

TAMIL NATION

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"Tamil Nation is nobody's mouthpiece and is proud of its individuality and independence. If an Indian newspaper supports the Palestinian cause, it does not become a PLO mouthpiece does it?"

Mr. S. Sivanayagam, Founding Editor of the Tamil Nation, whose detention without trial by the Indian authorities entered its 74th day on the 1st of October 1991

Open Letter to the Sinhala People from the Liberation Tigers

Pave the way for a free and fruitful association between two free nations

On September 22, two days before the Sri Lankan Parliament met to consider the impeachment resolution against President Premadasa, the Central Committee of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, in an open letter to the Sinhala people, from its headquarters in Tamil Eelam, called upon all progressive forces in the Tamil and Sinhala nations to join in the fight to dismantle a fascist and chauvinist regime and pave

oppressed people against the tyranny of a Sri Lankan regime which has sought to subjugate them. We seek to liberate our homeland from the clutches of the oppressive Sri Lankan state and its army of occupation and we seek to secure our inalienable right to self determination.

We have no hatred towards the Sinhala people. It is one of the fundamental principles of our struggle that we respect

within Tamil areas having nothing to do with solving landlessness among the Sinhala poor. The real aim of the Sri Lankan government is to use Sinhala settlers sometimes as a buffer, and sometimes as a cutting edge, in its war of aggression against the Tamil nation.

The additional longer term purpose of these 'colonisation schemes' is to change the demography of the Tamil homeland and

Sinhala chauvinism. But, however restrained we may be, these engagements with armed settlers will continue to be necessary until the armed threat posed by them is, at least, reduced.

However, the Sri Lankan government has adopted the diabolic strategy of increasingly militarising the 'colonisation schemes'. It seeks to exploit the Sinhala poor by arming them in such settlements, and using them as

ate everlasting enmity between the Tamil people and the Sinhala people.

The prolongation of this war of aggression and the spread of anti LTTE and anti Tamil sentiments are the 'trump cards' used by the Sri Lanka government to maintain and consolidate its oppressive rule over the Sinhala masses. The government seeks to 'blind fold' the Sinhala masses with a pervasive form of rac-

"Join in the struggle against a regime, which in the name of democracy, has been ruthless in denying every democratic right to the peoples which it seeks to rule"

the way for true democracy, liberation and a free and fruitful association between two free nations.

The text of the statement reads:

The government of President Ranasinghe Premadasa seeks to mislead the Sinhala masses into believing that the Tamil national struggle, led by the LTTE, is somehow directed against the Sinhala people.

But, nothing can be further from the truth than to suggest that the Tamil national struggle is directed against the Sinhala people. On the contrary, our liberation struggle is the armed struggle of an

and safeguard the rights of every individual, irrespective of creed, religion, sex or ethnic origin.

We are opposed to all forms of domination - internal or external. We have already proved our independence by battling with the foreign intruders into our country in the previous two phases of our liberation struggle. The third phase of our struggle will bring victory and the liberation of our nation. We are committed to national liberation and to democracy.

The Sinhala people should know that the so called state aided 'colonisation schemes'

in this way, make the Tamils a manageable minority in their own land. The Sri Lanka government has systematically armed these settlers - some of them ex-convicts - and often uses them to attack Tamil villagers in the surrounding areas.

Such actions, together with the brutality of the operations of the regular Sri Lankan army, have led our fighters to engage these armed settlers, with consequences which, sometimes, have been admittedly unfortunate and counter productive to our cause. Both you and we, are well aware of the ways in which the government uses such incidents in its attempt to whip up

expendable pawns in its war of aggression against the Tamil nation.

If our objective was to annihilate all Sinhala settlers as the government would wish the Sinhala people to believe, it would not have been difficult to have done so. But unlike the Sri Lankan regime we are not fascists. We are revolutionaries leading a historic and progressive struggle for national liberation. We repeat: we have no hatred towards the Sinhala people. We appeal to the Sinhala poor not to become pawns in the 'colonisation schemes' which have been carefully designed by Sinhala chauvinistic forces to sow the seeds of discord and cre-

ism so that it may continue to rule and exploit them.

We view the oppressed Sinhala people as our allies and we call upon our Sinhala brothers and sisters to join in the struggle against a regime, which in the name of democracy, has been ruthless in denying every democratic right to the peoples which it seeks to rule. We appeal to all the progressive forces in the Tamil and Sinhala nations to join in the fight to dismantle a fascist and chauvinist regime and pave the way for true democracy, liberation and a free and fruitful association between two free nations. (English translation of LTTE statement released by LTTE International Secretariat)

"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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The struggle to remove President Premadasa serves to expose the true nature of democracy, Sri Lankan style. It also serves to expose the underlying hypocrisy of the Sri Lankan government's preconditions for talks with the Liberation Tigers.

President Premadasa responded to the LTTE call for unconditional talks by insisting that the talks should be with all the political parties in the island. It was urged on his behalf that this was necessary because of his profound commitment to 'consultation' 'compromise' and 'consensus'. But, threatened with an impeachment resolution, President Premadasa was quick to suspend Parliament, and prevent the elected representatives of the Sinhala people from even discussing the resolution. He then lost little time in moving to expel the key members of his party who had the temerity to oppose him. So much for consultation, compromise and consensus.

Today, the political parties in the South, far from moving towards anything remotely resembling a consensus, are at each others throat - metaphorically and literally. President Premadasa's effort to address Parliament on the 24th of September was met with sustained booing and shouting from the opposition, and the sittings were adjourned in disorder. But it was a conference of these very same political parties which, it was suggested, would somehow help to resolve the civil war, and thereby enable President Premadasa to peacefully continue in power!

As the impeachment struggle continues, the question will increasingly become: for how long can President Premadasa survive? This is no constitutional crisis and constitutional pyrotechnics will not resolve it. This is a naked, 'no holds barred' struggle for power between opposing factions of the Sinhala establishment. It is a battle that is unlikely to be won or lost on the playing fields of Sri Lanka's Parliament. All the portents are that, in the end, it is a battle that will be taken to the people and to the streets, Aquino style.

President Premadasa's power base is fast disappearing. His own party is deeply divided. The Goigama Buddhist establishment which never really accepted President Premadasa, has now openly turned against him. The opposition parties including the left parties want him out. The JVP is an implacable enemy and has described the crisis in the UNP as a "Keselwatta-Kurunduwatta (Cinnamon Gardens)" power struggle.

President Premadasa has few friends abroad. The U.S.A and Israel are not happy about the closure of Israel's Interests Section in the American embassy in Colombo. Twelve members of the European Community joined in the protest against the recent expulsion of the UK High Commissioner David Gladstone, whose interest in human rights was not to the liking of the Sri Lanka government. India has not forgotten President Premadasa's stand on the IPKF and it is not without significance that all six E.P.R.L.F.

Democracy - Sri Lankan Style

M.P.s signed the impeachment resolution.

And as the saying goes, as the going gets tough, the toughs will get going. Ex Minister, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, has expressed fear for his life at the hands of 'extra constitutional goon squads formed to terrorise political opponents'. As a Minister in President Premadasa's Cabinet, until a month ago, Mr. Athulathmudali should know what he is talking about.

But then, during the past several years, innumerable human rights organisations have documented the acts of such 'extra constitutional goon squads' - including those during the period when Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali served as National Security Minister in President Jayawardene's Cabinet. Those Tamils who survived the onslaught of these 'extra constitutional goon squads' in 1983 will understand, but, understandably, may not sympathise with Mr. Athulathmudali's feelings of insecurity.

Not to be outdone, President Premadasa has also declared that he fears for his life. After all, 'extra constitutional goon squads' are not the special preserve of any one political group.

As long ago as December 1983, a Netherlands Human Rights Group reported on democracy, Sri Lankan-style: "The use of the police or pro-government supporters, to harass, humiliate and intimidate the opposition is not a phenomenon peculiar to this (UNP) government. The government of Mrs. Bandaranaike was well known for its recourse to these methods. But under the present government this phenomenon has assumed an alarmingly new dimension, in the highly organised and systematic way in which goon squads are made use of for political purposes. These squads are organised in two ways. UNP parliamentarians are known to have a permanent squad of vigilantes in their electoral districts, made up of UNP youth leaguers and well known local thugs. In addition, vigilante squads drawn from the UNP's trade union (the JSS) have been organised in each government Corporation. These squads function as paramilitary units exercising pro government discipline and do not hesitate to use violence to achieve their ends."

These are the realities of democracy, Sri Lankan style and the claims for democracy made by the contenders for power in Colombo must ring hollow for all those who are not tone deaf.

Again, as the going gets tough, the toughs will turn increasingly to another enduring aspect of democracy, Sri Lankan style - and that is 'Tamil bashing'. Over the years, Sinhala politicians have used 'Tamil bashing' as a sure fire method of securing Sinhala support. Mr. D.S. Senanayake was subtle about the way he set about it. Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was brash and open.

Mrs. Bandaranaike improved on her husband's style. Mr. J.R. Jayawardene appeared to revel in it. And now, President Premadasa and Ex Minister Lalith Athulathmudali have begun enjoying themselves as well.

Posters supporting President Premadasa have appeared in Colombo proclaiming that Ex Minister Lalith Athulathmudali and others with him are in league with the LTTE. Ex Minister Athulathmudali on the other hand alleges that President Premadasa has supplied arms to the LTTE and proposes to save the Sinhala people from both President Premadasa and the LTTE. This allegation, of course, has the added bonus of gaining for ex National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, the support of the all important armed forces as well.

Both President Premadasa and Ex Minister Athulathmudali seek to out bid each other in their efforts to ride to power on the back of Sinhala chauvinism.

It is not that they are unaware that 40 years of Tamil bashing has only served to consolidate the growth of Tamil national consciousness into the demand for Tamil Eelam. It is not that they are unaware that the ensuing civil war has led the Sinhala nation to the brink of anarchy. But, in a selfish quest for power, each contender, prefers to divert the attention of the Sinhala masses from the political reality that confronts us all in 1991, and believes that the worn out slogans of yesteryear will lead to victory. But after victory what?

1991 is not 1948 - or for that matter 1956 or even 1983. Time does not stand still. The political reality in 1991 is that the Tamil struggle for national self determination which was born in the womb of oppression cannot be aborted by a continuation of that very same oppression. The political reality in 1991 is that Sri Lanka cannot go on, as it does, spending more than \$575,000 a day and more than 20% of its annual budget, on the effort to suppress the Tamil struggle for self determination. The civil war has served to sharpen the problems inherent in a third world country and the Sri Lankan economy is heading towards that which a World Bank Report has described as a 'disaster scenario'.

Unsurprisingly, as the economy has weakened, so has Sinhala dissent increased. Those in power have sought to eliminate such dissent by the use of 'extra constitutional goon squads' - a strategy which has led to the disappearance of more than 60,000 Sinhala youths during the past two years.

On the one hand, President Premadasa presides over a Sri Lanka economy which cannot survive without foreign aid. On the other hand, as the reservations expressed at the last Aid Consortium meeting show, Aid Donors have become increasingly aware that aid cannot provide stability to a regime which has been compelled to resort to such large scale repression to stay in power. Recent-

ly, Rev. Richard Wooton of the Uniting Church of Australia declared forthrightly: "Australia cannot support a Pol Pot type regime which instead of using the ordinary processes of law, uses death squads to kill thousands."

The Paris Aid Consortium has indicated its displeasure by postponing its usual October meeting to February next year. The Aid Donors are well aware that despite a 6% overall growth, the division between the haves and have nots in the Sinhala South has widened into a chasm. Discontent has gone underground - and that is where it is most dangerous to stability.

But stability will not come without sustained and broad based economic growth and the first step towards achieving that, is to end the civil war in the North East. And, as Asiaweek remarks in a comment which we publish elsewhere in this issue, the starting point to any quest to end the war must be to recognise that minorities may be forced to stay in political unions but they cannot be made to like it. Lithuanians do not like it, Croats do not like it, Eritreans do not like it, Tibetans do not like it. The Tamils hate it.

Peace will come only when the broad mass of the Sinhala people begin to recognise that self determination is not a dirty word. Peace will come when they begin to recognise that self determination is a tremendous energising principle which will energise every people to make their own rich contribution to the increasingly small world in which we all live. Peace will come when the broad mass of the Sinhala people begin to recognise the truth of the words in the open letter addressed to them by the Liberation Tigers, which we carry on our front page:

"...nothing can be further from the truth than to suggest that the Tamil national struggle is directed against the Sinhala people. On the contrary, our liberation struggle is the armed struggle of an oppressed people against the tyranny of a Sri Lankan regime which has sought to subjugate them. We seek to liberate our homeland from the clutches of the oppressive Sri Lankan state and its army of occupation and we seek to secure our inalienable right to self determination. We have no hatred towards the Sinhala people..."

The prolongation of the war of aggression against the Tamil people and the spread of anti LTTE and anti Tamil sentiments are the 'trump cards' used by sections of the Sinhala political establishment to maintain and consolidate their oppressive rule over the Sinhala masses. These sections seek to 'blind fold' the Sinhala masses with a pervasive form of racism so that they may continue to rule and exploit them. The time has come for the Sinhala people to join in the struggle to dismantle a corrupt and politically bankrupt structure, and pave the way for a free association between two free nations. Democracy, Sri Lankan style has not worked, is not working and cannot be made to work.

Asiaweek says: minorities can be forced to stay in political unions but they cannot be made to like it - and that is the starting point of all quests to end the war

Lithuanians do not like it, Croats do not like it, Eritreans do not like it, Tibetans do not like it, and the Tamils hate it.

Sri Lankans ought to take comfort from the way the new world is turning. Everywhere, people are accepting novel solutions to old problems. If the war-tortured island takes a cue from Lebanon, Cambodia and Ethiopia, it will reappraise decades of investment in precious principles that pay dividends only in misery. Sri Lanka itself is an object lesson, one that Yugoslavia could well study. The moral is that minorities can be forced to stay in political unions but they cannot be made to like it.

Lithuanians do not like it, Croats do not like it, Eritreans do not like

"in a confederal system, Sinhalese and Tamil parts would have democratically elected parliaments, but there would be no elected national government"

ever. There are 1990s-style alternatives from "one country two systems" to the Confederal Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics. Autonomy now comes in many shades. The old world confederation has been dusted off and applied liberally in Canada, Czechoslovakia and the Central Asian republics. It is also favoured by western Europeans to define the way they are drawing together.

Centralised unitary states work well only in homogenous societies: Denmark, Bangladesh, Greece, Thailand, Uruguay. Sri Lankan leaders privately acknowledge this.

Strong central governments with delegated provincial authority are

not much better as models: Japan, China, Spain, Italy, Indonesia. Federations are suitable for countries that are either very large - the United States, Australia, Brazil, Mexico - or culturally diverse - Switzerland, India, Malaysia. A federation might have been the answer for Sri Lanka had it been pursued a decade ago, but the seeds of intercommunal hatred are probably now too deep even for that. In a confederal system, Sinhalese and Tamil parts would have democratically elected parliaments, but there would be no elected national government.

Conceding this would be psychologically impossible for many Sinhalese. Yet Russia and the Ukraine

say they can get by nicely with only a joint presidium to oversee the economy. **In Sri Lanka a committee of the two legislatures could control**

"In the end it is Sinhalese, not Tamils, who must answer the question: Is Tamil Eelam worth dying for?"

the rupee, capital markets, interest rates, internal trade, external tariffs. Another could look after foreign affairs, membership of international organisations, telecommunications and overseas transport and aviation. Coordinating bodies would harmonise the two states' social and administrative responsibilities - including taxation, police forces, railways, energy, industry, irrigation and agriculture. It is too late to think of harmonious integration of the armed forces, though perhaps there could be a joint navy.

Not even the most radical southern politician is likely to accept such a confederation - but the north may well accept nothing less. There is perhaps still time for a federation with two state legislatures and a national parliament. But does anyone in Sri Lanka still doubt that differences are irreconcilable? The army thinks, as good soldiers should, of defeat of the enemy.

All too many Sinhalese think Tamils and Tigers are one and the same. Failing a constitutional way out, the choice will lie between the Cyprus solution and interminable warfare. That a combat footing can be sustained for a very long time is evident in the experience of Cambodia, Afghanistan, Burma, Ethiopia, Sudan - and Sri Lanka. Even if one side is far stronger than the other, as in Northern Ireland, the southern Philippines and the Indian states of Punjab and Kashmir, the conflict can become more or less permanent. Who can accept that?

Nationalists will be tempted to declare that if Tamil Eelam gets auton-

omy, the other provinces must too. That would only dissipate the unity of the south. In Canada it is such stubborn reluctance to admit a special status for one province that is tearing the country apart. To be sure, taking a detached view is very hard when unspeakable atrocities are the stuff of daily news. But thoughtful Sri Lankans should try. Whether the brutal, fanatical Tigers really enjoy the goodwill of the Tamils is ultimately immaterial. Colombo has to make up its mind, not so much about the methods of secessionists, but the will to secede. If it is to be war, they should prepare for a long one. And in the end southern politicians will have to accept that the Tigers are something Tamils will have to sort out for themselves

Sri Lankans deserve more than a truce. Lasting peace, however distant it may seem, is the only thing worth striving for. The Tigers are suddenly ready to talk. This chiefly because they miscalculated badly in going for military victory at Elephant Pass in July and in resorting to assassinations that lost them far more support than they gained, especially in India, where they are blamed for the murder of Rajiv Gandhi. President Ranasinghe Premadasa had seemed ready to sit down with the Tigers. But now that they are in a position of relative weakness, he seems to be less willing.

No one can ever go wrong by asking the people. The value of plebiscites is never appreciated enough - and not just in Sri Lanka. Perhaps Sinhalese are as thoroughly sick of the war as one suspects. Perhaps they are more willing to try the federal or confederal solution than the army and the politicians imagine; perhaps they are ready to let the Tamils do what they like with a part of the country where hardly any Sinhalese live; perhaps they will say that if borders are shifted and minority rights guaranteed, de facto partition is as good as it will get; perhaps they may say let India have another try while we push ahead with our economic revival.

In the end it is Sinhalese, not Tamils, who must answer the question: Is Tamil Eelam worth dying for? (Courtesy: Asiaweek, September 13, 1991)

it, Tibetans do not like it. Jaffna Tamils hate it. That is the starting point of all quests to end the war.

