

Hot Spring

A Journal of Commitment

A man in a camouflage uniform, likely a soldier or journalist, is the central figure. He is wearing a short-sleeved, button-down shirt and matching shorts. A camera is slung over his shoulder and attached to his hip. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a building and some foliage.

**Sri Lanka: He
sets the agenda**

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Hot Spring

A journal of commitment

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Tamil genocide in the making

200,000 homeless Tamil civilians who deserted their homes in and around Kilinochchi following 10 days of aerial bombardments and artillery shelling by the Sri Lankan army are desperately in need of food and water, and are on the verge of starvation.

Troops bogged down

As on August 7, fierce fighting continues, and Reuters quoted diplomats in Colombo as saying: "The government troops, backed by armour, artillery and air cover, had apparently failed to breach the defences of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam after at least two attempts."

What Diplomats think

Reuters report adds: "Diplomats said troops were expected eventually to take Kilinochchi, but there was uncertainty over what tangible gains could be achieved. The troops are getting stretched, the people are fleeing into other LTTE-held areas, so what's the gain?" asked one diplomat. "At the moment it seems the army is helping the Tigers unwittingly".

"There were questions about the army's reluctance to allow food into the northern Tiger-held areas, diplomats said. Aid workers who visited refugee camps in the Vanni mainland said people were running out of water because of a drought and that no food has been shipped to the region for nearly three weeks."

More Green Berets to arrive in September?

More Green Beret specialists in military training are due to arrive in Sri Lanka in September according to knowledgeable military sources in Washington.

Mark Kaufman of the PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER who first broke the news of the U.S. military training programme in Sri Lanka (Hot Spring July 1996), when contacted by our correspondent, himself believes it is true. He thinks that the State Department had not been honest with the Tamils.

The decision to support the Chandrika government was made by the U.S. government almost two years ago. The U.S. government takes the stand that the Chandrika government's human rights record was good, and they therefore want to help her.

Mr.Kaufman thinks that India may be aware of all this, but as the U.S. is now the only super power in the world, India was not in a position to oppose U.S.involvement in the affairs of Sri Lanka.

“WHAT THEY SAY”

International

“A major reason China refuses to negotiate with us is that the world has stood silent about the original falsehood that Tibet has always a part of China”

- *The Dalai Lama, the exiled Tibetan leader*

* * * * *

“Terrorists are often supported by states: and states that sponsor or permit terrorism, including Iraq, Iran, Libya and Sudan must face strong sanctions”

- *President Bill Clinton*



* * * * *



“I play a game where there are rules: I see the movement of each piece on the board: But this is something entirely different. If there are rules to this game, then they are rules made and understood by one man only”

- *Russian world chess champion Garry Kasparov, commenting on President Boris Yeltsin*

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“The available information indicates



that the Israeli defence forces intentionally attacked the UN compound, despite Israeli claims that the attack was a mistake”

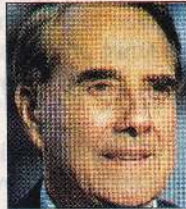
- *Amnesty International, on the killing of 100 Lebanese refugees at the UN base last April:*

* * * * *

“This is the way the President rules: It is our history, and it is very much Yeltsin’s style: Since time immemorial Russia has been used to having one man at the top: real power: vertical power...”

- *Yeltsin’s first Deputy Prime Minister Gennadi E. Burbulis.*

* * * * *



“You always feel a little older in the morning: By noon I’ll feel about 55”;

- *U.S. Presidential candidate Bob Dole celebrating his 73rd birthday.*

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“A coalition is not just a mechanism for government, it’s a culture”

- *West Bengal Communist Chief Minister Jyoti Basu.*



* * * * *

“India has helped Sri Lanka to restrict the Tigers’s access to overseas sources of money and weapons. It has rounded up LTTE cells in Tamil Nadu and joined Sri Lankan naval patrols to interdict arms shipments”

- *THE TIMES, London, Editorial comment, July 23.*

* * * * *



“We’ve been able to land reinforcements near the base and a big battle is still going on. Some of our troops are on location in the camp. We aim to take full control of the entire camp and relieve troops holding it”

- *Deputy Defence Minister General Ratwatte at news conference in Colombo, three days after the Mullaitivu camp, was overrun by the LTTE.*

* * * * *

“The LTTE have no regard for the army and their own LTTE cadres”

- *Defence Ministry spokesman Brig. Sarath Munasinghe tells WEEK-END EXPRESS, Colombo, 21 July.*

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“It wasn’t rare for people working with the security forces to chop off heads and hang them by the roadside, so there has been an improvement.”

- *American Jesuit priest Father Harry Miller tells Nick Macfie of Reuters*

* * * * *

“Looking at ground realities, it is necessary (for the government) to speak to the LTTE. The other militant groups surrendered their weapons in 1987: But they achieved nothing: How can one expect the Tigers to emulate them?”

- *Joseph Pararajasingam, of the “moderate” Tamil United Liberation Front (AFP, July 30)*

* * * * *

“Whether one likes it or not, political negotiation with the LTTE is the need of the hour”

- *TELO spokesman N. Srikanth (AFP, July 30)*

* * * * *

“The main supply route to Jaffna is through the sea. If Mullaitivu falls to the rebels, it could hit a vital link to Jaffna”

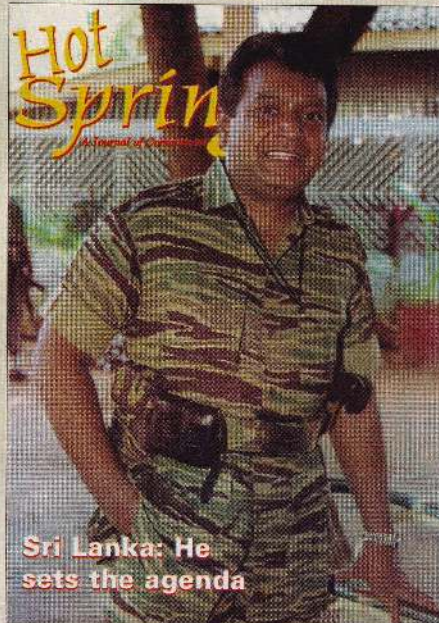
- *A Western diplomat quoted by Reuters, 22 July.*

The man in the Driving Seat

Political power, as is known, lies with Presidents, Prime Ministers and heads of states. It is the office they hold that gives them the authority (if not the wisdom) to determine the political fate of the countries they head. Why does it happen therefore that in a country like Sri Lanka, where the constitution itself bestows extraordinary powers to the President - powers unmatched by those of a Clinton or a Chirac - that the incumbent in office looks powerless either to carry forward her mandate for peace, or rescue her country from being bogged down in war? The answer is simple. The one who is determining the political and military agenda in Colombo is nowhere near Colombo, holds no office, sports no military title, but what is more ridiculous, he carries a price on his head, and is known in Sri Lankan political terminology as a "terrorist".

We know of terrorists planting bombs in secret, but where in the world do you get over 1,000 "terrorists" in full view, attacking a well-fortified army camp, overrunning it, wiping out the entire garrison, and taking away heavy weaponry? Is it not obvious that the Sri Lankan terminology is flawed? Once the terminology is flawed the thinking gets erratic, and the entire behavioural pattern gets muddled. That is the basic semantic self-deception that is preventing the successive Sri Lankan governments from making any headway in its 13-year old war against the Tamils. You keep on calling a powerful liberation force like the Tigers as "terrorists" till you are blue in the face, but that can only help you display your anger - your helpless anger at that - but will never help you come to touch with cold reality.

Careless use of the word "terrorist" could also result in final



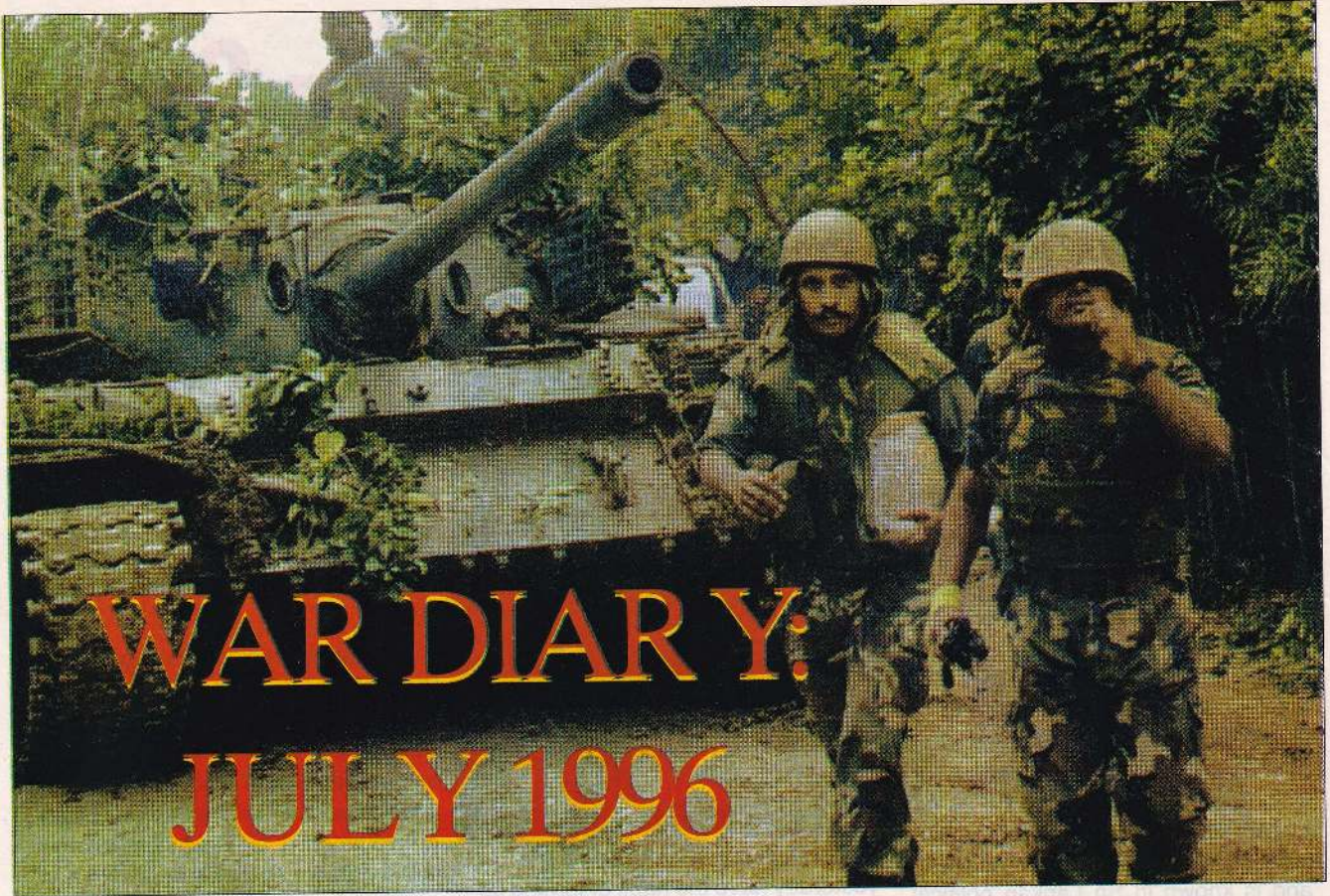
embarrassment. Some "terrorists" of yesterday have the habit of turning up to be tomorrow's "Your Excellencies". Some even end up receiving the Nobel Prize for Peace!

If Tiger leader Velupillai Prabhakaran is not a "terrorist", what kind of a man is he? Years ago, a veteran Sinhalese editor voted him THE MAN OF THE DECADE. A religious man, Bishop Kenneth Fernando, a Sinhalese himself, saw in him "a humane person", and some military analysts describe him as being in the category of a "military genius". To the thousands of Tamil youths, men and women, who go smiling to their deaths, he is demi-god.

Last April, an Australian newspaper sent its Asia Desk editor Norman Aisbett to the northeast. He interviewed "Thamilaval", a Tigress whom he describes as a 25-year old battle veteran and asked her what she thought of Prabhakaran. "My impression of him cannot be explained in words", she said. "I am just proud to have been born in the age of the

Leader". To millions of Tamils today, spread all over the world, he is the messiah, come to deliver. DK leader in Tamil Nadu was quoted as saying "There is only one Thiruvalluvar, one Kamban and one Prabhakaran". If such be the composite image that he conjures up in the minds of assorted people, it seems to us that President Kumaratunga's celebrated quote supplied to her user-friendly Indian journal, INDIA TODAY ("a merciless megalomaniac") is a trifle inadequate!

Madame President has only one Prabhakaran to contend with. But it has to be remembered that the Tamil leader has seen three Presidents before her, come and go. He has seen three War Ministers from Lalith Athulathmudali to Ranjan Wijeratne to the present Uncle General. He has seen ten Indian Major Generals in the northeast in his time, not to mention dozens of Sri Lankan ones with pips and ribbons and swagger sticks. And he has not been trained in Sandhurst or Lebanon or military academies, not even in Wirawila. So what makes him tick? What makes the Tigers such a formidable force that Israeli weapons and Chinese gunboats and American training do not daunt them? In trying to get the right answers to these questions lies the hope for peace in Sri Lanka. And the day the Sri Lankan government and the Colombo Press and the Sinhalese people stop throwing the word "terrorists" around will be the day when wisdom will dawn and peace prevail in that island so favoured by Nature but so sadly brought to the brink of ruin by its leaders. That will also be the day when the Sinhalese people take control of their own destiny and the Tamil people of theirs. *



WAR DIARY: JULY 1996

July 1:

32 army men killed

A 40-strong Sri Lankan army patrol from the Mutur-Kallaru camp was ambushed by LTTE forces on the Trinco-Kanthalai road. In an attack which lasted 45 minutes, 32 army men including two officers were killed, and four others injured. A "Buffel" armoured vehicle was also captured and destroyed. Two LTTE fighters lost their lives. Arms and ammunitions were captured.

July 2:

Another ambush: 4 killed

Four more army men killed when a patrol unit in the Mutur area was taken by surprise by the LTTE. The attack which lasted only a few minutes occurred between Palathoppur and Pattithidal.

No LTTE casualties. Arms and ammunitions recovered.

July 3:

Bombing over Punakari

Sri Lankan Kfir fighter planes drop bombs on scrub lands and jungles around their army camp at Punakari. Later, the planes fly low over Kilinochchi town terrifying the people with their deafening noise.

July 4:

Brigadier killed; Minister escapes death

Brigadier Hamangoda killed at Stanley Road in the heart of Jaffna reportedly by a woman suicide bomber. Minister of Housing Construction Nimal Silva escapes with head injuries. Several more killed and injured.



Shelling from

Mullaitivu camp

One civilian was killed, many others wounded in night artillery shelling from the Mullaitivu army camp. A Hindu temple chariot in the village of Thaneerutu was destroyed in the shelling.

July 5:

2 army men killed in Jaffna

LTTE forces open fire on Sri Lankan armed forces engaged in a cordon and search operation in Uduvil in the Jaffna peninsula.

Two Sri Lankan soldiers killed.

July 6:

Civilian home shelled

Two young sisters were critically wounded by Sri Lankan artillery shelling in Mullaitivu. The two girls,

Lavanya (12) and Jeyagowri (14) from Mulliyawalai were the victims. The shells were fired from soldiers from the Kent Farm army camp.

July 6:

Wilpattu army camp attacked

LTTE forces launch an attack on the Iranamadu army camp at the Wilpattu Wild Life sanctuary. One Sri Lankan soldier killed.

July 7:

Police post attacked

A Sri Lankan police check post at Pesalai in the Mannar district comes under LTTE attack. One policeman was killed.

July 9:

4 army men killed in Jaffna

A Sri Lankan army unit travelling in a tractor on a search operation in Karaveddy North in the Vadamarachchi division was ambushed. Four army men were killed on the spot and seven others escaped with injuries.

Army check post attacked

The Muhamalai army check post in Thenmarachchi in the Jaffna peninsula, dreaded by the civilians in the area, came under attack from the LTTE. One soldier was killed.



July 10:

Continuous shelling of Mullaitivu

Sri Lankan armed forces continue to rain down barrages of artillery and mortar shells on villages in Mullaitivu district for the second day.



Mannar police station.. attacked

LTTE forces in Mannar district penetrate Mannar island within the Sri Lankan military-controlled zone and carry out a daring attack on the police station. Two policemen were killed on the spot and 8 others were seriously injured.

On the same day, a mini military camp at ATHTHIMUHAPU area of Puttalam district was attacked by LTTE forces: three sentry posts were destroyed, and arms and ammunitions were captured.

Two Sri Lankan soldiers were killed

and the rest fled with the injured. Three LTTE fighters lost their lives during this operation.

