tamil Eelam (Eastern Province) 15-1. "The Sri Lankan government is trying to make the region that connects south Tamil Eelam with the rest of Tamil Eelam a fully Sinhala region". Colour this region (on the Tamil Eelam map and give the name of the Sinhala settlement in this region.)

There are also questions on the Mahaweli and Gal Oya schemes. The central idea underlying these questions is the new notion of geography. The east has become South Tamil Eelam. All Tiger and civilian writings in the north now refer to the east as then Tamil Eelam.

A new geography is taking shape in the Jaffna schools. Even among the new expatriate Tamil population in the west this geography is finding wide currency. Many who do not subscribe to the ideas of the Tigers use the Eelam geographical terminology.

Another question paper of students shows that substantial work has been done on the natural resources, geology and agriculture in the north and that it is being included in the curriculum. School children are expected to know a wide range of details on alternative technology, the development of alternative fuels, local water resources and food production. The specialized scientific knowledge and technology that is being developed through organization lie ROOT are being integrated into the education system.

The student themselves are asked to explain the changes that are needed in northern schools. The Tigers are educating school children in Jaffna about their own concept of education. They are creating a generation of Tamils who might become a bulwark against national political unification that is said to be the ultimate aim of the government's military success in the north.

Robert C. Oberst, Associate Professor of Political Science at Nebraska Wesleyan University writes to Senator Edward Kennedy

"The pressure of aid donors can be a major factor in a solution"

Dear Senator Kennedy

As a scholar who has spent the last 15 years studying the society and government of Sri Lanka, I would like to strongly express my concern about the carnage which is taking place in that country. The current violence between the government and Tamil guerrillas has escalated to the point where the civil war is the bloodiest conflict in the world today and may be the bloodiest internal conflict since the 1970s...

I urge you to take action for several reasons. The foremost is the humanitarian need to end the killing of innocent civilians. Secondly the interests of the United States will not be served by the partition of the Sri Lanka. A stable democracy in a united Sri Lanka serves the long term U.S. economic and strategic interests in the region. Thirdly, both sides to the conflict have recently expressed new interest in a settlement. The bloodshed of the past year appears to have sobered the attitudes of the LTTE and the government. Each has recently expressed interest in utilizing an outside mediator to assist in the peace process. Finally, the conflict offers Democrats in the House and Senate an opportunity to establish themselves with experience in helping to resolve a regional conflict without undermining state department efforts. These efforts, if properly used, could enhance the presidential candidacy of a democrat candidate.

There are several possible avenues of action that may be taken. All are based on the simple reality that no ethnically divided nation-state has been able to create a stable political environment and maintain democracy with a majoritarian political system. Power and authority must be shared in such an environment such that they can not abuse the minority. Although "federalism" has been scorned by leading Sinhalese politicians in Sri Lanka for years, there is a new willingness among governing Sinhalese politicians to consider federal solutions to the conflict. This willingness has created an environment where the conflict may be settled if the right formula utilizing emotionally neutral and ambiguous terms can be presented to both sides. The pressure of aid donors can be a major factor in a solution, especially if it comes from a nation such as the United States which has utilized a system which could be adapted and changed to fit Sri Lankan conditions.

I urge you to consider taking action, whether it be a resolution of Congress or personal action to mediate the conflict. I have enclosed several of my publications related to the conflict.

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India & Sri Lanka agree that aid should not be linked to human rights - but then, they would, wouldn't they?

The one day summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, postponed from last month, after the Indian scuttle, was held on 21 December. The 48 point SAARC declaration included a last minute clause, reportedly at India's insistence that "in regard to human rights the leaders observed that civil and political rights on the one hand and economic and social rights on the other are interdependent and of equal importance." **President Premadasa agreed with India and said that he could not accept some donor countries who make use of human rights as a condition for aid. He said that those countries did that for political reasons.**

Political analysts have commented that this agreement between India and Sri Lanka was revealing. They point out that without human rights, there will be neither stability nor economic development and that aid will end up being used to quell rebellion against injustice and to sustain oppressive regimes. It is understood that President Premadasa later described his talks with Rao as "very cordial". He said that there was nothing much to talk with the Indian Prime Minister other than the return of thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees from Tamil Nadu.

A joke is a serious thing?

A MATTER OF COUNTING

Heard in Colombo: President Premadasa interviewed prospective candidates for the post of Prime Minister. He sent for Gamini Disanayake and when Gamini showed up, he asked him "How much is one and one?" "Two" replied Gamini. He was rejected for the post of Prime Minister. Then he called Lalith Athulathmudali and repeated the same question. "Eleven" said Lalith. He was turned down immediately. The next to be sent for was DP Wijetunge. He popped the question again. Wijetunge replied, "Whatever you say is the sum, that is the correct answer" So, today, DP Wijetunge is Prime Minister, Finance Minister, Labour Minister and Deputy Defence Minister.

A MATTER OF BULLOCK CARTS

The TULF MP for Jaffna District, Mr K Navaratnam speaking in Parliament on 14th November said: The Govt. informs us that 1,500 buses are to be imported. This will not benefit the people of Jaffna in any way. What the people of Jaffna need are bullock carts. The Govt. should import 1,500 bullock carts and send them to Jaffna. This will be useful to carry all the corpses from Jaffna.

Mr AR Mansoor (Minister of Commerce & Trade): You cannot even visit your own electorate.

Mr Navaratnam: As long as your Govt. is in power, I'll not be able to go to my electorate

A MATTER OF BULL

Janata Party MP Dr Subramaniya Swamy declared that although LTTE should be wiped out, Tamil Eelam must be established.

Trawler seized outside Indian territorial waters

The trawler "NOVOTONGA" was seized 86km off Tamil Nadu coast by the Indian Navy. It is alleged that records taken from the trawler show that the LTTE had bought one Surface to Air (SAM) missile in March followed by two more in May 1991. In the meantime, Mr. Panrudi Ramachandran, an opposition member of the Tamil Nadu State Assembly, supported by the Pattali Makkal's Katchi has condemned the Indian Navy's action in arresting the Novotonga carrying supplies from Singapore to the Tamil Tigers and for sinking another ship accompanying her. He has called for the immediate release of the ship, the crew and its cargo. Continuing he said: "The Sri Lankan government is starving the Tamil people there and is using its army, navy and airforce to destroy the lives of the Tamil people with the objective of eliminating them root and branch from their own homeland. In order to save themselves from such genocide the Tamils are bringing in supplies by ship from outside. The Indian government in intercepting these supplies in mid ocean, outside Indian territorial waters, is acting hand in glove with the Sri Lankan government's genocidal policies against the Tamils and this is contrary to the feelings of the people of Tamil Nadu. According to information we have received, the ships were attacked by the Indian Navy whilst they were in the high seas, travelling in the direction of Sri Lanka. Such action is contrary to the conventions governing freedom of navigation by any ship in time of peace on the high seas. But even if as alleged, the ships had strayed into India's territorial waters they should be released after due investigation. There is already precedent for this in the case when an aircraft ferrying arms supplies to the Sri Lankan government ran out of fuel and landed in Trivandrum but the aircraft was not only released but was provided with sufficient fuel to continue its flight to Colombo."

Thondaman's Shuttle Diplomacy

Mr. S.Thondaman, Cabinet Minister and leader of the Ceylon Workers said that the LTTE have sent a second reply to his efforts to effect a settlement in the present conflict. Though the contents of the letter received on 7th November were not divulged Mr Thondaman said, "It is very encouraging and I am at the moment considering their proposals. This is (an advancement) a step towards the fulfilment of what I have been working for." He was not willing to disclose who signed the letter nor how it was sent to him. But it is hoped, he will discuss the contents with the Government's top brass. It is believed that the LTTE expects a firm political decision which will fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the Tamils in the North East. The LTTE, it is learned, have agreed to some of the proposals the Minister had put forward. (see also page 2)

Mr S Thondaman, also, met the Indian PM Narasimha Rao in Delhi on 18th November, during a week long visit to the Indian capital. Mr Thondaman said that his mission was to restore cordial relations between the two countries and not to hold India responsible for the failure to hold the SAARC summit. "I am going there to clarify matters between friends, because friends' fights are never permanent, but friendship is permanent", he said. Mr Thondaman, said that India welcomed the proposed peace moves with the LTTE initiated by him. The Indian Prime Minister had requested Mr Thondaman to persuade the LTTE to allow the refugees returning from India to settle down in their own villages.

And Premadasa's Twin Track?

Some political observers take the view that President Premadasa is following a twin track approach to the negotiating process. On the one hand, Minister Thondaman declares that the LTTE is the only party to deal with and continues with his efforts at 'mediation'. On the other hand, Mr MH Mohamad, the Speaker of the Sri Lankan Parliament has nominated a 43 member all party select committee, headed by the SLFP MP for Kalutara District, Mr Mangala Moonasinghe, and entrusted them with the task of working out a solution to the ethnic conflict.

The motion adopted by Parliament reads: "That this house is of the opinion that a Select Committee of Parliament be appointed -
a - to arrive at a political solution to the question involving the devolution of power to the Northern and Eastern Provinces;
b - to prevent
1 the disintegration of the Nation;
2 the killing of innocent civilians, members of the armed forces and the youth fighting for a cause;
3 the increased militarisation of the culture of violence in our country and
c - to achieve peace and political stability and utilise the reduced defence expenditure for rapid economic growth and national development."

Wide powers have been given to the Select Committee by Parliament to make its work easy.

Mr Mangala Moonasinghe, the SLFP MP for Kalutara and Chairman of the Parliamentary Select Committee set up to find a solution to the ethnic conflict has gone to Canada to study how Canada is able to cope with the problems of the French speaking Canadians.

NEWS WATCH

NO MUSLIM AMIRTHALINGAM

On being asked about the "boycott" of SAARC by non Islamic states, Mr Bradman Weerakoon, Presidential Advisor, who had just returned from his trip to Iran said "We don't need to be Islamised, but we must see that Sri Lanka Muslim Congress chief Mr Ashraff does not become the Muslim Amirthalingam."

HUMAN RIGHTS DELEGATION

A five member delegation of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, now in Sri Lanka, met Justice and Higher Education Minister ACS Hameed. The delegation stressed the necessity for providing information to the relatives of persons alleged to be missing and the maintenance of a catalogue of such persons. The delegation led by Mr Agher Hilaly from Pakistan, comprised Mr Jones Foli from Ghana, Mr T van Dongen from the Netherlands, Mrs Marita Teitelbaum from Argentina and Mrs L Gabriel from Mexico.

SINHALA COMMANDER'S ARMoured CAR DESTROYED

Brigadier Vijaya Wimalaratne, Sri Lankan Army Commander for Jaffna attempted to cross the Pannai bridge to reconnoitre on 18th October. The armoured car in which the commander was travelling came under heavy artillery fire from the LTTE guns, and was completely destroyed. The commander had a luck escape with should bruises only.