That does not mean Tamil Eelam has to be the next Bangladesh, how-

Release Sivanayagam Fund Launched

A Release Sivanayagam Fund to help defray the legal and other expenses connected with the campaign to release Mr. Sivanayagam has been launched by Tamil Forum Ltd. 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.

On the First of October 1991, Mr. Subramaniam Sivanayagam, the Founding Editor of Tamil Nation, entered his 74th day of incarceration without trial.

Mr. Sivanayagam is being held in preventive detention in an Indian jail, under the provisions of the Indian National Security Act. But, when he was taken into custody by the Indian authorities on July 18 no mention was made of the National Security Act. It was six days later, on the 25th of July that the Indian authorities belatedly resorted to the National Security Act - and that was when they were faced with Mr. Sivanayagam's application for bail before the Magistrates Court, Saidpet. The authorities admit as much in their statement of the grounds of detention served on Mr. Sivanayagam: *"The State Government is also aware that Mr. Sivanayagam filed bail application before IX Metropolitan Magistrate Saidpet Madras and the same was adjourned to 24.7.91 and is now in judicial custody and he will be dealt with under the normal criminal law. The State Government is however apprehensive that Mr. Sivanayagam will come out on bail in the usual course and if he is so allowed to remain at large he will further indulge in such illegal activities"* (presumably editing the Tamil Nation).

Tamil Nation does not deny that preventive detention is rendered lawful by the Indian National Security Act under certain specified circumstances. But that which we do say is that to use the powers conferred by the National Security Act to prevent an individual from being enlarged on bail under the normal law, is a clear abuse of powers given by the Act and is ultra vires. If the allegation was that there were irregularities relating to the registration of Tamil Nation in Madras, then, surely the appropriate and lawful course would have been to take action under the ordinary law. The prosecution would then have been compelled to substantiate its allegations by evidence tested in open Court and Mr. Sivanayagam would then have been entitled to bail, and would not have been separated from his wife and children, pending the court hearing. As it is Mr. Sivanayagam has been denied the opportunity to defend himself. He has been denied due process.

The ground for detention advanced by the State Authority, taken together with the belated recourse to the National Security Act, leads to the reasonable conclusion that Mr. Sivanayagam, a well known journalist, is being detained without trial, because the authorities seek to prevent him from freely expressing his views in the Tamil Nation - a paper which has campaigned for the recognition of the right of self determination of the people of Tamil Eelam. **We repeat: if the matter was one of failure to register and to obtain requisite approvals, there was no reason what so ever for action not being taken under the normal law.**

Mr. Sivanayagam is an outstanding journalist of more than twenty five years standing. He edited the popular Saturday Review Weekly from Jaffna in the early 1980s and was compelled to seek refuge in Madras to escape the wrath of the racist Government in Colombo. During these many years, Mr. Sivanayagam's integrity and sturdy independence have never been questioned and, regrettably, it is this integrity and independence which has now been subjected to attack by the Indian authorities. Under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Mr. Sivanayagam is guaranteed the right to "hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers". The continued incarceration of Mr. Sivanayagam without trial is a denial of the rule of law. It is also a gross violation of the fundamental right to freedom of opinion and expression. Finally, it is a cruel act against a decent and honorable human being who had the courage to stand up for that which was right and just - the national liberation struggle of the people of Tamil Eelam.

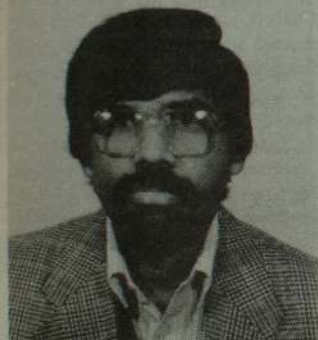
Peter Mares of the Australian Indian Pacific Programme interviews Senator Robert Hill, Australian Shadow Foreign Minister and Lawrence Thilakar, LTTE Central Committee Member and looks at the

Tamil - Sri Lanka Conflict

In two recent broadcasts, one on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the other the Day Break Programme, Radio National on August 19, Peter Mares looked at the Tamil conflict with Sri Lanka. On the Day Break Programme Peter Mares, interviewed amongst others, Senator Robert Hill, Leader of the Opposition in the Australian Senate. On the Indian Pacific ABC Programme Peter Mares, interviewed, amongst others, Mr. Lawrence Thilakar, European Spokesman for the LTTE, Christopher Morris, BBC Correspondent in Colombo, and Mr. Mervyn De Silva, Editor of the Lanka Guardian. We publish excerpts from the transcript.

Peter Mares (on ABC Indian Pacific Programme): In Europe an international array of diplomats are frantically searching for a cease fire in Yugoslavia. But in Asia, the region's most brutal civil war continues unabated and almost unnoticed. A mooted Commonwealth peace initiative is stalled in the starting blocks. Hello, I am Peter Mares, Welcome to Indian Pacific and a programme about Sri Lanka.

In twelve months of war in an island, the size of Tasmania close to 10,000 people are thought to have died. The fighting peaked last week in the battle for Elephant Pass - a military outpost besieged for a month by Tamil Tiger guerrillas in the north of Sri Lanka. The government in Colombo celebrated a victory when it broke the siege on August 3rd. How-



ever, the Tigers claim that the 8,000 soldiers sent to liberate the camp have walked into a trap.

Mr. Lawrence Thilakar the European spokesman for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam:

"I don't think we have lost the battle, the battle is not over, it is going on. Actually, the government troops are trapped in the Elephant Pass area. From the LTTE point of view it is a tactical withdrawal from one side of the camp and allow the troops to go inside and getting into a trap. So this misadventure of the Sri Lankan armed forces is going to be a total disaster."

Peter Mares: But according to some reports coming out of Sri Lanka the Tamil Tigers have lost around fifteen hundred fighters in the last month or so?

Mr. Thilakar: "This is government propaganda to boost the morale of the Sri Lankan armed forces. Actually nearly 400 LTTE cadres have died during this battle. But on the other side government troops killed in the battle is nearly 1,000

and same number of troops have been seriously wounded, that is why they have been bringing more and more troops to the Elephant Pass - because of the casualties."

Peter Mares: It is of course impos-

"The Government says that the LTTE should lay down arms before talks. That is not acceptable. It has not happened anywhere with conflicting parties - one party alone laying down arms before the talks. And the other condition is - we are asking for direct talks with the Sri Lankan Government but the government is talking about an all party conference as a forum to solve the problems. These are the conditions we can't accept" - Lawrence Thilakar

sible to verify the claims and counterclaims about the numbers who died at Elephant Pass.

Christopher Morris, BBC correspondent: "Colombo did score a victory by breaking the siege but not one that leaves the government troop with any decisive advantage."

"It was important for the army and they had to win it, if they'd lost the Elephant Pass Army Camp or if the Tamil Tigers had overrun the camp before reinforcement had arrived, then the Tigers really could have claimed to have been in control of whole of the Northern Province of the island. It was one of the last camps they held. That was important in that sense. It has certainly given the army a big boost to morale but I think the battle is by no means over. The Tamil Tigers have said that they are going to launch attacks on supply lines and the army has yet to decide whether it is going to try and push further into Tamil Tiger territories or whether it is just going to try and hold the positions around the Elephant Pass Camp."

Peter Mares: So the Army at the moment has some six or eight thousand troops up at the Elephant Pass Camp?

Christopher Morris: "That is right and they only have one narrow strip of land. So supplies are a problem. They have to land most of their supplies by sea. They found it difficult for 800 men trapped in the camp, now they have 8,000 men there. So looks like their logistical support system is going to be tied up in small specific parts of the island and there have already been fears voiced that the Tamil Tigers are going to take advantage of this and perhaps launch attacks in the Eastern Province which is the other part of the island which they claim as traditional Tamil Homeland."

Peter Mares: Do you think we are likely to see a push now by the military from Elephant Pass up into the Jaffna Peninsula the traditional Tiger stronghold?

Christopher Morris: "That is certainly what many army officers would like to see, they I think feel that attack could be the best form of defence. They feel that they have spent so much time getting to this position around Elephant Pass and they have so many men there now this is their best ever opportunity to try and push back into Jaffna and really put pressure on the Tigers. The key thing would be whether they will be able to provide significant logistical support for a push of that size..."

Peter Mares: In the wake of the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi the

Indian Government has deployed special army units in the Southern State of Tamil Nadu to keep a lid on the activities of Tiger guerrillas there. The LTTE have traditionally used the South Indian State as a base for

arms before talks. That is not acceptable. It has not happened anywhere with conflicting parties - one party laying down before the talks. And the other condition is, we are asking direct talks with the Sri Lankan Gov-

ernment but the government is talking about an all party conference as a forum to solve the problems. These are the conditions we can't accept"

their separatist struggle. New Delhi has also promised to step up naval patrols to stop the guerrillas moving between India and Northern Sri Lanka.

The LTTE claims to be unconcerned by such developments, just as they continue to deny any involvement in the Gandhi killing. The Tigers did prove recently that they do retain the capacity to strike at the very heart of government power in the south of Sri Lanka where the majority Sinhalese community are concentrated.

Mervyn De Silva, Editor of the Lanka Guardian in Colombo: "The recent suicide bomb attack on the nerve centre of the armed forces, the JOC Headquarters, The Joint Operations Command Headquarters, in the heart of the city in the best residential area, it was a brilliantly targeted attack by the Tigers, there is no question about it and that shows how vulnerable Colombo still is to that kind of attack... Now Mr. Prabhakaran, who is leader of the Tigers, knows the Sinhala mind I think very well, and he has also very instinctive brilliance of always disturbing the Sinhala establishment and the Sinhala middle class whenever they feel they can sit back and relax. He knows how to explode quite literally and metaphorically, any false sense of stability."

Peter Mares: In recent years Sri Lanka's troubles haven't been confined to the North and East. In the late 80s the Sinhalese revolutionary movement known as the JVP created havoc in the south of the Island. It was only contained after a massive campaign of indiscriminate killings by the security forces. The fear is that with 30% of government spending now devoted to the military the war in the North and East will starve the troubled South of much needed development funds.

But as the war drags on there is no sign of ceasefire or peace talks. Both sides claim they want to talk but neither will agree to the other's conditions. Mr Thilakar of the LTTE indicates that the Tigers are not about to give ground.

Mr. Thilakar: "We are always ready for peace negotiations with the Sri Lankan Government but the Government is always putting preconditions which are not acceptable to the LTTE. So without preconditions we are ready to talk to the Sri Lankan Government"

Peter Mares: What kind of preconditions is the Government setting that you object to so much?

Mr. Thilakar: "The Government says that the LTTE should lay down

arms before talks. That is not acceptable. It has not happened anywhere with conflicting parties - one party laying down before the talks. And the other condition is, we are asking direct talks with the Sri Lankan Gov-



Peter Mares: You don't accept the notion of participating in an all party conference?

Mr. Thilakar: "All parties, there are so many parties only registered without any backing of the people. We can't sit with those parties who have no support of the people and actually, this will not lead to a solution this will definitely complicate the issue more. The conflicting parties now are the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE and they are in armed conflict. So these two parties should talk and solve the problem peacefully."

Peter Mares: But shouldn't the Tigers be making greater efforts to get a ceasefire and get negotiations, making more concessions to get some kind of peace dialogue happening?

Mr. Thilakar: "LTTE is always ready to talk without any preconditions. While we are steadfast on our goal that is to win our legitimate right of self determination and we are always prepared to defend it."

Peter Mares: Chris Morris in Colombo, are there any olive branches coming from the Government to try and entice the Tamil Tigers back to negotiations?

Chris Morris: "Yes, The Government has been maintaining throughout that it wants to hold peace talks and immediately after Elephant Pass camp was recaptured, President Premadasa appealed to the Tigers to return to the negotiating tables. I think he genuinely does want peace because he wants to give greater

chance to develop the economy now. At the moment the government are putting up preconditions for any talks which include the fact that the Tamil Tigers should make a declaration renouncing violence. These are things which the Tigers have all along said 'we are not prepared to do, any talks should be unconditional, we'll see how we get on, and then after that we can start putting conditions down.' At the moment there seems to be a deadlock between those two positions and unfortunately, I think many politicians still tend to accept the State media's portrayal of the people in north of the island as an oppressed people terrorised by the Tamil Tigers and that isn't really

the case. I think that many people are opposed to the Tigers, they still have strong support in the area and the government has to come to terms with the fact that many people, the majority of the people in the north and east do want a considerable degree of devolution. The question is whether they are prepared to offer that."

Peter Mares: So to bring any kind of settlement the government in your view will have to recognise that their negotiating partners have to be the Tamil Tigers and really no one else?

Chris Morris: "Certainly, they have to recognise that they have to talk with the Tamil Tigers. It is fairly useless talking with anyone else. Whether they will agree to the Tigers' demand that they be recognised as the sole representatives of the Tamil people is another matter. What the government would like is for some sort of election to be held in the north and east. They are saying to the Tigers "If you are so sure that you are the sole representatives then stand for election and prove it, if after you proved it and you get a big majority then certainly we will be willing to talk to you."

Peter Mares: And the Tigers' position is that they can't lay down the arms because they are defending the Tamil people"

Chris Morris: "That is right. I mean the Tigers have spokesmen who will try to put forward a very moderate line, but their demand really amount to a call for independ-

continued on page 9

Lord Avebury lobbys for international mediation

Lord Avebury, Chairman, United Kingdom Parliamentary Human Rights Group has written to both the Secretary General of the Commonwealth and to the British Foreign Secretary, Rt. Hon Douglas Hurd, suggesting Commonwealth mediation to resolve the Tamil - Sri Lanka conflict. We publish here the text of the letters exchanged:

LETTER DATED JUNE 23, 1991 FROM LORD AVEBURY TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL, COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT.

Dear Chief Anyaoku

You have doubtless been following events in Sri Lanka, and their side-effects in neighbouring India, with as much concern as we have. The assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in the middle of the Indian elections; the reprisal killing by the Sri Lanka army of 150 civilians in Batticaloa the week before last, and the suicide attack by the Tigers presumably, which resulted in the death of 65 people in Colombo on Thursday, are the latest manifestations of a conflict for which no solution is in sight after many years of bloodshed.

Meanwhile, in certain other internal conflicts it has been considered necessary to bring in foreign mediation or chairmanship. France and Indonesia are the co-chairmen of the peace conference which seems quite likely to produce an agreement between the warring factions in Cambodia; the United Nations, together with the allies in the Gulf War, are physically present in northern Iraq to protect the Kurds, and Sir Ninian Stephen, an Australian, has been invited to chair the inter-party discussions in northern Ireland. Do these examples provide us with a clue to the resolution of Sri Lanka's intractable problems?

The Thimpu discussions broke down almost immediately and were followed by the disastrous intervention by India in northern Sri Lanka. Then more recently, 13 months of talks between the Premadasa government and the LTTE came to an inconclusive end when the LTTE mounted a concerted attack on police stations in the east, capturing some 600 officers and murdering a large number of their prisoners.

Perhaps, like Cambodia, Sri Lanka needs impartial outsiders to further the peace process. The Indians were not successful because they were directly interested in two ways: they had to demonstrate their commitment to protection of the Tamils, so as to keep the people of Tamil Nadu loyal to the government, but at the same time they had to discourage ideas of separatism in case they spread across the Palk Straits. But it should be possible to find, amongst Member states of the Commonwealth, totally disinterested countries which might play the same role in relation to Sri Lanka as France and Indonesia have for Cambodia.

The other essential ingredient of the Cambodian process was the agreement of Hun Sen to outside participation in the peace conference. I know that in J R Jayawardene's time there was a suggestion that other Commonwealth countries might have a role to play, and this foundered, perhaps on the opposition of India to other powers 'intervening' in the region. Would it not be worth approaching President Premadasa now, to see whether there is scope for reviving the idea, and also informally discussing it with India?

You did say, in your letter to me about Achehnese refugees in Malaysia, that the Secretariat was precluded, by its Agreed Memorandum, from doing anything which encroached on the sovereignty of Member States. If President Premadasa does agree to third party chairmanship of a peace conference, it does not commit him, of course, to acceptance of any proposals that may be tabled there.

Yours sincerely

sgd Eric Avebury

LETTER DATED JULY 20, 1991 FROM LORD AVEBURY TO THE FOREIGN SECRETARY, RT HON DOUGLAS HURD MP

Dear Douglas,

I enclose a note we had from the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka, and a copy of a letter from the Commonwealth Secretary-General.

As you will see, Ms Suriya Wickremasinghe of the CRM (who was at one time chair of the International Executive Committee of Amnesty International) draws a parallel between Sri Lanka and El Salvador, and she believes that mediation could be helpful also in Sri Lanka. The Commonwealth Secretary-General says that mediation by the Commonwealth was formally proposed last year by Prime Minister Hawke of Australia, but met with no response.

Do you think that if President Premadasa were minded to accept mediation, it would attract the broad support from within the Commonwealth that the Secretary-General says it would need? If this precondition is satisfied, would it not be worth another try? Surely it could be indicated to President Premadasa, assuming that this was the general feeling, that acceptance of an offer of mediation would help Sri Lanka to secure the long term aid she needs for the reconstruction of her economy?

Yours sgd.Eric

REPLY DATED 15 JULY 1991 FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL, COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT TO LORD AVEBURY

Dear Lord Avebury

Thank you for your letter of 23 June 1991 on the situation in Sri Lanka, which I have now seen since returning from overseas travel.

I am grateful to you for sharing with me your thoughts on the tragic conflict in Sri Lanka and on ways in which the protracted suffering of the people of that country might be brought to an end. I can assure you that, within the obvious constraints imposed on the Commonwealth Secretariat by its Agreed Memorandum, we have sought to follow events in Sri Lanka closely and with an ever-ready willingness to help should our assistance be sought. The Commonwealth naturally feels a particularly acute sense of concern and anguish at the continuing strife, the large scale loss of life and property, and the threat to the integrity and well-being of a member state.

You have raised in your letter the possibility of external mediation or a 'good offices' role in Sri Lanka, drawing upon precedents such as the peace conference on Cambodia or the inter-party negotiations in Northern Ireland. The concept of mediation by friendly and disinterested parties is in principle a laudable one and one which, in my view, might be especially suited to an organisation such as the Commonwealth. As you have also rightly observed, any viable third party role in Sri Lanka or elsewhere must be contingent on the consent of the government concerned. Such a role in Sri Lanka would additionally require broad support from within the Commonwealth. As you are perhaps aware, Senator Robert Hill, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia, had proposed a Commonwealth 'good offices' role last year and Prime Minister Hawke subsequently made a formal approach to President Premadasa, although to date such initiatives have not given rise to any request from the Sri Lankan Government.

