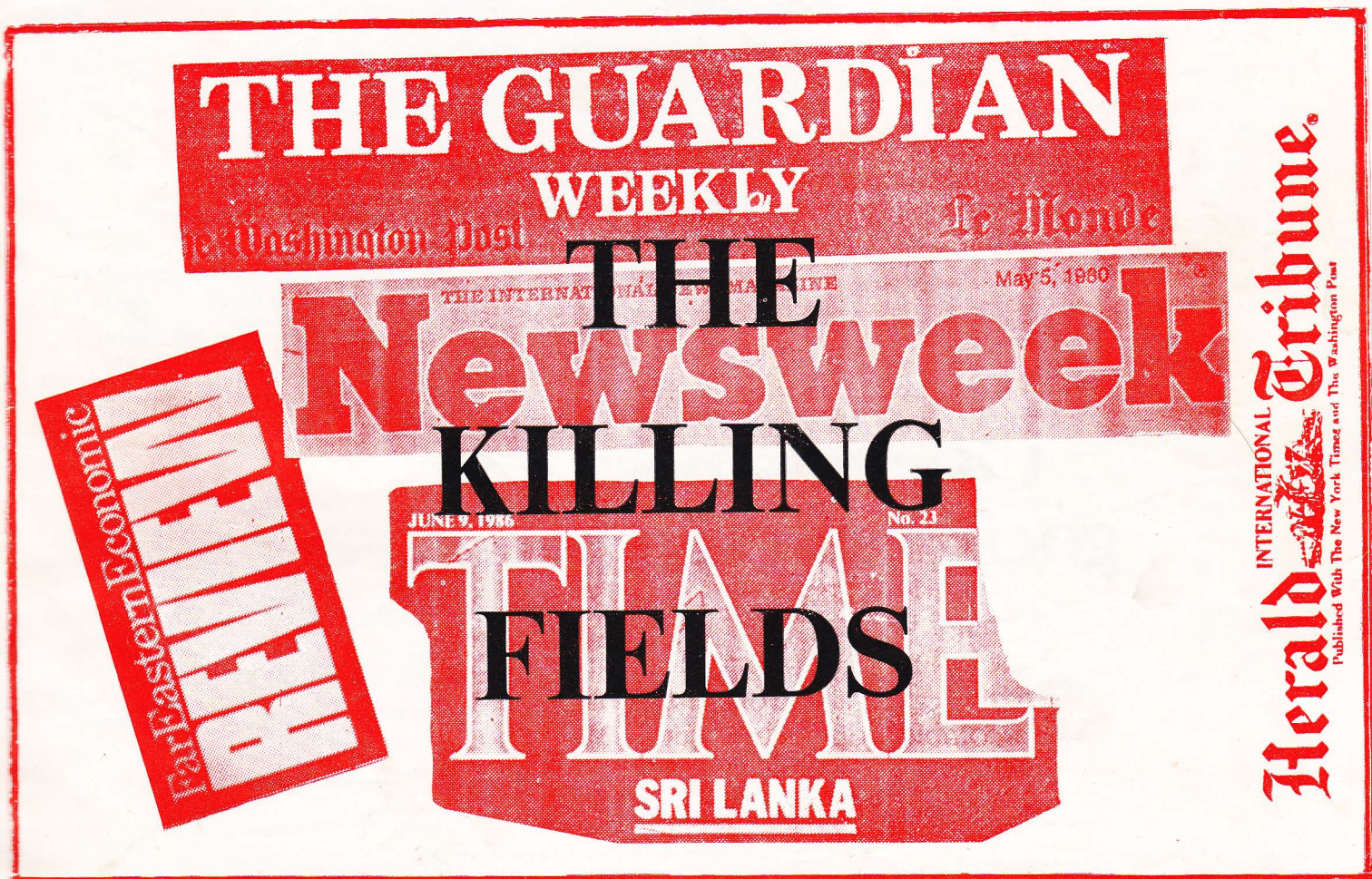


PRABHAKARAN — A TALK WITH THE TIGER
— Prabhu Chawla

LANKA

GUARDIAN

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Let the War end — *Gamini Akmeemana*

J.R.'s P.P.C. move and Opposition's options — *Mervyn de Silva*

'HINDU' on the TULF and Colombo's 3-Track Policies

How Rupavahini's Newsroom works — *Jeanne Pinto*

Also: Carlo Fonseka on "Argument"

NAM 8 and Reagan *and*

Sri Lanka's Peace Movement, Whither ILANGARATNE ?



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PEACE MOVEMENT GROWS

After the BANGALORE Group (L. G. May 1) the Indo-Lanka Maithri Sangamaya, a more broad-based people-to-people organisation that has brought together students, womens group, religious personnel, journalists and scholars. The Indo-Lanka Maithri Sangam is largely an initiative of those two indefatigable Centre for Society and Religion co-workers, Bernadeen Silva and Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, and their energetic partner in these activities, Ainsley Samarajeewa.

When the Peace Movement first started, the police, obviously on instructions from its political bosses, came down heavily. What with the PPC and the new proposals on a political settlement, 'giving peace a chance' may well be the prevailing, even dominant mood.

The SANGAM/SANGAMAYA hopes to 'foster understanding and cooperation among persons and groups in India and Sri Lanka', and is committed to a "peaceful just and honourable resolution of the present ethnic conflict".

S. L. M. P.

The first casualty of SLMP General Secretary Vijaya Kumaranatunge's visit to Madras was the SLMP leadership. While the General Secretary took along with him two Vice-Presidents (Chandrika Kumaranatunge and Ossie Abegoonesekera) the President and Vice President who stayed at home — Mr. T. B. Ilangaratne and Mr. V. W. Kuleratne — quit in succession, the former after a short spell of medical leave.

While the parent S.L.F.P. says that ex-SLFP'ers who joined the S.L.M.P. are sending frantic messages indicating a desire to re-join their old party, Mr. Ilangaratne seems on the verge of ending a political career that started dramatically with his role as a public service union strike leader.