July 11:

Six police commandos killed

While the Sri Lankan armed forces begin a new offensive in the Vaharai area of eastern Batticaloa district, LTTE forces launch attack on Sri Lankan Special Task Force (STF) commandos who came out on a search and destroy mission from their camp in Pannalagama. Six police commandos were killed on the spot while the rest fled carrying the injured. Two military vehicles were captured and destroyed. One LTTE fighter lost his life in the operation.

On the evening of the same day, a Sri Lankan police jeep came under LTTE attack in Batticaloa district near Kodaphthoa area.

Three policemen were killed on the spot and arms and ammunitions were captured.

July 14:

Major LTTE attack in Jaffna; 13 Killed

One Km. long fortifications of the Sri Lankan occupying forces in Jaffna completely destroyed. In a midnight operation, LTTE forces launched an attack on the army fortifications built at Sarasalai in the Thenmarachchi division of the Jaffna peninsula. The fortifications consisted of bunkers, sand bag reinforcements, embankments, and sentry points. It took only about 15 minutes to take the whole chain. The 15 sentry points of the Sri Lankan army fell to the LTTE who occupied them for about half an hour and then destroyed them. Thirteen Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and many more wounded. The LTTE lost one fighter.

JULY 16:

LTTE Attack in Polonaruwa

Around 6.30 a.m on this day, a Sri Lankan army patrol consisting of soldiers and armed Sinhala home guards is set upon by Liberation Tigers at Oliyankulam in Polonaruwa district. Three soldiers and three home guards are killed and arms and ammunitions captured.

JULY 18:

THE MOTHER OF ALL BATTLES?

Liberation Tigers launch "Operation Oyatha Alaigal" ("Ceaseless Waves") at about 12.10 a.m with a massive onslaught on the key Sri Lankan military base of Mullaitivu, in what turns out to be the worst military debacle for the Sri Lankan government in its 13-year old war against the Tamils.

Two major contingents of over one thousand LTTE fighters smash the Sri Lankan defence lines and enter the inner perimeter from the south and north of the military complex. After heavy fighting the entire sea coast defences and the interior section of the complex fell to LTTE forces.



The military complex was manned by over 2000 Sri Lankan soldiers with highly sophisticated armory and surrounded by sea on three sides. The fourth side is flat terrain favourable to the army. The entire complex covers several miles with buildings, embankments and other fortifications.

Two 122 mm artillery weapons captured

The entire armoury at the military camp, including two 122 mm artillery weapons, vehicles and other equipment have been captured by the LTTE.



The long-range artillery weapons were the ones used by the army camp to shell Mullaitivu villages the last several weeks.

Even as the Mullaitivu camp was coming under attack, elsewhere a Sri Lankan army patrol unit advancing from Meegagodalla towards Kantalai was ambushed by LTTE forces and 8 soldiers were killed. The rest fled. Arms and ammunitions captured.

In another confrontation on the same day at Pulpainthakal area LTTE forces in Batticaloa district overpowered a small army contingent. Seven Sri Lankan soldiers including one officer were killed, and nearly 20 others injured.

JULY 20:

Military Gun boat sunk

After two days of battle, LTTE overruns the Mullaitivu complex and bring the entire camp area under their control. Up till now, 800 bodies of Sri Lankan soldiers have been recovered from the ruins of battle, and the casualty figure is expected to rise as more troops are being killed from small pockets of resistance outside the camp perimeter. LTTE informs the ICRC they are prepared to hand over whatever bodies recovered to the Sri Lankan government.

Sea Tiger units operating along the coastal area of Mullaitivu foil all attempts by the Sri Lankan navy to land reinforcements. Gun boat SNLS Ranaviru sunk off the coast by Sea Tigers. Nearly 40 sailors on board feared killed.

Meanwhile, reinforcements airlifted from helicopters at Alampil, 10 km. from Mullaitivu suffer severe casualties and face virtual annihilation.

JULY 21:

Helicopter shot down

A Sri Lankan military helicopter is shot down and 37 soldiers including the commanding officer are killed as fighting continues at Alampil.

Meanwhile, LTTE continues mopping out operations in the bush areas outside the Mullaitivu camp where a small number of troops are hiding.

They wreak their vengeance on civilians

Following the humiliation at Mullaitivu, soldiers of the Elephant pass army camp send volleys of artillery shells into the thickly populated areas of Kilinochchi. Five civilians killed and nearly twenty others critically injured. Kilinochchi hospital is damaged and some medical personnel hurt. French doctors of the MSF have narrow escape. ICRC brings it to the notice of its head office in Geneva and the Lankan defence ministry in Colombo.

JULY 22:

1208 Sri Lankan troops Killed

The entire military complex at Mullaitivu is now under the firm control of the LTTE. On today's count, 1208 Sri Lankan troops including officers were Killed. LTTE lose 241 fighters including 68

women fighters. Bodies of LTTE martyrs are kept in the Vanni mainland, for the people to pay their respects.

Air Force burns down jungles

Around 5.10 p.m, the jungles of Iranaimadu area in Killinochchi are bombed by two Kfir jets. The incendiary bombs that were dropped burn down several parts of the jungle. Similar bombs are dropped in Mullaitivu area as well.

Govt. refuses to accept bodies of soldiers

Fearing political backlash in the south, the Sri Lankan government refuses to accept a large number of bodies of soldiers killed in the Mullaitivu battle. With great reluctance, ICRC accepts only 55 bodies arguing that the rest 386 bodies were decomposed and unidentifiable. These were handed over to Govt. Agent of Killinochchi by ICRC for cremation. Due to extreme heat, a large number of bodies were decomposed and had to be cremated in the Mullaitivu camp area itself by the LTTE. Another 100 bodies were handed over to G.A. Mullaitivu.

JULY 23:

Mass civilian exodus from Mullaitivu

More than 50,000 people living in villages in Mullaitivu flee their homes in consequence of the blind indiscriminate army shelling and aerial bom-



bardments, and seek refuge in the jungle areas of Otticutan, 15 km. from Mullaitivu town.

Landing craft badly damaged: 22 soldiers killed

A Sri Lankan landing craft was badly damaged and 22 soldiers were killed and several more injured when a shell from a 120 mortar fired by the LTTE made a direct hit on the troop carrier.

JULY 24:

Train bomb disaster in Colombo; 70 killed

70 people killed and at least 600 injured in a commuter train at Dehiwala station, according to agency reports.

Six civilians killed in bombing raid

Six civilians were killed on the spot and 20 others severely injured in the thickly populated town of Mallavi in the Vanni mainland when high explosive bombs were dropped by two Sri Lankan planes in the commercial centre.

JULY 25:

LTTE denies involvement

A statement issued by LTTE headquarters categorically denies any involvement by the LTTE in the train bombing in Colombo. The statement adds: "We wish to point out that even though the accusing finger is pointed by the government on the LTTE, there are interested parties within the Sinhala ruling establishment who feel the need to raise chauvinist hysteria in order to facilitate the military option, particularly when the Sinhala-



lese people themselves are losing their patience with the government's war efforts. We also wish to reiterate that it is not the policy of the LTTE to attack civilian targets".

14 Sri Lankan soldiers killed

Sri Lankan soldiers who tried to enter Mullaitivu through the jungles of Manal Aru were confronted by LTTE forces. Seven soldiers were killed. In a similar attack in Mullaitivu seven more soldiers killed. Arms and ammunitions captured in both incidents.

JULY 25

Clumsy withdrawal costs 100 soldiers

Over a hundred soldiers are killed and several more wounded by LTTE fire when Sri Lankan troops made a clumsy and disorganised withdrawal from the Mullaitivu area. Withdrawing in total disarray under intense mortar fire, they leave the dead and heavy weapons behind them.

With the withdrawal of the army reinforcements, and with the strategic Mullaitivu town and surrounding areas firmly in the hands of the LTTE, thousands of civilians are returning to their villages, responding to the call of the LTTE.

As a face-saving operation, Sri Lankan forces open a second front, and reach the outskirts of Paranthan, 2 km. from the Elephant pass army camp. Meanwhile, with the heavy artillery barrage on the civilian population at Killinochchi, people flee the area by the thousands.

Tamils rounded up everywhere

"Sri Lankans attack Tamils in wake of Train Bombing", says the headline in the INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE. 2000 Tamils who fled Colombo fearing a backlash on Tamils consequent to the train bombing are arrested in Vavuniya, according to police sources. Tamils in Colombo are also rounded up on suspicion. Angered by the Mullaitivu debacle, Tamil youths, both male and female, in army - controlled Jaffna are also picked up and taken to unknown destinations.

JULY 27:

Over 100,000 people flee Kilinochchi

Following two days of day and night artillery shelling from the



Elephant pass army camp, more than 100,000 people have fled Kilinochchi town and suburbs. Families are fleeing their homes on foot, in bicycles and bullock carts. Two women belonging to the same family were crushed to death after the bullock cart overturned while they tried to avoid the exploding artillery shells. The Kilinochchi hospital is in ruins.

LTTE attack in Anuradhapura

Three Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and 16 more wounded when

LTTE forces launched an attack on an army unit in the North Central province.

Jaffna: A Major among 9 killed

Sri Lankan commanding officer for Puloly sector, Major Bakeer, was among nine soldiers killed in the Jaffna peninsula. The LTTE attacks took place at different locations, in Vadamarachchi, Mirusuvil and Varani.

Two killed in Pulmoddai

Two Sri Lankan soldiers were killed and three more wounded in LTTE fire at Pulmoddai in the Trincomallee district.

July 28:

Ten killed in the peninsula

Ten Sri Lankan soldiers killed and many more wounded in a LTTE ambush at Maravanpulavu in the Jaffna peninsula. Others fled the scene, carrying the dead and wounded. Several arms and ammunition were seized.

In the Vanni mainland, a small spy plane makes surveillance.

July 29:

Sri Lanka uses bread to finance war

Sri Lanka raises the price of bread to increase funds for its war against the Tamils.

July 31:

Civilians rounded up in Jaffna

Angered by frequent army losses in army-controlled Jaffna, soldiers turn their anger on civilians. Hundreds of men and women are rounded up and held incommunicado. It is feared that many of them have been tortured and killed in custody.

PAUL HARRIS reporting from Colombo for SCOTLAND on SUNDAY of July 14, (4 days before Sri Lanka tasted its worst military setback at Mullaitivu) wrote:-

The presence of US special forces units in Sri Lanka marks a significant escalation in the conflict between the government and separatist Tamil Tigers.

Here are excerpts from his report:

If you had been walking along the sea front of Sri Lanka's capital Colombo a couple of weeks ago, you might have been disconcerted to observe half a dozen men in uniform emerging from the gatehouse of a white stuccoed colonial-style building. The smart combat uniforms, green berets - and white skins - of these early morning strollers set them apart from the mean-looking local commandos, with their T-56 Chinese-made Kalashnikovs, guarding the gate of the US Embassy. These were the men of the US Rangers special forces taking the air before breakfast.

A watching western defence attache could hardly believe his eyes. He telephoned his counterpart at the US Embassy suggesting a spot more discretion might be appropriate. Disguise was duly adopted. "The next morning," he told SoS, "these fellows emerged in their polished boots, combat trousersand Hawaiian shirts".

For some months there had been widespread rumour in diplomatic circles of imminent foreign involvement in Sri Lanka's long running civil war against Tamil separatists.

The British, the former colonial power, have tended to be polite but stand-offish while the neighbouring Indians regard Sri Lanka as being their concern. As for the US, its policy has been to hold back - until now. In a rupture of the country's tight censorship rules, a leading newspaper, the *Sunday Leader*, published

U.S. involvement in Sri Lanka's War

photographs of a group of US military advisers "somewhere in Sri Lanka", coyly describing them as "others".

The cat was publicly let out of the bag on April 30 at the farewell party for the army commander Lieutenant-General Gerry de Silva held at army headquarters, just a mile down the road from the US embassy. De Silva, newly returned from an official whirlwind trip of the US, France and Israel, announced that US forces would shortly arrive to assist in the struggle against the Tamils. This, implied de Silva triumphantly, would be the final nail in the insurgents' coffin.

The local Reuters bureau chief, Nick MacFie, was at the party and was as surprised as everyone else at the announcement. "De Silva certainly wasn't drunk but he appeared euphoric." MacFie tackled the retiring army chief who confirmed that the Americans would now train the Sri Lanka army, set up a training school and lend certain other unspecified services. This caused considerable consternation and, the next day, the US ambassador was obliged to release a statement confirming the story and expanding on the training-based nature of the assignment.

Other embassy sources were more circumspect, suggesting that US troops were not involved at all. "Maybe it'll be those guys from MRPI." This was a reference to military and Professional Resources Inc, of Alexandria, Virginia, a privately owned, closely held corporation staffed by retired US army officers. Certainly, it would be a challenge tailor-made for MPRI, which has conducted successful training pro-

grammes both for the US army and the armed forces of Croatia but its spokesman, General Ed Soyster, a former head of the US Defence Intelligence Agency, declined to comment on the company's interest in Sri Lanka.....

"Although the loss of Jaffna is a considerable psychological blow, the Tiger leadership can act equally effectively from its new base. Secondly, informed sources suggest around 2,000 Tigers have now transferred their attentions to the east of the country which is tenuously held by three army battalions totalling around 2,200 men backed up by overstretched Special Task Force police commandos, trained in countering guerilla insurgency.

Hit-and-run attacks on military and police in the east are now daily occurrence. One Tiger source told SoS: 'We believe we can bleed the security forces to death.'

Thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, the extraordinary capacity of the Tigers to develop and forge links in foreign countries has been unaffected by events on the ground in Jaffna.

A leading Sri Lankan expert on the Tigers, Rohan Gunaratna describes them as 'a world class revolutionary organisation which has mastered technology'. Not for nothing was the organisation judged two years ago in a western intelligence agencies report 'the most ruthless group on earth'. With offices and cells in 38 countries - they are particularly active in the US, Canada, the UK and Australia - the Tigers disseminate information to, and collect funds from, the 440,000-strong Tamil diaspora. There are extensive bank-

ing arrangements in Europe and the Far East....."

All this goes some way to explaining what is happening today in the south of Sri Lanka. It is a bleak landscape of abandoned paddy fields and open scrubland. Dotted alongside the uneven two lane road in the Wirawila district are the *kadjan* huts - mud walled dwellings with roofs of woven coconut leaf - while, in contrast, overhead fly Bell Huey helicopters, the occasional Mi-24 helicopter gunship, Chinese-built Y-12 surveillance aircraft and, even, Kfir ground attack aircraft leased from the Israelis. This is not simply a main base for the Sri Lanka air force. There are intensive exercises taking place here. It is also the special forces training ground.

Staying and eating in the hotels and government rest-houses around here are brawny, blonde Israelis and tight-lipped Americans who simply give as their addresses Okinawa, Hawaii and Fort Lewis, Washington.

Back in Colombo, Bill Dawson at the US information Service says that Operation Balance Style 96-1, at the tip of the Indian sub-continent, "exercises US special operations capabilities and demonstrates the continuing US commitment to the security and stability of the Pacific region [sic]". But other sources suggest that newly arrived Israeli-manufactured surveillance and communications equipment is being exhaustively tested. It seems as though the Tigers may not just find themselves physically matched in their heartland but, also, for the first time, with more than comparable technology.

Law and Facts are on the side of the Tamil struggle

Ms. Karen Parker is an Attorney specialising in International Law, Humanitarian (Armed Conflict) and Human Rights Law. She has been a member of the American States Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Since 1982 she has been a Non-Governmental Representative at the United Nations.

My presentation will address Human Rights, Humanitarian Law and the Tamil national struggle.

One of the first lessons we learn at Law School is the following: If you have the law on your side, argue the law; if you have the facts on your side, argue the facts; if you have neither the law, nor the facts on your sides, pound the table!

Now one of the problems in this case is that there has been the law, there have been the facts and there have been the Sri Lankan Government and occasionally others pounding the table so loudly that it has obliterated and in fact has intimidated people from discussing either the law or the facts. For instance many of you have heard the term "Human Rights". What are Human Rights? Where are they? How do you know you have Human Rights when you say I have human rights?

The Sri Lankan Government refers to the LTTE as a terrorist organisation. Is it? Who said so? What's the law? How do you answer that back? A lot of people talk about Self-determination. What is it? Where is it? Do you have it? Are you entitled to it? How can you defend it? These are problems with the Law.