For my part, I have repeatedly made it clear that the Commonwealth stands ready to assist, if invited to do so. This remains our position.

Yours sincerely, sgd Emeka Anyaoku

REPLY DATED 31 JULY 1991 TO LORD AVEBURY, FROM HON. MARK LENNOX-BOYD, PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE

Dear Lord Avebury

Thank you for your letter of 20 July to Douglas Hurd enclosing copies of a note from the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka and a letter from the Commonwealth Secretary-General about the prospects for mediation in Sri Lanka. I am replying in Douglas' absence on leave. The present view of the Sri Lankan Government is that any discussions with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam should not be conducted within the services of outside mediation including, it seems, the Commonwealth. Should this view change, I understand that the Australian offer to help initiate Commonwealth mediation remains available. We cannot of course tell at this stage how much support such a proposal would attract from other Commonwealth members, but we would support it. Indeed, we have told the Sri Lankan Government that we would be prepared to help mediate, or encourage others to do so, if the parties involved agree that this would be useful. The Sri Lankan Government has not taken up this offer either.

On your point about additional aid, I am sure we should try to look for incentives to encourage both sides to negotiate a settlement. But I doubt we could do more than point to the general economic advantages that would accrue. This would imply more effective use of aid, particularly to help reconstruct the areas worst affected. For instance, our own £ 20 million package for the North and East has been held up by the renewed fighting. We have not related our aid either to the fact that fighting is going on, or to the Sri Lankan Government's decisions on whether or not to accept offers of external mediation. But we have made clear that while we support the Sri Lankan Government in its struggle to defeat terrorist organisations, we are very concerned that this should be conducted with due care for the human rights of all Sri Lankans. Concern about the Sri Lankan record on human rights led us recently to withdraw an offer of £ 3 million in balance of payments aid.

I agree wholeheartedly with the sentiments expressed by the Civil Rights Movement of Sri Lanka that one of the main obstacles to an improvement in Sri Lanka's human rights record has been an unwillingness so far by the Government there to identify and punish those responsible for violations.

Yours sincerely sgd. Mark Lennox Boyd

Letter from Jaffna

...The Tamil community has gone to such a low because of the lack of farsightedness by our former leaders. Despite their intelligence, all of them have been cheated by the Sinhalese leader one time or another in the past....

The present freedom fighters and its leadership are a 'gift' for the Tamil community...

You have to be here to understand how the leader has won the heart and mind of every fighter. Very soon it will be that of all the people.

This is not the time to talk about their shortcomings. They are facing a life and death struggle. We must do all the help we can.

I will relate a recent incident. One fighter had a broken hand. His hand was plastered. His injury happened at the start of the Elephant Pass battle on 10th July. With that he has gone to the battle field.

Two weeks back he came to Manthikai Hospital - with damaged bandage, after wetting the bandage. The doctor warned him that the broken bones would not have set and if internal bleeding takes place, the hand may have to be amputated. The fighter replied that he has to return to the battlefield that night and he may die in a day or two. He is Major Ganesh. His dedication is typical of most of the fighters.

When they are prepared to throw away the most desired thing in life - life itself - how can we talk about material things. Most of the critics have never moved close with a fighter....

SINHALA ONLY - AND NOT EVEN TAMIL ALSO!

In the Post Offices of Badulla, Bandarawela, and Welimada areas, no business can be transacted in Tamil although large sections of the population are Tamils.

Again, the Diploma Course in Management at the Open University is being conducted only in Sinhala and English despite Government assurances that Tamil would also be a medium of instruction.

Application forms for flood relief in the predominantly Tamil area of Batticaloa are being issued only in Sinhala and English.

Recently, a money order made out in Tamil from the Trincomalee Post Office was refused encashment at the Nawala Post Office on the ground that the money order should be written in Sinhala or English.

So much for Tamil being an official language!

GOGGLES

by C.P.Goliard

Remembering Kavi Arasu Kannadasan

His given name at birth was Muthiah. But when he made his exit from this world, ten years ago at the age of 54, on October 16, 1981, millions of Tamils remembered him only by the name Kannadasan.

For Tamils all over the world, he epitomised Tamil poetry. Even those who were illiterate, and who couldn't read and memorise the poetry of Kamban or the maxims of Valluvan, could hum the compositions of poet Kannadasan.

A number count of his publications shows a tally of 109 volumes, which include 21 novels and 10 slim volumes of essays on Hinduism, captioned Arthamulla Indu matham (Meaningful Hinduism). In addition, he produced about 4000 poems and approximately 5000 movie lyrics, between 1944 and 1981, all with an eighth grade education at the formal level. He was also an excellent example of this century's Tamil goliard.

What made Kannadasan click? There is no doubt that he had a penetrating eye and keen observational powers. He also did not live a cocoon-type of life.

He dipped into everything that the Tamil Nadu could offer - wine, women, drugs, gambling, politics, polemics, atheism and religious sanctuary. After enjoying everything, what he did was remarkable - he composed verses about all his experiences, with self depreciating humour and biting sarcasm. These verses touched the sympathetic chords of Tamils from all walks of life - school boys, undergrads, housewives, farmers, manual labourers, plantation workers, middle class representatives and even upper class elites.

He was at his best when he wrote lyrics on the philosophy of cycles of life. Let me reminisce on some of his most popular compositions in this column. It is a pity that Kannadasan's verses has not been translated into other languages yet. I have made an elementary effort here, while not attempting a literal translation.

*Let the passions and bonds pass - by
Who has lived in this land forever?*

*Path of arrival is known - but
Path of departure and the route unknown.*

If all who came opt to stay

*Where's the space in this sphere?
Life is just a business - in which
the birth is credit and death is debit.*

Original:

*Ponal pohattum poda - intha
poomiyil nilaiyai vazhnthavar
yaarada
Vanthathu theriyum povathu
enge
vaasal namakke theriyathu
Vanthavarellam thanki viddal -
intha
mannil namakke idamtethu
Vazhakai enpathu viyaparam -
varium
jananam enpathu varavahum -
athil
maranam enpathu selavaahum.*

In another lyric, Kannadasan wrote



Kannadasan

Though born without a dress,

*did we come without passions?
when we complete the merriment
can anyone carry their possessions?*

Original:

*Aadai inri piranthome - aasai inri
piranthoma?
Aadi mudikkaiyile alli chenror
yaarumundo?*

When describing the final passage every man makes in his life, Kannadasan pondered about who accompanies the remains:

*The kin, till the house,
The wife, till the street,
The son, upto the cemetery,
Who will come beyond that?*

Original:

*Veedu varai uravu
Veethi varai manaivi
Kaadu varai pillai
kadaisi varai yaaro?*

Kannadasan could even describe Freudian themes in mere four lines of movie lyrics. For example, he

once wrote,

*Mind is like a tortoise - in which
the truth hides in silence
words can bring out only the half
while justice calmly sleeps*

Original:

*Ullam enpathu aamai - athil
unmai enpathu oomai
Sollil varuvathu paathi - nenjil
thoonki kidappathu neethi*

One of my all-time favourites, is the one which I heard for the first time when I was just six or seven years old. The deep-throated resonating voice of playback singer Tiruchi Loganathan, had fixed this Kannadasan lyric, in my mind forever.

*With passions as waves
we dance like the boat
in our passage of life
With the wind of youth,
by flying in the chariot of love,
man and woman make merry,
enjoy
and surprise themselves
but who can guess tomorrow's
path
today itself?*

Original:

*Aasaiye alai pole,
Naamellam athan mele,
Odampole adiduvome vaazhnal-
ile
Paruvam ennum kaatrrile
parakkum kaathal therile
aanum pennum mahizhvar
suhamparavar - athisayamkaan-
paar
Naalai ulahin paathaiyai inre
yaar kaanuvur?*

Even in this lyric, Kannadasan reinforces the theme, "sorrows are credit of life, while the joys are debit, with the balance being mere dreams, and who can comprehend the arithmetic of fate?"

Original:

*Vazhvil thunbam varavuu
suham selavu, iruppathu kanavu
kaalam vahutha kanakkai inge
yaar kaanuvur?*

If only Kannadasan had been born in Europe or the USA, instead of Sirukatalapatti village in the Ralmanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu, he probably would have become a Nobel laureate in literature and received international recognition. But on the other hand, Tamils would have lost a goliard, who composed lyrics in Tamil for every sentimental moment they experience in life.

EELAM TAMIL WORLD'S YOUNGEST UNIVERSITY STUDENT

World's youngest university student is 11 years old. At age 11, math genius Ganesh Sittampalam is the world's youngest university student - and he's speeding through sophomore year attending classes only one day a week.

In fact, the remarkable underage undergraduate expects to have his Bachelor of Science degree by the time he's 13-1/2.

Four days a week, Ganesh, who lives with his parents in Surbiton, England, attends junior high school with pals his own age. But once a week his mom Nela, 44, drives her

amazing son to the University of Surrey. There, Ganesh crams a week of math study into one day in one-on-one sessions with lectures and private study.

Ganesh was admitted to the university as a sophomore since he's already mastered first-year math courses. "Our records show that Ganesh is currently the youngest university undergraduate in the world," said Martin Day, an editor with the Guinness Book of World Records. "We plan to feature him in the 1992 edition."

Ganesh was 5 when his father Arjuna, 46, an investment banker, began teaching him fractions.

By age 9, the pint-size genius had mastered algebra and trigonometry. When Ganesh turned 11, he was capable of solving numerical problems high school seniors were doing - and the university accepted him as a sophomore. "I don't find the work hard at all," the youngster said shyly.

What will he do when he grows up? "I did want to be a train driver," he said. "Now I'm not sure." (Courtesy: The Sri Lanka Sunday Times Mirror Magazine)

Sachi Sri Kantha writing from Tokyo comments on

Sri Lanka's Ethnic Turmoil in the Economist Magazine

Two years ago, the Wall Street Journal (Aug. 16, 1989) carried an article by Martin Wooster, the Washington editor of the Reason magazine, with the caption "The Economist misrepresents America". After reading that, I found to my satisfaction that I was not alone in perceiving the way Economist has covered the ethnic turmoil in Sri Lanka.

If some Americans feel that, there is "bias, condescension and misplaced priorities" in the Economist's coverage about America and American life, they should read what this British weekly magazine writes about the people living in the recently liberated ex-colonies of the British empire.

Americans were lucky that they

ethnic groups in Europe, North America, Africa and Asia (as lamented by the scribes of Economist), what the LTTE militants have been involved in against the Sri Lankan army cannot be dismissed as "terrorism" and it is not an abnormal phenomenon.

Since it was established in 1843 (when the British empire was the biggest bully in the world), the Economist appears to carry its colonial bias and condescension to a greater degree when it covers the events in Asia or Africa.

What has been disappointing is the way, Economist had reported about the Eelam scene for the past six years or so.

In its Aug. 3, 1985 coverage on Sri Lanka, the commentary cap-

"bias, condescension and misplaced priorities" in Economist's reporting....

fought and gained their independence from Britain two centuries ago.

Since quite a number of Tamil Nation readers (Tamils, non Tamils and British) are living in Britain, and given that Economist also influences the minds of decision-makers of many other countries, I wish to comment on its coverage of the ethnic turmoil in Sri Lanka for the past six years. I also emphasize that this commentary is a preliminary one and an intensive study is needed to highlight the bias and condescension Economist spews out about the Sri Lankan situation in its regular coverage.

YUGOSLAVIA - POTENTIAL AIDS CARRIER SAYS ECONOMIST

Let me cite what the recent July 6th issue of Economist has to say on ethnic turmoil in Yugoslavia in its editorial and how it compares the similar situations in other nations including Sri Lanka.

"Yugoslavia is a potentially infectious carrier of a virus that risks becoming the AIDS of international politics lying dormant for years, then flaring up to destroy countries. It is the virus of tribalism. Yugoslavia itself is still in only the early stages of the disease.... The disease has already spread beyond Yugoslavia, to places as far afield as Canada, Sri Lanka and Ethiopia. Across Europe, from Spain to Czechoslovakia, countries are worried about the destructive force of tribalism. Yugoslavia could be merely a foretaste of a bigger bust-up to come in the Soviet Union..."

What is disheartening in such an opinionated journalism is that these apologists for status-quo (read as oppression) never bother to acknowledge or repent for their sins of colonialism which created such an ethnic turmoil in the first place, in nations like Sri Lanka.

The choice of the word, "tribalism", in place of "fight for self-determination or freedom or independence" shows the arrogance of the editor.

But one can feel happy that if the trend for fighting for independence has proliferated among oppressed

tioned as, "A small and solvable war", identified the five main Tamil militant groups and their cadre strength. Though this commentary was fairly balanced, it did not mention a single word about how Tamils lost their sovereignty when the British gave independence and political power to the Sinhalese.

In the past, former Sri Lankan president J.R. Jayewardene has occasionally been praised, such as "He (Jayewardene) acted courageously in bringing in the Indians and pressing ahead with some kind of Tamil self-government. The army is stretched to run even the essential services, but Mr. Jayewardene has declined to impose martial law" (Dec. 3, 1988). It was as if, the non-declaration of the martial law made a difference to the Tamils or to the Sinhalese in the island.

The LTTE militants have been repeatedly depicted as "brutal" killers, and as jungle warriors with "no interest in giving up the certainties of the gun for the vagaries of the ballot" (Sept. 16, 1989). Even the most recent feature entitled, "The battle for Elephant Pass" which appeared in the Aug. 3rd issue of the Economist, stated, "There is a growing recognition in the capital, Colombo that, like it or not, the Tigers are a military power. But deep suspicions remain about their ruthlessness".

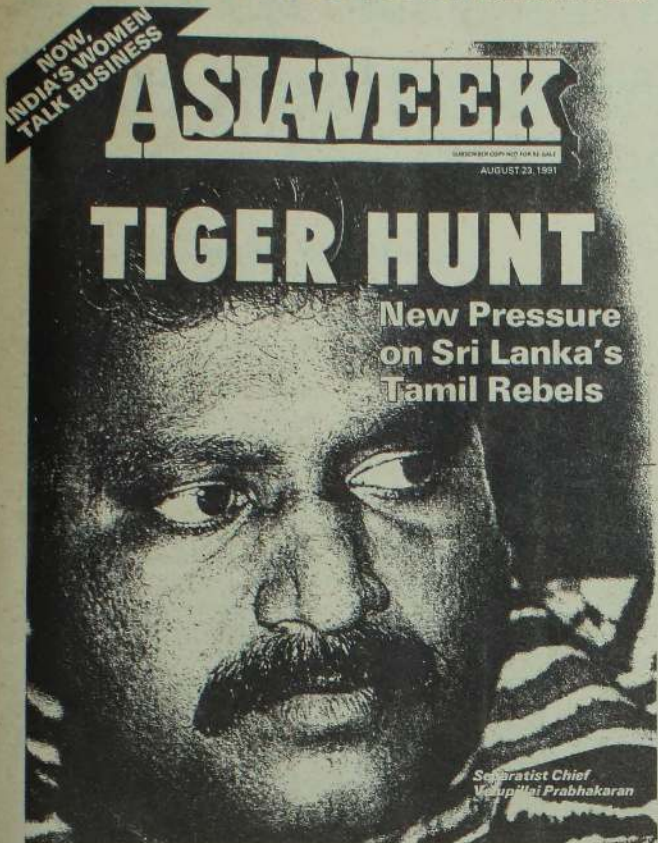
Wasn't Winston Churchill and his other British army commanders "ruthless" in planning and executing bombing raids against the civilians of Germany and other Axis powers? The less said the better about the brutality of the British imperial army against Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence campaigns or against Jomo Kenyatta's Mau-Mau campaign in Kenya.

NEED FOR BALANCED REPORTING

If balanced reporting (rather than an opinionated vision) becomes the norm, 300,000-odd subscribers and an estimated one million readers of the Economist could get a clearer view about events in third world countries which they do not (or cannot) visit at first hand.

Prabhakaran on cover of Asiaweek

Sri Lanka an island of two nations



After eight years of civil war, Sri Lanka seems to have become an island of two nations says Asiaweek in its cover page story on the Tigers in its issue of August 23. Excerpts from the reporting follow:

"It's great to be back on the ground in pursuit of a story," says 33 year old John Colmey, writing the story for Asiaweek which featured Velupillai Prabhakaran on its cover. But his enthusiasm has been tempered by what he has seen. "It's a bit depressing to find the war dragging on and, if anything, picking up pace." The casualty rate had increased since he left the country late last year. Even in the capital, he couldn't escape the war. "For several nights I could hear the sirens as caravans of ambulances ferried the army's wounded into Colombo's base hospital."

Of the fierce, long-running conflict, Colmey says: "Even if the government wins battle after battle, fighting a guerilla war is like a dog scratching a flea. By the time his paw has struck, it has moved. And that, combined with the Tigers' passion for their cause and their willingness to kill and be killed,

make them a formidable enemy."

There has been no electricity for over a year in Jaffna. Telephone lines are down. Petrol sells for \$25 a litre. Markets offer a meagre variety of vegetables and rice. Hardened by army shelling, residents say they have developed a "second sense" for helicopter attacks. "They've stopped talking about when normality returns," sighs an aid worker. "People have realised this is their new life." ... Jaffna villagers have adapted motorcycles and water pumps to run on kerosene. Windmills produce energy. Farmers grow rice despite a ban on fertilisers containing urea, which the army says can be used in explosives. "They have learned to live without the central government," explains a Tiger sympathiser.

After eight years of civil war, Sri Lanka seems to have become an island of two nations. President Ranasinghe Premadasa's United National Party may rule the booming south. But in war-worn Jaffna, the Tigers effectively run civil administration. "The 'Lebanonisation' of Sri

Lanka is now nearly complete," asserts a Western analyst... The guerillas are tightening their grip every day. Last week they named an eight-member cabinet" to administer the Northern Province. The Tigers have reportedly begun printing their own currency.