TEA PRICES

An organisation called Tamil Eelam Army (T.E.A.) thought up a diabolical plot in January this year to give Sri Lanka the most deadly New Year gift that any country has received from its own citizens. The gift cost the plotters nothing. A rumour was spread that the tea manufactured in this island and sold all over the world had been poisoned with arsenic.

Despite all the Plantations Ministry's checks and tests, and gilt-edged assurances, Sri Lankan tea was subjected to close, extensive and costly inspection at all US ports. The result was a dra-

TRENDS + LETTERS

matic drop in S. L. tea sales in the US and Canadian markets and a price drop in the Colombo auctions. Sri Lanka got a one-two punch in June when the US made a drastic cut in aid at the Paris meeting. (June 19). The total pledges however topped 700 million dollars, 23% more in real terms than last year. However most of it is development aid, and nothing could offset the losses accumulated through steadily dwindling prices at the Colombo auctions caused largely by the absence of two big buyers Egypt and USSR.

Last week the US removed restriction on SL teas and the immediate impact on the auctions on June 25 was encouraging.

(Letter on page 24)

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Kissingerian 'linkage' — Opposition's historic opportunity

NEWS
BACKGROUND

Mervyn de Silva

When the UNP appeared to have exhausted all its moves and seemed increasingly besieged and helpless, its leader President JR, surely the most astute tactician in Sri Lankan politics, has produced a brilliant political manoeuvre. With his new devolution package he has earned restrained praise from Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, kept the promises made to the Aid Consortium by his Finance Minister (his own previous pledges for a negotiated settlement had not always been honoured) and thus presented himself to these all-important constituencies the 'moderate' peace-seeker. In doing so, he has also co-opted the three-party alliance and other smaller parties and threatened to isolate his strongest challenger, the SLFP, giving it the difficult choice of either cooperating with the government or presenting itself to the Tamil community, to India and the donors as an uncompromising Sinhala-Buddhist party.

Although the TULF is not as vital a political factor as it was pre-1983, it still remains the parliamentary voice of the Tamils of the north and east. By offering a devolution scheme that the Indian government regards as good enough for the serious consideration of the Tamil leaders, President JR has also forced the TULF into a corner. The Indian press comments, including the editorial in the authoritative Madras-based *HINDU* make one basic point: the TULF committed a grievous mistake in turning down the invitation to participate in the P.P.C.

It seems pretty clear that the TULF is in disarray, its leadership torn between the desire to continue playing the role of the parliamentarian moderate and the need not to offend the militants, especially the 'Tigers'. Mr. Prabhakaran has amply demonstrated his instinctive gift for dealing with the recalcitrant and the dissident expeditiously and forcefully. Whether the coming weeks will lead to a closing of ranks in the TULF or a dramatic change of leadership is a matter that needs to be watched.

President JR has taken a firm stand. He will present his plan to the UNP parliamentary group. He will give the MP's a free choice...and also their undated letters of resignation back. In reply to a question by Dr. Colvin R de Silva, who reminded him that the letters were in his pocket JR quipped: "I'll see that the letters are in **their** pockets..." If they agree, I'll be happy. If anyone does not, he is free to leave. After a slight pause, a confident party leader said "Somehow I don't think that'll happen".

President JR, perfectly sure then of UNP support, will go through with his plans. The question is how far, in the first instance, will his unilateral move receive endorsement and active backing from the other parties at the PPC? (For the moment, at least, the SLFP position must be examined as a separate issue).

The answer to that question will depend largely on how the non-SLFP opposition analyses the situation and the interprets the government's basic political aims.

If the 1978 constitution centralised all power, the Referendum of 1982 December not only reinforced UNP hegemony but effectively closed the island's once vibrant and 'open' political system. The *WEEKEND* political columnist writing immediately after the Referendum called it 'a Constitutional Dictatorship'. The UNP's authoritarian grip was strengthened also by a divided and demoralised, SLFP, virtually leaderless, and by an utterly enfeebled Left. The unions had been battered into submission and all organised opposition groups had lost their nerve.

1983 and After

Then came July 1983, and the political situation changed in a manner that no pundit could have anticipated.

Violence escalated; the insurgency in the north and east spread; the economy started to show serious signs of stress; India entered the Sri Lankan political stage as a major actor.

While the pressures on all fronts steadily mounted, a UNP, quite alive to an increasingly restive electorate, resisted all demands for a negotiated settlement, nervous that such a settlement, which necessarily imply concessions to the Tamils, would inflame Sinhala opinion. And so from APC (1984) to Thimpu (1985) to Bhandari (1985-1986) to Chidambaram, April 1986. The pressures, especially economic (tea prices, defence spending, debt-servicing, near-collapse of tourism, shrinking investment and reduced foreign

exchange remittances from migrant workers) and the psychological and physical impact of the 'war' in the north and 'terrorism' in the south, became too severe for an administration that looked so utterly inept to the average Sinhalese voter in the South.

The fact that Finance Minister Ronnie de Mel then emerged as the voice of reason ("We must concede with grace what we cannot hold with authority," Gladstone's remark was his favourite quote) bears its own special meaning in the fast-changing national situation. The once omnipotent UNP seemed totally beleaguered, unable to advance either towards a military victory or towards a political settlement and peace.

The restoration of Mrs. B's civic rights is the other event that best dramatised the predicament of the besieged regime. The concession was a calculated risk, a move under pressure. But Mrs. B did not step out to help the

government. She smelt the old enemy's blood in the water.

Emboldened by events in the Philippines and the striking example of the Cory Aquino she threw a new challenge — elections. The repression, especially the easy use of the PTA and Emergency against opponents in the South, including SLFP organisers was moving southwards. Only elections could help prise open the political system closed in Dec. 1982 and based on a concentration of power in an executive presidency with total command of a parliament in which the UNP had 5/6ths majority.

JR's reply was a stroke of tactical genius. If the crisis continues, the UNP may be forced to hold elections and thus run the risk of losing power or having its power greatly reduced. Better then to devolve power to the provinces — actually to meet the Tamil demands in the north — than lose, or lose a large part of, the power at the

centre. Power-sharing at the periphery is obviously the far more desirable option.