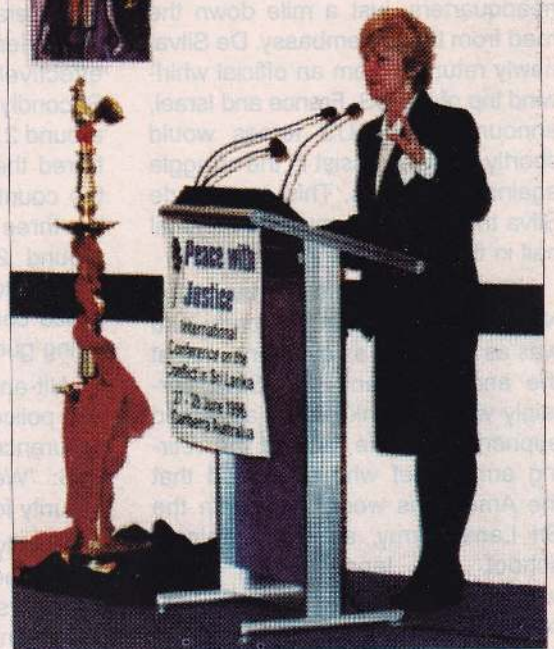
Now let us look at the facts for a minute. You have heard eloquent, fantastic, articulate and eye-witness factual accounts in this conference. And yet I read many reports and statements by the Sri Lankan Government, reports of even Non-Government Organisations, of allegations, such as

"the LTTE massacred this village" and yet neither the Government nor the NGO statements ask "How do you know?" "Whose source of information?" "Who investigated it?" "Who looked to see in fact?" Now we know from experience that the first victim in war is Truth. However in the Sri Lankan conflict we do have eye-witnesses and they do speak. And yet there is, internationally, prominent display of allegations as if making the allegation is the proof.

As far as pounding the table making an unfounded or unverified allegation is a form of pounding the table. But there are other even more subtle versions of pounding the table and we have had an experience of that even in this conference where a newspaper article or disclosure that apparently the Government of Australia did not want to attend this session because they are sympathisers of the Tamil cause or the LTTE or because certain people who might have been invited were not invited. That's very subtle because our first reason is "Well, free speech - that's an important aspect." But I can tell you absolutely when Martin Luther King during our Civil Rights Movement in the United States wanted to have a meeting to discuss racism in America he didn't ask the Klu Klux Klan nor was he ever challenged for making sure that the voice of the Klu Klux Klan was



Ms Karen Parker



present at a discussion on racism in America. When the Democratic Party of the United States has a Convention they do not necessarily invite the Republicans to come and present their point of view. Now I'm not saying that a meeting should be open or should be closed but I do say the meetings, particularly one with the hostilities that have been experienced by many of us - and I speak from personal experience - may make one not exactly willing to invite anyone who would want to come to such a session. I have had to have police protection when I was 7 1/2 months pregnant to go into an Academic Conference at the University of California at Sacramento to discuss

the Tamil question because of rioters outside.

Now let us go back to Human Rights. You have probably already used the term. In the life of my country the first articulation was "Give me liberty, or give me Death." A little later in our history in our Civil Rights Movement we said "Before I'll be a slave, I'll be buried in my grave."

The United Nations, however, in its Charter decided it was time to put those kinds of feelings which we all have in our hearts about what we mean about human rights on paper. The Justice earlier this morning gave an eloquent description of that process leading to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 which in its preamble says: "so that Mankind is not compelled to have recourse as a last resort to force against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law". Human Rights are also found in many treaties and covenants signed since. But in a sense the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says it all. It says we are all entitled to freedom from torture, violations of our right to life, the right to freedom of religion, freedom of opinion which includes that we have the right to like or dislike any particular group or faction in any particular conflict.

What are Human Rights?

We have the freedom from arbitrary arrest, we have the right to procedural guarantees, we have the right to food, shelter and education. And so we have, by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, if these are not realised, the right to recourse as a last resort to the use of force against tyranny and oppression. So that goes a long way in letting us know what is Human Rights. We know at least that we can pull out a document and read it.

How about the question. "Are the LTTE terrorists? Well, when you read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights it does not address that question. That's a whole new issue, it brings up a whole new question of law - called conveniently "Armed Conflict Law" or "Humanitarian Law". First we

want to know "Is there a war in Sri Lanka?" because obviously one side is saying "We are involved in the use of force to defend our human rights," and the other side is saying "This is terrorism." Whether there is a war or not is shown by the objective facts not by characterisations or labels. All of you in this room are as legally entitled as any one else to look at the objective facts and decide whether or not there is a war in Sri Lanka. For instance in the reports you have seen, if taking only what the Government says do you see the Sri Lankan military out there somewhere? Do they concede that they used armed forces? Do they concede that they use airplanes? or boats? or do they just say "We are using our Riot Police because there are riots and that's the Problem or we have terrorism." I do not want to labour the point. Obviously there is a war in Sri Lanka.

Acts of war & rules of war

One of the legal consequences of a war in Sri Lanka is that the military actions of the opposition are not terrorism - they are acts of war. There are rules to war as there are rules in human rights so that does not mean that just because one party or another engages in acts of war they are all legal acts of war. That is another question. But they are all acts of war. So we have to realise that we are talking about "A war". Obviously it is essential to make that realisation if you are going to have a peace process. A "peace process" is a process to stop a war. You do not need a peace process if there is no war. I do not want to pound that too hard. But it is incredible how often in my international travels governments and sometimes even non-governmental organisations say to me "We have got to get a peace process" and at the same time they do not recognise, not only the factual existence of a war because it is not convenient to do so in some cases, but they also pay no attention to the application of Armed Conflict law to the situation. How can you stop a war if you do not take into account its existence? Or to the rules of war?

There are two basic rules to war.

One is, the means of warfare are not unlimited. You cannot do whatever you want in war. And the other basic rule is non-combatants have the basic right to be protected from the dangers of war and they have a legal right to humanitarian aid, food, shelter, medical assistance. These are in the Hague Convention of 1907 and the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and 1977 to name a few of the treaties on Armed Conflict Law. When we fail to use these in our dialogue what happens is that even when we are arguing for such humanitarian principles as providing rights for victims of armed conflict such as the 400,000 Tamil civilians that need medical aid. When the Government says 'no' can they legally say "no"? When in fact the victim has a legal right to that aid under the Geneva Convention? Can the Government put conditions on what is an absolute right? No!

But if these issues are not addressed in the context of War then they become subject to "negotiation" and we end up in a process of negotiating people's absolute right. And that is wrong.

Legal military targets

Now in war there are legal military targets. One of the problems in this particular war and why the Tamil people have lost some of their credibility - I have heard this banded around today and I believe it is true - is because of mischaracterisation of what a legal military target is by anti-Tamil interests, especially the Government. I cannot give you today all the rules of Humanitarian Law regarding military targets. But let me tell you that shooting down an aeroplane belonging to the armed forces of your opposition, firing upon enemy soldiers in battle, carrying out a military operation against a military base of the enemy, attacking economic installations or infrastructure are all legal military targets with a few exceptions. As of 1977 you are not supposed to carry out military operations against a nuclear installation.

What are illegal military targets?

Illegal military targets are actions carried out against the civilian population in any way, shape or form. Occasionally however military operation carried out on a military base may result in civilian casualty. That is not necessarily a violation of the rules of war. Bombing a city has to be viewed as carrying out illegal military operation.

Also in Humanitarian Law under the rules of law there are rights of prisoners of war. In the thirteen years of armed conflict in Sri Lanka how many of you have ever heard international concern over POW's? Not a soul. This is shocking! Why is it that you might not have heard of any? Well, it may be, particularly on the Government's side, that not many of them come out alive! But how is it that the international community has not insisted on the

insists on full investigation rather than accepting mere allegations and having convictions based on allegations.

Now I am going to bring up another point that is rather touchy. I am used to discussing touchy points. When you deal with Humanitarian Law it is always touchy. I know it is fashionable these days to require parties in conflicts to resolve their differences by dialogue and negotiation. Is it realistic? I should hope so. But there are now 44 wars in the world, including the one in Sri Lanka, and the parties to those conflicts were not able to resolve their differences. I am not defending war but I do understand - as the Judge said this morning - why they are carried out.

Which leads to another touchy question. Controversial perhaps. What kind of war is it in Sri Lanka? This also

"There are two basic rules to war. One is, the means of warfare are not unlimited. You cannot do whatever you want in war. And the other basic rule is non-combatants have the basic right to be protected from the dangers of war and they have a legal right to humanitarian aid, food, shelter, medical assistance."

status of POWs in the Sri Lankan conflict? The status of POWs in the Bosnian - Croatian - Yugoslav conflict is what prompted the International Tribunal. And this was in the course of a conflict that was barely minutes old by comparison to the Sri Lankan one. And making the comparison also points out something very, very important to know about Humanitarian Law or these Geneva Conventions and the Hague Law. When you violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights you commit a violation of Human rights. When you violate the rules I've just set out in armed conflict it is a war crime. The reason there are Tribunals for Rwanda and Yugoslavia is because of war crimes. I think all of us need to begin to question the failure to address the fundamental law principles in this conflict. And on both sides I might say. And also because of the gravity of these violations to make sure that the international community absolutely

plays in to the issue of dialogue and negotiation. What kind of war is it in Sri Lanka? Is it a civil war as some speakers have said or is it something else? Now the term "self determination" has come in rather frequently in our discussion in the last two days. We have got to talk a little bit about that before we can talk about what kind of war it is in Sri Lanka. Maybe even a little bit of understanding of that may illuminate why at least at this point dialogue is not occurring.

The International Law of Self-Determination is sticky. I know many Tamils say we have the right to self-determination - and I agree with that. But because it is so sticky it is very, very important to articulate exactly why you have the right to self-determination rather than just saying "We have the right to self-determination", because I can tell you from immense experience the international community tends not to like that concept because they see

unitary states breaking apart.

What is the right to self-determination? It is very well enshrined in the international instruments which you heard this morning from the Judge - it is in the Charter of the United Nations it is the first article in each of the human rights covenants. The conventional definition is that it is a right held by peoples who have a common linguistic heritage and an ability to self-govern. It used to be that was viewed in the colonial context and once the coloniser left it was extinguished. Once the coloniser left Sri Lanka the right to self-determination no longer existed. That is now becoming old-fashioned.

Why? Because of the phenomena that has been discussed by many speakers. You know the dilemma of majority - minority. Whether it is the minority that is in power or the majority, if it is a situation where one or the other has the power and the other does not then it becomes a very serious crisis - if the group in power grabs it and runs. So there is a new version of self-determination and that is: it is held by people or groups who are subject to apartheid, persecution, discrimination and other violations of human rights by another group whether it is minority or majority which prevents the affected group from the realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. So obviously in defining self-determination it is important to know other human rights because you have to know if there is a persistent pattern of the violations. So when you listened to yesterday's speeches outlining the litany of the failure of the realisation of Human rights for the Tamil people what you were hearing was defence for the principle of self-determination of the Tamil people. Not the old-fashioned one but the evolving one.

There are always questions in these sticky matters. 1. How bad does it have to be? 2. How long does it have to go on? We can argue in certain circumstances quite clearly with the situation in South Africa with apartheid. It was one minute into apartheid too long. The apartheid system was so inherently in opposition to fundamental human rights that it could not exist

even one second before the right to self-determination ripened.

Now in a pattern of human rights violations what if the violation is that you have to sit in the back of the bus. And that's all. It is degrading, but probably if that were the only violation of human rights - that this group had to sit in the back of the bus - but had equal education, equal employment, equal participation in government etc.. maybe the right to self-determination based on that might be not be quite viewed as essential. Though if I had to sit in the back of the bus I might have a different opinion.

Now the question of how long? Let's look at the Tamil situation. The litany that you have heard and the worsening situation certainly would indicate that from the perspective of a Tamil in Sri Lanka the expectation that in their lifetime, given normal civil processes, the rights of Tamils would ever be realised was unrealistic. In 1976, 20 years and one month ago, the Tamil leadership and the Tamil people decided that the time was up. I believe you all know the document I am referring to. The Resolution of the First National Convention of the TULF, 14/5/1976. Regardless of your opinion of the parties or whatever participants in it, this document is a statement of the right to self-determination of the Tamil people which is remarkably well-drafted and clearly and strongly articulates the defence of self-determination both in the classic sense by reminding us all of the historic separateness of the two. And in the modern sense in articulating the litany of the violations.

I agree with this document. By 1976 it was enough. I made a speech - I think it was 1989 - at the United Nations saying 40 years was enough. Obviously defending the situation from these points of view leaves one to experience pounding of tables - and I have had a lot of experience of pounding of a table, both at the United Nations, with the thousand screams and threats from even seasoned diplomats and occasionally even from other NGO's who seem to think that every single conflict in the world ought to be resolved by peaceful means, some of

them who also applaud such military ventures as the United Nations and my Government have been involved with where we certainly were not interested in waiting for negotiations. My country has been involved in the last twenty years in six direct military actions.

In the face of all this what are we to do? You have heard some very profound and clear and strong statements about what to do. I am not going to repeat them. I would like to say that anyone of you in any NGO community to make very, very sure that when allegations are bandied around that if you repeat them without knowing for sure who did it you will atleast indicate the source of the information that you got so that people can weigh the source of the information as to whether or not its content is accurate. I know it

“What is the right to self-determination? It is very well enshrined in the international instruments which you heard this morning from the Judge - it is in the Charter of the United Nation, it is the first article in each of the human rights covenants. The conventional definition is that it is a right held by peoples who have a common linguistic heritage and an ability to self-govern.”

is hard to be rigorous at all times in a situation where we are besieged with information. But it does nobody any good to repeat an allegation as if it were true if we have not personally investigated it. I do not like to hold myself up, but I can clearly say that I have never made an allegation in the United Nations in this situation or any other situation when I have not personally investigated myself if the facts were true and if I wasn't sure I said so. Or said nothing till I did know.

International governments obviously have to pressure for cessation of hostilities but they have to do responsibly and honestly and from the perspective these bodies of law that I have just discussed. They can condition aid, they can refuse to provide military aid, they can do all sorts of things but at this point not much is being done.

I would like to talk about what you can do when you do not know what to do. Not all of us are lawyers with the astounding opportunities that I have had - for which I am immensely grateful - to present these issues at the United Nations and at Conferences such as this one, to governments and lobby them and try to reason with them. A lot of people feel for the situation but they don't know what to do.

In the fiasco in the former Yugoslavia there was a mortar shell that attacked a bakery and 22 people were killed. The next day there was a cello player who sat in front of the bakery and played the cello. The next day the cello player was back. The day after the cello player was back. Pretty soon a few other people came and played with the cello player. It turned out that

the cello player was a member of one of the orchestras in Sarejevo which no longer was able to function because of the war. So some of the players were other members and some were just people. So they played everyday in front of the bakery for 22 days. It seems like not much. But that created an immense turning point in that war with amazing repercussions. In the city of Seattle a group got 22 bakeries, 22 groups of musicians who played in front of 22 bakeries. Everyone in Seattle knew about the war in Bosnia, in Sarejevo in a way that was so graphic and so real and so moving.

All of us in our own way have cellos. But we do not know till we play them. 1

(Text of the talk given at the Canberra Conference on Peace with Justice)

“Neengatha Ninaivuhal”



“Neengatha Ninaivuhal” (Memories than cannot be erased) was a full-day programme arranged by VENPURA, the Tamil Women’s Network in London in remembering the anti-Tamil holocaust of July 1983.

It was observed as a day of cultural and educational activities and Remembrance at Conway Hall, Red Lion Saturday 27th July amidst a packed audience.

Mayor of Brent, Ms. Latha Patel, Member of European Parliament Robert Evans were among the distinguished guests.

Others included two visitors from Tamil Nadu, Dr. R. Janarthanan and Mahakavi (Poet) Sethuraman and G.G. Ponnambalam (Jr.)

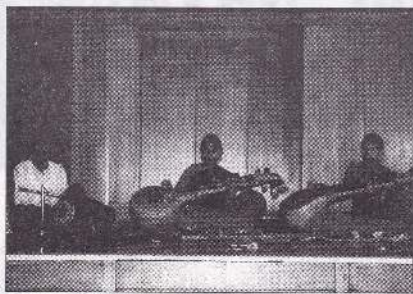
There was a guided tour of Tamil Life including stalls, food preparing demonstrations, traditional floor pattern designing, garland making and displays on the hitory of Tamil culture and current affairs.

Workshops and discussions on current issue such as Women’s role, Human Rights, Role of the Church, Aid and Arms, Tamil history for the youths took place, followed by a public meeting chaired by James Karan.

The programme ended with music and dance items, Villupattu (traditional music / story telling) and Veena items.



July 1983 remembered



Former Tamil M.P. on

Historically the Tamils and the Sinhalese were always politically independent of one another, and separately occupied their respective traditional homelands until the British conquest early in the 19th century. The Tamil homeland territory was ceded to the British by the Dutch by the Treaty of Amiens of 1802. It was the British who amalgamated the Tamil and Sinhalese territories into one crown colony for administrative purposes, which resulted in the Tamils becoming smaller in numbers as compared to the Sinhalese in the unified country.



V. Navaratnam

Broken pledges & Militarism by Sinhala Politicians

Mindful of this, when Independence was being negotiated in 1946 the British insisted on making provisions in the proposed constitution for the protection of the Tamils and demanded that the Sinhalese obtain the consent of the Tamils for the complete transfer of power to the people of Ceylon.