SINHALAS NOT KEEN ON RESOLVING CONFLICT

Prof. SD Muni, who is no stranger to the South Block in New Delhi, where his judgements are greatly valued and who is a fairly regular visitor to Sri Lanka with close friends in the Sri Lankan universities, has commented in the Times of India:

"Before the ethnic strife erupted in the early eighties, rival Sinhala parties wanted Tamil support against each other without in any way changing their uncompromising stance on Tamil demands. This was also true in the recent bitterly fought power struggle. In fact, ethnic prejudices were openly articulated by many Sinhala MPs on both sides; despite the Sinhala parties' need for Tamil support, their position on the ethnic question seems to have hardened in the last few months. In view of the hardened Sinhala position on the Tamil question, Mr Premadasa's occasionally conciliatory pronouncements appear to be a carefully planned tactical gesture. In the international context, it enables him to project a dovish, peace seeking image which is necessary to ensure continued inflow of economic assistance from Western donors. At the political level, the lack of seriousness on the part of the Sinhala mainstream parties has reduced the All Party Conference, set up to find a political resolution of the ethnic issue, to a farce."

KACHCHATIVU

Kachchativu, a small island 12 miles from Rameswaram and 123 miles from the North, belonged to the King of Ramana-thapuram. In 1974, the Indian Govt. ceded it to Sri Lanka, under the Indo-Sri Lanka pact. Under this agreement both India and Sri Lanka would continue to exercise the same rights in the seas around the island as they enjoyed before the pact was entered into.

After the pact was signed, whenever Indian fisherman attempted to fish

around the seas of Kachchativu the Sri Lanka Navy pose a serious threat. They attack the fishermen, cut their fishing nets or confiscate, burn or sink their boats. In recent times the harassments have become more dangerous and many Indian fishermen have been shot at and injured by the Sri Lankan Navy.

During the period from 1983 up to August 1991 there have been 231 such attacks on Indian fishermen, 303 fishing boats have been attacked, 486 fishermen have suffered heavily because of these actions, 51 boats completely destroyed and 135 fishermen have been seriously injured. Chief Minister Ms Jayalalitha, has raised the issue in the Tamil Nadu State Assembly as a way of gaining some credibility as a Tamil nationalist but political observers comment that nothing concrete will emerge from her protestations.

HOSTAGE TAKING BY COLOMBO POLICE

Colombo Police have taken into custody the parents and the entire family of Anandan, a youth wanted in connection with the bomb blast at the JOC Headquarters in Colombo. Police say Varathan, who is the mastermind behind the JOC bomb blast escaped to Talawakalle in a lorry brought to Colombo by Anandan. Police who scoured Wellawatte for Anandan arrested and detained his father Krishnapillai, mother Kuganeswari, sister Jayalakshmi, Jayalakshmi's groom to be Pathmakumar and Pathmakumar's mother Ponnammia.

COMMON FRONT?

A common front of most of the opposition parties including the dissident UNP and even possibly some Tamil parties is to be formed which will try to restore parliamentary democracy and solve the burning ethnic crisis.

NO VISA FOR MALDIVES

In 1988, following the abortive insurrection organised by some Maldivian nationalists with the help of a Sri Lankan militant group, PLOTE, in a bid to oust the Maldivian President and capture power, visa restrictions were imposed on Sri Lankans going there. As a result of the talks between President Premadasa and the Maldivian President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, during his recent visit to Colombo, it was agreed that Sri Lankans no longer need visas to visit Maldives, with effect from 11th November.

GOVERNMENT IN VAVUNIYA

The Sri Lankan Govt. is making a desperate effort to restore civil administration in Vavuniya. The Govt. has issued an order asking all Govt. servants from Vavuniya District to return to their former posts. As a first step, they have been asked to report to their Departmental district Offices on or before 18th December, and that if they failed to do so, they would lose their jobs. Fifteen Sri Lankan Ministers met at the Tamil Maha Vidyalayam in Vavuniya on 23rd November in order to ascertain the steps that should be taken to expedite the return of normality to Vavuniya.

THIRTY SRI LANKAN SOLDIERS KILLED

According to a report from the Joint Operations Command, thirty soldiers lost their lives when the LTTE engaged the Sri Lankan Army in fierce combat in Singapura and at Sangupputty on 20th November. Ten others were injured. Five LTTE men were also reported killed. The LTTE escaped with arms and ammunition captured as a result of these two operations.

IPKF in Jaffna - Rajiv Gandhi's contribution to the Tamil struggle

"Over a period of about twenty days, (in October and November 1987) the Indian Army's direct attack on LTTE positions, and defence from LTTE attacks, was coupled with the Indian Army's attack and storming of still unevacuated Jaffna - and many villages and settlements throughout the peninsula - with widespread (insofar as territory), indiscriminate (insofar as targeting) and sustained (insofar as intensity) artillery shelling. Only less widespread, sustained and indiscriminate, there was air strafing from helicopter as well. It was not 'crossfire' that incidentally killed thousands of civilians. The majority were killed inside their houses and huts under shelling or were shot at random by the roads and on the streets. A large number of people were 'only' wounded - yet many of them died in the absence of medical care, especially under the 24 hour curfew over a period of about one month to mid November. It was a combination of firing and shelling ... that made an estimated 175,000 families (that is about 500,000 people) refugees... (the) consequences have included: material ruin for much of the population all over the province; physical and moral suffering for no less than 1 million people, including thousands of civilian casualties counting both killed and wounded... On top of everything has been the 'unmilitary' or 'unsoldierly' side of events: wanton killings out of rage, reprisals against non-combatants, looting of homes of middle and wealthier classes, soldiers assault of women, a murderous attack on the main hospital victimising both patients and medical personnel, and killing of a number of unarmed and disarmed guerrilla suspects without trial according to the Law of War... the central fact is that the Indian Army attacked Jaffna and many other populated places throughout the Peninsula, shelling massively and indiscriminately rather than at the LTTE selectively. Why did they do this? For three interrelated reasons - physically it is very difficult to target the LTTE as it is such a part of the Tamil population; secondly to 'soften' (Indian officers terminology) and thereafter controlling the whole of the population with a view to squeezing the LTTE out; and thirdly to minimise casualties on the side of the Indian Army by maximising inactivity on the Tamil side... - *Eduardo Marino report to International Alert, December 1987*

"The Indian army are not angels. We are not devils either. We are just human" (IPKF) Brigadier Kahlon said when pressed for details. "Rape happens even in the West". - *Sri Lanka Sun, 15 January 1988*

"After its forces entered Sri Lanka on 30 July, the IPKF was increasingly accused of raping Tamil women and of deliberately killing dozens of unarmed Tamil civilians, among them elderly people, women and children... in several cases there was eye witness evidence that the victims were non combatants shot without provocation... Several dozen Tamil women, some of whom needed hospital treatment, testified that they were raped by IPKF personnel." - *Amnesty International Annual Report, 1988 for period January to December 1987*

"Indian troops regularly beat prisoners and subjected them to electric shocks... There were dozens of cases in which arrests by the IPKF or EPRLF were witnessed and after the authorities said the detainees were released, their bodies were found with gun shot wounds... Among the reported victims was a one year child." - *Amnesty International Annual Report, 1990 for period January to December 1989*

"I place on record the Government's very deep appreciation of the dedication and high moral standards with which the Indian armed forces have conducted their operations in Jaffna." - *Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in the Lok Sabha, 9 November 1987*

Kannagi - Stern Respect for Justice

Chilapathikaram and Kamba Ramayanam are rightly regarded as the two national epics of the Tamil people. But unlike Kamba Ramayanam, Chilapathikaram, the story of Jewelled Anklets, is rooted in the ordinary lives of the early Tamils of the Pandyan Kingdom in the first century A.D.. Professor A.L. Basham writing in 'The wonder that was India' comments that Chilapathikaram has "a grim force and splendour unparalleled elsewhere in Indian literature - it is imbued with both the ferocity of the early Tamils and their stern respect for justice, and incidentally, it throws light on early Tamil political ideas."

That which follows is taken from the excellent translation by Professor A.L. Basham: "Kovalan, the son of a wealthy merchant in Kaverippattinam, married Kannagi, the lovely daughter of another merchant. For some time they lived together happily, until, at a festival at the royal court, Kovalan met the dancer Madavi and fell in love with her. He bought her favours and in his infatuation forgot Kannagi and his home. Gradually he spent all his wealth on the dancer. At last he was penniless, and returned repentantly to his uncomplaining wife. Their only fortune was a precious pair of anklets, which she gave to him willingly. With these as their capital they decided to go to the great city of Madurai, where Kovalan hoped to recoup his fortunes by trade. On their arrival at Madurai they found shelter in a cottage, and Kovalan went to the market to sell one of Kanna-

forated her, and among the tumultuous throng some showed her her husband's body

"She, the golden vine, beheld him, but her he could not see. ...

"Then the red-rayed sun folded his fiery arms and hid behind the great mountain, and the wide world was veiled in darkness. "But he saw not the agony of her grief as she mourned in sorrow and wrath. ...

"Are there women here? Are there women who could bear such wrong done to their wedded lords? Are there women here? Are there such women?

"Are there good men here? Are there good men who cherish their children and guard them with care? Are there men here? Are there such men?

"Is there a god here? Is there a god in this city of Madurai, where the sword of a king has slain an innocent man? Is there a god here? Is there a god?"

"Lamenting thus she clasped her husband's breast, and it seemed that he rose to his feet and said, 'The full-moon of your face has faded,' and he stroked her face with his hands. She fell to the ground, sobbing and crying,

"it is kingly justice to put to death an arrant thief."

Then Kannagi showed her anklet to the King. On comparing it very carefully with the remaining anklet of the pair belonging to the Queen, he realised that Kovalan had been innocent.

When he saw it the parasol fell from his head and the sceptre trembled in his hand. "I am no king," he said, 'who have heeded the words of the goldsmith.

"I am the thief. For the first time I have failed to protect my people. Now may I die! [And he fell to the ground, dead.]

Then Kannagi said to the Queen:

"If I have always been true to my husband I will not suffer this city to flourish, but I will destroy it as the King is destroyed! Soon you will see that my words are true!"

"And with these words she left the palace, and cried out through the city, 'Men and women of great Madurai of the four temples, listen! Listen you gods in heaven!

"Listen to me, you holy sages! I curse the capital of the King who so cruelly wronged my beloved lord! With her own hand she tore the left breast from her body. Thrice she surveyed the city of Madurai, calling her curse in bitter agony.

**Chaste women of Madurai, listen to me!
Today my sorrows cannot be matched
Things which should never have happened have befallen me
How can I bear this injustice?' ...**

gi's anklets. But the queen of Nedunjeliyan, king of the Pandyas, had just been robbed of a similar anklet by a wicked court jeweller. The jeweller happened to see Kovalan with Kannagi's anklet, and immediately seized it and informed the King. Guards were sent to apprehend Kovalan, who was then killed on the King's orders. When the news was brought to Kannagi, she went out into the town, with her eyes ablaze with anger, carrying the remaining anklet in her hand as proof of her husband's innocence.