Opposition Dilemmas

Now the dilemma is that of the Opposition, the SLFP and the non-SLFP opposition.

If the SLFP takes the Mathewite 'National Front' road (perhaps its knee-jerk reaction of the rightwing) it will isolate itself from the mainstream of politics, the peace process, and promptly alienate India and the West, without whose help no Sri Lankan government in the foreseeable future can survive for long. If it joins the peace process, it will assist the recovery of a much weakened UNP to which all the gains of a successful settlement will accrue. If it takes the first option, has it the organisational capability and dynamism of the Aquino-led Democratic Front?

(Continued on page 9)

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Island at War

Tamil rebels mount a bloody campaign for justice

Marguerite Johnson

Reported by Ross H. Munro, Colombo (TIME)

The rice-growing settlement of Siripura in Sri Lanka's Eastern province was in shock last week. Red-and-white-paper lanterns, strung up to celebrate Vesak, one of the holiest Buddhist festivals of the year, lay in tatters on the grounds as smoke rose from the ruins of 25 thatched mud huts. At the entrance to one, village women wept at the sight of the charred remains of a young couple who had been shot and left to die in their burning home. Down the road, beside an irrigation ditch, the bodies of ten other villagers, including several children, lay in a row where they had been gunned down. The day before, twelve people had been killed in nearby villages in the district of Trincomalee. The victims in both attacks were Sinhalese, the major ethnic group in Sri Lanka, who had been settled in the area by the central government as part of a controversial land development program. Their assailants were Tamil guerrillas, members of an increasingly militant minority that makes up 12.5% of the island nation's 16 million people. Outraged Tamils charge that the government's intent is to increase the number of Sinhalese in areas that are predominantly Tamil.

To the northwest of Siripura, on the Jaffna Peninsula, Tamils were also mourning their dead and wounded. Less than a week before, government forces using helicopter gunships and fixed-wing aircraft rocketed and strafed the commercial center of the city of Jaffna. The central bus terminal, several shops and six wards of Jaffna General Hospital were hit. "Miraculously," reported a doctor who was in the hospital during the bombing, "only one patient and two visitors were injured,

because when the shooting started we immediately got all the patients under the beds or down to the ground floor, where they were out of the line of fire." A couple being married in the city's cathedral were surprised when a bullet landed at their feet: At the end of the four-day military offensive, at least 34 civilians and guerrillas were dead. Tamil sources said more than 60 people were killed and at least 100 others injured.

The government attack on the peninsula came shortly after Indian officials had left the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo, where they had been attending the latest round of talks initiated by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. The negotiations are aimed at finding a solution to the conflict between Tamil rebels and the Sinhalese-dominated government of President Junius R. Jayewardene. For the past three years the once fabled island of tea and spice — so lovely it was nicknamed Serendip by Arab traders — has been torn by ethnic hatred and bloodshed that grow uglier by the day. The increasing animosity between the country's 2 million ethnic Tamils and its 12 million Sinhalese has led to a proliferation of armed Tamil guerrilla groups. Some of them demand an Independent state, (Eelam) (homeland), to be established in the Northern and Eastern provinces, the country's main areas of Tamil concentration. Most Tamils, however, would probably settle for some degree of autonomy that would give them substantial control over education, and settlement and economic matters in their regions.

The government has responded with an equally determined effort

to suppress the rebellion. The island was led to a crackdown on civil liberties in Sri Lanka, turned Jayewardene's once popular government into an increasingly authoritarian regime and soured normally placid relations with neighbouring India. To bolster its military efforts, Sri Lanka has sought support from such sources as Pakistan, Israel and former British SAS commandos. The U.S. has resisted Sri Lankan requests for more military aid, limiting assistance to training worth about \$ 150,000 a year. Washington regards the war as primarily a domestic issue, but American officials applaud India's efforts to find a negotiated settlement. Says a State Department expert: "We

Sri Lanka in the world press

At a meeting in Colombo President Jayewardena held up a copy of the TIME magazine with Sri Lanka on the cover — the first occasion that TIME has made this country its cover story — and spoke to the crowd of the impact of world press coverage not only on the island's image but on its economy. On June 1st, the L.G. published the main editorial in the internationally respected FINANCIAL TIMES of London entitled "COLOMBO'S NEED TO COMPROMISE." In this issue of the LG we focus on this topic by publishing articles from the U.S. and British press to which the average Sri Lankan reader has little access.

believe that neither side will be able to prevail militarily."

The war has taken a devastating toll in human suffering. No one knows for sure how many have died in the conflict. The government puts the dead at 1,500, but pro-Tamil human rights organizations claim the number is closer to 10,000. Many more thousands have been injured or left homeless. In addition, more than 125,000 Tamil refugees have fled to the South Indian state of Tamil Nadu, where they share a common ancestry and language with India's 50 million ethnic Tamils. The cost to New Delhi of maintaining the refugee camps: \$3.6 million a year.

Despite Gandhi's attempts to bring both sides to the negotiating table, the intensity of the fighting has worsened in recent months. At 79, Jayewardene is still a wily and unpredictable politician. Although he has gone along with efforts to find a political settlement to the crisis, Jayewardene talks ominously of imposing "a military solution". Of the armed Tamil groups, he says, "They are called boys, militants, radicals, but they are simply murderers." The government has 37,000 heavily armed troops arrayed against some 2,000 lightly equipped guerrillas, who frequently rely on homemade pipe mines filled with gelignite to keep the military at bay. Last February in a major escalation of the war, Jayewardene sent Italian-made attack aircraft on bombing raids of suspected rebel hideouts in the north of the Island. The bombardment missed many guerrilla strongholds, instead killing innocent civilians and destroying their homes. An angry Indian External Affairs Minister, B. R. Bhagat, declared that the action "went beyond the realm of civilized behavior."