The Sinhalese gave a solemn promise and undertaking and pledged themselves never to use their majority numbers to discriminate against or to the detriment of the Tamils (vide State Council Hansard of 1946).

1948 Constitution

The British took care to ensure the faithful performance of the Sinhalese promise and undertaking by giving it legal form and incorporating it as unalterable laws in Article 29 of the 1948 Constitution and agreed to the British

transfer of power to the people of Ceylon.

The 1948 Constitution, the one and only lawful and legally enacted constitution Ceylon has ever had since the end of World War II, therefore provided for:

i) a Parliament, with power to make laws for the peace order and good government of Ceylon subject to the limitations placed on that power by the unalterable laws in Article 29 and consisting of

a) the Queen of Ceylon as constitutional Head of the State

b) the House of Representatives with balanced representation elected on the basis of universal adult franchise; the proportion of seats was something like 52% for the Sinhalese and 48% for all the minorities, and

c) the Senate as a second chamber for sober and mature deliberation of proposed laws and for the voice of interests not represented in the House of Representatives;

ii) a Cabinet of the Westminster model with executive power responsible to Parliament;

iii) an independent judiciary with a Supreme Court appointed by the Queen;

iv) the Right to Appeal to Her Majesty's Privy Council as the Court of Last Resort.

It was relying on these safeguards that the Tamils accepted the Constitution and agreed to Britain transferring power to a unified Ceylon.

Early in the exercise of their power the Sinhalese began to renege on their solemn promise and undertaking by enacting controversial citizenship of

more than one million Tamils and rendering the rest of the Tamils doubtful citizens or altogether stateless. Vehement Tamil opposition was ignored.

Then, the Sinhalese enacted The Ceylon Parliamentary Elections Order in Council Amendment Act of 1949 which reduced Tamil representation in Parliament by nine seats.

The ratio of Tamil representation was further tampered with and reduced by systematic planned state-aided colonization of Tamil homeland areas with Sinhalese colonists from outside the Tamil Provinces in impudent violation of the Land Development and Land Settlement laws in force and by the revision of Parliamentary Electoral Districts (ridings).

“Sinhala Only” Act

In 1965, in the face of a storm of protest from the Tamils, and indeed from all the linguistic minorities in Ceylon, the Sinhalese had recourse to steamroller tactics to rush through Parliament the Official Language Act making their mother tongue, Sinhala, the only Official Language of Ceylon the very thing expressly prohibited in by Article 29 of the 1948 Constitution. It made the entire Tamil population illiterate overnight drove thousands of Tamil children by imposing on them unconscionably higher grades of achievement to be eligible for admission to institutions of higher learning and forcing the Burgher Community, citizens of Portuguese or Dutch descent, to emigrate en masse to Australia.

For a quarter of a century during which the 1948 Constitution was in force and was respected as the supreme fundamental basic law of the country, Ceylon was relatively stable -- politically, economically, and socially. There was peace, law and order was maintained, respect for the Rule of Law was never in question, the occasional peaceful non-violent protest campaigns by Tamils against the blatant discriminatory laws and policies of governments notwithstanding.

Some of these laws were challenged in courts of law. A few cases

were taken to Her Majesty's Privy Council in appeal, in some of which judgements went against the government. In one such case, the case of the Bribery Commissioner vs Rana-singhe, Their Lordships of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council made the authoritative pronouncement that the provisions of Sub-section (2) paragraphs (a), (b), (c), and (d) of Article 29 of the 1948 Constitution **“represent the solemn balance of rights between the citizens of Ceylon, the fundamental condition on which inter se they accepted the Constitution, and these are therefore unalterable under the Constitution.”**



Mrs. Bandaranaike: The Ratwatte feudal family “noted for their Tamilophobia”

This emphatic pronouncement coming from the highest Court of Last Resort dealt a death-blow to the Sinhalese pipe-dreams for dominion over the Tamils.

In the 1965-70 Parliament, Members of the Official Opposition in the House of Representatives, a coalition of Nationalist Sinhalese-Trotskyite Socialist-Communist parties, never missed an opportunity to remind the Tamils from the floor of the House that at the very first chance they get to be the government they would use their power to do away with the last vestiges of British colonialism and to curb the power of the Tamils to obstruct what they called “progressive legislation”. I had the misfortune to sit and listen to these threats, which did sound

very ominous although how they proposed to do it was not clear at the time. As Parliament's term was nearing its end they appeared to prepare the ground for the denouement they were plotting.

Parliament was dissolved in March 1970, and General Elections for new Parliament were held on May 22, 1970. The incumbent Prime Minister's party (UNP) was roundly defeated by the above Coalition parties under the leadership of Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. The Coalition obtained more than two-thirds majority that was needed to amend any of the amendable provisions of the 1948 Constitution -- almost entirely from Sinhalese ridings.

Between assuming office by Mrs. Bandaranaike's new Government and 19th July 1970 the Coalition parties in power rushed through Parliament legislation **abolishing the Senate and abolishing the Right of Appeal to the Privy Council.**

Finally, on the 2nd of June 1972, the Sinhalese broke their pledged word to the Tamils, went back on their solemn promise upon which Britain transferred power, treated the Privy Council with utter contempt for its opinion, and drove the last nail on the coffin of the 1948 Constitution, illegally proclaimed Ceylon a republic with the illegal name of “Sri Lanka”, and sent their Army to the Tamil homeland Provinces to coerce the Tamils into submission by military force.

The Sinhalese feudal family of Bandaranaike-Ratwatte-- the father, the mother, the daughter, and the mother's brother, all noted for their Tamilophobia-- has always displayed a predilection for the use of the Army and the Police in the practice of their brand of “parliamentary democracy” against the people.

The Sinhalese Army that was sent to the Tamil Provinces, a rabble of untrained thugs in uniform with firearms and notorious for their undisciplined behaviour, went on a rampage committing indescribable atrocities and brutalities upon the innocent Tamil population.

Army sent to Northeast

The Tamils, in defence, took up arms, for the first time in 500 years, to defend themselves and their children and their families under the leadership of Velupillai Prabhakaran, the Supreme Commander of the LTTE forces of young boys and girls. This is the War that is still being waged in Ceylon without an end in sight.

Now, as one who had organized and led peaceful non-violent civil disobedience campaigns on the pattern of Mahatma Gandhi's historic campaigns in South Africa and India against the Sinhalese abuses of power and discriminatory laws and policies and imprisoned twice without trial for such activities, once had a twilight faith that the Soulbury-Ivor Jennings crafted 1948 Constitution with its Article 29 safeguards for the protection of minorities and the democratic Parliament it provided for might possibly act as a deterrent to any Sinhalese attempt to exercise dominion over the Tamils,

Some Questions

Is there a legitimate government in Ceylon for anybody to deal with? Should not Prabhakaran be wary when he deals with lawbreakers and usurpers of power? Why is Prabhakaran's alleged withdrawing from a temporary cease-fire agreement upon the discovery of bad faith more censurable than the Sinhalese breaking the momentous solemn promise that was so vital for the purpose of detaining the consent of Independence and then going back on their plighted Word? Why is Sinhalese calculated flouting of the State's Constitution and flouting the Rule of Law in an arrogant show of utter contempt for the Privy Council judgement justified? What constitution, what laws, what solemn agreements, what civilized values, can be trusted to be safe with Sinhalese leaders?

The 1948 Constitution was never expressly abolished. Nor was it ever positively repealed.

So, did Her Majesty Elizabeth II ever legally cease to be Queen of Ceylon?

If yes, when and how?

Did the Queen of Ceylon ever legally cease to be a constituent of Parliament and constitutional Head of State of Ceylon? If yes, when and how?

In 1965 the constitutionally elected Prime Minister of Rhodesia, Ian Smith, made a UDI which Britain and the international community of sovereign

nuity, and the successor state and government is tainted with illegitimacy. Professor S.A.D. Smith of Cambridge has pointed out that when Ceylon adopted a republican constitution in 1972 in violation of the law there was a clear "breach of legal continuity." It necessarily follows that all governments in Ceylon since 2nd June 1972 are illegitimate. The question therefore arises:

Why do the international media and governments persistently keep on



Tamil leader Velupillai Prabhakaran: "Acknowledged by the Tamils as their one and only leader and spokesman"

states refused to recognise. But when the constitutionally elected Prime Minister of sister Commonwealth country, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Ceylon, made an identical UDI seven years later, they all rushed in to grant it recognition. Why is UDI good for Ceylon, but not good for Rhodesia, or for that matter, for Quebec or Serbia? Why this double standard?

Legal continuity

It is a fundamental principle of state succession that legal continuity must always be preserved between the outgoing state and government and the successor one. It is achieved by strictly following the procedure laid down by the law in force. Where it is not followed there is a breach of legal conti-

harping on 19th April 1995 (when the LTTE withdrew from the spurious peace process) and conveniently ignore or condone 2nd June 1972 which launched Ceylon on a career of militarism and genocide, like Hitler did for domination of Europe?

At the Parliamentary General Elections of 1977, which were the last orderly held and regular elections in the Tamil homeland Provinces up to date, the registered political party which contested all the Tamil seats on the publicly declared its policy and promise to establish the separate independent Sinhalese UDI of 1972, that the Tamils were given the opportunity democratically to express their wish. The Tamils almost unanimously expressed

their will to separate in no uncertain terms. The Sinhalese replied by sending more troops to the Tamil Provinces and spread terror among the population. They engineered the Nazi-type pogrom of 1983 against the Tamils in Colombo burning them alive in cars on the roads and in their homes with their houses.

And yet, why do the international media persist in repeating the propaganda of lies that the Tamil people do not support, or "have failed to establish" their support, for the separate state demand, that the Tamils started the War, against the Tamils as to gloss over Sinhalese terrorism, and even to hide the truth, with condoning statements such as "The Army's reputation for brutality is part of the problem, but the bigger part is that the Tigers....." (THE ECONOMIST, London)?

International conscience

What useful purpose will be served by the international media and governments bringing pressure on Velupillai Prabhakaran, whom the Tamils acknowledge as their one and only leader and spokesman, to try yet another negotiated agreement when the Sinhalese are known to have torn up every one of the negotiated agreements in the course of the last one hundred years, including even the 1948 Constitution negotiated between the British government, the Sinhalese, and the Tamils?

Is not Prabhakaran entitled to ask himself the question whether he would be justified, after the loss of more than 50,000 Tamils killed, to jeopardize the lives of yet more Tamils by sitting at a negotiating table for yet another scrap of paper, only to be torn up when saffron-clad Buddhist monks squat outside bungalow? Who will guarantee that she will not tear up whatever "agreement" that may come out of the negotiating table after her purpose is served, like what her father did to the B-C Pact in 1957, or like what Adolf Hitler did to the little piece of paper he gave Neville Chamberlain at Munich in 1939?

Finally, the eminent English jurist Austin enunciated the princi-

ple that "Law is command supported by sanctions", and Professor S.A.D. Smith cited the case of the illegal declaration of a republican state by the Sinhalese in Ceylon in 1972 with military support as an example for the principle that "might becomes law" or "might is law".

If the Sinhalese are entitled to invoke these principles to seek perpetual domination over the Tamils and to rule over them as a subject people, what is wrong if Velupillai Prabhakaran chooses to invoke the same principles to defend and protect his people and posterity and prevent them from being trodden under? What is wrong if he believes, as the sole trusted leader of the Tamils, that he has no choice but to invoke the same principles like the Sinhalese aggressors to ensure that his people and their progeny live in their traditional homeland territory of Tamil Eelam in peace, freedom, and self-respect, and free from the fear of Sinhalese terrorism and violence?

The international media and governments owe it to their conscience and to the several hundreds of thousands of Tamil men, women, and chil-

dren who have been driven out of their homes and villages and cities by the Sinhalese Army to wander in the jungles as destitute refugees without food or shelter or medicines to ponder over the above questions and try to answer them, if they can, rationally and truthfully. It is strange that they do not realize how unseemly it is to repeat parrot-like the motivated propaganda of an illegitimate Sinhalese government that poses as a paragon of virtue.

V. Navaratnam, the only living founder member of the Ilankai Thamil Arasu Kadchi (Federal Party), he represented the Kayts constituency in the Ceylon Parliament. He later broke away from the party and advocated self-rule for the Tamils. A leading political strategist of the time, he now lives in exile in Canada. Mr. Navaratnam is the author of THE FALL AND RISE OF THE TAMIL NATION, (1995) P.O.Box 70, La Prairie, Quebec, J5R 3Y1, Canada.

The book gives an inside account of the political events since 1948, and is an invaluable source of information to students of the history of the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka.



A demonstration condemning India's assistance to the Sri Lankan government in the slaughter of Eelam Tamil Civilians was held in Madurai on 12th July. Comrade Thiagu was the main speaker.

UNBROKEN
CHAINS

UNBROKEN CHAINS
A STUDY OF THE DOWRY SYSTEM
IN SRI LANKA
ADELE ANN

BOOK LAUNCH

In conjunction with "EVERYwoman", a progressive monthly magazine (circulation of 40,000 in Britain) the women's section of United Tamils Organisation London, held a book launch of Adele Ann's "Unbroken Chains" on 4th, July in central London.

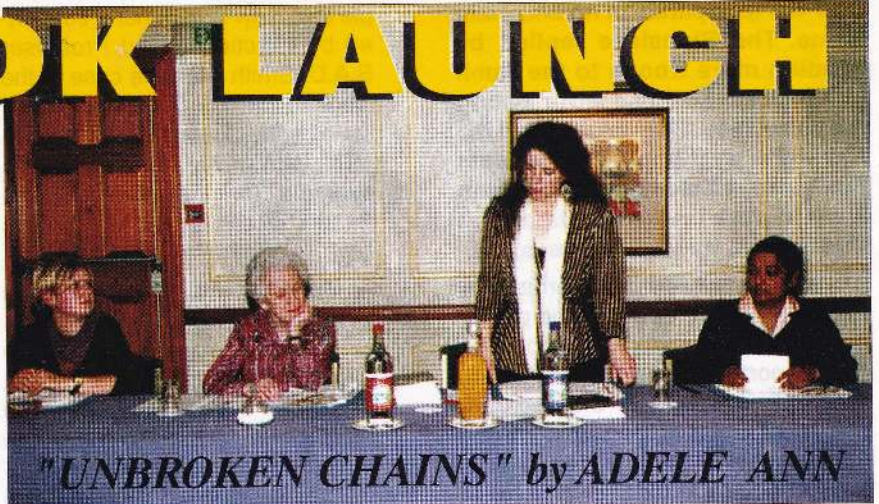
Adele Ann's research into socio-cultural relations, takes us from the original practices of a unique matrilineal property system, through by codification colonisers to the present time. She explores how "dowry has created an irreconcilable contradiction between social expectations and material reality". Of interest to researchers and those interested in the fields of women's studies, History and social sciences, This book can be obtained from U.T.O. office London.

Here follows a report by young Gayathrie, who was present at the launch of "Unbroken Chains":

On the 4th of July I was invited to the book launch of "Unbroken Chains" by Adele Ann, a study of the dowry system in Jaffna. The event was held at Park Court Hotel in central London and the programme was chaired by Ms. Deirdre McConnell.

Out of the dozen of people who came, there were more non-Tamils than Tamils and this pleased me as this was an indication that other people were interested and willing to know more about my culture. There was cheese and wine, not to mention

Gayathrie



"UNBROKEN CHAINS" by ADELE ANN
In the photograph (left to right) Jan Kaneen, Publicity officer 'EVERYwoman', Bianca Gordon, Psychoanalyst, Deirdre McConnell and Miss Mann.

"vadais", after which Ms. McConell introduced the three speakers for the evening. The first speaker was Jan Kaneen from "EVERYwoman" and she spoke on the issue of women and feminism. It was encouraging to see her positive attitude towards the welfare of the Tamil women and her eagerness to promote Tamil women's events through her magazine. The second speaker, Bianca Gordon also spoke about Tamil women and their sufferings due to the present situation in Sri Lanka. She was able to relate to the oppression because she, a Jew came to England during her early childhood from Nazi Germany. These two women were both non-Tamils and I felt that it was a great boost to the Tamil people to get their support.

Finally Miss. Mann spoke on the book, its author and the connection with the national struggle in Sri Lanka. The book is a study on the dowry System confronting the Sri Lankan Tamils, its complexity and its role as a major source of the oppression of women. Adele Ann has done a great deal of research for this book as proved by the long bibliography list. Adele Ann who is Australian, married Mr. Anton Balasingham, spokesperson for the LTTE. She is also involved with the LTTE and has previously written a book on "Women Fighters of Liberation Tigers". Miss Mann went on to describe the national struggle in detail, how it started, the oppression felt by

the Tamil people in the face of the Sinhala government and the present situation. Through simple incidents witnessed by her Miss. Mann was able to portray the life in North and East Sri Lanka, the lack of basic needs such as food and electricity, lack of medical equipment in hospitals, lack of study materials in schools, the fear of living in areas which may be bombed any time, the horror of carpet bombing and the psychological traumas faced by young children who have witnessed such events. There was then an opportunity to ask questions after which the programme came to a close.