"Chaste women of Madurai, listen to me! Today my sorrows cannot be matched. Things which should never have happened have befallen me.

How can I bear this injustice?' ... 'All the folk of the rich city of Madurai saw her, and were moved by her grief and affliction.

In wonder and sorrow they cried: 'Wrong that cannot be undone has been done to this lady!

"Our King's straight sceptre is bent! What can this mean? Lost is the glory of the King Over Kings, the Lord of the Umbrella and Spear!"

"A new and a mighty goddess has come before us, in her hand a golden anklet! What can this mean?

"This woman afflicted and weeping from her lovely dark-stained eyes is as though filled with godhead! What can this mean?"

"Thus, raising loud accusing voices, the people of Madurai befriended and com-

and clasped her Lord's feet with her bangled hands; and he left behind his human form and went, surrounded by the gods.

"I will not join my lord till my great wrath is appeased! I will see the cruel King, and ask for his explanation!" "And she stood on her feet, her large eyes full of tears, and, wiping her eyes, she went to the gate of the palace."

"Then came a cry from the gate: 'Ho, Gatekeeper! Ho, Gatekeeper! Ho, Gatekeeper of the King who has lost wisdom, whose evil heart has swerved from justice!! Tell the King that a woman with an anklet, an anklet from a pair of tinkling anklets, a woman who has lost her husband, is waiting at the gate.'

"And the gatekeeper went to the King and said: 'A woman waits at the gate. She is not Korraivi, goddess of victory, with triumphant spear in her hand. ... Filled with anger, boiling with rage, a woman who has lost her husband, an anklet of gold in her hand, is waiting at the gate.'"

Kannagi was then admitted to the King's presence.

"Cruel King, this I must say. ... 'My Lord Kovalan came to Madurai to earn wealth, and today you have slain him as he sold my anklet.' 'Lady,' said the King,

Then she flung her fair breast on the scented street. ...

"And the burning mouth of the Sire-god opened as the gods who guarded the city closed their doors. "The high priest, the astrologer and the judges, the treasurer and the learned councillors, the palace servants and the maids, stood silent and still as painted pictures.

"The elephant-riders and horsemen, the charioteers and the foot-soldiers with their terrible swords, all fled from the fire which raged at the gate of the royal palace. ...

"And the street of the sellers of grain, the street of the chariots, with its bright-coloured garlands, and the four quarters of the four classes were filled with confusion and flamed like a forest on fire. ...

"In the street of the singing girls where so often the tabor had sounded with the sweet gentle flute and the tremulous harp, the dancers, whose halls were destroyed, cried out: Whence comes this woman! Whose daughter is she?

A single woman, who has lost her husband, has conquered the evil King with her anklet, and has destroyed our city with fire!"

At last the patron goddess of the city interceded with Kannagi, and she agreed to withdraw her curse, and the fire abated. Weak with loss of blood from her self-amputated breast, Kannagi struggled to a hill outside the city, where after a few days she died, and was reunited with Kovalan in Heaven. Meanwhile the news of her death spread throughout the Tamil Land. She was deified, temples were raised and festivals held in her honour, and she became the patron goddess of wifely loyalty and chastity. Today, some quarters may regard Kannagi as a suicide killer and a terrorist.

Pudumai Penn

நிமிர்ந்த நன்னடை நேர்கொண்ட பார்வையும்,
நிலத்தில் யார்க்கும் அஞ்சாத நெறிகளும்,
திமிர்ந்த ஞானச் செருக்கும் இருப்பதால்
செம்மை மாதர் திறம்புவ திஸையாம்
Subramanya Bharathy, the poet of Tamil nationalism



LTTE
women
freedom
fighters in
Tamil
Eelam -
photos
courtesy
Guardian
and Goya



"The
struggle is
uniting
every-
body. All
the old
barriers
are fast
disap-
pearing."

*Yogarathnam Yogi,
General
Secretary,
Peoples
Front of
the Libera-
tion Tigers.*

John Papworth writing in the Arab News on the 'Birthpangs of a new world order' asks

"Why should we fear break up of large countries into small, ethnic-based nations?" **"Where such a process has been achieved such as in Scandinavia - the result has been affluence, stability and peace"**

It is time to acknowledge that the right of ethnic self rule is as inalienable as it is just; if there is to be a halt to the current and all too prevalent phase of jackboot denial of this right a new international code of respect for ethnic identity and self government needs to be formulated and legal machinery established for its implementation. Instead of baseless fears of Balkanization, let there be a realistic awareness of the need for a global form of Scandinavianization.

Why should we fear the break up of large countries into small, ethnic-based nations? Where such a process has been achieved such as in Scandinavia - the result has been affluence, stability and peace. When is the world going to wake up to the fact that it has revolution on its hands? That from one part of the globe to the other there is a peoples' ferment in progress which is inexorably changing the political map under our noses?

It is a ferment which assuredly is going to dominate 21st century politics as much as any other single factor. It is a revolt not of an underclass - indeed, it united all classes for it is an ethnic revolt of people who share a common ancestry, a common culture and a common identity.

Somehow the sheer ordinariness of its main features and the fact that we have been reading about its eruptions piecemeal for so long continues to blind us to its overall import. Our tardiness in grasping its significance is also due to the extent to which we are locked in a mind-grip of 19th century assumptions about the nature of political structures.

We tend to assume government has to be large, that the larger the better and the governing functions should be centralized as much as possible on the assumed ground of "efficiency". Despite the fact that none of this is true, we tend to assume it is part of the natural order of things (and if we think it is true we have to explain why those countries with high per capita incomes, marked political stability, excellent welfare programs and pronounced lack of war-making aggressiveness tend to be small).

In fact very few of these governments predate the 19th century, although Britain and to a lesser extent France are exceptions. British centralized government dates essentially from the Tudors whilst that of France from Napoleon.

By and large these forms of Government, and it is noticeable that both were imposed by highly authoritarian means, were deemed preferable to the regional conflicts which tended to erupt as rival feudalistic families struggled for their own forms of authoritarian supremacy. Nobody asked the common people what they wanted. Hence the 19th century saw the same structure of mass, centralized forms of government imposed in Germany, Italy, and many other Euro-

pean states, forms which were to be bequeathed to the colonial territories as they achieved independent status after World War 2.

Yet these forms of huge state unity were achieved at what was to be proved a terrible price. Far from achieving peace, wars became global in scale and exacted millions of casualties; there also ensued global economic disruption and a de-

and stability to an altogether exceptional degree; have we any reason to suppose that the Balkan peoples, on the basis of democratize government, could not achieve similar results? The modern world must learn this lesson very quickly: that "unity" leads to bigger wars and to bigger forms of economic wastage and dislocation, whereas division creates the conditions where peace and prosperity can flourish. What we

are witnessing today is the crumbling of the 19th century mindframe about state structures based not on localized ethnic identities.

So when Sikhs in the Punjab strive for independence for their Khalistan, they echo the aspirations of countless peoples around the world, including those of the increasingly fissiparous Russian empire, the American Indians, the Inuits, Aborigines, Polisarios, Croats, Serbs, Basques, Scots, Welsh, Irish, Slovaks, Czechs, Bretons, Flemings and literally scores, if

not hundreds, of other peoples in every continent. All this is the stuff of piecemeal daily media reports, but in fact what is being reported is the birthpangs of a new world order.

At present, in nearly every case, ethnic independence is being suppressed, often with the utmost ruthlessness and at immense cost in human life and suffering.

It is time to acknowledge that the right of ethnic self rule is as inalienable as it is just; if there is to be a halt to the current and all too prevalent phase of jackboot denial of this right a new international code of respect for ethnic identity and self government needs to be formulated and legal machinery established for its implementation. Instead of baseless fears of Balkanization, let there be a realistic awareness of the need for a global form of Scandinavianization.

LTTE allows families to visit POWs - but no green light from Government

The ICRC chief in Sri Lanka, Pierre Wettach, told the Sri Lankan Sunday Times that the LTTE has agreed to let families of 42 Sri Lankan soldiers and policemen in their custody to visit them, but the Red Cross has not yet received the go-ahead from the Govt. for the visit. Families of the POWs contacted the ICRC in Colombo when the LTTE leader V Prabhakaran gave permission for the visit. The ICRC told them that they would transport them provided the Govt. gave the green light and added that the prisoners of war were being treated fairly by the LTTE. Defence officials are suspicious of the LTTE offer and a senior military official remarked "We hope this is a purely humanitarian gesture and that there are no other motives behind it."

In the meantime, people journeying from Mthuiraisanthai in Jaffna on their way to Vavuniya, have to wade through a three mile stretch of sea and then join a small boat to reach Iyakachchi. After this perilous journey, they have to walk again a distance of three miles through muddy swamps and canals before they arrive at Murasumottai. From here they board a bus at a cost of Rs500 to come to Nochemmottai. This journey takes three whole days to reach Vavuniya. Reports say that in spite of all these harrowing difficulties, there are many who undertake this hazardous trip in an attempt to buy food in Vavuniya, for transportation to Jaffna.

British HC visits Vavuniya

Two top rung officers from, the British High Commission in Sri Lanka, went to Vavuniya recently to see for themselves what rehabilitation work was being done there. They met the GA police and military officials and visited the Thandikulam detention camps to assess the situation. These officers came to ascertain how British aid given for refugee relief and rehabilitation work was being expended.

Mass meeting in Jaffna commemorates fourth anniversary of death of 12 LTTE leaders

On 5th October 1991, a mass meeting at Theeruvil in Valvettithurai commemorated the fourth anniversary of the martyrdom of 12 top rung LTTE leaders, including Pulendran and Kumarappah, who took the cyanide capsules when the Sri Lankan Army arrested 17 leaders and decided to take them to Colombo for interrogation with the blessing of the Indian Government. At a time when the LTTE were handing over weapons on the undertaking given by India that she would be responsible for the security of the Tamils, the Sri Lankan Government contrary to the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord arrested these LTTE leaders and furthermore, sought to remove them from the Jaffna Peninsula for questioning in Colombo. It was a move which led to the complete collapse of the so called Indo Sri Lanka Accord - an act of treachery which has remain etched in the memory of the Tamil people and which has served to consolidate their determination to continue their struggle for freedom.