* * *

AT the same time, in the troubled Eastern Province, where Tamils make up 42% of the population, security forces acting under a government-declared state of emergency have been setting

up new military bases every few miles, bulldozing Tamil houses and herding their occupants into shacks. The military routinely rounds up Tamil males and holds them in camps like the notorious Boosa prison, in southern Sri Lanka. A number of young men are reported to have disappeared. Amnesty International, the human rights organization, says that last February security forces in the province's Amparai district surrounded a rice paddy farm where a group of Tamils were threshing rice. The troops shot at least 47 paddy workers, including a 13-year-old child, then heaped straw over their bodies and set them on fire. In a previous report issued last October, Amnesty concluded that torture by Sri Lankan forces is "widespread and persistent." It added that torture has been used particularly against young Tamil men ages 17 to 25 held under the 1979 Prevention of terrorism Act, and that some had died as a result.

Until recently Colombo appeared to have escaped major repercussions of the fighting in the north and east. Then, on May 3, a bomb exploded aboard an Air Lanka jetliner sitting on the tarmac at Sri Lanka's international airport, killing 16 people, most of them vacation bound foreign tourists, and injuring 20 others. Four days later, another bomb ripped through the Central Telegraph Office in downtown Colombo during the morning rush hour. Fourteen people died, and more than 100 were injured. No arrests have yet been made, but government officials blame Tamil terrorists, Guerrilla leaders deny responsibility, though one Tamil group, the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS), told TIME that it had carried out the telegraph-office bombing.

Late last week yet another bomb went off, this time at a railway station northeast of Colombo, on a train that had just come from Batticaloa, in the east. Authorities said that eight people were killed and 54 injured. Only hours earlier a blast had echoed through the center of the

capital during the lunch hour when a bomb hidden inside a delivery truck exploded at a soft-drink bottling plant, killing ten people. At least 15 others were critically injured. Also late last week, a land mine ripped into a government military convoy in the Eastern Province, killing 22 soldiers.

Following the Air Lanka and Central Telegraph office bombings some government agencies and companies began laying off Tamil employees. The move was said to be for the workers' protection, but there seemed little doubt the real reason was that many Sinhalese officials no longer trust Tamils, even those who work for the government. Many moderate Tamils are disturbed by the fact that there has been hardly a murmur of protest by civil libertarians. Says Neelan Tiruchelvam, a noted moderate Tamil leader, "Individuals now and then speak out, but the Sinhalese middle class remains uninvolved and uncommitted. There is no sense of outrage because it is not their sons who are dying the sons of poor Sinhalese farmers".

To those moderate Tamils who would like to see the conflict resolved justly and peacefully, the layoffs and bombings underscored the widening gulf between Sinhalese and Tamils. Says Professor Karthigesu Sivathamby of the University of Jaffna: "Separation is becoming a psychological reality." Historically, the two groups have seldom lived in harmony. It is believed that both the Sinhalese, who are Buddhists of Indo-Aryan origin, and the Tamils, Hindus of Dravidian ancestry, had immigrated from India by the third century B. C. The Sinhalese occupied three-quarters of the island, which they called the kingdom of Sinhale (Ceylon), including the bountiful rice-growing regions. The Tamils, largely traders and fishermen, lived mostly in the Jaffna Peninsula and along the east coast.

Successive conquests by colonial powers — the Portuguese in the

early 1500s, followed by the Dutch and then the British in the late 18th century — brought an end to the centuries of conflict between Sinhalese and Tamil kingdoms. Tamils flourished under the British raj, the colonial administration on the subcontinent. They seized educational opportunities offered by the British and embraced English as the island's common language. After independence in 1948, however, Sinhalese politicians began to seek ways to reassert their dominance. In 1956 the legislature passed a law replacing English with Sinhala as the official language of government and education. The Tamils, suddenly finding themselves a threatened minority, were stunned and outraged. The journey down the road to the separatist rebellion had begun.

Strikes and campaigns of civil disobedience followed. Several times during the first three decades of independence, Tamil political leaders tried to reach accords with the Sinhalese about language and other issues. These efforts failed, discrediting moderate Tamil politicians. Virtually all English-language schools disappeared, and schools were segregated by language, Sinhalese or Tamil. Today children of the two groups go to separate schools right through university and rarely mix, even in Colombo and other areas where they live side by side.

The situation worsened in the 1970s when new university admissions regulations decreed by the government had the effect of requiring Tamils to score higher than Sinhalese on entrance examinations. At the same time, Sinhalese politicians made it more difficult for Tamils to obtain government jobs. Blocked at home many Tamils left Sri Lanka and moved abroad, particularly to Britain and Australia. For those left behind, there were fewer and fewer educational or job opportunities outside the Jaffna Peninsula. Young Tamils who saw no future in Sri Lanka became increasingly resentful.

In 1972 a Tamil teenager named Vilupillai Prabhakaran started

a rebel group that became the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Three years later, several Tamil students in London formed another organization committed to fighting for a separate Tamil state. For years the Tamil rebellion consisted of much talk, with only an occasional bombing or killing. By mid-1983, Prabhakaran's Tigers had only 30 full-time members, with far less than one gun apiece. Tamils generally rejected violence and continued to place their hopes for change on political system. In the 1977 parliamentary elections, the Tamil party, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), swept to victory in all 14 seats in Northern Province and won four seats out of twelve in Eastern Province. That gave the Tamil party 18 out of 168 seats in Parliament, strengthening demands that regional councils be set up to give Tamils a larger measure of self-government. Jayewardene and his United National Party agreed to negotiate, then abruptly backed off.

The Tamil rebellion began in earnest in July 1983. In their first major assault, the Tigers ambushed an army patrol on the Jaffna Peninsula, killing 13 soldiers. The repercussions were far-reaching. The next evening when the bodies arrived in the capital, there was an outpouring of anti-Tamil hatred that quickly turned to slaughter. Within a week, an estimated 1,000 people nearly all of them Tamils, were killed by Sinhalese mobs. Many victims were burned alive. Tamils still refer to the riots as "the Holocaust." Tens of thousands of middle-class Tamils fled to Madras, the capital of Tamil Nadu. All TULF M.P.s were forced out of Parliament when they refused to take an antiseperatist oath. Over the next year, several attempts to reach an accord between the two ethnic groups ended in failure. As money poured in from Tamil expatriates in Australia, Britain and other countries, militants began buying weapons and setting up training camps.