Analysts doubt whether 45,000 government troops can hold territory that the 52,000 strong IPKF failed to control before withdrawing in 1990. And many of Jaffna's 1 million people sympathise with the Tigers... Already the civil war is draining Colombo's treasury of \$575,000 a day. And the estimated \$1 billion needed to rebuild the north and east is rising daily. ... About 18% of the workforce in the South is idle. With 140,000 able bodies entering the labour market each year, analysts do not discount new civil unrest in the south. "The president must do something fast," says a Sinhalese soldier who fought the JVP, "or else they or someone like them will definitely come up again." (Courtesy Asiaweek August 23)

Ana Pararajasingham, Secretary, Australasian Federation of Tamil Associations asks

Battle for Elephant Pass - what does it mean?

The LTTE can no longer be described as a guerrilla army. The battle at Elephant Pass has proved beyond any shadow of doubt that the Eelam Tamil Nation ("The Nation without a State") has finally acquired a conventional army capable of engaging in set piece battles to protect its territory.

This, however, is not an entirely unexpected development as several well informed political observers had speculated on the LTTE's conventional capabilities long before Elephant Pass.

In fact, it was openly acknowledged by the Sri Lankan newspaper columnist - Taraki, who wrote about it in the "Island" of 2nd December in an article entitled "LTTE is now a conventional army". According to Taraki, "LTTE which began the war in June this year as no more a guerrilla group is not only functioning as a conventional force in the North but is also thinking and devising strategy as one".

This was to be followed by the "Tamil Nation" in its issue of 15th December 1990 when it reported the over running of the heavily fortified Mankulam Camp by the LTTE in late November. According to the Tamil Nation, "Colombo based military strategists had assessed the Mankulam operations to be astounding in view of the speed with which the LTTE had graduated into successful open combat operations, despite periodic reported heavy losses of cadres".

The Madras Hindu of January 1 1991 reporting an interview with Kittu of the LTTE quoted the LTTE leader as having drawn attention to the Tamil Army as one of the basic realities which the Sinhala Government will have to come to terms with in any future political settlement.

Then of course came Elephant Pass

where the Government had employed over 10,000 soldiers in a direct onslaught on LTTE positions and had made little headway in dislodging the Tamil Army.

Manik De Silva writing in the "Far Eastern Economic Review" 22 August 1991 begins his report on the battle for Elephant Pass by conceding that the conventional military balance between the Sri Lankan Army and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has narrowed.

Asia Week of 23rd August 1991, reporting on the same battle under the caption "Two Nations" quotes an analyst who had given the victory to the Tigers "They sucked 8,000 troops into a quagmire and held them there for two weeks... They have also shown that Sri Lanka has two conventional armies"

What does this mean to the Eelam Tamil Nation in its quest for independence?

First of all it is reasonable to expect that these developments have driven home the truth to the Sinhala establishment that there is no military solution to the problem but only a "political solution". Secondly, it ought to have made it equally clear to the International Community that the solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka is a political one calling for the development of an appropriate political structure to enable the two nations (each of whom are armed and are in control of well defined territories) to co-exist.

Given the developments in the Baltics, Yugoslavia and Eritrea where nations are able to assert their right of self-determination, the time has come for the International Community to persuade the Sri Lankan Government to negotiate a political solution to the conflict, with the representatives of the Tamil Nation.

Manik Silva reporting in the Far Eastern Economic Review 22nd August says

Sri Lanka - LTTE military balance has narrowed

We publish here excerpts from the Manik Silva report:

The conventional military balance between the Sri Lankan army and the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerillas has narrowed, despite the Tigers' eventual withdrawal in the face of an onslaught by government forces in a battle for a strategic position that controls land access to the LTTE-dominated Jaffna peninsula.

Further, the outcome of the battle - which showed the military's ability to defeat the Tigers on their own ground while demonstrating the LTTE's capability of extracting a high cost for such a victory - has again raised the possibility of political channels being reopened between the two sides if a bloody stalemate is to be avoided.

The Tigers began their siege of the army base that controls Elephant Pass on 10 July. The camp, the Palaly airfield and a naval base at Karainagar are the three remaining government military outposts on the otherwise totally rebel-controlled Jaffna peninsula. Land access to the 800-strong garrison had long been cut by the Tigers, with resupply and casualty evacuation of government troops relying solely on helicopters.

The LTTE's tactics before it launched the Elephant Pass assault were limited to intermittent sniping and mortar attacks and raids intended to harass the heavily armed and entrenched garrison, which were easily countered by the base's artillery. However flushed by the success of their March assassination of Ranjan Wijeratne, minister of state for defence and political head of the security forces, and the bombing of the Defence Ministry's operational headquarters three months later, the Tigers - who may also have wanted

a distraction from the links being drawn between themselves and the 21 May murder of Rajiv Gandhi in India - decided to try to seize the Elephant Pass camp....

Colombo's military commanders opted to approach Elephant Pass by sea, quickly establishing a beach-head at Vettalaikkeni, 9 km east of the besieged camp. Naval landing craft poured troops and equipment onto the secured beach-head under air-cover. Then began an agonisingly slow march to Elephant Pass across ground strewn with anti-personnel mines in the face of fierce resistance.

As the relief column marched forward, the Tigers pounded the besieged camp with rockets, mortars and artillery.

TIGER'S ANTI AIRCRAFT CAPABILITY

Colombo's air power advantage was reduced by the Tigers' newly enhanced anti-aircraft capability, which was able to stop helicopters landing in the camp. Nevertheless, the Balavegaya force demonstrated a willingness to take casualties as they fought their way to the beleaguered base.

Although senior military officers had earlier said the battle for Elephant Pass would be the turning point of the war against the separatists, the LTTE's ability to stretch the security forces - who were deployed to the maximum extent of their resources during the 24-day, 9-km advance - suggested another outcome. As one well informed newspaper columnist said during the height of the battle, the Tigers had established that Sri Lanka had two armies.

This point was not lost on President Ranasinghe Premadasa. In a brief statement issued moments after hearing news the siege had been lifted, he said: "I hope at least now

the LTTE will give up their terror campaign and save innocent lives. In war nobody wins. All are losers. It is in peace that all are victors. It is through consultation that we can find solutions to human problems and not through confrontation."

.... many analysts and diplomats in Sri Lanka are convinced neither side can win the conflict through force of arms. The Elephant Pass battle demonstrated the LTTE's stamina and military skills and, despite developments in India, that they do not lack arms and ammunition.

THONDAMAN

S. Thondaman, a senior minister of the Premadasa government who leads the country's Indian Tamil plantation workers, said the Tigers will accept an "eelam" (separate state) without the name but with the substance. While his remarks disturbed a section of the country's Sinhalese majority, they did not spark the violent reaction they once would have.

This lack of response is being viewed by some analysts as showing that the majority of Sri Lankans, from whatever ethnic group or community, now want peace. This mood has been reflected by parliament's unanimous adoption of a private member's resolution to appoint a select committee that can find a way to peace. The LTTE, which formed a political wing during the aborted peace talks, has the opportunity to participate in the select committee - either by proxy or in its own right.

However, some observers believe the LTTE sought a victory at Elephant Pass in order to negotiate from a position of strength. If this were the case, and if such thinking persists, the conflict will continue until the Tigers achieve the military victory they seek before returning to the conference table.

BBC Colombo Correspondent Chris Morris interviews Vellupillai Prabhakaran, leader of Tamil Eelam - recorded in Jaffna on 1st September 1991, with translation from Tamil to English by LTTE political advisor, Anton Balasingham

Sri Lankan government now knows that it can't impose a military solution on the Tamil people

Vellupillai Prabhakaran

Outside the Tamil Tigers' main military training camp in the Northern Jaffna peninsula a message has been carefully painted on the wall. "Mother, don't search for me, I will return with Tamil Eelam."...

The movement's leaders dismiss accusations that their methods are no more than brainwashing. They agree that many of their recruits are very young, but claim to have no conscripts. "The young people volunteer", says political leader Yoga-

ratnam Yogi, "because they have seen the atrocities committed against their family and friends."

Mr. Prabhakaran brushes off criticism of autocratic methods, pointing to the extensive political and social network with the movement has now built up. He says the young teenagers recruited are well looked after, and only fight when they want to. Even though his name is invoked in the daily oath of allegiance, he dismisses suggestions of a cult of personality or deliberate attempts to increase the mystique which surrounds him.

Even the Tamil Tigers' recent failure to capture the Elephant Pass army camp, in one of the biggest battles of the war, appears not to have affected Mr. Prabhakaran's confidence. "We learnt a lot", he said, describing the battle as an important turning point in the rebel movement's transition from a guerrilla force into a conventional army.

The Tigers say they lost more than five hundred fighters around the Elephant Pass army camp, and they've already produced a book containing the photographs of every one of the dead. Soon the same faces will be staring out from the freshly painted walls of Jaffna, inspiring more young Tamils to join the rebel cause and face an early death.

TEXT OF INTERVIEW

Q: First of all I'd like to ask you about the general military situation since the war against Sri Lankan forces broke out again in June 1990. Taking the eastern province first, how are things going there?

A: The situation in the eastern prov-

Q: But isn't it fair to say that you are in a much worse position in the east now than you were before June 1990?

A: The assumption that the eastern province was under the control of the LTTE before the resumption of hostilities last year was incorrect. Because for a long time before the outbreak of hostilities the eastern province was under the control of the IPKF. And Sri Lankan army camps were functioning there. When the IPKF left the eastern province the Sri Lankan army camps and the police stations were still functioning there. Therefore the assumption that the eastern province was under the total control of the LTTE prior to the war is incorrect.

Q: In the north you still control most of the territory. Are you pleased with the way the war has gone there?

A: It is true that the LTTE controls large areas of territory in the northern province. We were able to destroy several important army camps during the war last year. Army camps at Kokkavil, Jaffna Fort, and Mankulam were destroyed and large areas came under our control. We can say that the military offensive operations by us in the last year have been satisfactory, and it has also given us new military experience.

Q: Nevertheless the army is claiming a major victory in the recent battle at Elephant Pass. Do you consider that that was a strategic mistake on your part?

A: The claim of a massive victory at Elephant Pass by the Sri Lankan government is simply a propaganda ploy. When we launched an offensive against the Elephant Pass army camp the camp was at the point of being over-run by the LTTE. There were eight hundred

A: Our armed struggle against the Sri Lankan state has a history stretching back fifteen years. During this period of history, we have evolved into a huge military force. We have been conducting a guerrilla type of warfare, and now we are transforming ourselves into a conventional type of military structure. This clearly indicates a massive development militarily, and it's a significant turning point in the history of our struggle. The Sri Lankan government has to learn a lesson with regard to the development of the LTTE. The lesson is that the Sri Lankan government will never resolve the Tamil issue by opting for a military solution.

Q: As the size of your military force expands, there has been great criticism of the young age at which you enrol boys and girls into the LTTE. Why do you take people in when they are so young, and when do they become part of your actual fighting force?

A: We have never forcefully conscripted anybody into the movement. It is true that young people join our movement. It is because of the consequence of the worst form of state oppression. It is also because the society is faced with innumerable social problems. There have been occasions at which parents have brought their children and handed them over to us at public platforms. And we provide education facilities for the children, we have helped them with technical education, and we have instituted several projects and programmes for their educational development. But as some people allege, we have never sent these very young people to the battle front.

Q: Turning to your relations with India. They are particularly bad at the moment. Does that worry you?



Jaffna has become a land of slogans, where the Tigers' pervasive propaganda invades the senses. Voice of Tigers radio plays patriotic songs from loudspeakers in the centre of Jaffna city, while walls are covered with paintings and murals dedicated to fallen martyrs. Next to the ruins of an army camp which was blown up four years ago by a Tiger suicide bomber driving a van packed with explosives, is a mural depicting the moment of his death. "You are carrying a volcano on your shoulders", reads the accompanying sign. "No-one can defeat you."

The Tigers certainly aren't lacking in confidence. But what marks them out from almost any other guerrilla organisation in the world is the extraordinary level of commitment which the movement inspires. The symbol of this dedication to the cause is the cyanide capsule, which every rebel fighter wears around his or her neck, once three months of initial military training has been completed. To prevent capture by the enemy, Tiger cadres regularly bite on their cyanide capsule bringing instant death and martyrdom and preventing secret from being exposed. To an outsider, the cyanide cult is bizarre, indeed a sinister, phenomenon. But for the young Tigers, it's been made to seem almost natural.

At a training camp north of Jaffna, 200 young women, most of them in their teens, were going through their training routine. The day starts with the oath of allegiance to the cause, as a blood red Tiger flag is raised. Physical exercise and military training is then followed by political classes, instilling the Tigers view of history, and the wrong done to the Tamil people by the majority Sinhalese.

Such is the devotion and discipline which the movement is able to inspire. Its critics fear that in an independent state of Eelam, ruled by the Tigers, that same discipline would be extended to all walks of life. Already the Tigers demand to be recognised as the sole legitimate representative of the Tamil People, and allow no other political parties to function in the North of the country, most of which is firmly under their control.

The Tigers supreme commander Vellupillai Prabhakaran, is a man killed off by speculation more times than he would care to remember. It's no exaggeration to say he has become a living legend among both his admirers and his enemies. Resplendent in his Tiger-striped military figures, he told me that the war was going well. A question about the thousands of civilians - Tamils and Sinhalese - killed since the war broke out again in June last year didn't make him nervous. "The Sri Lankan government now

is very complex, because in this region different communities - Tamils, Muslims and the Sinhalese people - are living together. And there are Sinhalese settlements in the Trincomalee and Ampara districts, and the government has put up several army camps to protect these settlements and they've also installed several army camps along the coastal belt. Even though there is a concentration of troops in the eastern province, one cannot say that it is under the control of the Sri Lankan government. Our military offensive activities are continuing there and there is a free mobility of our troops and cadres moving in various places. Villages and jungle areas of the eastern province are still under our control. Therefore the claim that the government has total control over the eastern province is untenable.

soldiers trapped inside the army base. To rescue these trapped soldiers Sri Lanka had to send in reinforcements. A massive force of eight thousand troops was deployed for the rescue operation. And in the battle that ensued the army has suffered heavy casualties, and it has taken nearly twenty four days for the army to advance some five kilometres. I don't think this can be characterised as a great military victory. In this war at Elephant Pass we have demonstrated that we can face a conventional army face to face, and this has shown a new phase in our development.

Q: Can you tell me something more about your moves to try to expand into a conventional army. How important is that for your military development?

A: Our organisation has had problems with India for quite a long time. The government of India intervened in the Tamil problem in 1983 and provided military assistance to various Tamil groups and created new Tamil militant organisations. In 1987 the government of India entered into an agreement with Sri Lanka and imposed a solution on our people. We were opposed to the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement, and as a consequence the war broke out between India and the LTTE. So for a long time India was acting on its own national interest, but we were upholding the interests of our people. As a consequence there have been contradictions between the LTTE and the government of India. The present hostility is a product of this long historical bitterness. Therefore we are really concerned and to some

"Mother, don't search for me, I will return with Tamil Eelam"

We have always been prepared for peaceful negotiations - but we have always insisted, and continue to insist, that the talks should be without pre-conditions

Vellupillai Prabhakaran

extent disappointed over the approach of the Indian government.

Q: Can you tell me more specifically about the clampdown on your activities in Tamil Nadu. What has been the worst aspect of that clampdown on your fight in Sri Lanka?

A: For a long time the LTTE have been used as pawns in the political chess game in Tamil Nadu. The government of India as well as the Tamil Nadu state government have been making calculated efforts to turn the Tamil Nadu people against our struggle. Deliberate attempts are being made to undermine the image of our organisation. But we can say confidently that there are vast sections of the people in Tamil Nadu who support the Tiger movement and the legitimate cause for which we are fighting. As long as there is this continuing support I don't think our struggle will be in any way affected.

Q: Now I know you have denied any involvement in the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi. But the Indian investigators are convinced that you were responsible. In another development, your representative in London, Kittu, has been expelled by the British government. Aren't you concerned that international opinion is turning totally against you?

A: Our movement is not in any way involved in the killing of Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. So far this accusation has not been corroborated. It is true that the government of India has been engaged in a massive disinformation campaign against our movement, based on this false accusation.

As far as Kittu's matter is concerned, our people are deeply disappointed about the action taken against Mr. Kittu. Kittu was sent to London for medical treatment with the permission of the British High Commission. Kittu is a handicapped person and an authentic representative of our people. Having full knowledge of Kittu's case, the decision by the government of Great Britain to expel him is unfortunate and we consider this action was irresponsible and inhumane.

Q: Your critics in Sri Lanka say that despite the formation of your political wing, the LTTE is primarily a ruthless military organisation. Can you hope play any political role in the future?

A: We have a political wing, it is a massive political structure, which has been involved in a variety of activities.

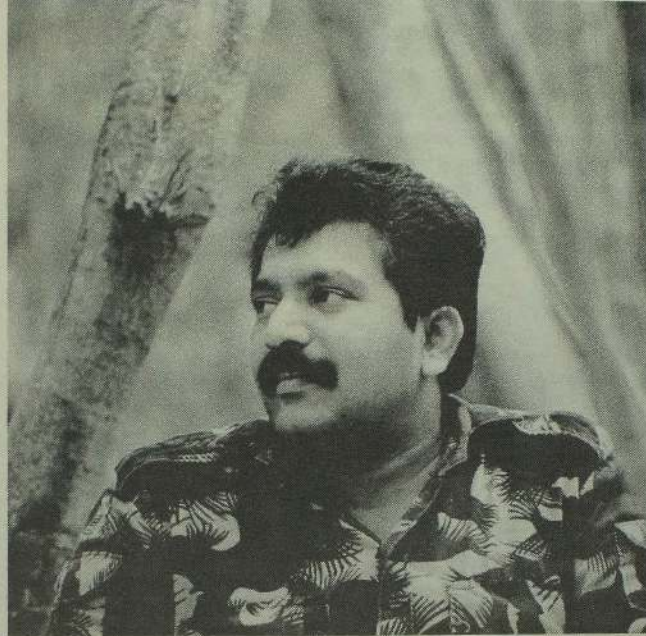
In particular the political organisation runs our civil administration in the north and east. They are involved in food production, they are involved in relief and rehabilitation work, social services and the political organisation is also looking after the problem of the refugees.

In every aspect, in all facets of social life, our political organisation is deeply involved. So the accusation that we don't have a political structure, and we are simply a military organisation, is untrue.