"Government cannot suppress the people's desire for freedom"

During the Budget Debate in the Sri Lanka Parliament, Mr M Senathirajah (TULF) said: "If the Government's intention is to starve the people of Jaffna to make them surrender, they would rather die than capitulate. The Govt. cannot suppress the people's desire for freedom. On their graves it shall be written 'We have been killed by war hungry imperialists.'" The Govt. is using delaying tactics in sending adequate food supplies to the Jaffna Peninsula. You cannot win by starving the people of the peninsula. The Govt. cannot trample on the genuine aspirations of the people. On the pretext that the LTTE are confiscating the food sent to the peninsula you are attempting to starve the 100,000 people from the Jaffna peninsula to death. The mothers are unable even to breast feed their infants. The people are not even in a position to bury their dead. If the Govt. does not want to send adequate food and save these people, they should send at least 100,000 coffins. In this budget there has been a large increase in the defence expenditure. On the pretext of eliminating the LTTE, the Govt.'s intention is to starve the people of Jaffna to death. The cost of living index has been increased by Rs100 to Govt. employees. In the Jaffna Peninsula, Rs 100 is not enough to buy even a kg of sugar."

Mrs Rajamanohari Pulendran - Minister of Education, declared: "Let us recognise that the Tigers have a conscience too. Who is responsible for the sad state of affairs at present? The successive Sri Lankan Govt.'s thought of politics as a chess game and used the Tamils as pawns. Today we are witnessing the results of this chicanery."

49,000 refugee families in Jaffna

In a report issued by the Census and Statistics Section of the Jaffna District, 49,326 of the 221,200 families living in the Jaffna District are those who have been made refugees as a result of the war on the Tamils caused by the Sri Lankan Govt. The report adds that the Sri Lankan Govt. has provided facilities to house 12,665 refugee families in 16 schools and other refugee centres. In Navatkuli the ICRC has provided accommodation for 620 families in 250 temporary houses. 36,041 refugee families have no roof over their heads. Some of these are taking shelter in disused burnt out railway stations and bombed public buildings.

Displaced Tamils registering at rehabilitation centre organised by LTTE in Jaffna Peninsula



Vijayan writes from Madras about the plight of 200,000 Eelam Tamil refugees in Tamil Nadu:

"EELAM TAMIL REFUGEE IN TAMIL NADU IS A FRIGHTENED HUMAN BEING"

The anti - Tamil riots of July 1983 externalised the Sri Lankan Conflict with an exodus of nearly 100,000 Tamil refugees to the Indian State of Tamil Nadu. Most of them had lost all their worldly belongings. They arrived in fishing boats risking their lives fleeing from murderous Sinhalese mobs with the Sri Lankan law and order machinery turning a blind eye. The situation, said the then Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, was "unacceptable". She promptly offered her "good offices" which Colombo readily accepted. Thus, India became the mediator in Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict.

The flow of refugees continued with the escalation of the war and today there are over 100,000 refugees almost all of them penniless accommodated in various camps spread all over Tamil Nadu. Another nearly 100,000 refugees (the affluent sections) live by themselves mostly in Tamil Nadu out of remittances received from members of their families working in different parts of the world. Considerable foreign exchange flow into India in this respect.

The more affluent and influential sections of the Eelam Tamils continue to flee to Canada and Western Europe mostly France, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Denmark and the United Kingdom. Over 20,000 Tamils have been killed, several thousands have been maimed during the past eight years of the war that the Sri Lankan Government continues to wage against the Tamils and obviously nobody wants to become the next victim. It should be conceded that Canada and Western Europe have by and large treated the refugees with sympathy, understanding and made life for them tolerable.

THE SITUATION IN TAMIL NADU

India with its own problems of poverty with a per capita income of less than US \$270 and nearly 40 percent of its population below the

poverty line could not be expected to look after the refugees in the manner refugees are cared for by the rich industrialised countries but it should be conceded that no refugee was allowed to die of starvation in India and they were given freedom to move about freely and have interaction among themselves and others.

Anyway the entire Indian attitude changed with the 1989 and 1991 elections with Sri Lankan Tamil Militants (LTTE) waging war in the North and East of Sri Lanka being accused of supporting one or the other political parties in Tamil Nadu. The situation became worse with the tragic killing of Rajiv Gandhi.

The Eelam Tamil refugee in Tamil Nadu today is a frightened human being. Landlords are advised not to rent out their premises to Eelam Tamils. Day in and day out the refugees are told that they would be sent back to Sri Lanka a country from which they fled to save their lives. They live under the perpetual fear of forced repatriation. On the slightest suspicion of any activity they are taken into custody under the pretext that they have no visa to stay in Tamil Nadu, despite of their protestations that they are genuine refugees with refugee cards.

The worst is their inability to have meetings or discussions among themselves to discuss the difficulties they have to face as any such get together is often described as LTTE inspired and the organisers are taken into custody. Protestations by fair minded Indians against this type of persecutions and mental torture are seldom given any publicity by the vested interest controlled Indian media.

REPATRIATION

Although the Indian Government has stated that only those refugees opting to return to Sri Lanka of their own free will would be sent back to the island the count taken by offi-

cials in a number of camps have been faulty according to complaints received from various camps. Officials either under duress or without advising the refugees of the content of the assent document have caused the refugees to sign the same indicating their consent to be repatriated. In a large number of camps there was no form in Tamil, only English forms were available and did not contain the option clause as to whether "the refugee wished to return or did not wish to return".

At the time of writing preparations are under way to send the first batch of about 500 refugees who had opted (according to Indian official figures) to return to Sri Lanka from India during the next few months. But the Sri Lankan Government obviously not satisfied with the method adopted, by the Indian authorities to obtain the option of the refugees is insisting that those refugees who wished to return would first have to sign a declaration that they were doing so voluntarily. Moreover for Sri Lanka to obtain International relief assistance from relief organisations such as the UN-CHR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), this declaration is particularly essential.

REFUGEES OR PRISONERS?

Both the Indian and Tamil Nadu Government have every right to bring to a halt Eelam Tamil militant activities if any, on Indian soil. At the same time they should be conscious that the nearly 200,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees both in the camps and outside are not prisoners in India and they have certain rights under accepted International practices and conventions. It is immaterial whether India is a signatory to the UN Refugee Convention. Refugees have the right to free expression, get together for discussions and debates, to publish and circulate especially matters relating to themselves and in regard to their homeland, North and East of Sri Lanka. In-

European Community agrees on refugee policy

It is learnt from reliable sources that after several months of prolonged negotiations, the European Community governments have hammered out an agreement on the policy to handle the increasing number of persons applying for refugee status. Though the policy was designed with a view to deal particularly with the influx from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, it will also have an impact on other refugee applicants as well. It is reported that, as usual, pragmatism has prevailed over principles.

The number of refugee applicants in the EC has been rising rapidly. In Britain the increase in 1991 was almost ten fold whilst Germany showed a three fold rise. Germany is particularly concerned about the future influx from Eastern Europe.

The EC governments are reported to have agreed on a tough refugee policy and stringent border controls on the perimeters of the Community. They have also decided that methods for deciding refugee applications must be simplified and speeded up. It is reported that more than 500,000 refugee applications are currently waiting final decision in the EC. It is learnt that whereas in the past most of those identified as so called 'economic migrants' were allowed to stay, in the future, such persons will be either kept out or sent back after a speedy assessment of their applications. Under an arrangement agreed to by EC countries, the refusal of one state to grant refugee status will bind the other states. Suggestions have also been made that legislation be introduced to speed up the deportation of those who have been refused refugee status.

Another practical step that has been taken is to persuade countries like Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary to sign the refugee convention. In this way, these countries will operate as 'buffers' against refugees from further east. These countries appear to be willing to perform this 'buffer' task but are requesting western aid in return. It is reported that they have also been informed that performing this task for the EC will improve their chances of joining the Community at a future date.

TRAG elects new Chairman

The Board of Directors of the Tamil Refugee Action Group in London has elected Mr. C. Sithamparapillai, a leading Solicitor, as its new Chairman. Mr. A.K. - Vairamuthu was elected Vice Chair. The current Directors include Miss E.P. Mann, Mr. S. Thirunathan, Mr. A. V. Sakthivel, Mr. Basil Tisseverasinghe, Mr. K.P. Nagulesan, Mr. A.K. Vairamuthu, Mr. Pathmanabha Iyer, Mr. K.P.S. Chetty, Mr. V.E. Cherubim and Mr. S. Nagendran.

TRO constructs school building in Jaffna

Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation (Vadamaratchy East Branch) has put up a new building, 100 feet by 16 feet, comprising five class rooms, for the Nagarkovil Maha Vidyalayam. Most of the labour for the construction was provided voluntarily, without payment, by refugees from Myliddy, who are now living in Vadamaratchy East. The building has been named after a former girl student and a LTTE freedom fighter, Niranjana, who died in battle.

fringement of any of these, merely relegates the refugees to the position of prisoners with no legal status or International protection.

What is actually happening in Tamil Nadu is that, whenever refugees get together or whenever a meeting is called, discussions naturally lead to the on going war in Sri Lanka between the Government forces and the Tamils led by the LTTE. Actually these are the only two parties involved in the Bloody Conflict. It is therefore not possible to have any discussion on the war without discussing the strategies of both the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE.

The insistence that refugees should not discuss the LTTE is like asking for a discussion on "Ramayana" without mentioning "Rama or Ravana". Any discussion which includes the LTTE is misconstrued as LTTE inspired and

TRO appeal

The Tamils Rehabilitation Organisation, UK has appealed for the 'kind and positive help' of expatriate Tamils so that it may continue and expand its work towards the relief and betterment of the people of Tamil Eelam. The Appeal states: "Under difficult conditions and the hazards of war, we have had a challenging year in our efforts in setting up and maintaining essential and emergency services to our community in the North East. We have set in motion a number of work programmes which are intended to bring a sense of reasonable stability to our people. These include an ambulance service and several first aid centres. The 'ambulances' are vehicles obtained from the general public, and converted for such use. Children's and infants education has been seriously affected by the arrival of displaced Tamils and the use of school buildings to house them. The TRO is setting up infant and junior classes within refugee camps and in adjoining villages." Contributions may be sent to TRO, 59, Aubrey Road, London E17 4SL. The Head Office of TRO is situated at 83/2 KKS Road, Kokuvel, Jaffna.

the authorities clamp down on the participants.

This type of persecution has to come to an end in Mother India, if not, India should abdicate its responsibilities to the Refugees and hand them over to the UN Agencies which deal with Refugees all over the World. Handing over Refugees who do not want to return instead to the Sri Lanka Government from whom they have fled, to say the least is "unacceptable" to anybody who value Human Rights. Certainly what is not needed is to replace the refugee camps in India with new camps in Sri Lanka. Considering the situation in Sri Lanka, this is not the time to encourage repatriation of refugees. At least in Tamil Nadu the local population by and large continues to have sympathy on the plight and aspirations of Sri Lankan Tamils.