Today there are five major armed groups, all with headquarters

in Madras. Tamil Nadu also harbors 39 rebel camps, in which an estimated 3,300 guerrillas are undergoing training. New Delhi has not shut down the rebel camps, but Indian authorities keep a sharp eye on the guerrilla organizations. Officials stand at dockside as rebels load their boats with arms and ammunition for the 22-mile trip across the Palk Strait to Sri Lanka. Arms shipments that do not have the approval of Indian authorities are seized. New Delhi has sought to limit the arms flowing to Tamil groups as a means of forcing the rebels to the bargaining table. In the same way, it apparently has tolerated the training camps in order to bring pressure on the Sri Lankan government.

Although the rebels initially benefited from a wave of sympathy in Tamil Nadu, there has been growing disenchantment over their presence. Robbery, smuggling and extortion by rebels have become widespread. Parents complain that their children are being sold drugs by the guerrillas. Several Indians have been killed or wounded in cross-fire between feuding rebel groups. Perhaps the worst episode took place in August 1984, when a bomb was planted aboard a Sri Lankan airliner. It was intended to explode in flight but instead went off in the Madras airport, killing 37 people.

The largest, oldest and most disciplined rebel group is Prabhakaran's Tigers. Most Tiger recruits are youths who struggled up the educational ladder only to find there were no jobs for them. Each wears around his neck a glass ampul containing potassium cyanide, to be used in case of capture. The Tigers claim that 100 of their members have committed suicide by taking the poison after being cornered by government security forces. Says one young rebel: "No human being can withstand torture, so to avoid letting out secrets we carry potassium cyanide."

The second-largest group, before the Tigers killed more than

100 of its fighters in a battle in Jaffna five weeks ago, was the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization, which was notorious for its violent internal power struggles and criminal activities. Prabakaran, now the undisputed leader of the armed Tamil separatists, told TIME's Anita Pratap that the Tigers moved against TELO because its leader, Sri Sabaratnam, was planning to destroy the Tigers. "While we are engaged in fighting the armed forces", he said, "TELO was engaged in antisocial activities damaging the Eelam liberation movement". TELO's new leadership, while conceding that the group is finished as a fighting force, says it will now focus on political activities.

TWO other groups, the Eelam Revolutionary Organization (EROS) and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), were formed by Tamil students in London in the mid-1970s, the latter a breakaway group from the first. Their members tend to be better educated than the Tigers and more ideological, espousing a Marxist-Leninist line. Both briefly had use to Palestinian guerrilla organisations. The fifth group, the People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOT), is regarded as something of a mystery. It has training camps and bases in Tamil Nadu, but its leader, Uma Maheswaran, condemns the "hit-and-run tactics" of the other four groups, saying they lead only to retaliation against civilians by the military. PLOT says its ultimate aim is to work with the Sinhalese left to foment an islandwide Communist revolution. The group is regarded as most violent toward its own members. Rumors are widespread in Tamil Nadu that scores of PLOT dissidents and deserters have been murdered.

As the rebel groups have grown in size and sophistication, Tamil moderates in Sri Lanka have increasingly been caught between militants and government. Family life, the central value of Tamil

society, has been totally disrupted as young men have left to join the guerrillas or have been taken prisoner by government forces. Some rebels have turned to crime and extortion to obtain funds for weapons. Last September, radicals murdered two former Tamil M. P. s who had been elected to Parliament on a Tamil autonomy platform. Ordinary Tamils are repelled by "lamppost killings" — rebel executions of suspected Tamil informers who are tied to posts, shot and left to die.

"I fear the militants are bringing about a totally undisciplined society", confesses a doctor in Jaffna. "Most are fairly young, and they feel they can get anything they want by using their guns". Three days earlier, a gang of Tamil guerrillas had invaded the hospital where he works and killed a rival leader. In the ensuing gun battle, a magistrate waiting for an electrocardiogram died in the crossfire. Even so, the physician is quick to add that "the militants are fighting a war for my benefit and that of my children."

Indeed, once conservative Tamils believe the government has played into the hands of the guerrillas with its bombing of the Jaffna Peninsula and other attacks that have harmed civilians. The latest attack occurred at a time when support for the rebels in the Tamil community was cooling. When I voted for Jayewardene in 1977," says a Tamil lawyer, "there were only 20 or 30 militants. Now there are thousands.

This government is the recruiting agent for the militants." Jaffna's Professor Sivathamby agrees. Before the bombing, he says, "there was a line, however thin that was drawn between the militants and the people. Now that line has disappeared." Even some government officials acknowledge that the bombing was a serious mistake. Says a Western military expert in Sri Lanka: "Stupid. They should be clearing out areas by ground action, not aerial bombing. The reason they're

bombing is that they don't have troops willing to go in."

The problem, says a senior Sri Lankan official, is that "we have some of the worst armed forces in the world." To improve military training, Jayewardene has turned to some controversial sources of assistance. In 1984, a team of Israeli intelligence experts spent several weeks in Sri Lanka advising the government on counterinsurgency operations. Jayewardene also hired Kini Meeni Services Ltd., a firm incorporated in the Channel Islands that employs hardened veterans of anti-guerrilla campaigns, almost all of whom are former British SAS commandos. In addition to giving counterinsurgency training to Sri Lankan forces, some Kini Meeni men have flown Bell 212 helicopter gunships in combat in the country. Much to India's dismay, Jayewardene has sent more than 1,000 junior officers to Pakistan for training over the past year.

The military buildup has been costly the defence budget has soared from \$66 million in 1983 to \$325 million this year.

India is deeply worried about the turmoil plaguing its neighbor across the Palk Strait. New Delhi is also concerned about the number of Sri Lankan refugees that have been pouring into Tamil Nadu since 1983, although the influx has abated somewhat of late. Many have melted into Tamil Nadu society, through refugees are legally barred from working. Others are confined to 171 refugee camps scattered around the state. Conditions are often squalid. In the Kovalam camp, located in an old cyclone shelter south of Madras, the living space is divided by sheets and sacking material hung from ropes. Most of the occupants arrived last year to escape what they describe as a reign of terror by Sri Lankan army units in two districts south of Jaffna. "Sometimes we wonder why we came," says a thin, dirt-pierced farmer. "We thought it would be only for two months or so and then we could return. We never thought life here would be so hard".