Q: Can you comment on the current situation in Colombo, where

President Premadasa appears to be facing a threat to his rule. Do you think the confusion in Colombo will have any effect on the ethnic conflict?

A: We are observing the situa-



"We sincerely feel that we are progressing towards the objective for which we have been fighting"

tion very carefully, and it is premature on our part to make any public comments at this stage.

Q: There have been various attempts in the last few months to reopen some form of dialogue between the government and the LTTE. What do you think are the chances of anything along those lines succeeding in the coming months?

A: We have always been prepared for peaceful negotiations. But we have always insisted, and continue to insist, that there should be talks without conditions.

Sinhalese people should first of all recognise the very basis of the Tamil question. In other words, the Tamil homeland, the Tamil nationality and the right of our people to self-determination. If these basic principles are recognised, then there is a possibility for unity between the Tamil and Sinhalese peoples.

Q: Can I ask you one question about yourself. There's a mystique grown up around you and people say you are extremely secretive. Can you tell me why you are so secretive, and why you so rarely appear in public?

A: This is an entirely wrong characterisation of my personality. It is true that I avoid public meetings, but in my day-to-day life I meet a lot of people, I address various seminars and I regularly meet a lot of people. So this assumption that I am alienated from the people is totally wrong.

Q: Finally can you tell us what you have achieved by the last fifteen months of war. Thousands of Tamils and thousands of Sinhalese have been killed. What has the LTTE actually achieved as a result?

A: As a consequence of these fifteen months of war, we have impressed upon the government of Sri Lanka, that they cannot impose a military solution on our problem.

Q: And what about the future?

A: We sincerely feel that we are progressing towards the objective for which we have been fighting.

Peter Mares interviews Senator Robert Hill and Lawrence Thilakar

continued from page 4

ence - one of their demands for example is that there should be a separate Tamil army in the North and East.

Now I think most observers would agree that if you have a separate army, you are to all intents and purposes a separate country. The Tigers' argument of course is that we can't lay down our arms because they are the only things which protect us, they are the only things which make the government take notice of us".

Peter Mares: If there is to be a breakthrough in Sri Lanka it appears the pressure will have to come from outside.

Peter Mares (on the Day Break Programme of Radio National): The next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, or CHOGM, is due this October, and as CHOGM approaches there are fresh attempts to get a Sri Lankan peace initiative off the ground. In Canberra the push is coming from the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator Robert Hill-

Senator Robert Hill: "Well, I've

been urging that the Commonwealth should, in effect, go to President Premadasa and say: "Look, we have these skills, these experiences. You are part of OUR family in the Commonwealth, we can assist you."

The Commonwealth has been very reluctant to take the initiative in this and other similar type matters before. But it is looking to a new role

commonwealth mediation?

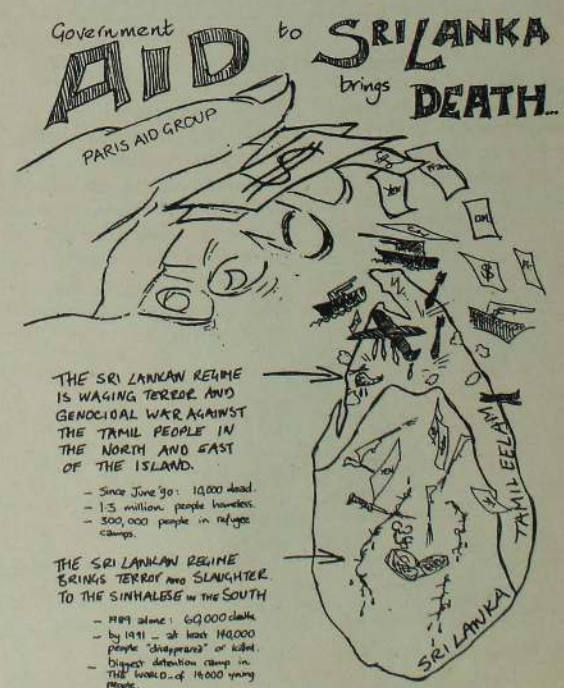
and it's taking a greater nation building task in a number of areas. And what I'm saying is that Commonwealth leaders should now have enough confidence in themselves and in their organisation to take it up to the President of Sri Lanka and say "these are the services that we could bring which might be of help to you".

Peter Mares: You have got a resolution before the Australian Senate. What's happened to that resolution?

Senator Robert Hill: Well, it hasn't progressed. It was a resolution actually urging a Commonwealth involvement towards the settlement and the Australian Government, through Senator Evans, has been reluctant to accept it.

He accepts the sentiment of the resolution but hasn't been prepared to accept that it should be in specific terms requesting the Commonwealth's involvement. I intend to press that.

I've been in the process of negotiation with the Australian Democrats and I hope that they will support us and I hope that we can now put it in specific terms requesting the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, to take this initiative to the CHOGM meeting, and at least then CHOGM members will know that the Australian Parliament is behind this idea and that might just add a little bit more weight to it.



Campaign Against State Terrorism in Sri Lanka,
c/o The Church of the Ascension, Royce Road, Manchester 15, UK.

NO COMMISSIONS WERE PAID IN THE PURCHASE OF PAKISTANI ARMS SAYS THE NAVY COMMANDER.

The Sri Lankan Navy Commander Ananda Silva, said in an interview that reports that the Pakistani ammunition used recently in the Elephant Pass campaign were of poor quality and that commissions paid for it's purchase was false and designed to tarnish the image of the Navy. He said that Pakistani ammunition used in the Chinese guns was 8 dollars a round cheaper than the Chinese rounds and the Navy was therefore able to make a considerable saving by buying from Pakistan rather than from China.

PLOTE HELPING TAMIL NADU TO HUNT LTTE

PLOTE (quislings) in Tamil Nadu are helping the Indian Police to hunt Tigers in the crackdown on LTTE, said Mr. K. Kandasamy of PLOTE. He also said that some of their 'leaders' had gone abroad to canvass world opinion against the LTTE in countries such as England, Switzerland and France to convince the authorities there of the dangers posed by the Tigers and the need to take action to curb their activities.

OVER 200 POLICE AND ARMY MEN IN LTTE CAMPS

The security forces commander, Jaffna Peninsular Brigadier Wijaya Wimalaratna said that over 200 policemen and soldiers were in LTTE detention camps in the north and that ICRC had been asked to help secure the release of these personnel.

TIGERS ATTACK TASK FORCES' SUPPLY ROUTE

Two soldiers were killed and 13 wounded when the Tigers attacked the main supply route of the Sri Lankan Army Task Force between Elephant Pass and Vettalaikenni beach head on 16th of August.

JAYALALITHA DEMANDS THE RETRIEVAL OF KACHCHATIVU

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha Jeyaravu demanded the retrieval of Kachchativu ceded to Sri Lanka in 1974. She said that she would launch an agitation, if necessary, to get Kachchativu back.

The fishermen of Rameswaram, on whose behalf this demand was made have pledged to give their lives to get the island back and make it secure.

ASSAULT ON UNION MINISTER CHIDAMPARAM IN TAMIL NADU

The Indian Union Minister Chidamparam, MP for Trichy Mr. P.L. Adaikalaraj, MP for Pudukkottai Mr. N. Sunthararaju and 38 supporters of the Indra Congress sustained severe injuries as a result of an attack on them by supporters of AIADMK. This happened when the Minister and his party were on their way to Pudukkottai from Trichy to attend a function organised by Indra Congress. Nineteen motor vehicles in which the party travelled were also badly damaged.

LEAFLETS DEMANDING EVACUATION NOT MANNA FROM SRI LANKAN HEAVEN!

Sri Lankan Air Force has dropped leaflets from helicopter over Chavakachcheri and environs to evacuate the district and warning them of obvious consequences if they fail to do so.

FOREIGN AID FOR WHAT ?

The Sri Lankan Government is to spend Rs 25,000 million during the next financial year to prosecute the war in the North East according to Sri Lankan Prime Minister D.P. Wijeyatunge.

NORAID DONATES Rs 78,500 TO RED CROSS FOR MAKING WELLS IN BATTICALOA DRINKABLE

A sum of Rs 78,500 has been given to the Sri Lankan Red Cross by NORAID, to clean up and make over 500 wells, in Batticaloa District, usable for the public. It is reported that human corpses and carcasses of animals, all killed by the Sri Lankan army in the North East have

NEWS WATCH

been dumped in these wells and thus become unfit for drinking

YET ANOTHER DEVICE TO KEEP THE TAMILS OUT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

All future appointments to the public service will be made only after obtaining security clearance of the appointee from the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB). A Public Administration Circular, No. 31/91, dated July 24 1991 setting out the details pertaining to NIB clearance has been sent out to the relevant officials.

THE BUILD UP OF THE SRI LANKAN ARMED FORCES SINCE 1983

Since 1983, the Sri Lankan military today has undergone a radical transformation with much bigger numbers and better weaponry along with a more modern organisation. In 1983 the total armed forces numbered 16,560. Defence expenditure then was Rs 848 million. Since then fresh troops have been churned out of training camps with the help of foreign instructors, a better intelligence system was created with Israeli assistance, and new weapons began flowing in. Naval officers are undergoing anti-submarine warfare training abroad. Today the total armed forces number more than 100,000 - the army alone has 70,000 men. Defence spending has increased ten fold since 1983.

With supersonic jet fighters, tracked infantry fighting vehicles, medium range artillery, better gun boats and the intention of acquiring small corvettes (with the capability of staying at sea for long periods and with enough firepower) and a naval air arm for ocean surveillance as well as anti-submarine warfare, the Sri Lankan military will for the first time have a modern conventional warfare capability.

SRI LANKAN EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN ASYLUM FRAUD

Sri Lankan embassy officials abroad are alleged to have resorted to fraudulent means in a bid to stay back in countries where they now serve or forging visas to prolong their stay or gain entry to other countries.

THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT TO RELEASE ALL MALE PLOTTERS

The Maldivian Government is expected to repatriate the remaining 17 members of PLOTE who were involved in the abortive 1988 coup. Sri Lankan Defence Ministry sources say that the 17 members will be released when they are handed over by the Maldivian Government. This is in addition to the 33 plotters who were sent back to Sri Lanka from the Maldives in December 1990. The latter have been set free and are known to be in Vavuniya where they are actively participating in the campaign against the LTTE by the Sri Lankan armed forces.

COMPOSITION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL QUESTION

A Parliamentary Select Committee has been set up consisting of members from multi-party as well as multi-ethnic communities that will study devolution of powers so that a satisfactory solution can be found to the ethnic crisis.

The President, Mr. Premadasa has now recommended that the Chairman of the Committee be Mr. Mangala Moonsinghe (SLFP), much to the displeasure of the Speaker, Mr. M.H. Mohamed who was expecting to be selected as Chairman. The Committee is to consist of 23 members from the Government and 20

from the Opposition. Among the Government nominees are Lalith Athulathmudali, S. Thondaman, A.C.S. Hameed, M. Mansoor, Wijepala Mendis, A.M. Premachandram, A.H.M. Azwer and Mrs. R. Pulendran. The composition of the Opposition MPs will be SLFP(10), TULF(5), MEP(1), USA(1), SLMC(2) and EROS (1). Whether it is feasible for such a large committee to sit and arrive at a consensus remains to be seen.

TAMIL GROUPS WHICH HAVE LAID DOWN THEIR ARMS ARE HELPING THE SRI LANKAN SECURITY FORCES, SAYS PREMADASA

President Premadasa while speaking at Mt. Lavinia after unveiling the pinnacle of a newly built dagoba said; "There are several Tamil groups in the battle field. Having been convinced of the futility of war they have laid down their arms and entered the political mainstream. Some of these Tamil factions also help the security forces to preserve the country's unitary system. We must be united and Buddhist ideas should be infused into the ruling mechanism." The burning question of the day is: how can Tamil groups which have laid down their arms help the Sri Lankan security forces without taking up arms?

REFERENDUM FOR NORTH EAST PUT OFF YET AGAIN

The Referendum for a merged North East Province scheduled to be held on August 22nd 1991, has been further postponed until February 22nd 1992 on a directive signed by President Premadasa.

SLBC PROTESTS TO BBC OVER ALLEGED BIAS

The Sri Lankan Broadcasting Corporation has lodged a protest with the British Broadcasting Corporation about BBC news and feature programmes which are tilted heavily in favour of the LTTE and the Tigers' view of the situation in the North East.

ANURA TO PRESS FOR REMOVAL OF EMERGENCY IN ALL AREAS EXCEPT THE NORTH EAST

The SLFP National Organiser, Mr. Anura Bandaranaike has called on President Premadasa to lift the emergency regulations in all areas of Sri Lanka, except in the North East where he says the security situation necessitates the extension of the emergency regulations.

DIVIDE AND RULE

Leaflets are being dropped from the air by the Sri Lankan Air Force over Trincomalee and Batticaloa Districts telling the Tamil parents that most of the LTTE boys and girls who lost their lives in Elephant Pass were from these two districts and that the LTTE were sacrificing the lives of the innocent children from the Eastern Districts. They also urged the parents to take measures to protect their children.

WE DO NOT FAVOUR A SEPARATE STATE SAYS DOUGLAS DEVANANDA, SECRETARY OF THE EPDLF

At a press conference on 23rd August 1991, the Secretary of the EPDLF, Douglas Devananda, called on the LTTE to accept the conditions laid down by President Premadasa and to agree to peace talks with the Government. He said that they do not favour a separate state, but will struggle for the rights of the Tamils within a unitary Sri Lankan state. He maintained that life has re-

turned to normal in Kayts and the islands around it, which have now come under the control of the Sri Lankan army; that about one thousand of the forty thousand people who fled their homes from these islands have now returned and that schools, hospitals, courts etc. are functioning normally and that the Sri Lankan army has made food available to these areas at controlled prices.

LTTE ALIVE AND KICKING IN THE EAST

The LTTE ambushed a Sri Lankan armoured vehicle at Verpangkulam in Trincomalee district. Four Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and one Sri Lankan soldier sustained serious injuries.

The LTTE attacked a Special Task Force foot patrol in Akaraipattu killing one STF personnel. It also engaged a Sri Lankan army patrol at Sinhapura killing one soldier and wounding one. Six Sri Lankan soldiers are reported to be unaccounted for.

MUSLIM YOUTH READY TO JOIN THE SRI LANKAN ARMY, SAYS MUSLIM MP

Mr. S.S.M. Abubakar, speaking in Parliament said, that at a time such as the present, when the LTTE is in a weak position, the Government must do all in its power to bring the Mannar District under its control. He said that Muslim youth were ready to enlist in the Sri Lankan army and fight the LTTE to liberate Mannar from their control.

6,800 TAMIL REFUGEES IN INDIA TO RETURN VOLUNTARILY

The Indian High Commissioner in Sri Lanka, Mr. S.S. Jha said that the names of 6,800 Tamil refugees at present in India, who want to return voluntarily to Sri Lanka, have been handed to the Government of Sri Lanka. These refugees are to be settled in the Mannar District in refugee camps similar to the one in Madhu. He also states that the Indian and Sri Lankan authorities will discuss ways and means of returning the remaining Tamil refugees in India to their homes in Sri Lanka.

Regarding the action against the Government, he said that the Indian Government will take the necessary action to rid India of the LTTE but any such action will be independent of the Sri Lankan Government.

ARMS FOR WIVES OF HOME GUARDS

The wives of home guards in Amparai District are to be given special paramilitary training in the use of arms according to defence sources. The plan to train and arm women to back up male guards was mooted by a senior police officer in the Amparai District.

T.M. SAUNDARARAJAN AT THONDAMAN'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

Mr. S. Thondaman, Minister of Tourism and Rural Development and Leader of the CWC celebrated his 79th birthday on 30th August at Bandarawela. The musical entertainment which followed the party was conducted by the well known cinema singer T.M. Saundararajan and party.

NEW FOOD CROP IN THE NORTH

Farmers in the North have started cultivating a strain of cereal which can be harvested in only three months. This strain called "Kambu" is grown in South India in many areas. It is similar to kurakkan, millet and sorghum. The Agricultural research Department in the North says that kambu has a higher protein content than any other cereal. The flour from this grain can be made into pittu, bread and biscuit.

29 VAVUNIYA SCHOOLS SHUT

According to a report issued by the Education Department, 29 schools in the Vavuniya District have been closed for over an year, due to the war in the North East.

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A CONVERSATION HEARD IN COLOMBO 7

THEY HAVE GOT PROVINCIAL COUNCILS - WHAT MORE DO THEY WANT?

"Most of my relatives in Colombo cast embarrassed glances of disapproval about my stand", said a Colombo Seven expatriate. He was a vociferous advocate of Eelam a separate state for the North East of Sri Lanka

"He" they exclaim, "is out of touch." "These expatriates live in luxury while we suffer." "Why are they supporting these rebels?" "Don't they realize what they are doing?"

These are the brilliantly critical comments of the so called Tamil intellectual set of Colombo 7.

They dance their lives away at night-clubs while Jaffna burns. They sit in the quiet of their homes and discourse, while Jaffna is demolished. "Damn it!" they exclaim, "They have got provincial councils. What more do they want? How ungrateful can they be?"

They feel for the Sinhalese ruler. "Who are these uneducated wretches that do not appreciate what is being done for them? We are all Sri Lankans who want to live together. Why don't these damn rebels leave us alone?"

They want an immediate end to the present impasse. They want the country on its feet again. "How can we move forward as long as these elements keep disrupting our economic progress?" "They just must be wiped out." "Our army must for gods sake do their bit." "None of this, they have got the people behind them, nonsense." "Wipe them out." "God, how politicians have ruined this country."

"But how?" says a savvy army commander. "They will fight us till we find a political solution."

"We've given it to them, haven't we?" says a Sinhalese thinker. "What the hell are they fighting about? If they want a separate state, let them go to India. No one is for separation.

Who do they think they represent?"

A foreign journalist walks in. "My god" she says, "do you realize how determined these people are? Women who hid behind fences are riding bikes in uniforms with guns toted over their shoulders, saying 'I will kill one Sinhala soldier before letting them rule us again.' Children of

will be always dependant on them economically," butts in a sharp witted chap, sipping his third scotch.

NOT FOR FUN

"Do you think that people fighting and dying for a cause do it for fun?" asks a Tamil sympathizer of the move for independence.

"How about letting us try?" the young Tamil asked.