The event gave me a fresh determination to do something to help the Tamil people back home. Miss. Mann's portrayal of every day life in the North and East of Sri Lanka was very disturbing and made me realise how lucky I am. I felt that people like me who are living abroad had a lot of freedom and capacity to voice for the people caught up in the freedom struggle and to help them as much as possible. It is our duty to let the world know what is happening out there. And being amidst so many people who cared and were eager to help the Tamil people made me a lot more cheerful like Ms. Kaneen said, this event was just a drop of water towards the well being of the oppressed Tamil people but it is these drops that make up the vast ocean. 1

Mullaitivu Debacle

The soldier who climbed a coconut tree

A NURADHAPURA, Sri Lanka, July 23 (AFP) - A soldier who survived a massive Tamil Tiger attack on an army camp by climbing a coconut tree said Tuesday that the garrison was overrun by human waves of ferocious guerrillas.

W.G. Damnike, 19, said from his hospital bed that hundreds of young female and male guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) took part in the pre-dawn July 18 offensive wearing battle fatigues.

"I have never seen such an attack. It was horrible," said the soldier, who reached this northwestern town after he was rescued by reinforcement troops far away from the fallen garrison at Mullaitivu in the island's northeast.

"We fought as good as we can, but

the Tigers pounded our camp with mortars," said Damnike, the first to give a first-hand account of the battle.

"They literally rained mortars and shells non-stop. When I ran out of ammunition, I climbed a coconut tree with two other soldiers and remained there for a full 24 hours.

"The mortar firing went on and on. I was frightened. Each time a mortar fell near me. I thought the tree would be uprooted.

"The Tigers poured in like human waves. There was no stopping them.

"As the fighting subsided, I saw Tigers bring in a tractor and take away loads of weapons, mainly T-56 (assault) rifles. Another tractor ferried bodies, mainly of soldiers.

"Next a LTTE jeep drove into the camp. There was a LTTE leader who got out and gave out orders in Tamil over loudhailers. I couldn't understand what he said. Later I saw civilians

come and help the Tigers to remove the weapons.

"Many soldiers who were wounded bled to death," the survivor said.

"The camp was fully destroyed (by the LTTE). There is nothing left in the camp."

Damnike, who was sent to Mullaitivu after he joined the army a year ago, said he came down the coconut tree and fled towards the Mullaitivu lagoon after the Tigers in the area relocated themselves.

"As I was making my way through the forests, the (Sri Lankan) air force began to bomb the place," Damnike said. "I had to take cover from that also. It was very frightening.

"After walking three-four kilometers (1.8-2.5 miles) I came across army reinforcements," he said. "I raised my hands so that they wouldn't think that I was a Tiger."

Sri Lankan forces gave up trying

C OLOMBO, July 26 (UPI) — Sri Lankan forces Friday gave up trying to recapture a key army base in the island's northeast and withdrew troops after an unsuccessful week-long battle to wrest control of the besieged garrison from Tamil separatist rebels, officials said. A senior military official told United Press International soldiers were finding rebel resistance at Mullaitivu too strong to retake the camp. Troops retreated from Mullaitivu under heavy mortar fire on Friday and were being evacuated by amphibious landing craft, the official said on condition of anonymity. Some 40 special force commandos who secured the beach head for the withdrawal were killed by guerrillas, he said.

The strategic withdrawal from Mullaitivu, 175 miles northeast of

Colombo, came on the same day the government launched a new offensive against the northern headquarters of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Sri Lankan forces made a drive south from strongholds in the island's northern Elephant Pass toward the town of Kilinochchi, where separatist rebels are believed to maintain their headquarters. The hospital at Kilinochchi was hit during an air force bombing run on the town, a representative of a Western aid organization confirmed. However, the number of casualties was not immediately known.

"A major operation code named "Sathjaya" was launched during early morning hours of 26 July 1996. The latest government offensive triggered a mass civilian exodus from the area, with as many as 300,000 refugees on

the move, aid workers said. Experts said the operation, involving 2,500 troops, was apparently meant to save face after the government's forced retreat from Mullaitivu.

On Thursday, angry opposition members of Sri Lanka's Parliament blamed President Chandrika Kumaratunga for the debacle, which ranks as one of the worst defeats for government troops in 13 years of ethnic civil war. "The deputy defence minister should resign in shame over this issue. The whole government should resign," Member of Parliament Tilak Karunaratne said. Karunaratne said the rebels had captured long-range artillery and other sophisticated weapons from Mullaitivu that would be used in future attacks against government security forces. "They can now attack any place in the country," he said.

NATIONAL CONFLICTS AND THE ROLE OF THE WEST

According to the authoritative Stockholm International Peace Research Institute none of last year's wars was between states. All were, in its terminology, "civil wars" fought within states, apparently signalling a shift away from the pattern of inter-state wars which have characterised the modern era.

Most of these so-called "civil wars" are, in fact, "nationalist struggles" waged by numerically smaller nations within some countries to achieve independence from artificial state-structures which are being used by numerically bigger nations to dominate and oppress them. I have heard the General Secretary of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, himself using the term "civil wars" when referring to nationalist struggles, in a TV discussion.

I think this usage is not only misleading, it is also being used as a cover - or perhaps excuse - to justify the UN not intervening in such conflicts. It brands them, conveniently, as "internal affairs" of the countries concerned.

The UN should learn quickly to distinguish between two sorts of armed struggle: On the one hand, nationalist struggles (within states) aimed at liberating an oppressed nation - like the Tamil struggle - and on the other hand, internal social upheavals where a section of the population tries to overthrow an existing government.

While secessionist struggles do not necessarily aim at overthrowing an existing government, internal social upheavals usually do. Hence, these upheavals can be legitimately called "civil wars" whereas secessionist struggles cannot.

Secessionist struggles are best described as conflicts between nations occurring within artificially imposed states and aimed at winning the democratic right of self-determination. Such struggles necessarily consist of nationalist guerrillas fighting an oppressive state's forces from their home ground.

In Sri Lanka, for example, it is not the Tamil guerrillas who have invaded the Sinhalese homeland. It is the other way around - it is Sinhala troops who are occupying the Tamil homeland.

So, while the overthrow of the Shah of Iran and the failed uprisings by the JVP guerrillas in Sri Lanka can be classified as "civil wars", the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka, the Kashmiri struggle in India and the Chechen struggle against Russia cannot be characterised as "civil wars".

By bundling "social upheavals" and "national conflicts" into the same category of "civil wars", the UN is obliged to brand nationalist-conflicts also as "internal matters" to be left to the state concerned. Since the UN is expected to

Vasantha Raja

respect the principle of sovereignty, it has no choice but to turn a blind eye to some ruthlessly oppressive nations' efforts to use the state-power at their disposal to militarily crush the legitimate struggles of oppressed nations - unless of course the big powers in the Security Council choose to intervene - but this rarely occurs unless there are particular strategic interests.

In relation to the national conflict in Sri Lanka, the most selfish and hypocritical stance taken by the rich countries - led by the United States - in directly helping the Sinhala government's efforts to militarily crush the Tamil liberation struggle, can be cited as a vivid illustration of the rich governments' extremely ill-considered approach to the secessionist phenomenon currently dominating the world scene.

An American journalist, Mark Kaufman, wrote recently from Veeravila in Sri Lanka, exposing how the US government quietly expands its role in Sri Lanka and how the US Green Berets help train Sinhala soldiers. As one

American political observer commented, "perhaps the US military want to quietly gain a toehold in the Indian ocean while India is preoccupied".

So, it is clear that as long as big powers with vested interests control the UN, oppressed nations in the world cannot have much hopes in that organisation either. As the Secretary General of the UN himself has already admitted, there is a pressing demand for the 'democratisation' of the UN to enable it to handle the worsening calamity confronting the world as a result of these roaring nationalist struggles. The UN's impotence - and its failure to adapt to new circumstances - seems to spring from the structural defects inherited at its inception - as a result of which it can be easily rendered impotent in many areas of conflict by a few big powers.

In my view, Western governments (particularly the United States) fail to understand the form and content of the secessionist phenomenon and this is the main obstacle to the UN ever achieving the necessary transformation in handling them. Too often, rich countries formulate policy in these areas with respect to short-term business interest only.

The first thing to understand is that contemporary struggles for independence are, in essence, the same as similar national struggles fought by western nations a few centuries ago.

Just as the first Western struggles to assert national identity took a different form to those later struggles against Western imperialism by Third World countries, so too today's national liberation struggles have taken their own unique form - but in essence, all these struggles form part of the same unfinished democratic revolution.

Let me, at this point, make a passing observation about the miraculous success of the peace process in South Africa, even though what I have to say is not directly relevant to the main theme of this paper.

It has become fashionable these days for many professional peace-mongers (who are eager to reproach determined liberation fighters like Velupillai Prabhakaran) to refer to Nelson Mandela's statesman-like ability to compromise. What they forget to mention is that Nelson Mandela or the ANC would never have compromised on the fundamental democratic principle at stake in their struggle i.e. the right of Universal Franchise, on which the black struggle in South Africa was based.

It was, on the contrary, the apartheid government which had to capitulate entirely to that demand, knowing full well that it would lead to the dismantling of the apartheid system and pave the way for an ANC government.

Also, it was the business community in South Africa which forced the apartheid regime to surrender when it realised that the black struggle could not be crushed and that their business interests were being fatally affected. What the pacifist liberals and the professional peace-mongers should realise is that it would be totally unrealistic to expect guerrilla movements fighting for national liberation to compromise on the democratic principle (i.e. the right to self-determination) for which they have been fighting all along. And that means it would be futile to think that these liberation fighters would ever give up arms to a state that is controlled by another nation, when their armed cadres are the only guarantee they have for the protection of their democratic right to self-determination.

Now, let me come to another concept that often confuses western and eastern political observers alike, i.e., the difference between "ethnic minorities" living in a given country and historically evolved "nations" occupying clearly recognisable territories within a given state.

In the United Kingdom, for example, Scottish people would not see themselves as an ethnic minority living within an "English" country, whereas the Indians, Pakistanis or Sri Lankans living in Britain would. Scottish people see the British state as a voluntary Union from which they can at any time break away from, should they wish to do so.

In fact we have seen recently how Scottish nationalism is growing in spite of the self-governing powers Scotland enjoys at present. The leaders of the Scottish independence movement can be seen arguing that they want to establish an independent state and that they are willing to re-join the English at the European level through the European Union, as equals. We can see a similar trend among the French in Quebec in spite of the substantial federalist powers they enjoy within the Canadian Federation.

The bottom-line in many Western Federations is the voluntary nature of the co-existence of more than one nation within a single state. It is like a

oppression and discrimination against numerically smaller nations.

Sri Lanka is a classic example. It was the British who imposed the unitary state there, providing incentives for Sinhala politicians to whip up chauvinism in order to gain political power, thus creating a vicious-circle in which politicians and the electorate from the dominant nation become trapped in a process of mutually reinforcing chauvinistic sentiments against the minority nation, and, thereby, magnifying its will to secede.

Western governments must appreciate that the artificial states imposed in the past by Western colonialists in many Third-World countries do not cor-

Sri Lanka is a classic example. It was the British who imposed the unitary state there, providing incentives for Sinhala politicians to whip up chauvinism in order to gain political power, thus creating a vicious-circle in which politicians and the electorate from the dominant nation become trapped in a process of mutually reinforcing chauvinistic sentiments against the minority nation, and, thereby, magnifying its will to secede.

voluntary "marriage" enshrining the right to "divorce".

Such unions cannot be imposed on any partner by force. If the majority within any one nation strongly feels the time has come to quit, then, they have the right to do so - under international law. The most glaring recent example of an amicable separation taking place in the most civilised manner is in the case of Czechs and Slovaks. One of the most glaring examples of an amicable and voluntary union is the Benelux Union where three nations (Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg) each with complete self-rule, have formed a union for their mutual benefit.

In many "third world" countries, however, the unitary-states imposed by former colonialists did not tally with the ground realities - and in fact, such state-structures have been instrumental in engendering

respond with the national complexities of those territories. Thus, the "democratic rule" introduced in some former colonies - far from being democratic - has paved the way for majority nations within unitary states to unfairly exercise hegemony over small nations. In other words, such state-structures have bound together separate nations into unjust and unequal relationships.

In Sri Lanka, we can see how the Sinhala-dominated governments are very keen to refer to Tamils as an ethnic minority living in the Sinhala/Buddhist country, when in fact Tamils are a nation, with their own language, culture and traditions and domiciled within their traditional homeland.

The Sinhala political establishment wants to see the "grievances" of the Tamil people as those of "tenants" living within a Sinhala/Buddhist household; whereas the Tamils see themselves as

occupying their own household side by side with the Sinhala household.

President Kumaratunga has no difficulty in admitting that the previous Sinhalese landlords have treated their "Tamil tenants" badly and is keen to show that she, being a particularly benevolent landlady, is prepared to redress those "grievances". But that is as far as it goes. The Sinhala political establishment intends to hold on to the upper whip at all costs.

It is the unitary state-structure which has enabled the Sinhala political establishment to dominate the Central government and maintain its hegemony on the Tamil nation for so long. The Sinhala politicians know

this and that is why they are determined to keep any devolution of power to Tamils within a unitary framework, so that the Sinhala dominated centre can hold tightly on to the reins. In order to justify this political domination, the Sinhala political establishment is trying its best to brand Tamils as an "ethnic minority" - when in fact in every sense they are a nation in exactly the same sense the Sinhalese are a nation.

But by using the term "ethnic conflict" instead of "national conflict" Western analysts have also played their part in helping camouflage the real nature of the issue.

In any case, it is high time the inter-

national community and the United Nations recognised the real content of the secessionist struggles which have emerged as an inevitable historical force, and it is high time they stopped supporting chauvinist regimes in their desperate yet futile efforts to crush them. The international experience clearly shows the unstoppable direction in which these forces move. It would be a monumental error to think that hi-tech warfare can put an end to powerful historical forces like this, unless of course you are prepared to wipe out entire nations. Grasping their historical inevitability and searching for imaginative solutions would, in my view, pay off in the long run.

Swiss offer of good offices not accepted by Sri Lanka

In reply to letters and an appeal sent by Tamils in Switzerland, the following letter was sent by Flavio Cotti of Head of the Federal Foreign Department:-

The violent conflict in Sri Lanka, which has lasted for 13 years now, has caused intense concern to my department for a long time. As you know, Switzerland is particularly affected by the events in Sri Lanka, because a large number of Sri Lankan citizens have come to live in Switzerland since 1983 (today they number approximately 30,000). Switzerland is making all possible efforts to further peace in Sri Lanka. We believe that a lasting and just solution to the conflict can only be achieved through a unification of the parties concerned and that law and order and democratic principles are of great importance in this process.

Now I would like to answer in detail some points you made in your appeal of 27th April 1996:

-As to your appeal to release the leader of the LTTE Mr Muralidaran, who was arrested in Zurich recently: Due to the separation of powers in Switzerland the foreign minister and even the Bundesrat can neither instigate such an arrest nor order a release. The arrests of 10th April in Zurich took place in the course of an investigation in progress since 1994. The responsibility lies with the state attorney (Bezirksan-

waltschaft) of the canton of Zurich and procedures follow the cantonal criminal law.

-As to your appeal to Switzerland not to abandon your nearest relatives in Sri Lanka and to do everything possible to achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka: The Swiss population as well as I and my department in particular are well aware of the suffering of civilians in the areas of Sri Lanka affected by the war. We have therefore tried to contribute to an alleviation of this suffering, mainly through the International Committee of the Red Cross (IKRK) but also through Swiss aid organisations and through projects of our own. In 1995 the humanitarian aid of the federation supported the activities of the IKRK in Sri Lanka with one million francs, half of which was set aside entirely to aid those people in the north and east of the country displaced by the war. In addition 230,000 francs were given to projects by Swiss aid organisations and 400,000 francs were spent on the building of a hospital in the province of Trincomalee. We are planning to go on supporting the emergency assistance programs of the IKRK in Sri Lanka, and new bilateral projects are being prepared. As far as Swiss influence on the solving of the conflict is concerned, we are making great efforts in spite of our limited possibilities. We have repeatedly offered our good services in the search for a peaceful solution of the conflict to the government of Sri Lanka. But, as you know,

the government in Colombo wants to solve the conflict without foreign assistance. Our offer, however, still stands: Switzerland is ready to offer her good services with regard to a peaceful solution of the conflict, provided the conflicting parties are willing to accept them and ready to cooperate constructively.

-As to the question of recognizing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as a national liberation movement: Following constant practice and in accordance with the law of nations the Bundesrat does not recognize any liberation movements but only states. Moreover, an official recognition of the LTTE by Switzerland would infringe on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka. On the other hand, the Tamils living in Switzerland enjoy the freedom of association and the freedom of assembly within the limits of our laws and may, within these laws, also engage in political activity....