After the refugees dramatically increased last year, India began pressuring Tamil exile leaders to pursue talks with the Jayewardene government about a political settlement that would give the Tamil community a degree of autonomy but stop well short of creating an independent state.

New Delhi persuaded both sides to accept a cease-fire that, while not completely successful, drastically reduced hostilities for several months. Tamil leaders insisted that Jayewardene was deceiving India by talking about a political settlement while pursuing a military solution. When the Sri Lankan military bombed Jaffna, it appeared that the exile leaders might be right.

Nonetheless, Gandhi sent another delegation to Colombo last month. India has won a key concession from TULF to abandon its demand for an independent Eelam. New Delhi has also refused to support Tamil demands that Northern and Eastern provinces be merged into a single state. The Indian delegation instead appears to have agreed in principle with Sri Lankan officials on the need for a decentralized federal-type system that would permit the largely powerless provinces to elect governments of their own. There was agreement between Indian and Sri Lankan officials that future land settlement should reflect "traditional ethnic mixes." The Tamil fear that the government will continue to settle Sinhalese farmers in areas in which Tamils predominate.

* * *

THE sticking point, all sides agree, is what to do with "the boys," as the rebels are known. Disarming thousands of guerrillas will be no easy task. Moreover, Tamil leaders want to control their own security forces and impose limits on when the government can send troops into a Tamil-dominated province. The government wants as few restraints as possible.

Western diplomats see some reason for hope that an agreement

can be reached. Sri Lanka is beginning to feel the effects of the insurgency in reduced foreign investment and tourism. India is also eager to extricate itself from a costly and increasingly volatile situation. Even the Tiger's Prabhakaran appears ready to accept a settlement. Says he: "I doubt whether the masses will ever settle for anything short of Eelam, but if people are satisfied with an alternative formula, we are prepared to consider the alternative. After all, we are fighting for the people. We don't lose sight of what the people want."

Perhaps the major imponderable is "the old man," as Jayewardene is frequently called. Few purport to know what the President thinks. Foreign ambassadors and close associates often come away from a conversation with him convinced that he will take steps to end the violence, only to find him doing quite the opposite. As far back as the mid-1950s, Jayewardene led a protest march against a Tamil-Sinhalese accord that would have given Tamils far fewer concessions than they are asking for today. More recently, say his critics, he has thrown away two opportunities for a lasting settlement of the crisis—immediately after his landslide election victory in 1977 and again after the riots in July 1983.

At the moment, Jayewardene and his party are regarded as the strong favorites to win the next parliamentary elections, which can be called at any time. But there is growing unease about his economic policies and his handling of the insurgency. The disenchantment has not yet become politically threatening, largely because of the economic boom that Sri Lanka has enjoyed in recent years. Says a Colombo journalist: "Most Sinhalese have been too busy making money to worry about the Tamil question."

But Finance Minister Ronald de Mel warns that the insurgency is playing havoc with the economy. Soaring military expenditures have helped push the country's foreign debt to \$ 3.9 billion, up from \$ 2.8

billion a year ago. The annual 20% interest payments on that debt are contributing to a 1986 budget deficit of nearly \$ 1 billion. Tourism has fallen off dramatically, leaving many top hotels two-thirds empty. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Jayewardene won plaudits for pushing through sweeping economic reforms. Today, however, many Sri Lankans wonder whether "the old man" has the will or the energy to put together a settlement to end the costly spiral of violence and provide a way for the Sinhalese and the Tamils to live together in peace in their island nation.

— TIME

Kissingerian . . .

(Continued from page 4)

What of the Left? The LSSP and CP do not need to be reminded of how 'bourgeois' parties use the Left and throw it out after it has outlived its usefulness. That's what the SLFP did to the LSSP in 1975, a few years after it had helped the UF to meet the JVP insurgent threat and muzzle the trade unions.

The CP has too many examples from which to draw lessons. The CP played an active role in pushing through a regional autonomy plan for the Kurds in northern Iraq. The next year the CP was banned, and its leaders those who did not flee to the socialist countries — were jailed.

While the SLFP sticks to its elections demand, the CP in its last statement has called for 'preliminary steps' — all in the direction of democracy and civil liberties. Will the Opposition spot the opportunities now opened before it and see its own future tactics in terms of Kissingerian "linkage," devolution at the periphery together with a return to Sri Lanka's traditional democratic norms at the Centre?

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An Island in Turmoil

Sri Lanka's sectarian strife again threatens to spin out of control

At the Colombo airport last week, Sri Lankan workers picked through a mound of metal debris, bits of inflatable life vests and other rubble — grim reminders of a bomb planted by Tamil separatists that blew apart an Air Lanka jet on May 3. In the heart of Colombo, a powerful explosion ripped through the crowded central telegraph office, gutting a section of the rambling colonial-era building. Bystanders gawked at the jumble of beams and twisted metal. Such sights are becoming all too common on this once idyllic island. The two bombs killed 28 people and injured 153. And in the strife-torn north, rival factions of militant Tamils clashed in a bloody power struggle. In a single, violent week more than 200 people died.

No one knows where the escalating conflict will lead or when it might end. Since grisly sectarian riots exploded in 1983, violence between Sri Lanka's Buddhist Sinhalese majority and the predominantly Hindu Tamil minority has spiraled viciously, claiming some 3,000 lives. The government of President Junius Richard Jayewardene blamed the two recent bombings on the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). The LTTE is the most radical group of Tamils fighting a guerrilla war to establish Tamil Eelam, an autonomous homeland in the country's northern and eastern provinces, where Tamils outnumber Sinhalese. Now at least some members of a welter of separatist groups seem to have targeted foreigners and civilian crowds in the capital itself. "The Tamils are playing very rough," says a foreign diplomat in Colombo, "they're bringing the war home to the Sinhalese. This is real terrorism."