ALL IDEALS AND NO REALITY?

"That's the trouble with all of you Tamils. All ideals and no reality. How the hell are you going to get money to rule yourselves?"

"Probably from more sources than

"That's your trouble no, you Tamils want to rule us."

"You think we will accept that? You all had it good under the British, now it's our turn."

"To do what? Take revenge?"

"Have we done anything to you? How can you talk like this? All we are asking is for our people to catch up with your people. The British as part of their divide and rule favoured you, no?"

"So we are to be disadvantaged while you rise? How long do you think the average Tamil or Muslim can take this? When will this ever stop? You think we are willing to be ruled as unequal citizens for ever?"

"But what choice do you have? You are a minority, no? How can you do anything about it?"

"Ah, my dear friend, by kicking you out of the North East, where you are a minority."

"And how will you do that without an army?" "AHHHHH, we shall see, we shall see, my friend," said the Tamil dreamily, as he dosed off to sleep.

REPORTING BY CHIT CHAT

13 display their determination to fight the Sinhala enemy proudly." In tears she ends. "And I saw a little fellow riding a bike warning everyone of an approaching heli, only to be gunned down by the pilot".

COLOMBO IS AN ISLAND WITHIN AN ISLAND

"Colombo is an island within an island. Nothing touches you," she said angrily.

"What does this foreigner know? These are a bunch of patronizing meddlers. If all of them like Amnesty and these interfering journalists would leave us alone, we've got it made. Don't they realize our business potential? We have contributed as much towards the country's economic development, as these damn rebels have towards its ruin."

"These first world dreamers walk in with these high ideas for a third world struggling to develop. They should work for a living here to know what's good for us."

"I even feel this must be a conspiracy by the industrial world to keep us subjugated. This way we

"Not fun you beggar, those beggars have no entertainment, like movies and things, so what the hell else can you do? Not fun, just damn frustration. Must we provide you with everything?"

"No; but how about the right to live as equals of the universe?" asks the Tamil.

SOME ARE MORE EQUAL

"What are we, all equal or something. You must know the reality of Orwell's 'Some people are more equal than others?'"

"Are you then saying the Sinhalese have an inherent right to be more equal than others in Sri Lanka?" the young Tamil quipped.

"That's not what I am saying. But how much do you want? You can vote, you can have your members of parliament, you can indulge in satyagraha (but not too much). What more can we do for you guys?"

"How about nothing?" the Tamil Turk went on.

"What, you Tamils want to rule yourselves after all we have done for you? You don't have the resources to last you two days."

the ones we have relied on up to now," said the Tamil acidly.

"No wonder people have problems with you Tamils. You are never grateful for all we have done for you."

"And, what is that?"

"What is that, what is that? That's all you ask. Look at you. All you Tamils here are better off than the average Sinhalese."

"Are we the average? If you gave the average Tamils the chance, they would be like you or me, don't you think?"

Tamil language at Sydney University

A course of study in Tamil language may be undertaken from August 1991 at the University of Sydney, in Australia. The course is conducted by Dr. A. Kandiah, formerly at the Open University of Sri Lanka. This is the first time that a course or study in Tamil is available at a university in Australia.

"Tamil is a major member of the Dravidian family of languages, which, in terms of their recorded history at least, are indigenous to the Indian subcontinent though affinities with languages spoken elsewhere have, with some degree of plausibility, been suggested. In modern times, Dravidian speakers are concentrated in the four southernmost states of India - Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu - though there are significant pockets of Dravidian speech as far north as Bihar (Malto), Nepal (Kurux) and Pakistan (Brahui). Second to Telugu with respect to its number of speakers, Tamil is of particular importance as being the member of the group with the longest continuous written history, the earliest extant literature belonging to the beginning of the Christian era or earlier, and as being in certain respects the most typically Dravidian, in that with respect to historical change both autonomous and through contact situations Tamil can be shown to be more conservative than any genetically related language.

No accurate figures for the number of Tamil speakers at the time of writing (1981) are available. The provisional figure for the whole of India produced by the 1971 census is 37,592,794. A reasonable calculation, based on a projection of population trends, would give between forty-five and forty-six million for India as a whole in 1981, with some forty-three million living in the southeastern state of Tamil Nadu, which has Madras as its capital and Tamil as its official language. If one assumes four million or so in Sri Lanka (mainly in the north and northeast and classified as Ceylon Tamils, Indian Tamils, Ceylon Moors and Indian Moors), something approaching one million in Malaysia and Singapore, and much smaller minorities in many countries of the world, including Mauritius, Fiji, Burma, South Africa, some Caribbean states and Great Britain, the total number of Tamil speakers in the world at the present time might well be in the region of fifty million... From the Introduction by Dr. R.E. Asher University of Edinburgh Scotland in Descriptive Grammars (published by Croom Helm):

Shock Treatment?

PUNE, Aug. 27. A German diplomat today shocked an Indian audience by blaming India for its "over-armament" "hegemonial regional policy" and its present demand to be recognised as a leading world power which it is not, not yet at least."

Speaking at a seminar on "Role of Germany in Europe-German European and Indian perceptions," jointly organised by the Mahratta Chamber of Commerce and Industries and Max Mueller Bhavan here. Mr. Juergens, Deputy Consul General of Germany, Bombay said "India's potential is in its neighbourhood. Instead of realising this potential, it has scared away its neighbours by a hegemonial regional policy and a policy of over-armament"

He said changes in Eastern Europe and above all in the Soviet Union "have robbed India of one of its most important economic and political partners." Its humanities with the Gulf region, established by Indian workers there have been severed as a result of the Gulf war.

India neglected to establish "useful friendships" in its own region - the West Asia and south east Asia and its foreign policy has "neglected necessary orientation towards the west

the north and the east" Mr. Juergens said. India is in a "state of isolation" he declared and advised it to effect "radical change- towards a cooperative foreign policy."

He said India's conflict with Pakistan "is an unnecessary nuisance." It has "neglected to strengthen its ties with the United States of America" and "Maintains a claim of an important opinion leader of the third world, although it never gave it a useful network of operational relationships."

Mr. Juergens said "it has been convenient for India to lean on the strong Soviet partner which offered a profitable and easily accessible market.

"India is still suffering from birth defects—it came into independence too big, too heavy, too

"The Soviet Union has protected India in the past 20 years in this position. It has thus stopped India from undertaking the necessary reflections and new orientations in its policy."

The German diplomat said "we have no extensive political interest in this region. It is good to help somebody who is alone, especially if it is a solitary and potentially big power."

NEW DELHI, Aug. 28. The German Embassy here today clarified that the remarks made by the Deputy Consul General in Bombay at a recent seminar on "over-rearmament" by India reflected his personal views and not the official position of Bonn.

The promptness with which the Embassy came out with a clarificatory statement showed its anxiety to dispel a wrong impression of the German government's stand.

A statement by the Embassy's Press Attache said: "In connection with a report by PTI on August 27 about critical comments of the Deputy German Consul General in Bombay on India's Foreign Policy, the following statement is being made:

"The German Government is fully aware of the peaceful objectives of India's Foreign Policy both in relationship with her neighbours and in international relations in general.

"The German Government continues to cooperate with India in the spirit of mutual confidence and trust." (Courtesy: Hindu International Edition)

A self sufficient economy an essential pre-requisite for Independent Tamil Eelam

Velupillai Prabhakaran

The following is an extract from a congratulatory message sent by Mr V. Prabhakaran, Leader of the LTTE to the Archaya Fruit Industry on their first anniversary:

At the present moment Eelam Tamils are fighting two battles: first a liberation struggle to regain our homelands from the enemy and second an economic battle - to produce enough food locally so as to defeat the blockade and embargo, by the Sri Lankan state on food materials sent to the North East. It is only if we can succeed on these two fronts that we can be sure of achieving our ultimate goal - Tamil Eelam.

For a very long period in our history, our land had a self sufficient, mixed economy until the colonising foreigners destroyed this position. Alien products and foreign eating habits were thrust on our people.

The Imperial powers (English) introduced the tea and rubber plantations and neglected the lands producing food crops. They unified the North East and the rest of Sri Lanka for administrative convenience. They made Colombo as the main centre for marketing of foods. As a result of this, the Tamil areas lost their self sufficiency and became dependent solely on the Colombo market. The successive Sinhalese governments which took over from the British, encouraged this dependency of the Tamils, on Colombo and the south.

The Sinhala racist politicians are of the opinion that as long as the Tamils live in southern Sri Lanka, depending on income derived from jobs and businesses there, the struggle for independence of the Tamils will not reach fruition. It is because of this dependence that each time the battle for liberation

is on the point of being successful, the Sri Lankan government imposes an economic blockade on the North East.

This economic threat of the racist Sri Lankan government is a challenge to our freedom struggle. We should face this challenge head on, achieve a steady growth in food production to become self sufficient, thus completely defeating their expectations of our dependency. This is an essential pre-requisite in the present state of our struggle, if we are to achieve an Independent State of Tamil Eelam.

Sinhala businessman and military police smuggle goods to Tigers!

A millionaire Sinhalese businessman from Anuradhapura and seven military policemen have been charged with smuggling contraband to the Tigers in the North. A consignment of banned goods worth Rs.5 million (\$123,000) was discovered at Ransevapura. Over 40 items including batteries, petrol and matches are currently banned as part of the Army's blockade of the North. The Thandikulam checkpoint reopened in late July with hundreds of civilians a day moving north but very few coming south. There is still LTTE activity south of Vavuniya. Four soldiers died and eight were injured in an attack at Arugampulveli on 22 July. (Courtesy Sri Lanka Monitor, British Refugee Council Publication)

Kokkaddicholai massacre - 21 women raped, youngest was 12 years old

Mrs. Palipody Arasammah told the Presidential Commission investigating the Kokkaddicholai massacre at its opening session on 29 July in Batticaloa how her husband Santhosam and 16 others were shot dead and their bodies burned in a landmine crater. Sri Lankan infantry ran amok at Kokkaddicholai on 11 June, killing 159 civilians and wounding 27 after a LTTE landmine killed two soldiers. Reports say 21 women were raped - the youngest was 12 years old. After four days the Commission suspended hearings and will reconvene in Colombo. No time frame has been set for its report. (Courtesy Sri Lanka Monitor, British Refugee Council Publication)

"Stop Offensive against Tamils" say Students for Human Rights, Sri Lanka

The Students for Human Rights Sri Lanka (SHR), an organisation standing for the human, civil and democratic rights of the people of Sri Lanka, has issued a statement on the impeachment of President Ranasinghe Premadasa. It says:

"In this motion presented under the article 32 (2) of the constitution, among 15 reasons put forward for the president not being it for office, we consider the 12th, "The president has failed in his duty to protect the fundamental rights of the people particularly those mentioned articles 10, 11, 13 and 14" as being of great importance with regard to the human, civil and democratic rights of the people of Sri Lanka. What is important to us is that the spirit of this resolution is put into practise. We believe that in order to achieve this immediate steps must be taken to remove the repressive legislations and to stop the warmongering methods employed by the regime..."

The shock and destruction caused in the Sri Lankan society due to the (1987) Indo-Lanka accord signed against the will of the people was enormous - the Sri Lankan "security forces" which up to then had been repressing the people in the north and east started manoeuvres in the south while the Indian forces took charge of the north and east. The military measures undertaken to quell the people's opposition which arose with the entry of the Indian troops was not second to measures taken by an one of the most murderous regimes in the world. Killings were carried out at a rate of more than 200 per day. Outside the north and east, in 1989 alone, after president Ranasinghe Premadasa assumed office

(with 27% of the total votes) the number of civilians killed were more than 60,000. During this period thousands of people from all walks of life 'disappeared' and were made to suffer horrible torture, were summarily executed and burnt in public. Among these people murdered were students, intellectual, journalists, human rights activists, workers fighting for democracy and civil liberties as well as thousands of lesser known civilians. Of the students killed outside the north and east were more than 450 university students including nearly all the student leaders involved in negotiations with the state for democratic rights; and more than 5000 school children. The violations of human rights by the Sri Lankan state was a well planned operation...

After the Indian troops were withdrawn, the north and east of the island continues to burn with the war between the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) and the Sri Lankan state. The genocide of the Tamil people continue through non stop aerial bombardment, arbitrary arrests and killings by the ground forces continue unabated. The lack of essential medicines, fuel and other essential commodities have made the lives of the people not worth living. In the north and east more than 1,200,000 people are reduced to being refugees in their own country and are forced to live in camps under intolerable conditions.

Today, murderous military units with the most disgraceful human rights records such as the Commando (Army), RDF (Rapid Deploy-

ment Force - Army), STF (Special Task Force - Police), CSU (Counter Subversive Unit - Police) and other para-military forces created by the government to repress the people are deployed in the north and the south. Today the south is pervaded by White Terror with the government's spies infiltrating all layers of society and institutions and a constant state of fear is the normal state of affairs and the government continue to hold more than 25,000 political prisoners held under the emergency regulations and the PTA without trial - mostly JVP (People's Liberation Front) suspects

In every part of the country, whether it be north or south people are intimidated and terrorised by the state power and its made to live under a blanket of fear. The regime's racist war in the north and the east and the regime's terror in the south must be stopped. Stable and lasting peace, free and fair elections and the fundamental rights guaranteed in articles 10, 11, 13 and 14 of the constitution must be ensured.

We would welcome the removal of President Premadasa from power. More importantly we would welcome the introduction of real human and democratic rights to the island. A precondition for this will be

1) Remove the Emergency Regulations, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the Indemnity Act.

2) Immediate halt to the military offensive against the Tamil people in the North and East (Courtesy Viraj Mendis)

New Delhi is doing every thing to prevent Tamil Eelam - but we will overcome

Yogarathnam Yogi

In a broadcast over the "Voice of Tigers," the LTTE leader Yogarathnam Yogi accused the Indian government of trying to destroy the LTTE organisational structure in Tamil Nadu.

India Abroad reports that Yogi, who is also general secretary of the LTTE's political wing known as Peoples Front of Liberation Tigers (PFLT), charged that New Delhi is doing everything possible to prevent establishment of Eelam. "But we will overcome these obstacles and achieve Eelam with the help of the Tamil people," he vowed. He did not explain whether he included Indian Tamils as well in the category of "Tamil people."

Yogi accused India of taking an anti-LTTE line "because it failed to control and use the LTTE for their own designs." He said India, "having failed" in arm-twisting methods against LTTE leaders, "sent Indian troops to north and east and nearly succeeded in completely destroying the Eelam struggle, but the power of the Tamil masses prevailed and we are in a position to continue our struggle."

This was the LTTE's first blast at India since the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi on May 21, although Indian authorities raided some LTTE hideouts in India and detained a large number of Tigers following the assassination (Courtesy India Abroad).

The Madras Hindu News Report dated August 27 says LTTE Base Remains Undestroyed

The LTTE in Tamil Nadu is down but not out. Like a phoenix, the 'Tigers' may surface again. This is the perception of the security agencies. They think that the LTTE base still remains undestroyed. Its contacts are still intact and its sympathisers continue to owe their allegiance to it.

The continued arrest of LTTE militants in remote parts of the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, the agencies say, testifies to this. The militants are lying low for the present unable to face the massive police hunt. How long will the pressure last? Will the current relentless drive against the LTTE be canalised into a permanent action plan to rid the State of the militant menace?

These are the questions in the minds of the security agencies knowing as they do the LTTE psyche and its ability to widen its base and strengthen the muscle after adversity. The agencies do not understate the organisation's ability to finance and sustain its movement in Tamil Nadu in the light of what it did before the crackdown

The 'Tigers' have always used the Tamil Nadu coast for smuggling arms and ammunition to Jaffna and indulged in hawala transactions to finance their essential supplies. Huge consignments arriving regularly by sea were smuggled into Tamil Nadu from where the arms and ammunitions were despatched to Jaffna. One such liner, registered in Latin America with headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, was extensively used on such missions.

The militants were also found to have collected foreign currencies from Sri Lankans residing abroad who remitted money to their kith and kin in India and paid in Indian rupees on receipt of instructions. The foreign currency was used for buying arms and ammunitions. During President's rule in Tamil Nadu, raids were organised in which Rs. 7 lakhs and foreign currencies to the tune of Rs. 1 lakh were seized. And that was considered only the tip of the iceberg.



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Tamil Refugees arriving in Tamil Nadu, India



"Everyone has the right to seek and enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution" (Article 14, United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

A refugee is anyone who has a "well founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (Article 1, United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951)

No Refugee shall be returned to a country where "his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion" (Article 33, United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951)

Governments should "act in a particularly liberal and humanitarian spirit in relation to persons who seek asylum on their territory" (Resolution 14 of 1967, on Asylum to Persons in Danger of Persecution, Council of Europe)

Amnesty International expresses grave concern at New curbs on Asylum seekers in the UK

On 2 July the Home Secretary announced a package of measures aimed at restricting the number of people seeking asylum in the United Kingdom. Richard Dunstan sets out Amnesty's response.

People fleeing human rights violations will be prevented from travelling to the United Kingdom to seek asylum under severe new measures announced by Mr Baker. The fine imposed on airlines bringing asylum seekers lacking a valid passport or visa is doubled (to £ 2,000 per passenger) with immediate effect, and British officials will operate strict document checks at airports overseas to stop refugees boarding aircraft bound for the UK.

Mr Baker's long-awaited announcement follows an eight-month, interdepartmental review of asylum policy, co-ordinated by the Cabinet Office. Amnesty and refugee agencies were shocked by some of the measures announced in the Home Secretary's statement to the House of Commons, the most controversial of which is a proposal to remove asylum seekers' right to legal aid, a step which will exacerbate the unfairness of current procedures. **Without legal aid, asylum seekers will no longer be able to obtain essential advice and representation from solicitors.**

Other measures announced by Mr Baker include: the creation of a "fast track" procedure to deal with applications which the Home Office considers to be "clearly unfounded", with adjudicators being able to reject appeals against such decisions without an oral hearing; and the rapid expulsion of asylum seekers who arrive from transit countries. Entry procedures at air and sea ports, par-

ticularly at Dover, will be tightened to ensure identification of such asylum seekers. Mr Baker also announced a substantial increase in the number of Home Office officials dealing with asylum applications.