The Tamil national liberation struggle is not taking place in outer space. It is taking place on the ground - and in the Indian region. The political impact of much that happens on the Indian subcontinent is also felt by the people of Tamil Eelam. Though reports of the disintegration of the Indian Union are often greatly exaggerated, events in the Soviet Union show that empires do crumble, if they do not recognise, well in time, the political force of emergent nationalisms, and take steps to restructure in a genuine and meaningful way. And for the Indian Union the time is now. Unity will emerge only when the different nations of the Indian Union are recognised as equals, not when it is sought to deny their existence. Unity will emerge only when New Delhi acquires the vision and the strength to constitute a confederal commonwealth of free and equal nations. It will be futile for New Delhi, Canute like, to order the rising tide of emergent nationalism to recede. The rising tide of Sikh nationalism will not recede in the years to come. Neither will Kashmiri nationalism recede. Nor will Assamese nationalism. Nor for that matter will Tamil nationalism recede in the years to come. On the contrary, these nationalisms will grow from year to year. The words of Lord Avebury, in an article published in the December 1991 issue of the Tamil Nation, are apposite: "There are momentous changes beginning to take shape all over the world, and India cannot insulate herself from the new dispensation."

The Indian Region

Jayalalitha urges Delhi "send Indian Army to save Tamils in Karnataka"!!

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, has urged Prime Minister Narasimha Rao to send the Army to Karnataka to put down the violence against the Tamils living

there. The Madras Hindu reports that five days of violent protests in Bangalore and the Cauvery basin districts of Karnataka against the Cauvery Tribunal's interim order about the distribution

of the Cauvery waters commenced on December 11 itself, the day that New Delhi announced its decision to notify the award which was in favour of Tamil Nadu. The worst was seen on December 13 when Karnataka State observed an all party sponsored, government supported bandh. The targets of the attack were Tamils and their property and clashes were reported between Tamils and Kannadigas. The violence has left nine persons officially dead, several vehicles burnt and property worth several lakhs looted or destroyed. The offices of a Tamil daily in Bangalore were among those attacked. Following the violence, reports of Tamils fleeing some areas of Bangalore abandoning their belongings have started pouring in. Nearly 2,000 of them, mostly labourers and construction workers have crossed to neighbouring districts in Tamil Nadu.

Political observers say that reduced to impotence, Ms. Jayalalitha has sought refuge in rhetoric. She knows only too well that New Delhi will not send the Indian Army to Bangalore to 'help the Tamils'. She has tried to allay rising Tamil anger by launching a verbal onslaught on Karnataka Chief Minister, Mr. S. Bangarappa for the "dastardly act committed and the frenzied violence let loose on the innocent Tamil people". Some angry Tamils fleeing Bangalore have asked: "If we had our own Tamil army, we would not have suffered this fate."

Narasimha Rao wins by a landslide in rigged election

HYDERABAD, Nov. 19. The polling of more than 90 per cent votes in 19 booths in the Nandyal Parliamentary constituency, which returned the Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, with a record-shattering margin of 580,297 votes, hides more than it tells—that the Prime Minister would have won otherwise by a margin of 610,000 votes after getting about 94 per cent of the valid votes cast. For the first ten rounds of counting, the Prime Minister's margin of victory was increasing at the rate of about 50,000 votes per round, but this rate fell to 37,000 each in the 11th and the 12th round.

Though officials allowed the press to note down the figures of counting at the end of each round up to the tenth round from all the counting centres, suddenly at the end of the tenth round, when Mr. Narasimha Rao was ahead by 508 lakh margin, the clerk who was giving the information to the press was asked to withdraw, and the results of counting of the 11th and 12th rounds were not announced until the final declaration of result.

If this was not a case of fudging the figures, the polling percentage declared officially definitely appeared to be so. It jumped from 56 per cent at around 5 p.m. to 60 per cent an hour later and to 70 per cent at 8 p.m. sending reporters scurrying to the telegraph office at Nandyal to revise their news stories. The final figure turned out to be 72 per cent.

The high-polling percentage came as quite a surprise as there was abnormally low turnout at the booths on November 16 morning because of incessant rain on the pre-poll day and heavy drizzle on November 16. In about 20 polling booths visited by this correspondent in the Allagada area, there was not a single voter outside booths waiting to cast his vote at different parts of the day.

When this reporter visited a polling booth in Bathabor village in Allagada at 8.15 a.m. only one vote was cast. On returning to this booth at 1.30 p.m. there

was a dramatic transformation and 450 out of 855 votes were cast. Scores of jeeps loaded with Congress(I) supporters had a free run of the entire constituency and were seen going from booth to booth without any hindrance by the police or the BJP which, in any case did not have agents in a majority of the booths.

In Atmakur, Mr. Budda Vengal Reddy and his son, who were moving from booth to booth in tipsters of the Telugu Ganga Project, loaded with men to stamp ballot papers, were confronted by the UCCRI (ML) and BJP leaders but the police took no action. If the polling was peaceful in Nandyal it was only because there was heavy security but police could do nothing to check booth capturing and rigging. As the UCCRI (ML) candidate, Mr. Mandla Subba Reddy, described the situation, it was "peaceful rigging". (Courtesy: Hindu)

Bengal Turning Into Arms Bazaar

Marxist-ruled West Bengal might actually be industrially backward, but at least one business in the state is growing: arms. Intelligence agencies, especially the ones engaged in tackling the rising extremist challenge in India, have just placed lengthy reports before the Center and the leftist state government on how Bengal's vast industrial and border areas are alarmingly changing into a great arms bazaar. Buyers are streaming into the humming bazaar on ally sides equipped with long shipping lists.

Says a police investigator on the condition of anonymity: "the mysterious buyers appear from nowhere, don't clamor for cut rates, make purchases quietly - illegal arms are finding their way in to the rest of India."

As this reporter's investigation into the flourishing bizarre business shows, illegal trade in arms of all kinds was knocking up a turnover of almost \$2 million a year. The month-long investigation involved interviews with police investigators, illegal arms merchants and even journalists who have been working the crime beat for years.

It does not take much, say from \$3,000 to \$4,000, to set up an arms making unit. The bulk of investment in large scale production comes mainly from wealthy traders who have enough cash and slightly bent minds to start up unconventional ventures. Such traders will never show their hand as they are well entrenched in such key businesses as commodities, textiles, iron and steel.

The genesis of Bengal's arms bazaar lies in 1971 when, soon after the Bangladesh liberation war, firearms, specially discarded ones, started coming in through several ungaurded points along the border. They would mostly be used by political workers and small-time hooligans. Actual manufacturing of arms started in a limited way in the mid-seventies in sympathy with the Naxalites or the ultra-leftists, and their dreaded philosophy of armed resurrection and annihilation of class enemies.

In a way the pace was set in the bazaar by the surge in terrorist activities all around, especially in the volatile north-eastern states like Assam, Tripura, Mizoram and Nagaland. The intelligence agencies have actually portrayed in their reports how guerrillas belonging to the outlawed United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA), People's Liberation Army (PLA) of Manipur, National Socialist Council of Nagaland (NSCN) and different Khalistan movement factions are silently queuing up to buy weapons in the Bengal bazaar.

As it happens in the stock market, prices in the arms bazaar perk up or dip responding to buying pressures, especially at the time of a religious festival or an election. For example, a smuggled foreign made pistol (.33 bore or nine mm) will fetch Rs 70,000 (\$2,400) a piece on important occasions against the normal price of Rs 30,000 (\$1,200) a piece. Similarly, an indigenous six shooter-pistol will sell at Rs. 3,000 (\$160) a piece against the normal price of Rs 500 (\$20) a piece. Says the investigator: "only consolation is that even in the times of inflation knives and swords sell at sober rates, say between Rs. 50 and Rs. 200 a piece. They sell low because they cannot be used much for large scale violence." The arms are in the line of a cottage industry, in hundreds of houses in the districts of Nadia, Howrah, Hooghly, Murshidabad and North and South 24-Parganas. (courtesy India Abroad)

EC urges India to allow access to Kashmir

NEW DELHI. Speaking on behalf of the European Community in a UN committee, Mr. Robert J. Van Schaik of the Netherlands deplored the "continuing violence" in Kashmir and the resulting "deterioration in human rights situation in that region." In this connection, the Community urges the Indian Government to allow humanitarian and international human rights organisations free access to the region to give independent assessment of the situation, he said.

In the meantime British Foreign Secretary, Douglas Hurd declared at Luton South on December 6: "Over the last 50 years across the world a handful of disputes about nationhood, territory or people have been persistent sources of conflict and instability. Kashmir ranks high on this list."

Militancy in Assam

An army officer who commands a mountain division in Guwahati said there was a training and recruitment camp of the separatist outfit in each of the 17 districts and that the newly recruited cadres were sent across to neighbouring Nagaland for training.

Talking to journalists at Dinjan, heartland of ULFA activities, Major H. M. Khanna said the top leadership of the ULFA had escaped to neighbouring countries to avoid mounting pressure of the Army. Referring to allegations of Army atrocities which had begun to pour in right from the day the Army was deployed in the State, Gen. Singh vehemently denied saying there was no truth in the charges.

Major R. P. Singh, commander of a mountain division in Guwahati, said though the activists were on the run, it would not be possible for the army to eradicate the ULFA from the State. Major R. P. Singh said the extremist in Assam is more educated than his counterparts elsewhere. Many incriminating documents have been seized from the ULFA militants which prove ULFA links with the All-India Sikh Students Federation, the National Socialist Council of Nagaland and the Liberation Tigers Of Tamil Eelam. The improvised explosive device (IED) had led to a suspicion of its link with the LTTE. The extent and the nature of the links are being investigated, according to Army officials.

The Awami League President, Shiek Hasina Wazed has denied allegations by the Assam Chief Minister, Mr. Hiteswar Saikia, that the ULFA was receiving shelter and support from Bangladesh. The Bangla opposition leader also denied that the ULFA had bank accounts in her country. In the meantime, five persons, four of them Congress (I) activists were gunned down by suspected ULFA militants last week. (Courtesy: Hindu)

Entire Punjab "Disturbed Area"

The entire Punjab has been declared a disturbed area and Operation Rakshak II jointly launched by the Army and para-military forces in the State. The Act empowers the Army and other security forces to raid, search and arrest suspected persons without obtaining warrants from magistrates. In the meantime, 18 close relatives of a militant were shot dead in late November, by a Nihang and two his accomplices at a marriage party at a village in the Amritsar District. In early December, Punjab militants struck again almost simultaneously in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, mowing down 52 people, injuring many and kidnapping a few. A large number of Punjabi Hindus have started moving out of Chandigarh and into Haryana. It is reported that violence has made its mark on Chandigarh as never before. A relatively small number of committed militants, operating from Punjab, have succeeded in changing the way of life of the people of one of the most influential cities in the country. On 26 December in a stark reminder of the Punjab militants capacity to strike in face of a heavy military presence in the state, rebels boarded a crowded train in Ludhiana and opened fire on passengers, selectively, killing 60 and wounding 20 (News Sources: Hindu and India Abroad)

The Emerging Multipolar World

Yeltsin asks Indian External Affairs Minister, Solanki: "Where is the Soviet Union? Can you see it?"