Rival faction: At a strength of roughly 2,500, the LTTE is the most disciplined and most doctrinaire of the five main separatist groups. In the past three weeks

its men have clashed with a rival faction, the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO) in and around the northern district of Jaffna. Last week, following pitched gun and grenade battles, LTTE claimed supremacy over the northern province after killing 175 TELO members, including TELO's leader Sri Sabaratnam.

Whoever planted the bombs in Colombo, did the job with precision. In the airplane blast, terrorists found a loophole in Air Lanka's wall of security, reportedly concealing explosives in perishable produce, including vegetables and meat, which was not inspected stringently before being loaded onto the plane. The explosion killed 17 people, mostly foreigners headed for vacation in Maldives. A government official said the bomb that wrecked the interior of the telegraph building was a sophisticated "Lebanon style" device.

The timing of the blasts was part of the message. They erupted almost exactly one year after Tamil guerrillas killed 146 Sinhalese and fired on a Buddhist shrine in Anuradhapura. More significantly, the Air Lanka explosion coincided with the visit to Colombo by Indian mediators who were holding talks with government leaders on the Tamil problem. India has huge stake in the issue; the 1983 violence triggered a Tamil exodus abroad, and some 125,000 Tamils headed to the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, from which many of their ancestors emigrated. That number includes up to 5,000 guerrillas and many of their leaders, who frequently strike at Sri Lanka across the 20-mile-wide Palk Strait. Last week NEWSWEEK's New Delhi Special Correspondent Sudip Mazumdar visited the LTTE base in Madras. His report.

Outside the yellow two-storey house on a suburban street, the young Tigers, some of them still

in their teens, sat chatting unobtrusively. But they kept an alert eye on the passers-by, and some hid automatic weapons under their shirts. Inside, portraits of the Guevara and Lenin hung alongside a duster of shocking photographs — what the tigers insist are evidence of Sri Lankan army atrocities against Tamil civilians. A little girl, her ribcage split open. The unashed head of a teenager. A charred torso. "We are fighting a battle against hate terrorism and genocide," says Anton Balasingham, an LTTE spokesman and theoretician. "Jayewardene wants to wipe out the Tamils. We are ready to carry on the battle until we establish a Tamil nation." (Atrocities, however, have been attributed to both sides).

Smuggling and piracy: Working out of their base in Tamil Nadu, the guerrilla groups have recruited young warriors from the links of the refugees. Some are devoted revolutionaries, but others are devoid of ideology, indulging in smuggling and piracy. Easy access to weapons, which are used in training long deserted stretches of the Indian seashore, increases their treat. The Tigers also pose a huge problem for Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. Tamil Nadu is not only home to 50 million Indian Tamils but is also an important power base in Indian politics. Rimmed in as it is by international political concerns and domestic political realities by Gandhi's efforts to broker some sort of settlement have so far yielded few results.

In the face of the laborious negotiations, Jayewardene and his military command have insisted that the Tamil agitation is tantamount to terrorism, requiring a "military solution," and the president vowed to crush the guerrillas by the end of the year. Security forces bombed and strafed areas around Jaffna, the nor-

thern most district the home to about half of the country's 2.7 million Tamils. The escalating conflict has peaked more and more funds into Colombo defense budget. Still, two months ago military commanders conceded that they could not guarantee a military victory no matter how much cash they get.

Some Sri Lankans had hoped the terrorist eruptions would jolt Jayewardene into tackling the Tamil problem with greater urgency. And in fact the day after the Air Lanka bombing, government representatives and the Indian mediators agreed upon the most concrete proposals yet for a political settlement. "The Indian game plan involves a substantial devolution of power to Tamil-speaking areas, which would isolate Tamil extremists and encourage moderates and a couple of the guerrilla groups to give it a try," said one source close to the talks. Yet a similar flurry of activity followed the May 1985 massacre

at Anuradhapura; Jayewardene met with Rajiv Gandhi in New Delhi, a cease-fire was declared and, at secret talks in Bhutan, representatives from Colombo met for the first time with the Tamil separatists. Within two months the cease-fire unraveled and the negotiations fizzled because neither side would bend.

Too little, too late? Now just about any government proposal could prove too little, too late. Jayewardene doesn't have much room to compromise: the strident opposition party is poised to wave the flag of Sinhalese Buddhist nationalism if he goes too far. At the same time the undisputable dominant guerrilla group is now LTTE, which is also the least amenable to a political settlement and the furthest from India's sphere of influence. "LTTE has an effective veto on any political solution," said a Tamil spokesman, "and is sending a no-compromise message to all the players."

Jayewardene hasn't changed his tune either. In response to the

bombings, last week he appealed once more to friendly countries for more aid and more guns to fight the guerrillas. Already more than 1,600 Sri Lankan security-force members have undergone training in Pakistan. A handful of Israeli advisers instructed Sri Lankans in intelligence techniques. Colombo also hired ex-commandos of the private British firm Keenie Meenie Services to provide advanced counterinsurgency training, and Western mercenaries from KMS were sighted last week commanding helicopter gunships. With the violence spinning nearly out of control, some residents predicted that in a few years foreigners from various nations might be struggling to keep the peace just as in other countries torn by hopeless strife. That could be overly pessimistic. Still, after last week Sri Lanka — called "Serendib" by ancient mariners — had tragically earned its new nickname — "the Lebanon of South Asia."

— NEWSWEEK

Sri Lanka's Killing Fields

A vengeful cycle of violence goes on and on

Wednesday, June 11 — a day in the life of Sri Lanka. Passengers in the eastern port city of Trincomalee settle in for the long, hot six-hour bus ride to Colombo when a hidden time bomb explodes. Minutes later, only a hundred yards away, a second bomb rips through a bus bound for the town of Kontalai. The two blasts kill more than 20 people and injure at least 70 others. Later in the day another bomb — this one hidden in a rickshaw — explodes outside a movie theater in Colombo; 3 more people are killed and 36 injured. Back in the north, Tamil separatists claim that they have killed 19 Sri Lankan sailors in a mortar attack. The assault, they say, comes in retaliation for a reported massacre the previous day in which they charge that Navy seamen murdered more than 20 Tamil fishermen.