While welcoming the increase in staffing at the Home Office, which should lead to a substantial decrease in delays, currently averaging 16 months, **Amnesty fears that the accelerated "fast track" procedure may not allow some asylum seekers an effective opportunity to present their case and give reasons for their fear of persecution.** International standards for the protection of refugees provide that asylum seekers must be given a "reasonable" time to present their case with "the necessary facilities". This is particularly important for those, such as victims of torture, who may still be traumatised upon arrival or may, as a result of their experiences, be apprehensive of authority and therefore afraid to speak freely.

Similarly, the denial of an oral appeal hearing in "fast track" cases will make it that much more difficult for asylum seekers to present their case fully to adjudicators reviewing Home Office decisions, and increases the risk of unfair decisions by the Home Office not being corrected. Amnesty believes that adjudicators hearing asylum appeals should rigorously examine the basis on which the Home Office has made a negative decision, taking full account of the asylum seeker's response or counter-argument to the reasons for refusal, and this is unlikely to happen if asylum seekers are unable to give oral evidence and be represented before the adjudicator by a solicitor or specialist refugee organisation.

Amnesty condemns the doubling of fines imposed on airlines under the 1987 Immigration (Carriers Liability) Act, a move clearly intended to deny those fleeing persecution an opportunity to seek safety in the UK. Such people are commonly unable to obtain proper documents, particularly visas, and therefore have to resort to the use of forged documents provided by unscrupulous profiteers.

Since 1987 fines totalling more than £ 30 million have been imposed under the Act, and it is clear that airlines have adopted practices aimed at minimising the number of fines incurred. Some now carry out stringent checks on passengers' documentation prior to embarkation, in effect shifting the burden of immigration control to airline personnel, who are not qualified to carry out such work.

As one airline spokesman put it recently: "If we suspect that someone may claim asylum (after reaching the UK), we are expected to deny boarding. We could refuse a genuine asylum seeker, yes."

The right to seek and obtain asylum from persecution is a fundamental human right of enormous importance. **Amnesty fears that the measures announced by the Home Secretary will seriously endanger the protection of those genuinely at risk of human rights violations, and will undermine the international community's carefully constructed system for the protection of such people. We will therefore continue to press the Government to amend its proposals.** (Courtesy Amnesty International British Section Journal August/September 1991)

Tamil Refugees in Europe

Over 25,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees a year arrive in Europe to join the 200,000-strong exile community and there is now growing pressure to reverse the flow.

Germany says it will exempt Sri Lankan Tamil refugees from tough new asylum laws that allow federal authorities to expel refused asylum-seekers. Less than 1% of Germany's 50,000 Sri Lankan asylum-seekers gain refugee status and most are denied work permits and free movement.

In France, there is a new wave of revulsion over a series of forcible expulsions of Tamil asylum-seekers. A 55 year old Sri Lankan, Aramugam Sivasambu Eesan died of a heart attack after manhandling by French police at Charles de Gaulle airport in a second attempt to deport him on 24 August. Hewas refused asylum on his arrival two weeks earlier. (Courtesy: Sri Lanka Monitor September 1991)

Amnesty delegation denied access to India

An Amnesty International delegation, scheduled to leave for India on 3 July, was not granted entry visas by the Indian Government. The Government informed AI on 3 July that the request for visas was still under consideration and that a decision would be reached by 15 July. As of 22 July, there was still no response from the Indian Government.

In a letter of 23 April to the Foreign Secretary, Muchkund Dubey, AI had proposed that a delegation visit three southern states: Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. On 11 June AI further specified that a three-member delegation proposed to visit southern India from 3 to 23 July. A Japanese member of the AI delegation was initially granted a visa on 20 June but his visa was withdrawn a few days later.

Bishop of Canberra to President Premadasa: Stop Human Rights Abuses

Dear Mr President,

I write as leader of the Anglican community in the national capital of Australia, where our Government is based. Anglicans here and in other parts of the country are exceedingly anxious about the fate of the Tamil people in Sri Lanka, especially the many Anglicans amongst them. Some here who have relatives in Sri Lanka have spoken to me personally about their distress.

We hear continuous stories of human rights abuses and we note that you yourself appointed a special task force on human rights in 1990. We have heard nothing of a report from that task force, and hope that it may lead to a regularising of relationships in the many troubled areas of Sri Lanka.

We are disturbed to hear a report that the world-renowned work of Amnesty International is treated with contempt in Sri Lanka and has been called a 'terrorist' organisation by your Foreign Minister. We are aware that the European Community has deplored the human rights record of Sri Lanka, as did Canada recently. The Australian Government has made repeated representations, which we support.

As you know, a considerable amount of foreign aid moneys is given by Australia to help in your very difficult situation. However, the Australian community cannot continue to support that while such internationally documented human rights abuses continue. **We urge you to take immediate, obvious and clearly communicated action to bring these abuses to an end.**

Yours sincerely,
The Right Reverend Owen Dowling,
Bishop of Canberra and Goulbourn
7th June 1991

Tail piece

"Reason is one of the very feeblest of Nature's forces, if you take it at any one spot and moment. It is only in the very long run that its effects become perceptible. Reason assumes to settle things by weighing them against one another without prejudice, partiality, or excitement; but what affairs in the concrete are settled by is and always will be just prejudices, partialities, cupidities, and excitements. Appealing to reason as we do, we are in a sort of forlorn hope situation, like a small sandbank in the midst of a hungry sea ready to wash it out of existence. But sandbanks grow when the conditions favour; and weak as reason is, it has the unique advantage over its antagonists that its activity never lets up and that it presses always in one direction, while men's prejudices vary, their passions ebb and flow, and their excitements are intermittent. Our sandbank, I absolutely believe, is bound to grow - bit by bit it will get dyked and breakwatered."

William James, October 7, 1904

BOOK REVIEW

Ethnic Conflict and Human Rights in Sri Lanka: An Annotated Bibliography by Kumar Rupesinghe and Berth Verstappen, Hans Zell Publishers, London, 1989, 565 pp, £ 48.00.

One humorous definition for a bikini suit is, 'What it reveals is interesting, but what it hides is significant'. In a similar vein, a reference book such as a bibliography could also be reviewed by asking two questions: What it reveals? and what it hides?

According to the authors Kumar Rupesinghe and Berth Verstappen, "The purpose of this bibliography has been to record the literature concerning the escalating phase of the internal conflict in Sri Lanka, with an emphasis on the period 1983-1988... though the bibliography contains a large number of documents from an earlier date, and in particular of the period from 1977 onwards."

From a base of 5000 books, pamphlets, articles and 'statements', about 2310 were selected for inclusion in this bibliography. The authors point out that they have focused on the periodicals and unpublished public documents of non-governmental organizations, which are given less attention in the traditional academic bibliographies.

The merit of this book is in the annotations of each entry. This becomes clearly visible when one compares this work with that of H.A.I. Goonetilleke's path-breaking five-volume bibliography of Ceylon, published between 1973 and 1983.

A total of 2311 entries (according to the number count in the book, though entries 876 and 1810 are missing) are categorized under 15 chapters. These (with the total number of entries within parenthesis) are as follows:

political participation (156), freedom of expression (42), liberty of the person (51), detention (36), judiciary (48), legislation and human rights (95), ethnic conflicts (533), citizenship and plantation workers (106), collective violence (309), militarization (57), refugees (67), international relations (308), negotiations and mediation (362), 1987 Indo Sri Lankan agreement (114) and bibliographies (25). Among these, 25 select entries cover the two decades, from 1951 to 1970. An additional 186 entries are from 1971 to 1980. The remaining 2100-odd entries cover the period of 1981 to 1988.

Among the political leaders, the views of J.R. Jayewardene have found place in 30 entries. This is acceptable since he was the head of state, during the period (1977-88) which show a drastic deterioration in human right situation in Sri Lanka. Colvin R. de Silva and N. Sanmugathan have 10 entries each, espousing their opinions. Other prominent players in the political arena whose views are covered in more than 5 entries include, A. Amirthalingam, L. Athulathmudali, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Cyril Mathew and Velupillai Prabhakaran.

The author with the maximum number (65 in all) of entries to his credit is Mervyn de Silva, the editor of Lanka Guardian. Among the Indian journalists, a number of reports from S.H. Venkatramani, T.S. Subramanian, Anita Pratap and G.K. Reddy have been included.

Quite a few entries reveal the true personalities of their authors. For instance, A.T. Ariyaratne is known as the founder of Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka. He also projects a neutral image (probably for international consumption) in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. However the entry no. 799 which is a text of his Sinhala address published in the Riviresa (9 Dec. 1984) reveals his true heart. In this address to the Sinhalese security forces, Ariyaratne states, "You took up arms, not for personal glory, not to repress another group of people, but to protect the country from what is virtually a foreign invasion; do your duty nobly, restore peace and order in the country and come back to us".

The entry no. 793 is authored by C.G. Weeramantry, reputed to be a scholar in international law. He points out that, "there is no basis for separatism in international law".

(Note by Interim Editor: please see Satchi Ponnambalam's article in this issue of the Tamil Nation)

Some entries are quite entertaining. The entry no. 779 authored by the Sinhala Bala Mandalaya - U.K. and Europe Branch in 1983 states that, "there was never a Tamil kingdom in the North or East of Sri Lanka". Then the entry no. 783, authored by one G. Senadhira in 1983 informs us that, "there existed in Jaffna, a Tamil principality during the 14th and 15th centuries...". The annotation for the subsequent entry no. 784 (published within a week of the preceding entry in the same Sinhalese newspaper in Sri Lanka) tells the readers that, "there was a sub-kingdom at Jaffna under the rule of the Arya Chakravasti (sic) during the 14th and 15th centuries". All these variations within a space of five entries!

Now, I will focus on some of the pertinent omissions in this bibliography.

First, the literature on the results of the 1977 general election have not been included completely. While the entry no. 446 presents the views of Fr. Tissa Balasuriya on this topic ("While the TULF was successful in the Northern province, the Tamil-speaking people in the Eastern province apparently rejected separatism"), the entry no. 530, which is a 1983 press release of the Sri Lankan Ministry of State has been annotated as, "in the 1977 elections, the TULF obtained only 48% of the votes in the Northern and Eastern provinces". The opposing views to Fr. Balasuriya, presented by S. Sri Kantha and Rev. Joseph Mary in the Aug-Dec. 1977 issues of Colombo Tribune have been excluded. Factually speaking, the overall 'vote for Eelam' in the 1977 election amounted to 57% in the whole of Northern and Eastern provinces (see Asia Week, Sept. 2, 1977), and within the Jaffna peninsula, 68% of the voters preferred Eelam.

About the TULF's performance in the Eastern province, the then MP for Trincomalee, R. Sampanthan noted, "The TULF polled 139,925 votes in the Eastern province, that is in the Tamil-speak-

ing electorates and won 4 seats. The UNP polled 124,620 votes and won 6 seats". (see Govt. of Sri Lanka Hansard, Nov. 21, 1977, columns, 831-836). Exclusion of these alternate views in this bibliography is regrettable.

Secondly, four entries relate to submissions to the Sansoni Presidential Commission, appointed to report on the 1977 ethnic riots. These were the submissions of Ven. Madihe Pannasaha Thero, Prof. S. Ranwella and two unnamed Sinhalese sources. Neither the submissions made by the various organizations representing the Tamil interests, nor the details about this Commission's final report have not been included. I found this omission as a strange oversight.

Thirdly, the compilers state in their introduction that they have excluded the newspaper articles and features for this bibliography. However, the newspaper articles which were republished in news magazines like the Lanka Guardian and Tamil Times have been included. The newspapers covered in this indirect manner include, Daily News, Davasa, Dinamina, Divaina, Island and Sun (all from Sri Lanka) as well as Hindu, Deccan Herald, Times of India and Hindustan Times (all from India).

If this is acceptable, one would have preferred to see the news-reports and features which appeared in the internationally prestigious newspapers like the New York Times, Christian Science Monitor, Washington Post, Le Monde, Globe and Mail, Guardian, Sydney Morning Herald, Melbourne Age and Die Welt. For one thing, these international newspapers have gained reputations for their balanced coverage; and they are easily accessible in computerized data base and microfilm format for ready reference.

For credibility, I would opt for the New York Times than for the Ceylon Daily News or Davasa. Can any serious student of Sri Lankan affairs ignore what the reporters of the New York Times wrote about the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka during the past ten years? I will

list chronologically just a dozen of these New York Times reports (culled from my clipping file) which have failed to find a place in this bibliography. 1. M.T. Kaufman; Harassed Sri Lanka minority hears call to arms, Sept. 11, 1981.

2. W.K. Stevens; In Sri Lanka city (Jaffna), a tale of army terror unfolds. May 2, 1984.

3. Sri Lanka army said to set town (Mannar) ablaze. Aug. 14, 1984.

4. S. Hazarika; Israel and Britain said to aid Sri Lanka force. Aug. 26, 1984.

5. S. Hazarika; Sri Lankan separatist violence raises fears of intervention; renewed clashes between soldiers and Tamil minority alarm India. Aug. 26, 1984.

6. S. Hazarika; Editor (Gamini Navaratna) angers fellow Sinhalese in Sri Lanka. Aug. 30, 1984.

7. S.R. Weisman; A Centuries-old struggle keeps Sri Lanka on edge: The Tamils confront heavily armed and increasingly undisciplined troops. Feb. 17, 1985.

8. S.R. Weisman; Rebels in Lotus Land (Batticaloa): Sri Lanka hunts 'the boys'. Feb. 8, 1985.

9. B. Crossette; Sri Lanka buys arms to fight rebels. May 20, 1985.

10. B. Crossette; Sri Lanka leader plans crackdown; calls for martial-law courts and armed communities. May 25, 1985.

11. B. Crossette; Sri Lanka fears spread of violence. June 2, 1985.

12. B. Crossette; Ethnic groups circle the wagons in Sri Lanka: hundreds have been killed in Tamil violence. June 2, 1985.

Why these reports of the New York Times correspondents have been excluded in preference to the reports indirectly covered from the Sun, Davasa and Hindu? These omissions show that, quite an important segment of available, relevant publications have not been covered in this bibliography. And there is an urgent need to put together the material which have been omitted by Rupesinghe and Verstappen. Despite the criticism, in conclusion, I would state that this bibliography serves a definite need for scholars, journalists and students who are interested in the ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamils. The authors should be congratulated for their perseverance in bringing out such a significant reference book.

Sachi Sri Kantha

Florence Nightingale Award - Unique Honour for Green Hospital Nurse Belaratnam Chithamparanadarajah

The International Committee for the Red Cross in Geneva has chosen Miss Belaratnam Chithamparanadarajah a nurse of the Green Memorial Hospital Manipay for the Award of the Florence Nightingale Distinguished Service Medal and Certificate for 1989-1990.

Bala as she is known by her fellow staff and friends, rendered a unique service at the Hospital during the months the Jaffna Government Hospital itself had to function in the premises of the Green Hospital Manipay. As one would expect when the Hospital was bombed almost all the staff left the premises but Bala with a small team of her friends held the fort looking after the patients remaining at the Hospital.

When the Hospital began to function again after the bombing, the surgeons of the Government Hospital were operating at the Green Hospital theatre round the clock trying to cope with the numerous injured due to the aerial bombardment and other military operations. The continuous curfew kept away a large proportion of the nursing staff. Bala was one of the few standing ever ready to take responsibility and

help in numerous ways. Officers of the Red Cross who were stationed at the Green Hospital during those months were able to observe Bala's work and made the recommendation.

We are told this is the first time a nurse in Sri Lanka has been selected for the Florence Nightingale Award which is given by the I.R.I.C. once in two years.

The Jaffna Branch of the Sri Lanka Red Cross under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Nachchinakinian arranged a function to formally make this award to Miss Bala Chithamparanadarajah on Wednesday 24th July at 11.00 am at the Green Hospital Manipay. Dr. Nachchinakinian who presided over the function pinned the Medal on Bala while Mrs. Vallipuram the Principal of the Government Nursing School in Jaffna pinned the accompanying lapel badge. Prof. A. Thurairajah the Vice-Chancellor of the Jaffna University presented her the Award Certificate and Dr. Mrs. Shanmugam, the Medical Superintendent of the Jaffna Hospital honoured her with the traditional Ponnadai. The public meeting began with a prayer by the Rev. A. Jeyakumaran. At the public meeting Dr. Nachchinakinian said that Nurse Bala Chithamparanadarajah had

served in the face of grave danger and at great risk to her own life. In the spirit of Florence Nightingale herself she placed service before self. Dr. Mrs. Chandra Ambalavanar the Medical Superintendent of the Green Hospital said that this honour to Nurse Bala is an honour to the Green Hospital itself and to the whole company of nurses in this and other hospitals who continue to render service in the midst of great trials and dangers.

Mrs Vallipuram, the Principal of the Jaffna Government Hospital Nursing School was the Chief Speaker on the occasion. The Florence Nightingale Award given by the I.R.I.C. once in two years is meant to encourage and promote that spirit of selfless service combined with knowledge and scientific skill.

The Rt. Rev. D.J. Ambalavanar, the Bishop of the Diocese also spoke. The Principal of Milk White Industries Mr. Kamagaraj who donated the Ponnadai also presented Nurse Bala with a book on Mahatma Gandhi. Mr. S. Sivanadarajan the Secretary of the Jaffna Branch of the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society who took so much pains to organise the function proposed a vote of thanks. (Courtesy: Morning Star)

FIRST DEATH ANNIVERSARY



Dr. Ariam Sathiamoorthy and Dr. (Mrs) Tharmavalli Sathiamoorthy (Born 20.03.43) whose lives were snatched away under tragic circumstances while on holiday in Penang on 5th August 1990. Fondly remembered by many relations and friends.

OBITUARY

KANAPATHIPILLAI CULANTHAVELU
PRAESOODY
born 04.03.06 - died 07.09.91

Praesoody was a giant among men, both literally and metaphorically. His iron frame looked indestructible and he possessed immense reserves of strength and energy. He first made his mark as Captain of the all-conquering football

team of Hartley College in 1923. The following year he joined St John's College and helped his new school in its Centenary year to win the coveted football championship. It was also there that he took up tennis, a game in which he excelled in later years and won numerous trophies.