To meet the challenge posed by the collapse of the USSR as a monolith, India has decided to upgrade its relations with the Soviet Republics and provide for direct dealings with their Heads. The realisation that the pattern of bilateral dealings has to change drastically because of the changes in the Soviet Union, was reinforced as a result of Mr. Solanki's talks in Moscow. Mr. Yeltsin, in particular was outspoken—he, it was clear, would take a highly positive position on bilateral ties if Russia's pre eminence was recognised and it was regarded virtually as a successor to the Soviet Union. "Where is the Union?" the Russian leaders asked Mr. Solanki when he wanted to know the relationship between the Union and the Republics. "Can you see the Union?" It is reported that India is trying to organise a visit by Russian President Yeltsin to New Delhi in March year. It hopes that the occasion will be an opportunity to help undo its past diplomatic indiscretions. Similar invitations have been to leaders of Kazakhstan, Turkmenia and Kirgizstan.

Russia to get instant UN Status?

Russia will be elevated instantly to great power status if it inherits the Soviet Union's permanent seat on the UN Security Council, with veto power, as Nato countries proposed on December 19.

Britain which takes over the rotating presidency of the Security Council on January 1, will immediately invite a Russian representative to take over the Soviet seat. The US and France, two other permanent members, will support the proposal. This will establish Russia as the 'first among equals' among the republics of the former Soviet Union. China, the fifth permanent member of the Council, is reported to be uneasy about this change, but it is not expected to block the move.

No permanent member wants to create a situation where the succession to the Soviet seat is contested and a Pandora's box opened into the composition of the Council. Germany and Japan are already waiting with claims as powerful states to be made permanent members. Among the 12 EC members, several are pressing for an EC permanent seat in place of Britain and France. Western diplomats do not rule out the possibility of opposition from Ukraine and one or two of the other republics which are unwilling to have Russia's supremacy confirmed by the international community.

Nelson Mandela at the South African Constitutional negotiations declares

"When our people are demanding to be armed, what political organisation could hand over its weapons to the same man who is regarded by the people as killing innocent people?"

South African Constitutional negotiations continued despite a dramatic confrontation between Nelson Mandela and State President, F.W. de Klerk on December 20. The crisis developed over allegations by Mr. De Klerk that the African National Congress had failed to honour undertakings to abandon the armed struggle. Mr. Mandela said: "When our people are demanding to be armed, what political organisation could hand over its weapons to the same man who is regarded by the people as killing innocent people? I asked Mr. de Klerk not to insist on this as we would never agree. I regret very much that he should try and take advantage of this meeting (for constitutional changes) for petty political gains. It confirms what we have been saying all along: that the national Party and the government have a double agenda. They are talking peace to us. They are at the same time conducting war."

China & India search for Tibet - Kashmir deal

The Chinese Prime Minister, Li Peng, left New Delhi on December 16 after a six day visit to India - the first by a Chinese Prime Minister since 1960 - with a mild rebuke to his hosts for allowing "continued activities in India by some Tibetans against their motherland." For six days, the small Tibetan community in Delhi had tried in vain to make a vocal protest against the meeting. Every time a few dozen Tibetans tried to form a procession or shout some slogans outside the Chinese embassy, they were tear gassed, baton charged, or dragged away. In a joint communique, the Beijing delegation referred to Tibet as 'an inalienable part of Chinese territory'. The Indian side 'reiterated its long standing and consistent position that Tibet is an autonomous region of China, and that it does not allow Tibetans to engage in anti China political activities in India.' Some Indians had hoped that in return for Delhi's reiterated view that Tibet is part of China, China would back India's claim to Kashmir particularly since India can no longer rely on the Soviet veto in the Security Council. India has expressed concern about arms supplies reaching militants in Kashmir - a reference to China's weapons customer, Pakistan.

"I cannot separate language from substance," says Ashrawi the new, clear voice for the PLO



The phalanx of Spanish Civil Guards mowed through the mass of television cameras and reporters like a high-speed earthmover. In their midst, barely tall enough to be seen, a black-haired woman struggled to keep up with her bodyguards' rapid pace. Smiling slightly, she wore the look of someone who realized that, for the moment, events were beyond her control.

But not for long. As soon as Hanan Mikhail Ashrawi reached the podium for yet another press conference, she was back in command. A teacher by profession, a literary scholar by choice, a politician by nature, Mrs. Ashrawi

likes nothing better than an opportunity to present what is her passion by birth - the Palestinian case. As spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation at the Middle East peace conference, Mrs. Ashrawi, 45, argued the Palestinian case with composure, conciseness and clarity. She left many of the outworn clichés and taboos surrounding this conflict cut to ribbons.

Take, for example, the man who rose at a press conference last Friday to confront her. A representative of an American Christian broadcasting outlet, he said he "didn't understand" how Mrs. Ashrawi could ask Israel "to exchange land for peace," because "when Judea and Samaria were in the hands of the Arab world, Israel was attacked three times."

"First of all, I find your reference to 'Judea and Samaria' a statement of extreme bias, and rather offensive," Mrs. Ashrawi replied, homing in on his use of the biblical names for the occupied West Bank. "I am a Palestinian Christian, and I know what Christianity is. I am a descendant of the first Christians in the world, and Jesus Christ was born in my country, in my land. Bethlehem is a Palestinian town. So I will not accept this one-upmanship on Christianity. Nobody has the monopoly." She then asked, "Are there any serious questions?" From start to finish, Mrs. Ashrawi's voice did not waver a decibel, up or down, from its customary level tone. Even an Israeli spokesman, Yossi Olmert, gave her performances grudging respect: "She's definitely impressive. She appears well on television."

If her people were looking for a "new image" at the conference, Mrs. Ashrawi, more than anyone else, helped give it to them. She is a woman who got her master's degree in textual criticism of Renaissance literature and then spent three years at the University of Virginia, earning a PhD in medieval literature. But as a former dean of Birzeit University in the West Bank, Mrs. Ashrawi has dodged bullets on campus and seen four of her students killed in clashes with Israeli soldiers. She also watched in horror as television reports described the 1982 massacre of Palestinians in two Beirut refugee districts. For her, this was a turning point: "I said to myself: 'This has got to stop. Palestinians must not be an easy prey to everybody.'"

Mrs. Ashrawi says she sees language as a key to winning that battle. It has largely been her ability to speak about the Palestinian political struggle that thrust her in to the spotlight in Madrid. "I cannot separate language from substance," she said. "I don't like slogans. I don't like the sort of slick professional PR attitude, and I think that's probably why people react positively to what I say, because I'm genuine. And I don't mince words, and I don't play

Japan's interest in Sri Lanka?

Japan is the largest aid donor to Sri Lanka. In 1990 alone she gave US\$ 85.1 million as loans and US\$ 91 million as outright grants. At the same time, a key Japanese official who represents his country's interests in Sri Lanka has asked the Sri Lankan Govt. to give coverage to even opposition news on Rupavahini - the state owned media. Rupavahini is an outright grant, to the Sri Lankan Govt, from the Japanese Govt. He has also said that the Sri Lanka 'Island' (which is privately owned) is the only independent newspaper in Colombo.

US cautions Japan against 'cheque book diplomacy'

On a visit to Tokyo in early November, US Secretary of State, James A. Baker called upon Japan to assume a much more active role in protecting democracy around the world and promoting free trade rather than relying on 'cheque book diplomacy' to protect its narrow interests or waiting for foreign pressures to force it into action.

In the 1930s, Moham- ed Ali Jinnah remarked that the demand for Pa- kistan was a national question - and that there- fore it was an inter-na- tional question. Ever since the Thimpu talks in 1985, the international di- mension of the Tamil national liberation strug- gle has become increas- ingly open and manifest. The bottom line is that Sinhala chauvinism can- not succeed in its attempt to subjugate the Tamil people without aid and support from the inter- national community. It is also true that, in the end, Tamil Eelam itself will need to secure broad in- ternational recognition. To address the interna- tional frame within which the Tamil national liber- ation struggle must per- force take shape, is there- fore, not a matter of self indulgent luxury but a matter of immediate, di- rect and practical signif- icance. The new balanc- es that are being struck in the emerging multipolar world are not without rel- evance to the struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam. Again, if the 1950s and the 1960s were the decades of the anti colonial liberation move- ments, the 1990s will prove to be the decade of the post colonial national liberation movements. Self determination is not a mere phrase. Neither is it a dirty word. The polit- ical force that it gener- ates has begun to prevail over the power of many existing state structures.

games. I really like to answer ques- tions. I don't like to manipulate." She also attributed her status to a "historical coincidence - where ability coincided with need." Her forte, she said, is being able "to articulate, analyze and to get through to others." Her emergence onto the international stage in Ma- drid had its roots in her student years in Beirut. At the American Universi- ty in the late 1960s, Mrs. Ashrawi was a spokeswoman for the General Union of Palestinian Students. In 1969, she was the only woman in the union's delegation from Lebanon at an international conference in Am- man, Jordan, where she first met Yasser Arafat. "My father told us when we were young that you have to be daring when you have right on your side," she said. "And you know, sort of being indecisive and not taking decisions and running away from challenges - it's a luxu- ry we don't have." (Courtesy: In- ternational Herald Tribune)

Oli Vizha in New Cross, London

Goldsmith's College, New Cross, London was the venue where the Catholic Tamil Youths Association had their first Carol service on Saturday the 14th of December 1991. A large crowd of Tamils from all parts of the South East enjoyed the three hour performance. Rev. Bishop Harold Tripp presided over the evening's function, where those present were treated to a medley of tuneful old and new carols, readings from the Bible, prayers written and read by young children and a vivid presentation of the annunciation, visitation and nativity stories. Bishop Tripp presented prizes to the winners of the competitions. The final item was the Naatu Koothu depicting the present state of the Tamil nation and the light which Christ brought to the world at the first Christmas will bring peace and prosperity to Tamil Eelam. Rev Father T.E. Thevarajan deserves congratulations for bringing together in a very short time, such a large number of young boys and girls from all parts of the South East of London - young boys and girls who also deserve encouragement and praise for their effort, especially the choral singing. Well done, youngsters, you have done your nation proud. Happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

R.E.Emmanuel

தமிழீழ விடுதலைப் புலிகளால்
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- வில்லுப் பாட்டு
- கவியரங்கம்
- நாட்டிய நாடகம்

- "களங்கண்ட காதலி" -

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Wembley, Middlesex

காலம்: 18-01-1992

சனி மாலை 6 மணி

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Wandsworth High Street, London SW18

காலம்: 02-02-1992 (ஞாயிறு மாலை 6 மணி)

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World Wide**

DEATHS



Dr. Chelliah Pathmanathan (48) Son of the late Mr Chelliah and Mrs Chelliah of Manipay, beloved husband of Saraswathy, loving father of Surendran and Haritharan, brother of Ramanathan (Abudhabi) Mrs Ramachandran, Mrs Mahalingam and Mrs Ganeshalingam (Sri Lanka) passed away in Brunei on 7th October 1991 after a brief illness. The cremation took place at Seria Crematorium BRUNEI according to Hindu rites on 13th October 1991.