In conclusion I would like to assure you that my department and I personally continue to observe events in Sri Lanka very carefully and that we do not only maintain our offer of good services but would also like to contribute the Swiss experience concerning the co-existence of various cultures, federalism and democracy to the peace process in Sri Lanka. Hoping that violence in Sri Lanka will soon give way to such peace process, I send you my kind regards.

Flavio Cotti

People



ARCHBISHOP TUTU RETIRES

"Tutu laughs all the way to retirement", says the headline of a report by John Carlin to THE INDEPENDENT, London. Desmond Tutu "whose reflex is always to see the funny side of things", gave up office recently after ten momentous years as the head of South Africa's Anglican Church.

"The Archbishop, a deeply spiritual man who spends hours of his day in prayer, has too impish a sense of his own... to allow himself the indulgence of pompous self-absorption."

Along with Nelson Mandela, he was a courageous fighter against apartheid. Desmond Mphahlele Tutu was born on 7 October 1931. He won the Nobel Peace prize for his central role in one of 20th century's greatest dramas, the end of apartheid.

GOPAL GANDHI AS HIGH COMMISSIONER



Renewing the links between Mahatma Gandhi and South Africa, the Indian government has appointed Mahatma Gandhi's grandson Gopal Gandhi as the Indian High Commissioner in South Africa. He will be taking off from where his grandfather began his political

career.

Gopal Gandhi is reported to have had an achievement to his credit in South Africa even before he takes up his new assignment: he turned the Nehru Centre there, from a disused building owned by the Indian High Commission into a thriving centre of Indian culture. Book launches, music programmes, talks, films: the Nehru Centre became a meeting point for Indians and Indophiles alike.

BOMBAY FILM ON SIVARASAN

Remember Sivasaran, the man whom the CBI suspected of being the one who masterminded the killing of Rajiv Gandhi?

Well, he is to be the subject of a forthcoming film in India. His role is to be played by actor Sadashiv Amrapurkar, who is a "villain" from Bombay's "Bollywood".

The intention we are told, is not to make Rajiv Gandhi the protagonist of the film; the focus will be on Sivasaran. Both aspects of Siva-

rasan, as villain to some, and as hero to others, will have to come from the film, says a visibly excited Amrapurkar.

The producer of the film is Aniruddha Mitra, who covered the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi for a magazine, and has now conceived an unusual project of retelling those tragic moments of May 1991.



SALMAN RUSHDIE'S SEVENTH NOVEL

Salman Rushdie, who has been living under a death threat ever since he published THE SATANIC VERSES in 1988, continues to be as prolific since then.



His seventh novel, THE GROUND BENEATH HER FEET is described as a love story and is due for publication in 1999. Rushdie who has

been living in hiding since becoming the subject of a "fatwah" says his involuntary confinement has not affected his ability to write. It has not affected the tone of his writing either. "Everyone told me that THE MOOR'S LAST SIGH has been the funniest thing I've ever written", he says.

Rushdie is also editing a compilation of Indian writing from the last 50 years to coincide with the 50th anniversary of Indian independence.

BOUTROS GHALI vs. UNITED STATES

The 5-year term of UN Secretary General Boutros Ghali ends in December this year, and his hope of winning a second term is effectively being dashed by the U.S. government's determination to block it. A Secretary General is formally chosen by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Security Council where the United States has the strongest voice.

Among the other four permanent members of the Security Council, Russia is thought to be leaning towards the incumbent. France backs him, China threatens to veto almost everyone else - and particularly Europeans - and the British have no strong objections or other candidates. But if the U.S. exercises its veto against Boutros Ghali, the UN will have to look elsewhere for a consensus candidate. Mr. Boutros Ghali who will be turning 75 in November next year is a former Egyptian diplomat.

International Tamil Foundation celebrates its 8th anniversary

(From our correspondent)

THE INTERNATIONAL TAMIL FOUNDATION'S 8th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION WAS HELD AT THE PUTNEY LEISURE CENTRE ON SUNDAY 21st JULY 1996.

The 8th Anniversary of the International Tamil Foundation proved to be the best attended and, perhaps, also the most interesting of the annual series held by the ITF. About 250 persons, including a few Sinhalese, were present. The atmosphere was charged with a sense of elation as the meeting followed hard on the heels of the LTTE's signal success at Mullaitivu. Everyone knew that those who fight for the Tamil cause far from being annihilated were even more powerful and determined than before.

The Chairman of the ITF (Arjuna Sittampalam), in his opening address, recalled the founding of the ITF by Jeyam Thamootheram and his nurture of it to serve as a think tank for the Tamil diaspora. It afforded a forum for a diversity of views, all of which could serve in the building of the Tamil nation. It promoted the very necessary research to re-inforce arguments on the justice of the Tamil cause internationally. It presented the Tamil situation in its true perspective to the highest ranks of government in the UK. It strove to inform and enthuse the younger generation of the Tamil diaspora about the cultural inheritance and unique character of the Tamil nation and what it could contribute to the world.

This large agenda needed support of every kind financial and moral, contributions of time and voluntary work as

well as contributions in kind. The questionnaire distributed at the meeting was intended to elicit such support from as broad a base as possible.

Three guest speakers addressed the meeting - two of whom had come



especially for it from Colombo and New York, Messrs Kumar Ponnambalam and Viswanathan Rudrakumaran respectively. The third was M. Vasantharajah from London. All three had been present at the meetings held in Canberra, Australia in June this year.



Kumar Ponnambalam dismissed the Sri Lankan government's peace proposals as farcical in the context of its military offensive. He described the discriminatory treatment of young indigenous Tamil men and women both in Colombo and at Thandikulam and the insult and injury such mistreatment caused. All efforts at an honourable settlement with the Sri Lankan government had been exhausted,

leaving no alternative but support for the armed struggle of the LTTE. He read out, and proposed, the resolution drafted at the Australia meetings. It was adopted unanimously and with acclaim by the meeting.

M. Vasantharajah placed the Eelam Tamil struggle for self-determination and independence in the international context of national independence movements. The effectiveness and single mindedness of the Tamil struggle were an example to the world in which such struggles were

now the commonest cause of war. He gave examples where settlement of such wars by separation was followed by co-operative arrangements between the former antagonists. He hoped such a course could be followed in Sri Lanka as well.

Viswanathan Rudrakumaran dealt with the facile and shallow demonization of the LTTE as "terrorists" by the Sri Lankan government. He referred to the many international covenants to which the LTTE had subscribed, thus earning for itself a recognized international status as a national liberation movement. He

hoped the Sri Lankan government would soon begin to understand the true nature and intensity of the Tamil struggle for national self-identity. He hoped that reason and commonsense would replace jingoistic hysteria.

An interesting question and answer session followed after which all present enjoyed each other's company and fellowship and were entertained to the usual lunch.

TAMIL PROBLEM AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

- THE GROUND SITUATION

(A paper read by G.G.Ponnambalam [Jr.], General Secretary, All Ceylon Tamil Congress on Sunday, 2nd July 1996, at the Eighth Anniversary Symposium of the International Tamil Foundation, on The Conflict in Sri Lanka - International Concerns, held at the Putney Leisure Centre, in London, England).

Friends,

I have sought permission to make my presentation in English for 2 reasons. Firstly because I feel my presentation is a strong indictment on the international community's stand, vis a vis what I... the Tamil problem, and secondly because we have a mixed stock today people belonging other ethnic groups other than the Tamil Nation. Therefore I shall proceed to make my presentation in English.

I came from a land where there is a veritable civil war for the last decade or more - a war where the Tamils are pitted against a Sinhala army.

I come from land which even men of God now say is a Buddhist - Sinhala land whilst others say it is a land which has "a Tamil minority that has a majority complex".

I come from a land, therefore, where the Tamils do not have a sense of belonging. And when the Tamils then cry out that they are a Nation and that they must be allowed to plot their own destinies within their traditional homelands, they are buffeted for claiming one-third of the land and two-thirds of the coastline of the tiny island called Sri Lanka!

This is the Sri Lankan conflict. But I describe it as the Tamil Problem - the status of Tamils in the island.

Where does the international com-

munity stand in the Sri Lankan conflict? What has been its past record?

Before 1983, the international community either did not know of a Tamil Problem or were not interested in it.

After 1983, we saw foreign countries getting concerned or involved in the Tamil Problem, in low profile at first. India adopted the Tamil youth who had



G.G.Ponnambalam (Jr.)

taken to arms in a big way largely because India saw an identity with the Sri Lankan Tamils due to the presence of the 55 million Indian Tamil population in the Southern-most parts of India. At the same time, other foreign countries gave gratuitous training in military warfare to the Tamil militants.

The very effective lobby of the Tamil militant youth and the Tamil expatriate community made many foreign countries become aware, for the first time, about the Tamil Problem to such an extent that, till the very recent past, it could be safely said that the international community viewed the

Tamil Problem with much concern and sympathy, so much so that the Tamils were not left alone in their struggle for liberation.

Before we consider the international community's role in the future in the tragic Tamil Problem, it is necessary to identify the issues and see how much of such issues are being recognised and appreciated by the international community in such a way that it would be able to play a vibrant role in the whole affair.

The Tamil problem is, by any standard, very much a Sinhalese -Tamil affair. In the war that is going on, it is the Sinhalese soldier and the Tamils, civilians and the who are killed or maimed. It is the Sinhalese who join, what is exclusively and 100%, a Sinhala army. It is, therefore, the Sinhalese villager who is adversely affected by this war in that the Sinhalese village youth join the army and get lost. So there is, wide spread resentment to the war and of the Colombo politicians at that level. As to why the Sinhalese youth join the army is debateable. Economic pundits say that widespread unemployment forces the Sinhalese youth to join the army indesperation, whilst the Sinhalese politicians say, as they must, that it is patriotism to save the motherland that prompts the Sinhalese youth to join the army. This type of glib talk further underlines the point that the "motherland" belongs to the Sinhalese. So when the Tamils say that they want to live separately, it is opposed on the grounds that Sri Lanka is a Buddhist Sinhala land and nobody can be allowed to take a part of it away. The Tamils, therefore, are looked upon still as illegal immigrants. **But we will not**

find a sane voice from the international community that would say that the island was never ever a Buddhist Sinhala land. If the Buddhist Sinhala Nation wishes to have it so, it could only be after the creation of a separate state of Tamil Eelam and, therefore, it would be in the interests of the Buddhist Sinhala Nation to allow the Tamils to separate on the basis of their inalienable right to self-determination.

Whilst on the subject of economic issues, where was the international voice when the Sri Lankan Government imposed an economic blockade on the North in July 1990? Where, indeed, was the international voice when the Sri Lankan Government did not keep to its schedule of releasing items of food and essentials on which there was an embargo, during the time of the "Peace Talks" in early 1995 between the Government and the LTTE?

Economic pundits were telling that no meaningful development of Sri Lanka can ever take place if such stupendous sums are spent as military expenditure. It was a two-pronged attack that no development can take place during a time of war, on the one hand, and that there was not enough of money for development, on the other hand. But what was the international community's reaction? They took cover under some spurious "Peace Proposals" to give the Sri Lankan Government military armament for next to nothing or for nothing. This was accepted by Minister G.L.Pieris in a Suda Nelum speech soon after the publication of the August 1995 proposals.

Where was the international community when the Tamils could not strut the streets of Colombo and its environs without being picked up, whether you were decrepit or a toddler, whether you had an identity card or not, whether you were known or unknown? It was Tamil bashing of a new dimension.

So-called "lodges" sprung up all over Colombo in areas where there was a sizeable presence of Tamils, in

order to house Tamil refugees pouring into Colombo from the North and East. Soon after the Central Bank bombing, the police went about ordering the closure of these lodges and hundreds of Tamils were literally thrown onto the roads. Even on humanitarian grounds, the international community did not think it necessary to show concern.

Tamils who want to go South from the Vanni are first herded into transit camps manned by the police, in the first camp and by the army, in the second camp. At the first camp, statements are recorded from each and every one and this process takes days. Why and the wherefore are asked.

Where was the international community when the Tamils could not strut the streets of Colombo and its environs without being picked up, whether you were decrepit or a toddler, whether you had an identity card or not, whether you were known or unknown? It was Tamil bashing, of a new dimension.

Those Tamils who are filtered through this camp then spend days at the second camp. Here, the army want evidence of one of three kinds. That one has been in Colombo before and the full particulars of such stay. Otherwise, some intimation from one who is ordinarily resident in Colombo that the person in the army camp will be kept by this resident of Colombo at his home and all his needs looked after.

The third way is for someone connected to the person in the army camp to travel to Vavuniya from the South, establish his bona fides and bring him to Colombo. The process takes about one month! No question is asked by the international community as to why Tamils must be treated as pick-pockets.

Early this year, there were instances when female Tamil civilians were used as mine-detectors by the army in the Batticaloa District. This was possible because the army was able to mingle with the Tamils in the East. But this was not possible in the North till very recently. There were some from the East who brought this to the notice of the international community in Colombo. But there does not seem to have been any public condemnation or concern.

Today, there is a scramble on the part of the Tamil political parties based in Colombo to meet the new Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, M. Karunanidhi. It is my position that this frenzied movement has nothing to do with politics. It is just a desire to hobnob or rub shoulders with Karunanidhi and they have been cold-shouldered, according to reports that come from Madras. Of course, there is also the other matter, which is that these political parties might be trying to get what they can by way of material benefits from Karunanidhi. He has gone on record as saying he would not encourage any Tamil political party from Sri Lanka? But, there is a general expectation, amongst the Tamils in Colombo, that Karunanidhi would take a positive line in the Tamil Problem. But Karunanidhi's stand today must be conditioned, to a great extent, by the position taken by New Delhi on the Tamil Problem because Karunanidhi's DMK - Tamil Nadu Congress Alliance is now a part of the Government at the Centre. But one thing that could be safely assumed is that India will continue to be positively hostile to the LTTE. And this is a tragedy.

The Tamils in the South have always been a problem. In the past, they had been viewed with much embarrassment by the Tamils of the North and East. In fact, in the 1950s and thereafter, it was derisively said of the Tamils in Colombo that they were Leftists during the week when they are in Colombo but federalists during the weekends when they return to their homes in the North and East! Again, people started talking derisively of a category called "Colombo Tamils" and

ed looking down on the Tamils in Colombo who had only tentative roots in the North and East. A determined effort was made, in 1994, to erase this sad image of the Tamils living in Colombo and a definite Tamil identity, no different to that of the Tamils in the North and East, be given to the Tamils in Colombo specially, as was mentioned then "to create a Tamil identity in the Lion's own den". But our people refused to grasp it and they jumped onto the UNP or PA bandwagon or chose to be low-profile. This is, again,

media itself to complain!

Then, again, this censorship that is in force. Under cover of censorship, a lot of hanky-panky is going on. Violations of human rights and transgressions of the laws of the land are going on and one or two Tamils have complained to the President. For instance, on the 29th April and 18th May 1996, large number of young Tamil boys were brought into Colombo. Tamil eye-witnesses have seen these. An organisation known as AGOTIC - Action Group of Tamils in Colombo -

NGO is lying when it says that the Ministry of Health invited this NGO to go and work in Valikamam! This, in spite of a letter the NGO has from the Ministry of Health! The countries that fund this NGO are the countries of the European Union.

The other instance concerns the ICRC. After 'liberating' the Jaffna Peninsula, the army escorted the ICRC to certain places in the Peninsula. The ICRC personnel were expressly told that they must not talk to the ordinary Tamil folk!

Why is the international community silent on these matters? Does it not realise that this talk of the Government wanting to rehabilitate the Tamil areas is just eye-wash?

Tragically, the concerns displayed by the international community about the Tamils, has taken a sharp and sudden dip after August 1995. In August 1995, The Government put out some "proposals" for solving the Tamil Problem. Those proposals were neither here nor there. For some obscure reason, the international community saw much in those "proposals", or pretended to see some merit, and fell over each other in extolling the virtues of those "proposals", without stopping for a moment to think or analyse as to why those "proposals" were put out three weeks after embarking on a war against the Tamils.

Surely, the international community should have realised that something was wrong somewhere for the Government to put out some proposals for solving the Tamil Problem, when the Tamils of the North and East, for whom really the proposals were meant, were not in a position to even take a second look at the piece of paper that contained the proposals, with bombs raining all over them? Instead, we saw at least a dozen countries, some even super powers, coming out strongly for the Sri Lankan Government because they just put out those proposals. Such was the calibre of these countries! Some of these countries as has been mentioned earlier, even favoured the Sri Lanka Government by giving it their unwanted second hand military equipment, at

In this situation, one would expect, at least, the international community to raise a voice. But sadly, even that is not forthcoming. For instance, let me refer to just two instances. When the first of the Operation Riviresa commenced, the Government prevented any type of media going into the operational areas. This is something that does not happen in any part of the civilized world. We did not know what was happening. The Tamil representatives in Parliament nor the international community complained. It was left to the media itself to complain!

the tragedy of our People. The majority of the Tamils in the South never felt free or wanted to speak their mind out. If any Tamil did, one could be almost sure that he would speak for those in power! That is so even today. To speak for or to speak up for your own kind is something that the Tamils in Colombo have always found it difficult to do and considered it infra-dig to do so because it would either change their status of being considered 'liberals' or 'intellectuals' or prevent them from hob-nobbing with, and getting material benefits from, the powers that be.