He joined the Excise Department as an Inspector in 1928 and retired in 1965 as Superintendent. Being an outstanding sportsman and possessor of exceptional wit and charm, he progressed fast in his chosen career and these qualities also brought out his latent talents for organization and innovation. Wherever he worked - in Jaffna, Mannar, Trinco or Colombo - he was involved with sporting activities, and proved a tower of strength to schools, clubs, Public Service Associations and the community at large. His great love of tennis and his talent as a player gave him a special place in top society but he never lost the common touch. He was truly a friend of everyone in need, be he a Government servant in trouble or, here in England, a refugee threatened with deportation or denied Social Security benefits.

Praesoody's sons, Nagendra and Rajah, both outstanding and internationally acclaimed Tennis players, predeceased him as did his wife. He came to the U.K. in 1981, to be with his widowed daughter Sita Kandasamy and her three children, one of whom, Senthoooran, won the Surrey County Tennis championship while still at school. C.J.T.T.

PEOPLE & EVENTS

Swarupini Kathirgamathamby in concert at the Great Hall, Bromley



Sixteen year old **Swarupini Kathirgamathamby**, daughter of Dr and Mrs Kathirgamathamby of Bromley, a student of Holy Trinity Convent Bromley, celebrated her graduation ceremony in Classical Carnatic Music with a grand vocal concert at The Great Hall Bromley which was immediately followed by dinner hosted by her parents. Her Headmistress, Sister Bernadette was her Chief Guest. The distinguished gathering of invitees included artists who had travelled from distant parts of the world to be present at this concert. Her Guru (Master) in Classical Music is Srimathy Bushany Kalyanaraman, daughter of Sangeetha Bushanam Kulasegaram who hails from Sri Lanka. Srimathy Kalyanaraman is a Gold Medalist for Vocal Music from the Government College of Music in Madras and has been a lecturer in vocal and veena at Ramanathan College, University of Jaffna. She is now the wife of Tanjore S. Kalyanaraman a Maestro in classical music in South India. The couple were personally present at this function, and Shri Kalyanaraman went on stage to bless the new artiste Sai Swarupini.

Among the speakers were Dr John Marr, who compared Sai Swarupini's voice to that of N.C. Vasanthakohilam an evergreen female singer of the 50's. Sai Swarupini started her concert with a Dharuvarnam and went on to offer salutations to Ghanapathy Saraswathi and chose to sing "Evarani" (Devamritha Varshini: Adi) one of the inspiring masterpieces by Saint Thiagarajah pondering over the origin of Gods. After another four items on Siva, Sakthi she selected "Nagumomu" another of Thiagarajah's lilting compositions

(Aberi: Adi). Time on and time again this song has been sung and re-sung in India, Sri Lanka and all over the world by hundreds of Carnatic singers and Masters of Carnatic music. But to hear sixteen year old - Western educated - Sai Swarupini rendering "Nagumomu" within the great walls of The Great Hall of Bromley, it was an experience with a difference indeed! The performance was made all the more memorable as Swarupini's cousin M. Ravichandran from Australia accompanied her on the Mridhangam and Girija Varothayasingham on the Thamboora.

The Bharathi Song "Ketta Polluthil" was the one of the Tamil songs she sang along with Thirupugal and the song on Sathya Sai Baba composed by Tanjore S. Kalyanaraman specially for this occasion. Inclusion of many more Tamil songs would have added more variety and colour. Sai Swarupini has won medals for pianoforte and has passed grade 5 in piano. She had her Buarata Natya Arangetram when she was barely nine. Her vocal recital has shown that she has a bright future in Carnatic Music ahead of her.

Reviewed by - Wimal Sockanathan

Weddings

The engagement is announced and the marriage will take place in August 1992 of **Dr Mohan Jayarajah**, son of Mr & Mrs D.C. Jayarajah of Sutton, Surrey and Miss Jennifer Marks, daughter of Mr P. Marks of Penzance and Mrs R. Wheeler of Emsworth, Hampshire.

The marriage of **Venk-ateshwaran**, son of Mr & Mrs R.S. Nadarajah of 106 Homebush Road, Strathfield, NSW 2114, took place on 14th September 1991 at the Dundas Community Centre, Sturt Street, Telopea.

The marriage of **Suresh**, son of Mr & Mrs Parameswara, 84 Cumbrrian Gardens, Golders Green Estate, London NW2 1EL and Kayalvizhy, daughter of Mr & Mrs Rajalingam, 56 Kendal Avenue, Edmonton, London N18 took place on 24th August 1991 at Archway Murugan Temple

Arvind Jayan Violin Samarpanam



Sixteen year old **Arvin Jayan's Violin 'Samarpanam'** was staged at the London Murugan Temple, East Ham on 1st September 1991. He is the son of Mr & Dr (Mrs) Lakshmi Jayan. **Arvind received his training from his mother, herself an eminent and well-known violinist in the U.K.**

MEETINGS

The Annual General Meeting of M.I.O.T. (Medical Institute of Tamils) took place on 15th September 1991 at Kelsey Park Boys School in Beckenham.

Dr Pasupathirajah, the Founding President who chaired the meeting, reviewed with pride the activities and achievements of the institute since its inception three years ago. The membership has grown to over 250. In addition to the main objective of meeting the medical needs of the North and East of Sri Lanka, the organisation was engaged in educational activities, helping overseas doctors with PLAB Examinations, and achieved excellent results. New office bearers were elected. The meeting ended with a cultural programme participated by the children of doctors.

Deaths

Lilly Nallathamby, mother of **Mervin Gunaselvam, Gnanachelvam, late Arudchelvam, Ariyaranani (UK), Nesarani & Mahilrani** expired on 18th August 1991. 21 Kachcheri Nallur Road, Jaffna

Sinnathurai Pariyariyar (88) of Thambachetty, Point Pedro, husband of **Lakshmpillai**, father of

Karunanathan (Colliers Wood), Karunes Ratnasingham (Wimbledon), Indrani Velayuthan (New Malden), Sarvananathan (Morden), Sathanathan (Wimbledon), Satchithanathan (Alvai, Pt Pedro) and father-in-law of A.T.S. Ratnasingham passed away peacefully, after a brief illness on Sunday 1st September

EAST MEETS WEST

The London Veena Group celebrated their Annual Cultural Concert recently at the Graveney School Hall Tooting, London SW17.

The special feature of the concert was East Meets West music. The Hawaiian guitar by **Balendran** and the Bass Trombone by **Pamela** evoked much interest and appreciation. The harmony and beauty of the music produced by the symphony for the Eastern and Western instruments kept the audience spellbound.

Mr A.T.R. Ratnasingham, President of the Wimbledon Ganapathy Temple and prominent social worker, presided over the ceremony and congratulated the London Veena Group for their efforts to popularise the Veena Music in this country.

Arunthathy Srikantarajah leader of the Veena Group



Bharatha Natyam

The League of Friends of the University of Jaffna in association with Shakespeare's School of Dancing presented on 15th September 1991 at Winston Church Hall, Ruislip, Middlesex, a scintillating Bharatha Natyam by **Nirtha Periyar Sri J Venkatachalapathy**, India's famous exponent of Bharatha natyam and Kuchipudi, was accompanied by his disciple **Shenika Shakespeare**. Vocal and Nattuvangam was by **Sri Aravindakshan**, with Mridangam by **Sri N.K. Kesavan** and violin by **Dr Lakshmi Jayan**.

Sivakamasunthary Kumaravel Arangetram

The Arangetram of **SIVAKAMASUNTHARY KUMARAVEL** took place at the Forum, Hatfield, Herts., on Saturday the 14th September 1991. She started initial training in Bharata Natyam at the age of 6 under **Thembakutty Master** in Alavedy in Tamil Eelam. She continued her lessons in England under **Mrs Rajani Sureshkumar and Mr Jeyachandran**. She spent some time in India learning the Art under the well-known **Nirtha Periyar Sri J. Venkatachalapathy**. Besides her famous Guru conducting the Nattuvangam, she was accompanied by **Sri Kesavan (Mirthangam)** and **Dr Luxmi Jeyan (Violin)** and **Sr Aravindkshan (Vocal)**.



University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate

Applications are invited from candidates who wish to sit the Tamil examination (Syllabus Y, Code 3206) in November 1991 and subsequent years.

Examination Date: Friday, 29th November 1991

Centre: West London Tamil School based at Stanhope Middle School, Mansell Road, Greenford, Middx. All correspondence to be addressed to: **R. Balasundaram, M.Sc. Deputy Headmaster, W.L.T.S., 45 Marnham Crescent Greenford, Middx, UB6 9SW Tel: 081-578 3943 N.B. West London Tamil School is an approved examination centre.**

1991. His remains were cremated at the North East Surrey Crematorium, Lower Morden Lane, Morden, Surrey on Sunday 8th September. 178 Queens Road, Wimbledon, London SW19.

Mrs Maheswary Sivarajah (71 yrs) beloved wife of late **Mr K. Sivarajah of Ilavai, Jaffna** (retired Principal, Yarlton College, Karainagar, Jaffna) mother of **Dr (Mrs) Sarathadevi Sivagnanavel, Gopalan, Rajupalan**, all of London, **Mrs Sakuntala Kumarasingam** of Dehivala, Sri Lanka, and **Jeyapalan** of Wellington, New Zea-

land, passed away in London in the presence of all the children on 25th August 1991. Her remains were cremated on 1st September 1991 at the South London Crematorium, Streatham, Surrey. 282 Coombe Lane, London SW20.

Mrs Sundaraluckshmi Sripatham widow of the late **Chundrampillai Sripatham** (retired General Manager, Ceramics Corporation) mother of **Kumar (Sydney), Raj (London)**, mother-in-law of **Manju, Bhama** and grandmother of **Rishyan, Vishala** and **Vibhushan** expired on 31st July 1991 in Sydney, Australia.

TAMIL NATION

Fourth Anniversary of Thileepan's martyrdom

The Jaffna University has decided to offer a research fellowship for biotechnology to mark the martyrdom of Thileepan the LTTE leader who gave his life for the cause of his people in October 1987, by fasting to death in protest against the Rajiv Gandhi- J.R. Jayawardene, Indo Sri Lanka Agreement. The Registrar of the Jaffna University has called on graduates and undergraduates to apply for the Thileepan Research Fellowship for Biotechnology giving their research proposals in plant issue culture and genetic engineering. The graduate or the undergraduate who wins this fellowship will get a monthly allowance of Rs. 2500. This one-year fellowship may be further extended by applying for an extension, according to a newspaper advertisement which appeared on August 30.

Rev Richard F. Wootton of the Uniting Church of Australia says Australia cannot support Pol Pot type regime which uses death squads to kill thousands

Rev Richard F. Wootton, Director, Social Responsibility and Justice, Uniting Church of Australia in a forthright statement in the August 23rd issue of 'Tamil Update' declared:

"Premadasa has resolved nothing for the Tamils. He has turned viciously on his own people including Tamils and Sinhalese and slain tens of thousands. Australia cannot support a Pol Pot type regime which instead of using the ordinary processes of law, uses death squads to kill thousands, bombers and high powered military equipment to slay Tamils. To top all this off, it systematically stops all food and other aid for Tamil areas and Tamil refugees, contrary to what is said in the media."

The rest of the Rev. Wootton's statement reads:

"As we look back on the recent violence in Sri Lanka it is clear that almost every human right has been denied to the Tamils in the North and East. We can see that the LTTE has fought valiantly against the larger military machine of the Premadasa regime. We can also see that in some cases there have been examples of extra juridical killings on both sides. We abhor this situation and request that the LTTE control their fighters to the extent that there are no attacks on civilians and an example is set by the young fighters.

We would like these words to be applied to the Sri Lankan. After all, it is always the duty of the defence forces of the lives of, and defend the property of, its citizens. When defence forces fail to do this and cause massive damage to property, the creation of hundreds of thousands

of refugees and the killing and wounding of thousands, then it is time for such a government to resign.

Because of the situation of war that rages in the country which has led to huge bombings even in the capital, all aid and tourism should cease.

In one large explosion the Minister for Defence, Ranjan Wijeyaratne was killed along with 17 others. This is indeed a horrendous time in the history of beautiful Sri Lanka. We must be informed and ache in our prayers as the tragedy continues. With new weapons arrived and arriving for the Sri Lankan military, this will cause the Tigers also to procure the next level of weapons. So, it goes on and on, and on. Our prayer is again for a cease-fire, peace and some outside peace-keeping force to ensure that permanent solutions can be found. We also call on all who supply weapons to this war to desist and those who supply finance to purchase such weapons to stop.

Enough is enough. Premadasa will never be able to bring peace after this war of genocide and starvation. He has to retire like Marcos and others to wherever he can flee and we will make a new start. To this end the LTTE must also realise that a political solution must be sought with true vigour.

Let us hope that through this new Commission for Peace, the Sinhalese will be helped so that in this day and age no one tries to rule over other people and that autonomy and self-determination are likely to bring peace to all concerned.

This then will be an opportunity for the LTTE and the Tamils to respond warmly.

KITTU IN SWITZERLAND

Tamil Nation learns that the Tamil leader, Sathasivam Krishnakumar, also known as Kittu, has been offered sanctuary in Switzerland. Kittu, a member of the Central Committee of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and Head of its International Wing, was refused political asylum in Britain and served with a deportation order in late July. It is learnt that Kittu entered France in mid-August and thereafter went across the border to Switzerland.

President Premadasa Struggles

Colombo - Sri Lanka President Ranasinghe Premadasa prorogued Parliament in an effort to buy time to stave off a major challenge to his leadership in the form of an attempt to impeach him.

The move to impeach him was initiated by two of his ministers who quit the Cabinet. They made a joint appeal with another leader of the ruling United National Party (UNP) asking ministers and members of Parliament to pull down the President.

Education Minister Lalith Athulathmudali and Labour Minister G.M. Premchandra joined former minister Gamini Dissanayake, who was dropped from the Cabinet last year, to announce that they would campaign for restoration of parliamentary form of government.

Contenders for Nomination

Athulathmudali and Dissanayake, who were contenders for party nominations for the 1988 presidential election, claimed many UNP MPs had signed the motion for impeaching Premadasa.

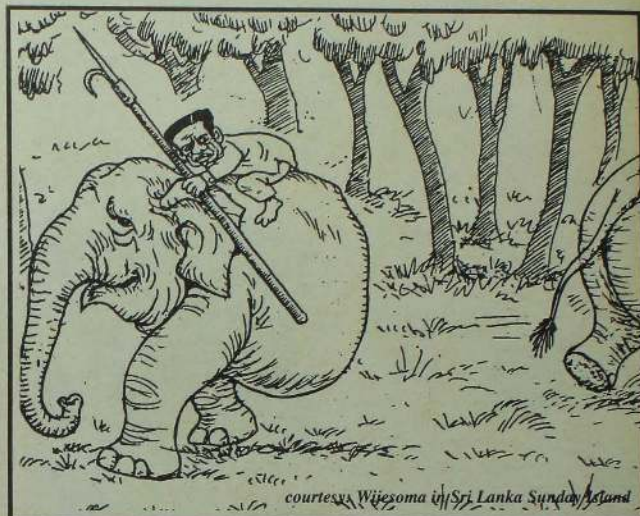
Athulathmudali said, "Although I supported the executive presidency when it was introduced in 1978, later on it became increasingly evident that such a system would result in erosion of democracy."

Later, leaders of five opposition parties, including Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), called for impeachment of the President on the ground that "he has been guilty of intentional violation of the Constitution, treason, misconduct and corruption involving abuse of power of his office, offenses under the law involving moral turpitude and on grounds of his mental incapacity to govern the country."

Impact of the Motion

Leader of the Opposition and former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike said that once the motion had been accepted by the Speaker for debate it effectively removes from the President his right to dissolve Parliament. Athulathmudali said, "As of now, the government of President Premadasa has lost his parliamentary majority."

Apparently to preempt any impeachment move, Premadasa decided to prorogue Parliament. As such, the motion for impeachment would not come for debate this week. According to Bandaranaike,



- but for how long?

76 members of the opposition and a large section of the UNP group in the 225 member Parliament had signed the motion. Because of security reasons, she did not want to divulge their names. She said there could be a security threat to them if the names were revealed.

Fear for life alleged

Athulathmudali said he himself feared for his life. The former National Security Minister said that he had reliably learnt that extra-constitutional "goon squads" had been formed to terrorize political opponents.

While the government sources claimed as many as 116 out of the 125 UNP MPs had extended support to Premadasa, Athulathmudali said four other UNP MPs had joined his group taking the total in his camp to 47.

Constitutional experts say impeachment motion would have to be reintroduced at the beginning of the next session scheduled to begin on September 24.

The government had to call for the next session before the end of September because parliamentary approval is essential to extend the emergency in the country. This, however, will give three weeks time for Premadasa to try and get back some of the MPs who signed the motion against him.

Already three UNP MPs have retracted their signatures and extended support to the President.

However, the opposition is confident that more UNP MPs would join the group opposed to the President. "Three members retracted their signatures because they de-

veloped cold feet," Bandaranaike said. By the time of vote taking the number of parliament members supporting the impeachment would increase, she said.

As the Constitutional measure to impeach President Premadasa unfolds, the chiefs of the armed forces vowed to uphold the Constitution and democracy and to maintain law and order.

In a joint statement, the Defense Secretary, three service chiefs and the police chief stated that "we wish to assure the people and the government that we will uphold the Constitution and render all assistance to the Minister of Defense and President Ranasinghe Premadasa to maintain law and order and preserve the democratic form of government."

Earlier, the opposition had sent copies of their motion against President Premadasa to the three chiefs of the armed forces.

"This unexpected crisis will create political instability" a veteran political analyst said. "Even if the motion to impeach President Premadasa fails, it will lead to snap general election," he predicted. "And there will be polarization of forces." A South Asian diplomat said that members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation were watching the situation closely to see whether it would result in postponement of the SAARC summit scheduled to be held in Colombo in November. (Courtesy India Abroad)

What is a nation?

"A portion of mankind may be said to constitute a nationality, if they are united among themselves by common sympathies, which do not exist between them and any others - which make them cooperate with each other more willingly than with other people, desire to be under the same government... This feeling of nationality may have been generated by various causes. Sometimes it is the effect of identity of race and descent. Community of language, and community of religion greatly contribute to it. Geographical limits are one of its causes. But the strongest of all is identity of political antecedents; the possession of a national history, and consequent community of recollections; collective pride and humiliation, pleasure and regret, connected with the same incidents in the past." John Stuart Mill: *Considerations on Representative Government*. London 1872