Professor Sivaraman of McMaster University, Dept. of Religious Studies Hamilton, Ontario, passed away at the age of 69 in the last week of October. He was a great scholar of Saive Siddhanta and much concerned about the plight of his fellow Tamils in Sri Lanka.

H.W.A. Arul Nathaniel, popular Royal College teacher and son of the late Rev and Mrs N.G. Nathaniel of Nallur, Jaffna, died recently in Australia. He leaves behind his wife Jothy and daughters Jeevamalar and Indramalar.

Dominic Chelliah, 618/55 Buddhagaya, Mawatha, Anuradhapura

Thurai Kandiah, 7/10 Pirivena Road, Ratmalana

Balambihai Mahendra, 3 Mahatma Gandhi Road, Jaffna

R. Murugeson, 84 Larnoo Drive, East Doncaster, Victoria 3109, Australia

Sothiratham Kandiah, 37 Jinananda Mawatha, Colombo 13

Lily Nadarajah, 51 Khean Hock Road, Singapore

Swamynathan (Sabi) Kanasabai, 68 Kuruppa Road, Colombo 8

S. Panchalingam, 78/6 W.A. Silva, Mawatha, Colombo 6

Thillaiampalam Sinthamany, 18 Kelankaduwe Place, Wellawatte

Allen Chinnapph Canagarajah, 22 Ratnakara Place, Dehiwala

Maheswaran Candiahpillai, I.P.O. Box 34528, Lusaka, Zambia

Sothilakshmi Velupillai, 34 Boswell Place, Wellawatte

Arthilakshmi Sinnadurai, 34 Boswell Place, Colombo 6

Saratha Gunaratnam, 64/133 Sangamitta Mawatha, Kottahena

Winslow Jeyam Edwards, Lusaka, Zambia

Muttutamy Navaratnam, 64 Oriol Road, Ivanhoe, Melbourne 3079, Australia

Profile of a freedom fighter

Lt. Col. Sara. (Sinnathurai Jeevarajah) - Born 19.4.1962 Died 28.7.1991



Beloved son of Mr and Mrs Sinnathurai of Kalviankadu, after his schooling in Jaffna Hindu College, moved to Germany in 1981. After the 1983 holocaust in Colombo, Jeevarajah returned in December to fulfil his duty to "save his motherland." He joined the LTTE to become the 3rd batch to receive training in SALEM India under Lt Col Ponnammann and the late Lt Col Pulendran. Thereafter, he took charge of LTTE Mechanical Workshop in Madurai. In May 1985 he returned to Mavnar to participate in the successful attack on Mavnar Police Station. He was Instructor at the physical training camp from June 1985 until December 1985 and was responsible for training 6 batches of recruits.

In late 1985 he functioned as Chief Political Organiser for KALVI-ANKADY and IRUPALAI and took part in confrontations with the army when the latter attempted to capture Jaffna (Vasavilan - May 1986, Jaffna Fort - 85.86.87), raids on the army occupied Telecommunications buildings twice in early 1987. In April 1987, he took charge of the LTTE weapons productions factories (Tamil Eelam) Ordinance factories, until October 1987.

He played a very prominent role in leading hundreds of male and female cadres to defend KOPAY. It took the IPKF 9 days to capture KOPAY with a loss of nearly 100 men and a number of armoured vehicles. Several sophisticated weapons and ammunition belonging to the occupying forces were captured. Jeevan himself was badly injured in his hand. He was sent to India where he had to undergo repeated surgical operations.

In August 1988, he was arrested along with many other injured LTTE cadres and was detained under the NSA at the Central Jail, Madras. In October 1988, he was transferred to IPKF custody in Tamil Eelam. He was detained at KKS and Pt Pedro detention centres when he went under the pseudo-name LINGAM; while the IPKF was still searching for the arrest of SARA. In August-September 1989 the Indian Military Intelligence discovered that Lingam and Sara were one and the same person, but with the help of friends within the cell, Sara managed to avert torture and death. Prisoner 1616 was released from custody on the 18th February 1990. From June 1990 until his death, he became involved in military operation against the SLA (Sri Lankan Army). In spite of 3 bullets which were embedded in his body, Jeevan participated in the Elephant Pass battle. He succumbed to injuries he received after a direct confrontation with the SLA. (Remembered by friends in Canada)

Tail piece

"The mistake which despots have been making ever since organised states came into existence and which, it seems, they will go on making to the end, is that they overestimate their coercive power, which is physical and material and therefore palpable and underestimate the power of ideas and sentiment... the aspiration towards liberty cannot be estimated in terms of concrete power, in so many fighting men, so many armed police, so many guns. The idea or sentiment is at first confined to a few men whom their neighbours and countrymen ridicule as lunatics or hare brained enthusiasts. But it spreads and gathers adherents who catch the fire of the first missionaries and creates its own preachers and then its workers who try to carry out its teachings in circumstances of almost paralysing difficulty. The attempt to work brings them into conflict with the established power which the idea threatens and there is persecution. The idea creates its martyrs. And in martyrdom there is an incalculable spiritual magnetism which works miracles. A whole nation, catches the fire which burned in a few hearts; the soil which has drunk the blood of the martyr imbibes with it a sort of divine madness which it breathes into the heart of all its children, until there is but one overmastering idea, one imperishable resolution in the minds of all beside which all other hopes and interests fade into insignificance, and until it is fulfilled, there can be no peace or rest for the land or its rulers. It is at this moment that the idea begins to create its heroes and fighters, whose numbers and courage defeat multiplies and confirms until the idea militant has become the idea triumphant. Such is the history of the idea, so invariable in its broad lines that it is evidently the working of a natural law..." [Aurobindo Ghose: Bande Mataram - Early Political Writings, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry India]

PEOPLE & EVENTS

Vijayanarthanalaya presents Bharata Natya Arangetram of Shona Kundu



Bharata Natya Arangetrams are not uncommon in the Asian arts scene of London today. But the Arangetram of Miss Shona Kundu which took place at the Chingford Assembly Hall recently was unique in that the debutante's father was a Bengali while her mother was a Scottish lady and Shona became the first Bengali or Scottish girl to progress to the stage of a Bharata Natya Arangetram in the UK.

Shona was the shishya of the distinguished dancer and Eelam Tamil, Mrs Vijayambigai Indra Kumar at Vijayanarthanalaya (Academy of Indian Arts) and the Arangetram was presented by the Academy.

The Arangetram got off to a brisk start with Nataraja Anjali in Adi Tala and Alarippu in Thisram, both being sung in the majestic Nattai raga. A Jathiswaram in Vasantha and Thisram introduced rhythm in good measure bringing out Shona's competence in Nritha.

It was followed by a Varnam in Dhanyasi and Adi ("Nee inda mayam"). Dancing as the love torn lass pining for the arrival of her lover - Lord Krishna, Shona raised quite a few eyebrows with the depth of her bhara and the ease and appropriateness with which she flicked from expression to expression to suit the sentiment of the story. She danced with flawless rhythm to the jathis.

The Padam, "Kaa vaa vaa", dedicated to Lord Nurgu and the Ashtapati that followed showed Shona really enjoying her dancing and exploring the realms of bhara in a more expansive and leisurely manner. A Padam in Bengali showing Lord Shiva in a dance of destruction was aptly portrayed by Shona with very good "raudra" sentiment. A bright and buoyant Thillana in Ketharagowlai marked the completion of the repertoire and heralded the arrival on the Indian cultural scene in Britain of a 16 year old dancer with great promise for the future.

Full credit must go to the Guru, Vijayambigai for all the expertise, experience and hard work she must have put in with a shishya with no knowledge of Tamil and get her to perform so well to a

repertoire which was dominated by lyrics in Tamil. Vijayambigai's Natluvangam, rendering of the jathis and choreography only went to reconfirm her status as a first class professional in the field for 21 years. Sri. V A Aravindakshan at vocal and Sri. N Kesavan at mridangam, who had been imported from India for the occasion, kept the audience enthralled and contributed towards creating that "evening in Madras" mood on the occasion. They were ably assisted by Thiruvavarur L. Kathandapari at violin and Sri. S Thayaparan at flute.

reviewed by Kartik

Vannakam Group meets Swiss Frauen Gruppe

On Friday, November 15, about twenty members of the Liberal Frauen Gruppe of Luzern City met with Tamils from the Vannakkam Group in the Parish hall of St. Leodegger. Mr. Anton Ponrajah from the Vannakkam Group, with Mr. Hans Peter Lehner from Carita Luzern as translator, gave an account of the civil war (Burger krieg) between the Sinhala and Tamil nations in the island of Sri Lanka. Anton explained that in Tamil, Vannakkam meant both greetings (gruezi) and good bye (adieu). The evening ended with a Tamil meal and a 30 minute film featuring a Swiss journalist's journey with an urn to Sri Lanka, where it was buried. (Courtesy: Bild Flavian Cajacob)

Father Joachim Pillai

Rev Fr C A Joachim Pillai OMI, Professor of New Testament Theology, St Augustine's Seminary of Toronto, Scarborough is on a years Sabbatica in the USA. After visiting Pakistan and India, he is now in Florida where he is doing some studies in Inter-Faith Dialogue with a view to teaching a new course when he returns to Canada, besides his usual courses on New Testament Studies. In Toronto Fr Joachim Pillai is of immense help to the large Tamil Catholic community more than 3000 strong. With the approval of the Archbishop of Colombo, he was able to find a full-time worker Fr Patrick Gnanapragasam for the still growing community.

LOOKING AHEAD

January

12th Sunday
Swami Vivekanandar Birthday
Chunnam A Kumarasamy
Pulavar Birthday
15th Wednesday
Thai Pongal
Karthigai Viratham
16th Thursday
Ekathasi Viratham
17th Friday
Tamil Nadu Ex Chief Minister
Makkal Thilakam, Puratchi
Thalaivar M.G. Ramachandran
Birthday
19th Sunday
Dr Ratnajothei Saravanamuthu
Remembrance Day
20th Monday
Thai Poosam
21st Tuesday
Lenin Remembrance Day
22nd Wednesday
Fr Gnanapragasam
Remembrance Day
25th Saturday
Chunnam Kumarasamy
Pulavar Remembrance Day
26th Sunday
Australia Day
Indian National Day
Fr Thomas (of Tholakkatty
Farm - Atchuvayal)
Remembrance Day
30th Thursday
Ekathasi
Mahatma Gandhi
Remembrance Day

February

3rd Monday
C.N. Annadurai
Remembrance Day
5th Wednesday
Appoorthy Adigal - Guru
Poosai
8th Saturday
Rev Fr. Thaninayagam's
birth anniversary
9th Sunday
G.G. Ponnambalam
Remembrance Day
11th Tuesday
Karthigai Viratham
C. Suntharalingam
Remembrance Day

Wedding

The wedding of Kulendran, son of Mr. & Mrs Sivaguru of 42 Moor Road, Colombo 6 to Thulasi, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Janathan of 23 1/1, Anula Road Colombo 6 took place on 12 December 1991.