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and an individual wrote letters to the President and released the letters to the newspapers. When the press is told of these and requested to create awareness amongst the people, it is not done so because they say the censor will shoot it down in flames. This is something the international community can condemn. But it has not because it has also become one-sided now.

There are two instances where the international community itself in the centre of things. The first is the NGO called "MERLIN-Medical Emergency Relief International. This foreign NGO was invited by the Ministry of Health to help out in Valikamam. The chief executive spent two days there and submitted a report to the Ministry of Health.

Medicine to the worth of US \$ 66,000 was got down and handed to the Government.

After some days, clearance was asked for from the Ministry of Defence. Clearance was not forthcoming. The NGO approached the Ministry of Health to obtain clearance. The Ministry took up the position that the

cut rate prices, and this was the proud boast of the Sri Lanka Government.

Both before August 1995 and after, we did see the international community going through the motions of offering their good offices at mediating in the Tamil Problem.

There are many questions that have to be answered about mediation, in the first instance. Thereafter, there are many factors which have to be considered and accepted by any foreign country, if it is to do an honest job.

Firstly, if the international community is really serious about mediation, it must first answer the question as to who are the two sides. Whilst the two sides are naturally the Sinhala Nation and the Tamil Nation, for the immediate purpose of mediation, it must be the Sri Lankan Government, representing the Sinhalese, and certainly the Liberation Tigers of Thamil Eelam (LTTE) representing the Tamils. But, how many of the foreign countries will accept this position? How many will accept the LTTE as one of the two sides after denouncing the LTTE, so mercilessly, in the recent past, as a terrorist organisation? In order to mediate, one must be completely unbiased. Many countries have already disclosed their hand in their castigation of the LTTE and will not be fit and proper persons to mediate.

Secondly, even those foreign countries who have still got their hands clean, will have to be fully possessed and appreciative of the political issues at stake. If we are to talk of political issues, we must, necessarily, think of the political issues that the Tamils will put forward. Amongst the foremost political issues the Tamils will demand constitutional recognition are, the inalienable right to self-determination of the Tamils, the recognition that the Tamils in Sri Lanka are a Nation, that there is a traditional homeland of the Tamils in Sri Lanka and that, even though the Tamils are only 12% in the island, that they are equals in a common heritage.

To a lesser extent, the foreign countries offering to mediate must accept that the LTTE is not a terrorist

organisation but a liberation movement and that the LTTE, in a time of war, has to play a role which cannot be, simply and unjustifiably, branded as "terrorist".

In this context, it will be useful to note that, in a celebrated case that is going on at the moment in Toronto, Canada, concerning one Suresh Manickavasagar, erudite American scholars like Mr. Francis Boyle, have given evidence and taken up the position that the LTTE has signed the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocol 1 of 1977 which gives it the recognition of a national liberation movement and that, for that reason, could not be charged as being a terrorist organisation or an organisation engaged in terrorism.

Thirdly, there is also this fact to be considered. Third parties that would mediate would necessarily be Governments. It is unlikely that either the Sri Lankan Government or the LTTE would agree to a Non-Government Organisation as the mediating

the door to international mediation by saying that Sri Lanka will look after its own internal problem and solve it by itself. President Kumaratunga, even as late as 16th May 1996, at a press conference in Japan, said that there is no need for international mediation, because Sri Lanka was capable of solving her own problem.

We also have hard-line Buddhist and Sinhalese organisations who have publicly complained and protested, when it was reported in the daily newspapers that Tamil political parties had gone in deputations and met Heads of Missions in Sri Lanka.

In other words, these organisations cannot stomach any form of lobbying by the Tamils. With this frame of mind, how will they allow the Government to permit international third party mediation? After all, the Government is completely in the hands of the Buddhist clergy.

Finally, we cannot forget the amount of hatred that is being dis-

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force. If it is Governments, it must not be forgotten that many countries have already supplied the Sri Lankan Government, not only with hardware, in terms of arms and ammunition, to fight the LTTE and the Tamils, but also, in some cases, with their military expertise. This factor will clearly put these countries also out of reckoning.

There is also the other side to this question of international third party mediation. Successive Governments in Sri Lanka, especially the Premadasa and Kumaratunga Regimes, have shut

played today by the Sinhalese masses against the Tamils. This hatred is increasing and getting harder by the minute. This, alone, will prevent any resolution of the conflict in Sri Lanka, with third party mediation or otherwise.

With this scenario all round, there does not seem to be a hope in hell for a solution to the Tamil Problem except to allow the fight to go on till the separate state of Thamil Eelam is established.



MSF denies authenticity of INTERNET article

The Editor
Hot Spring Magazine
24th July 1996

Dear Sir,

We were dismayed to see that in the June 1996 issue of your magazine, "Hot Spring", you published a piece entitled, 'MSF volunteer resigns in sympathy with the Tamils'. This piece first appeared on the Internet and is wholly untrue. The individual publishing this is not really called Ute U Bellahn (this is the name of an entirely uninvolved German girl, stolen from the computers). He is in fact a young student at university in England who has **in no way ever worked for or otherwise represented** Medecins Sans Frontiers, either in Sri Lanka or anywhere else in the world. Furthermore he has been appealing for funds using our name which is clearly fraud.

Gen. Ratwatte's speeches deserve publication!

I have regularly followed the interviews and speeches by Deputy Defence Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte, and each time I get my apprehensions confirmed about his speeches; they are inflated, fustian, and vainglorious, and their content is on an intellectual level of an editorial of the ISLAND. He is a jester; I have noticed him taking up the theatrical role of Sapumal Kumaraya.

But he is not a harmless jester; he has led the island into a disaster by his war mongering.

Let us see two short passages of his speeches addressed to a Sinhala assembly:

1. In a "Solemn Pledge to eliminate LTTE and Prabhakaran", he speaks in glorifying terms about "the holy task of defending the integrity and sovereignty of our motherland" and about "the compelling and holy task of the heroic and

This person or persons responsible for these messages are using the name of Medecins Sans Frontieres to give credibility to politically motivated communications. MSF is a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian organisation, whose purpose is to help all people in need in areas of conflict, regardless of ethnic origin and political affiliation **not** to take sides in political disputes. For example, in Sri Lanka our teams work to provide medical assistance for anyone who requires it, and do not favour either the Sri Lankan government or the LTTE. This episode has put the teams working in the country at

Letters

patriotic members of the armed forces to destroy the Tigers". (DN 14 FEBR, 1996). He evidently believes that he is conducting a "holy" war against the Eelam Tamils.

2. "Don't be scared, we will attack where it should be attacked very soon; and suppress the people who ought to be suppressed. We will conclude the war once and for all. By the time I come before you next we will have accomplished that mission" (DN 8th April 1996).

Somebody should make a collection of his speeches and publish them.

Maybe that Mullaitivu makes the President rethink her position - in a democracy, she and her General are expected to resign, being politically exhausted and responsible for the death of 1208 young Sinhala soldiers in one battle - and open the doors for some rational, pragmatic and effective peacemakers, who with the help of a third party can get both parties to accept a cease fire.

Peter Schalk
Roedbetsgatan 17
754 49 Uppsala,
Sweden.

increased risk. We deplore the irresponsible actions of these individuals who have jeopardised the vital work which the medical teams perform in Sri Lanka and strongly condemn this abuse of our name and neutrality. Legal proceedings have been instigated against the person/s responsible.

Yours sincerely,
Polly Markandya
MSF UK

Editor's note: We regret the publication of the above-mentioned item in the June issue of magazine, and offer our apology for any embarrassment caused to MSF. We also understand that a follow-up of the above item in Internet in the name of "Dr. Tania Politis" seeking to authenticate the letter by "Ute U Bellahn" was itself a fake.

We take this opportunity to record the tremendous humanitarian assistance rendered by MSF teams over the past several years in war-torn northeast of the island, despite the occasional hostility by the government of Sri Lanka towards foreign humanitarian organisations.

Gowry Retchakan - another Olympic entrant

Dear Sir,

The article on Mr. Ethirveerasingham (June 1996) asks the question whether any other Tamil took part in the Olympics. Indeed someone did at the 1992 Olympics. It was none other than "Bullet" GOWRY RETCHAKAN. She went up to the semi-finals in the women's 400 meters hurdles in the Barcelona games, representing Britain. Gowry is also from Jaffna. She held the Sri Lankan record in the 400 meters hurdles and has represented Sri Lanka at the Asian Games.

Mr. M.K. Varman
Hounslow,
Middlesex, U.K.

THE RACISM OF THE SINHALA-LEFT

Even the "revolutionary left" in Sri Lanka seems to perform a devious schizophrenia when it comes to the Tamil national question. On one hand, they proclaim 'enlightened' support for the right of Tamil self-determination. On the other, they would rather the LTTE had no part in a settlement. The LTTE and the Tamil people are presented and spoken of as two different entities which do not converge.

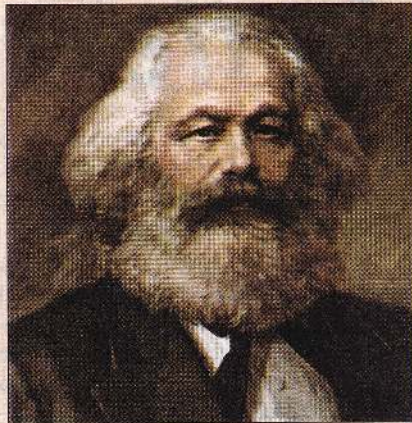
They might be forgiven for this in light of the fact that the LTTE has never held a referendum in order to validate their support, but then when has a national liberation movement ever interrupted its struggle in order to hold elections? Can you imagine Ho Chi Minh stopping the Vietnam war and setting up ballot boxes to validate his support? The conditions are simply not suitable while there is a superior military waiting to pounce at the first opportunity.

So rather than using the fact that the LTTE has not held an election as excuse to deny legitimacy to the LTTE as true national leadership, one should study the LTTE within its historical context.

The 'Sinhala-left' display an astonishingly weak grasp of history. They interpret the appearance of the LTTE on the political scene as a deviation from the natural evolution of Tamil political consciousness, i.e., they see the LTTE as an unwelcome imposition on the Tamil people. But, in actual fact, the LTTE emerges as a quite natural continuation of the evolution of the Tamil political consciousness. Indeed, the emergence of armed fighters as leaders of national liberation struggles has occurred in much the same pattern within almost any oppressed nation throughout the world (e.g., Chechnya, Kashmir, Kurdistan).

S. De Silva (U.K.)

Tamil political history unambiguously indicates that national consciousness and the demand for self-determination became firmly embedded not long after Independence. The LTTE's arrival was no deviation from this trend. It was a last resort where all else had failed. It reflected total disillusionment with party politics in a system in which the Tamil nation was always going to be at a structural disadvantage in relation to the Sinhala



Karl Marx

nation and therefore subject to oppression.

The 'Sinhala-left' today finds itself fully backing the government's efforts to crush or at least weaken the LTTE and this can be easily explained. It reflects the difficulty for the intelligentsia of any 'dominant' nation within an oppressive state structure to accept as legitimate the leadership of the nation it 'rules'.

I will try to show that this too is part of a historical process through which 'dominant' nations attempt to maintain their power over smaller nations.

It is also -frankly- racism. It is in essence no different from the racism inherent in the thinking of the British colonialists who ruled the island before Independence.

Marx's exposition of 'ruling ideology' proves very useful here in explaining the left's position vis a vis the national conflict. Marx argued that ruling groups within a given society tend to interpret the world in a way which legitimises and reinforces their power within it. I think this analysis can be usefully employed to interpret the thought-structures prevalent within ruling 'nations' - in which the 'Sinhala-left' constitutes just one layer of the entirety of Sinhala society.

The Sinhala nation at present 'rules' the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka (through the oppressive constitution) and has tried to do so since Independence. The imposition of the unitary state structure assured unequivocal hegemony over the Tamil nation. The Tamil nation, as soon as it became adversely affected by this and conscious of it, fought hard through political channels to rectify the situation. Its peaceful efforts failed. Meanwhile, the idea of this island being 'one country' was constantly reinforced in the South to the extent that today the idea that this island was ever non-unitary in character seems to most people inconceivable. Indeed, even now, Sinhalese historians try their damndest to 'prove' that there is no such thing as a Tamil nation using unbearably complicated yet ultimately futile arguments.

Anyhow, the important point I wish to make is that within any power structure, the ruling ideas of a dominant group always tend to legitimise and reproduce the existing unequal power relations. In this sense, the Sinhala-left's rejection of the LTTE leadership

unfailingly serves to reproduce the unequal power relations that exist between the Sinhala and Tamil nations.

It is this observation which leads me not to be too surprised by the fact that this so-called 'leftist' PA government (largely with the backing of the left in general, though there are a handful of notable exceptions) has performed the most unspeakable destruction to the Tamil nation of any government since Independence. The Sinhala-left has clearly emerged as 'Sinhalese' first, and 'left' second, even if they are not wholly conscious of this.

As a result, while they remain conscious of class-oppression, their thought-structures do not take into view (or regard with proper significance) national oppression - since they themselves have emerged from within the dominant national category.

It seems that in national conflicts of this kind the ruling nation has no trouble manufacturing a whole range of such 'thinkers' who discover a host of sophisticated arguments opposing the disintegration of their own national supremacy. The demonstration of and rejection of the oppressed nation's leadership (i.e., the LTTE) is one such method.

This explains the left's usual contradictory stance of supporting national self-determination in theory but not accepting the LTTE as the Tamil nation's leadership in practice.

One 'left' Sinhala newspaper, 'Ravaya', is currently performing just such a reactionary historical function.

In the current conflict, Ravaya has pointedly recoiled from accepting the political legitimacy of the LTTE. While it is now seeing the practical necessity of 'talks' with the LTTE to end the conflict, it does not come to this position from any acceptance of the LTTE's legitimacy. Rather, it reaches this position only after it becomes clear that the LTTE cannot be defeated.

That is a crucial difference. For, it suggests that its position arises from Sinhala national self-interest rather than an endorsement of the Tamil nation's right to independence. During the first stages of the military operation

('Leap Forward'), the newspaper's silence (like that of the left in general) was astonishing and heart-breaking. The total displacement of an entire population of Northern Tamils with discriminate bombing was able to occur virtually unchallenged.

Tamils, however, are all too familiar with this attitude on the part of the 'Sinhala-left' and that perhaps partly explains why the LTTE has become a necessary asset for liberation from the clutches of the Sinhala nation and why Tamils tend to be distrustful of the 'Sinhala-left' in particular. Tamils have never been able to rely on the benevolence of their Sinhala rulers (of left or right persuasion) and in that respect this phase of the conflict is no different.

Indeed, what the left's position on the Tamil national question amounts to, when deconstructed, is this: "the Tamils can have change, but only on our terms". This is what is behind the rejection of the LTTE leadership by the left, because the LTTE represents what Tamils want - not what the Sinhalese are 'willing to give'.

This point applies to the present devolution package too. It is, above all,

a solution on Sinhalese terms. A concession. That is why so many leftists have rallied around it. It is the Sinhalese solution to the Tamil problem.

But to any seasoned observer, this is merely the past repeating itself for the umpteenth time: as soon as the Tamils throw forward a political leadership, the Sinhalese find a way of rejecting it and imposing their own solution. They rejected the Federal Party when it emerged, then the TULF, and the now the LTTE. Only a Sinhalese solution is permitted. It has been this way since Independence.

I think it is important for the 'Sinhala-left' to become conscious of this pattern because it is a manifestation of the racism endemic in any ruling nation. It is also morally disgraceful. As long as such racism operates unconsciously, there results corrosive effect on both individuals and on Sinhala society. Only the rare individual from within a dominant nation dares to confront and defeat his own racism. But then colonial history has always been that way.

Song, Dance and Prayer to remember Navaly Church victims

Dancers, singers and musicians took part in a service at St. Martin's in the Fields, Trafalgar Square to pray for the victims of a Sri Lankan church bombing.

More than 120 innocent Tamil victims, men, women and children, were killed, and 218 injured at St. Peter and Paul Church at Navaly, Jaffna, on 9 July last year. Having sought refuge at the church compound, when armed forces drove them from their homes, they were then targeted by a Sri Lankan bomber plane.

Picture above shows Jonna Tharasini Ghandi lighting a candle for peace after performing the Candle dance at the inter-faith memorial service.