Combined Sports Meet at Sydney for Students of Tamil



Sri Venkatachalapathy and Senika Shakespeare dance in London

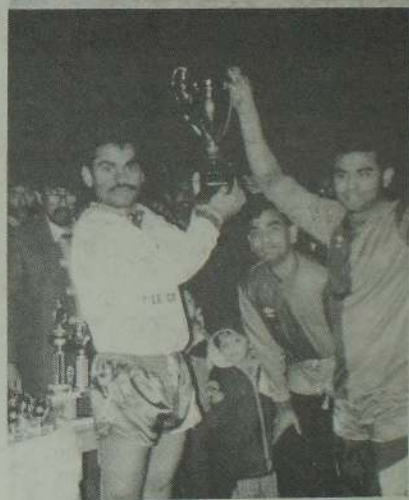


Nirtha Periyar Sri Venkatachalapathy well know exponent of Bharatha natyam and Kuchipudi was in London recently at the invitation of Mr and Mrs Kumaravel to choreograph the dance Arangetram of their daughter Sivakamasundari. During the same week Indian National Television Door Darshan screened a special half hour dance programme performed by him. Sri J Venkatachalapathy personally performed in two fundraising events, one for the Tamil Orphans Trust of UK, and the other for The League of Friends of the University of Jaffna. A radio interview with him by Mr Wimal Sockanathan was also broadcast by the BBC World Service programme 'Tamil Osai.' Sri J Venkatachalapathy was a lecturer in Kalakshetra Madras for over fifteen years under Smt Rukmani Devi and has been conferred several titles by various Organisations. His portrait performing Kuchipudi appeared in a Postage Stamp released by the Government of India.

In the picture, Sri J Venkatachalapathy appears at the Winston Churchill Hall, Ruislip, Middlesex with Senika Shakespeare of the Shakespear School of Oriental Dancing.

Football in London for Relief Work in Tamil Eelam

A seven a side knock out football tournament was organised by the Tamil Rehabilitation Organisation, United Kingdom, on the 24th of November 1991. All proceeds were in aid of relief work in Tamil Eelam. Picture shows the winners with the trophy.



TAMIL NATION

Frontline started by LTTE's long term strategy for

'Pan-Dravida Nadu' linking Tamil Nadu with Tamil Eelam

Frontline, the periodical published from Madras reports in its issue of 3 January 1992: "...a new startling dimension to the LTTE's activities in Tamil Nadu has come to light with the arrest near Udumalpet in Coimbatore district, of Sri Kanth of Thali, who was trained by the LTTE in Jaffna. He revealed the long term strategy of the LTTE to create a 'pan-Dravida Nadu' linking Tamil Nadu with the Tamil areas of Sri Lanka. Though it was suspected that this plan was in the works for a long time, this is the first time that the police have got some valuable information on it. Already, the LTTE has established a nexus with the naxalites, especially those of the People's War Group in Andhra Pradesh. Srikanth has said the ultimate aim of the Tamil National Retrieval Force, of which he is a member, was to establish an independent, sovereign Tamil Nadu in India and Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka. Initially the members of the Force had planned to capture strategic places in Tamil Nadu and bring them under control to facilitate the activities of the LTTE and maintain an uninterrupted supply of arms to it. Srikanth was arrested from a house in Tripur on December 5. This was following the arrest of six Indian nationals, all members of the Tamil National Retrieval Force, from their hideout in Dindigul in October this year. Srikanth was also a member of a Dravida Kazhagam faction led by Ramakrishnan who had met the LTTE leader, V. Prabhakaran in Jaffna when the LTTE was fighting the IPKF. On Srikanth's information, the police recovered arms, explosives and a wireless set in Thali village from the house of Marimuthu who was the Secretary of the Udumalpet union of the DMK. Marimuthu, his son and Kumar, an activist of the D.K. (Ramakrishnan) group were also arrested. From Srikanth the police recovered a 9 mm pistol, a pistol magazine, 23 live cartridges, a wireless set with its accessories, and a walkie talkie. The LTTE had allegedly given all these to Srikanth before he left for Tamil Nadu after completing his training in Jaffna. He was part of a group led by Ravichandran of Aruppukottai, the Chief of the Tamil National Retrieval Force. The group returned to Tamil Nadu in May.

What is a nation?

"(During the inter war years) The counterpoint of class and nationality was repeated with endless variations. Where no elite was ready to take the lead, a national movement could not start, but where classes were well developed they were liable to cancel each other... the new Third International was always scratching its head over the choice of tactics, and generally inclined towards the united fronts prescribed at the outset by Lenin and challenged at the outset by M.N. Roy. National freedom was to be won first, like bourgeois democracy in Europe, social revolution to follow - though the left must preserve its own distinct organisation. But as in Europe, mass participation could only be secured by pledges of social reform going beyond what the propertied classes were willing to endorse... Communist parties were so much more likely to divide than to unite subject nations that it was foolish of colonial governments to be so anxious to suppress them. Their search for a national bourgeoisie, ready to join in a struggle for independence and fight it out with its left wing allies later, proved illusive..... "A nation is not merely a historical category, but a historical category belonging to a definite epoch, the epoch of rising capitalism." Stalin's formula appears in many ways close to the mark, but it applies much better to the handful of original nation states in the West than to their imitations further afield; it applies far less well still to the majority of nationalist movements as distinct from nations. Marxism has often slurred over the distinction between these two things, and made modern nationalism, as well as the classical nation state, an alter ego of capitalism... Like religion... or any other great emotive force, nationalism is ambivalent, and can escape very completely from a prescribed political channel. Even in its origins, it was a complex phenomenon, deriving both from the solidarity and from the divisions of society. It would have astonished Marx to see socialism owing so much to partnerships with nationalism in Afro-Asia and in the Soviet Union during the second world war... It may be said indeed that just as the national state of the 19th century led logically, by way of the sovereignty of the nation and people to bourgeois democracy, nationalism in opposition in the twentieth century has led logically to socialism." Anthony D. Smith (Ed) *Nationalist Movements* - Article by V. Kiernan - *Nationalist Movements and Social Classes*.

Lest we forget

"Who attacked you? Sinhalese. Who protected you? Sinhalese. It is we who can attack and protect you. They are bringing an army from India. It will take 14 hours to come from India. In 14 minutes the blood of every Tamil in the country can be sacrificed to the land by us. It is not written on anyone's forehead that he is an Indian Tamil or a Jaffna Tamil, a Batticaloa Tamil or upcountry Tamil, a Hindu Tamil or Christian Tamil. All are Tamils. We have decided to colonise four districts including Mannar with Sinhalese people by destroying forests. A majority of Sinhalese will be settled there. If you like, you also can migrate there." - Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, speaking to the Executive Committee of the Lanka Jathika Estate Workers Union, consisting largely of Tamil plantation workers - September 5, 1983

Message to mass rally at Sydney from Senator Vicki Bourne, Australian Democrats Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs:

"Australian Democrats unreservedly condemn the Sri Lankan Government for human rights abuses committed by the military"



Over 800 Eelam Tamils of all ages participated in a mass rally organised by the New South Wales based Eelam Tamil Association, a member association of the Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations, on 30 November 1991. The rally called upon the Australian Government to help bring an end to the conflict by exerting pressure upon the Sri Lankan Government. Rev Richard Wooton, Director of the Social Responsibility & Justice Commission of the Uniting Church addressed the public meeting (see picture) held at the end of the ninety minute long march which took the protesters along the main streets of Sydney. Senator Vicki Bourne, Australian Democrats Spokesperson on Foreign Affairs in a message to the rally said:

"The Australian Democrats share with you the deep sense of grief which you feel as you remember the killings and senseless loss of life in Sri Lanka. All nations in the

international community including Australia must act now and put an end to this appalling cycle of violence.

There is now overwhelming evidence that large scale extra judicial executions and disappearances have been occurring in the north east of Sri Lanka for some considerable time. It is clear that government forces have detained and deliberately killed thousands of defenceless people since the fighting broke out.

In recent years, the incidence of these awful human rights violations has significantly increased. The Australian Democrats unreservedly condemn the Sri Lankan Government for these human rights abuses committed by the military and we call upon the Government to uphold and respect the fundamental human rights of all peoples.

If a solution is to be found to this crisis, which will be lasting then all

parties must be prepared to negotiate and work towards a constructive future. As a first step we call upon President Premadasa to immediately cease the military actions that are being carried out against the Tamil population.

In addition the Democrats call upon the Sri Lankan Government to invite the United Nations and its agencies into the country so that work can commence on finding a peaceful solution to the conflict. It must be understood that the way to resolve the problems of Sri Lanka is through negotiation and not intimidation. Accordingly, the Australian Democrats call upon the Australian Government to take a more active role within the United Nations to see that this matter is dealt with and that pressure is brought upon the Sri Lankan Government which would lead to an immediate cease-fire followed by United Nations sponsored negotiations representative of all sides."

Senior Tamils Centre of Ontario appeals to Prime Minister Mulroney

President F.V. Balasingham of the Senior Tamils' Centre of Ontario has forwarded to the Rt. Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, a resolution passed by the Centre calling for the intervention of the Canadian Government. In his letter he says: "While welcoming your stand at the Harare Conference, where you unequivocally stated that violators of human rights will not receive aid, we are sure that you will be able to bring pressure on the Government of Sri Lanka to go for an negotiated settlement. Many of our members, who have come to Canada due to the unending conflict in Sri Lanka, would welcome an early settlement

so that they may live their last years in the hope that their loved ones, who are left behind are safe in Sri Lanka".

RESOLUTION

We the Tamils of Toronto assembled at the Senior Tamils' Centre, Toronto note with regret the inaction of the Governments of Canada and those of the Commonwealth of Nations to end the genocide of the Tamils by the Sinhala Government of Sri Lanka, by its concomitant acts of soldier gang rape, torture killing and maiming of defenceless innocent Tamil civilians and the total destruction of their property. They therefore call upon the Gov-

ernment of Canada to: 1. regard the just struggle of the Sri Lankan Tamils for a homeland as on par with the struggle of those of the Kurds, Palestinians, East Timorians and the Croatsians.

2. prevail upon the Government of Sri Lanka to end the armed conflict and seek a negotiated settlement with the Tamils.

3. bring economic and diplomatic pressure on the Government of Sri Lanka to lift the blockade of food, medicine and other necessities of life, from the Northern region of Sri Lanka, where over one million lives are in peril of death.