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GERRY ADAMS:

Portrait of a Revolutionary

He is the man in the centre of the unfolding Northern Ireland drama, with its twists and turns, of ultimatums, elections, threats and promised peace talks always shimmering ahead on the horizon..

The 47-year old president of Sinn Fein is a study in complexities. What you think of him depends largely upon who you are. .

To the Protestant Ulster Unionists, who want Northern Ireland to stay part of Britain, he is a hated terrorist. To the British, he is the always suspect mouthpiece for the Irish Republican Army, the underground force that wants to expel the British Army and unite the province with the Republic of Ireland. To Catholics, he is one of their own, the respected leader of a movement that many feel in their bones is necessary for self-preservation, even if they do not always agree with its methods.

To much of the world abroad, he is an enigma - once shunned as a pariah for his background as a man of violence, then transformed by the IRA cease-fire of August 1994 into something of an international celebrity who shook hands with President Clinton, and now, with the cease-fire broken and hanging in suspended animation, a vague shadow somewhere in between.

But few would deny that he is still the pivotal figure in the fog of Northern Ireland peace politics. That is especially true with the peace talks. If he eventually joins them - and at the moment he is distinctly uninvited - then they have a slim chance of success, even though a final settlement is hard to envision.

But if he does not join them, they seem pointless.

In a wide-ranging interview, Mr. Adams returned again and again to the thought that history is providing an opportunity to take the first steps on a path to resolve the ancient warfare between the Irish and the British and between Ulster's Protestant majority and Catholic minority.

"I see myself as an Irish separatist, and so I would like to dogmatically face up to the British", he said. "But we've now had a quarter century of conflict. What I want is to be part of whatever possibility there is of getting people to sit around a table and thrash it out".

But nothing would suit me better than to have a situation where we had a settlement which may be short of the republican objectives but which allows me and others to go back to the broad republican family and say: Right. We haven't got what we wanted, but we're in a situation where over the next decade we can pursue, we can build our party, we can go on an all-Ireland basis. we can strengthen our networking. That's what we want to be able to go back with".

Mr. Adams developed a gift of gab as a bartender after dropping out of school. He has a reputation as a long-



Gerry Adams with President Clinton

Asked if his call for "dialogue" was real or a tactical pause to gain ground before rebuilding the guerilla army, "...From Sinn Fein activists, we have buried scores of our own people and family members. Twenty five years is a very long time to be locked into combat. So we're making our best bet at getting a negotiated settlement".

"Now if we fail this time around, of course we'd have to start rebuilding.

term thinker from the days when he presided over bull sessions in Long Kesh prison in the mid-1970s. And typically, at the moment he is keeping everyone guessing about his next move as the IRA weaves its uncertain course between armed conflict and political struggle. . .

He feels the British government of John Major has dealt in bad faith at

critical junctures over the last 22 months by setting "preconditions", like the demand that the IRA must start to disarm before talks can begin....

He has been asked so many questions so often that he rattles off the answers. He is a master of the sound bite and adept at tying up hostile British interviewers in knots. No one in the province is faster on his feet in front of a microphone or so quick to use humor to win over an audience.

Once he was delivering a sidewalk diatribe when he stopped abruptly and looked down at a small boy before him and winked.

"What do you think of that, then?" he asked.

"Not bad, Gerry, Youse are on good form today".

Delighted, he grinned and shot back: "There's a man who knows good political sense when he hears it. John Major should take him on as adviser." The crowd collapsed in laughter.

When asked a sensitive question, he narrows his eyes behind the wide-framed glasses and fixes a gaze directly upon the questioner.....

Is he religious? "I would normally say - because of the way these questions are taken out of context, especially by the British tabloid press - I would normally say, none of your business. But I'll answer. I'm not overtly religious. I do go to church. I do believe in God. And yes, I do pray".

How can the commandment against killing be squared with being a revolutionary?

"It's been written that the Catholic who is not a revolutionary is living in mortal sin". he replied laughing. "I've engaged in public debates with bishops on a whole range of issues. There's always an uneasy relationship. Parnell once wrote: Our religion we can take from Rome, but our politics we get at home".

(Excerpted from an interview by John Darnton for NEW YORK TIMES Service)

"India helping Tamil genocide", charges DK leader Veeramani

(PTI, Madras) Dravidar Kazhagam General Secretary K.Veeramani has condemned "India's clandestine military support" to the Sri Lanka government which was adopting a "genocidal" policy against the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Circulating copies of telex messages sent from Delhi to the Indian High Commission in Colombo this month, purporting to inform about training Sri Lankan army personnel in India during 1996 -97, he charged the United Front government of resorting to a "double role"

The Centre had denied LTTE's allegation that the Indian Navy had been escorting Sri Lankan ships between Jaffna and Trincomalee but messages were sent on imparting training to the island's military personnel, he alleged.

The telex messages revealed that the UF government was following the course set by the Narasimha Rao government which "clandestinely" extended military assistance to Sri Lanka, Mr.Veeramani claimed.

He urged Tamil Nadu Chief Minister and DMK president M.Karunanidhi to use his good offices to stop military assistance to the island government which was launching a genocidal war against the Tamils there. He was making this appeal to Mr.Karunanidhi as the DMK was a constituent of the UF government, he said. Mr.Karunanidhi's intervention in this regard was important because the DMK representative was holding the charge as Union Minister of State for Defence.

Mr.Karunanidhi should make the government declare that it would at least keep itself off from the genocidal war even if it could not extend



help to the island Tamils, he said, urging the UF government to clarify if telex messages were sent on giving training to Sri Lankan army personnel in India.

Asked about the genuineness of the messages, he said he was not sure if they were "100 percent correct". The person who had sent a copy of the message to him had not disclosed his identity.

He added, "I will be the happiest person if the Indian government denies these messages".

However, the past record of the Indian government, with particular reference to the case relating to the incidents of the Indian Navy intercepting an LTTE vessel carrying LTTE men including prominent Tiger leader Kittu, in January 1993, showed that it had been helping the Sri Lankan government...

Mr. Veeramani said when he urged the Centre not to extend military assistance to the Chandrika government, he was not speaking on behalf of the LTTE, but was only expressing his concern over the plight of the island's Tamils.....

(The Pioneer, July 26)

Tamils in the USA show cultural solidarity

Two well known cultural organizations, FeTNA (Federation of Tamil Sangams of North America) and T.N.F (Tamil Nadu Foundation) jointly celebrated the tradition & language for full three days (July 4-6) in Stamford, Connecticut, USA. The event drew more than 1500 Tamils from all walks of life. Eelam Tamils who are part of FeTNA played a constructive and highly visible role in this year's convention with whole hearted support from the participants and organizers.

message to the audience spell bound by the emotional performance.

Artists and speakers from India contributed their share to amplify the freedom struggle. Well known carnatic artist **Mrs.Sudha Ragunathan** was specially invited to present a 3-hour performance on the first evening. She was the first established artist to come forward about 12 years back to glorify the freedom struggle through her music. On the final day at prime time a major discussion on "Human Rights for

struggle in the form of question and answer format thus making the issues simple and clear to grasp. **Vasantharaja** eloquently defended the struggle for self-determination and called upon Tamil Nadu to actively to contribute without delay. **Karen Parker** effectively articulated the political status of LTTE in the fight for freedom of the Tamil people. **Congressman Sherrod Brown** gave his view on the role of US government and indicated that the cold war mindset is still preva-



The three day convention covered a range of topics that are of interest to Tamils living abroad. Of particular interest was the issue of Tamils in Eelam. Performances of all sorts, from poetry reading to dance drama to Bharathanatyam had explicit themes on the courage of the Freedom fighters. A 40-children dance drama staged by the Canadian Tamils depicting the joyful life in villages in the north-east prior to the Sinhala aggression, repressive and violent life during the military occupation and the eventual birth of the freedom movement was displayed with magnificent artistry and well received by the audience. Bharathanatyam performance by a Washington student for the song "Kadal alaiye koncham nillu" brought vibrant energy to the classical dance form. Another dance portraying the role of Black Tigers imparted a powerful

Sri Lankan Tamils" was moderated by **Mr.Ram Mohan of Chicago**, an ardent supporter of the Sri Lankan Tamils. **Congressman Sherrod Brown of Ohio, attorney Karen Parker**, and author **Vasantharaja** (Former chairman of Rupavahini- Sri Lankan TV) presented their views in a highly attentive setting for about 2 hours. Mr. Ram Mohan defined the status of Eelam

lent in the policy formulation of the US government. He has been one of the few leaders in the US who has shown genuine interest in the plight of Tamil people.

As the cultural events progressed key organizations worked round the clock to pass a resolution that would free FeTNA/TNF to actively seek support to help redress the human right abuses on Eelam Tamils. Enthusiasm and solidarity among Tamils to support the growth of the culture and tradition could not have been missed in this three day event that was successfully co-ordinated by an array of dedicated people.

For Eelam Tamil activists the conference provided a delightful moral upliftment to witness the ever-increasing support and solidarity from the South Indian Tamils.





Sri Lanka warns UN envoy

The Minister said, "never again should such advice be tendered without giving the government the opportunity to express its own views first."

Mr. Kadirgamar said he would not tolerate the discourtesy to the government or the people of Sri Lanka from any quarter.

Mr. Ofstad had explained to the Minister he was only following UN guidelines on countries where there were disturbances, but said he would in future consult the host government before tendering his advice.

The Sri Lankan envoy in Geneva was instructed to advise the WIPO that Colombo was safe for such a conference.

He was also instructed to advise the WIPO that 19 international conferences

including one by UNESCO had been held in Colombo since the January 31 Central Bank bombing.

Late last year the Foreign Ministry wrote a sharp letter to UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali saying he had been misinformed on the situation in Jaffna following Operation Riviresa I. Mr. Boutros Ghali has retracted later.

About that time the ICRC Representative in Colombo had been warned after he made some erroneous remarks to the international press about an alleged bombing of the Naval Church near Jaffna by the armed forces.

In February this year, the Australian and West Indies cricket teams refused to come to Colombo to take part in their scheduled World Cup games.

The United Nations Resident Representative Arve Ofstad was summoned recently to the Foreign Office in Colombo and warned by Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar for advising a UN agency that Colombo was unsafe for an international conference.

Norwegian born Mr. Ofstad was told by Mr. Kadirgamar that he should have had the courtesy of first consulting the Foreign Office before such advice was tendered. He was also asked not to do so in future.

The issue arose after the UN agency, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), wrote to Sri Lanka's Ambassador in Geneva, Bernard Gunatillake, seeking advice on the feasibility of holding a training conference in Colombo after the UN Resident Representative and Resident Co-Ordinator had informed them that Colombo was unsafe.

Mr. Ofstad had said the conference, a regional training course on intellectual property, could however be held in Bentota, Negombo or Kandalama and mentioned by name specific hotels which were safe.

The WIPO had pointed out that this training course was organised annually since 1984 without a break jointly by it, the UNDP and the Sri Lankan Government.

Foreign Minister Kadirgamar last night expressed the grave displeasure of himself and the President that the UN Resident Representative thought it fit to give advice to a specialised agency of the UN against holding a meeting in Colombo without even extending to the host government the elementary courtesy of consulting it before hand.

Human cultures strike again

By M. Ismeth

Vultures laid their dirty hands on the bodies of those who died in the Dehiwala bomb blast to take away their jewelry and valuables. Police said.

This sordid behaviour is seen every time an incident like this occurs. Even when the Central Bank was attacked in January this year many of the dead or injured were relieved of their valuables.

The injured at the hospital told us how they lost their jewellery while being put into ambulances. Relatives said their lost ones had jewellery on them and now its missing.

They said it was a crying shame on the country and more so on the people. Whoever is caught stealing valuables of an injured or a dead person in an accident should be severely punished. If its in the gulf, their hands would be chopped off, but here there would be a hue and cry if the authorities did that. But look at the disgrace and vulgar attitude of these miserable fellow who commit such an inhuman act, they said.

A good many of those who died in the Dehiwala bomb blast and those were seriously injured lost their valuables. Now, why did the Police let all and sundry to lay their hands on those who died or were injured. Let each Police station form a volunteer force that could be called upon in an emergency to help and issue them a badge for identification, some suggested.

We speak of culture and dignity but, where has all this gone. It's a crying shame, to say that whenever anyone dies or gets injured in a bomb blast or accident, the victim loses his or her valuables. Can we put this in paper for the world to read. When are we going to learn to respect the dead and the injured, they asked.

What's more, the wife of the late brigadier, Ananda Hamangoda when she went home after her husband's funeral was over, found that someone had pilfered Rs. 8200 from her purse.

Are we Sri Lankans or are we still living in the jungles? they commented.

OBITUARIES

A.S.Kanagaratnam

Abraham Samuel Kanagaratnam age 86, of Jaffna, Sri Lanka, passed away at his daughter's home in Columbus, Ohio on Friday 19th July 1996. He was past President of the Sri Lankan Teachers' Association, a teacher of English, author of books and a publisher of poetry. He had a love for nature, politics and most of all his family. He is survived by his wife of 59 years Selvaranjitham, the love of his life. He is also survived by his 5 children, Dr.K.Sathanathan, Ken Nirmalan, CEO Agro-Marine, Mrs. Mallikha Samuel, daughter, Ranjan Manoranjan, CPA and Dr.Mervyn J.Samuel. He is also survived by 13 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren. The funeral was held on Saturday July 20, 1996 at Schoedinger East Chapel, 5360E, Livingston Ave, Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A.



Dr.N.T.Sampanthan

Dr.Thirugnana Sampanthan, the well known and much loved physician and surgeon of Jaffna passed away at the age of 80 in Colombo, Sri Lanka on Friday 2nd August 1996.

Born in May 1916 in Malaysia, he had his education at St.George's school Taiping and later at St.Thomas' College Mt.Lavinia. He entered Medical College, got his M.B.B.S (Cey.) in 1943 and his F.R.C.S (Edin.) in 1946.

Dr.Sampanthan worked for a short period in Government Medical Service in Kandy but chose to return to Jaffna to serve his people. As Medical Superintendent of the Cooperative Hospital Moolai from 1945 to 1975, he built it up from a small village hospital of 10 beds

to a fully equipped and staffed hospital with 120 beds, a fine surgical theatre, an up-to-date labour room and a modern well equipped Intensive Care Unit.

Affectionately called Dr.Sam, he was a successful physician and surgeon, an able administrator and a pioneer in Cooperative Hospital Movement. Throughout his life he was motivated by the vision of providing excellent medical facilities at affordable cost to the common man. and this is precisely what the hospital was providing under his direction. In recognition of his services Dr.Sampanthan was awarded the U.S.State Department leaders and Scholars Grant in 1960 to visit U.S.Medical Institutions and study medical practices.

Dr.Sampanthan is survived by his wife Saratha and his two sons Subachandran and Nagalingam who live in Colombo. He will be sadly missed by a large number of relations and friends with whom he kept in touch.

Dr.V.Thangarajasinga

Dr.Vythilingam Thangarajasingam (71), retired Medical Officer, U.K., and former private medical practitioner, Jaffna, husband of Punithavathy, father of Kawsar (Civil Engineer), Kiruba, Dr.Vakees, Kethees and Sibi passed away in London on 11 July.

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Arulnandhy Thavendran

Mr. Arulnandhy Thavendran, consultant chartered accountant of 14 - Palm Grove, Colombo 3, beloved husband of Ranees, loving father of Anjali and Ravi, son of late Mr and Mrs K. S. Arulnandhy, son in law of late Mr. N. A. Rajaratnam and Mrs. Rajaratnam, brother of late Mahendrarajah, late Kamala, late Mangalam, Manie,

Puveendran, Thevi and Chithra, brother in law of late Jeyaranees, late Thiruvathavooran, Mahadeva, Kiruba, Sarojini, Sunthari and Alvapillai, passed away in Las Vegas, U.S.A. on 14 - 7 - 1996. The funeral took place in Lancaster, California on 17 - 7 - 1996.

Mrs. Nagaratnam Chelliah

Mrs.Nagaratnam Chelliah age 87 years expired in Navatkuli, Eelam, on 08.07.96. She was the wife of the late Thillaiampalam Chelliah, and mother of Amirthalingam (Kanderodai) and



Dr.Sornalingam (UK), sister of Mrs. Chellammah Namasivayam, (presently Vavuniya), and mother-in-law of Mrs Gnanam Amirthalingam, and Sathibama Sornalingam, and much loved Appamma to grand and great grand children.

V.Kandavel

Mr.V.Kandavel, former chief architect, Colombo, died in the USA on July 18. He was 78. Mr.Kandavel obtained his architectural qualifications on a Sri Lanka government scholarship in Australia.

One of Sri Lanka's top most architects, he was responsible for the design of some major public buildings in Sri Lanka. He also designed the highly acclaimed Sri Lanka centre at 'Expo '68, in Montreal, Canada. His funeral took place on July 21 in the USA.

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