The day's killing typified the cycle of violence that has turned the island into a battleground every bit as deadly as Lebanon and Punjab. Tamil rebels who have been battling the Colombo government since 1983 showed again last week that they are willing to terrorize the nation with random bombings to press for the creation of an independent homeland in the northern region of the country. President Junius Jayewardene's military has earned soiled reputation for excesses of its own. Neither side has shown much genuine interest in negotiating a peaceful settlement, despite the mediation efforts of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

Reason to fear: There is little hope for an early end to the Sri Lankan terrorism, and every reason to fear for the future. "I think terrorists will make more attempts to explode bombs at

places where people gather, such as hotels, railway stations, bus halts, government departments and big shops," National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali warned last week. The same day, 48 hours after the Trincomalee bombings, a government helicopter flew over Tamil strongholds in the northwest and strafed two rebel trucks, reportedly killing 26 guerrillas. Residents of the predominantly Tamil village of Ichchilampatti also said that men dressed in Army uniforms had attacked them, killing 21 people and burning most of the homes. The government confirmed that the slaughter had taken place but said that the attackers may only have been posing as soldiers. That seemed doubtful, but even if it were true, there is little doubt that Tamil rebels will seize on the murders as an excuse to seek revenge once again. — NEWSWEEK

Humphrey Hawksley reports from Trinco on the ruthless campaign to win control over the region and clear out the Tamil inhabitants

How the battle for Trincomalee was won

IF Sri Lanka's civil war has a front line at all it is in the district of Trincomalee on the north-east coast. Five years ago, when Trincomalee's sweeping coral beaches were being developed for the package tour industry, the Tamils, the Sinhalese and the Moslems lived side by side in roughly equal numbers in what seemed to be a fine example of ethnic harmony.

Now a visitor only has to drive a few miles, passing through settlements of each community, to see what has happened: the Tamil villages are deserted and the houses burnt. In a ruthless, but effective campaign, the Government has driven the Tamils out of their homes and into refugee camps or to the predominantly Tamil northern province.

"You have to ask why has there been no campaign to win the hearts and minds of the Tamil people in this crisis," said one Tamil lawyer. It's because the policy has been to search, destroy, and re-locate, and you can't have both. And when you look at it in the clear light of day the Government has won Trincomalee."

There used to be about fifty Tamil villages in the Trincomalee district. The only big ones remaining are Sambativu and Nilaveli, about ten miles north of Trincomalee itself. These are controlled by Tamil guerrillas.

Nilaveli has a population of about 3,000. It also has 2,500 refugees most from the fishing village of Kuchcheveli, another 15 miles north. A year ago, as part of a general sweep against Tamil villages in the district, Kuchcheveli was destroyed.

One of the refugees, a 48-year-old fisherman known as Tammy, said the soldiers arrived with armoured cars, firing wildly. Then a helicopter appeared and started shooting. Several people were killed or wounded, but he did not know how many. He and his nine-year-old son ran into the jungle.

About 1,500 people were hiding there without food or water and, said Tammy, they were terrified to go anywhere. This huge band gradually disappeared. Most of them walked through the jungle to Nilaveli where for the past year they have been living in camps.

Later, Tammy tried to return to his village. He said he was told by soldiers there that he should forget any ideas about living in Kuchcheveli again. He should go to Jaffna, in the North, because that was where the Tamils belonged.

Other refugees tell of atrocities. One said he had been told he was being taken to hospital to have his wounds treated. Instead a naval rating gashed the wound with a knife. Another saw a boy being beaten to death in a bus. A third asked for water, and was given a thick medicine.

In November, a new commanding officer, Brigadier Harsha Guneratne, arrived in Trincomalee marking what appeared to be an end to the steady stream of killings of Tamil civilians. He said undisciplined soldiers were punished and that the Tamil refugees could return home. He would look into the reports from the Kuchcheveli fishermen.

He said I must also visit a Sinhalese refugee camp, which I did. There was little difference between the squalor of the camps, except that there was no evidence of scabies among the Sinhalese refugees and there was a permanent medical officer. Scabies was rife in the Tamil camps and there was no medical officer. When a helicopter flew over the Sinhalese camp the children waved. When one flew over the Tamil camp everyone instinctively scattered for cover.

Brigadier Guneratne gave me lunch on the terrace of his large bungalow at the British-built naval base overlooking China Bay — a

symbol of the Tamil campaign because the the guerrillas say they need Trincomalee's natural harbour, one of the finest in the world, to make their envisaged homeland of Tamil Eelam economically viable.

The 55-year-old brigadier has carried out three military operations against guerrilla strongholds to assert his control over Trincomalee since the beginning of the year. He said the area — with 18 army camps — was now more or less secure, but admitted that Nilaveli was still in guerrilla hands.

"We will have to take that soon," he said. "But there is no major threat because they can neither move north nor south from there."

I asked him about the recent landmine attack on an army which killed 25 soldiers and five civilians.

"That was negligence," he said. "They should have been travelling at walking pace, checking the culverts for landmines."

I asked him about the massacre by Tamil guerrillas of 30 Sinhalese villagers the previous weekend — the Tamil attempt to keep Sinhalese settlers from moving into the eastern province. The brigadier said he was doubling the strength of the civilian militia, known as the homeguard, from 2,500 to 5,000.

But could he say that Trincomalee was really under his control? "You can never stop all the attacks. As long as there is a terrorist in the jungle they can strike. That is where the politicians come in," he said.

After lunch, I heard that men thought to be homeguards had murdered four members of a Tamil farming family, including a two-year-old boy, in a midnight raid on a remote farmhouse.

Mr Kandaratanam Sivapalan, a 65-year-old human rights worker, said that although the search,

(Continued on page 24)

Ethnic gap widens

Barbara Crossette

COLOMBO

Among the people affected by the days and nights of violence (in July 1983) was the poet Anne Ranasinghe. A German Jew who had fled Nazi rule as a child, married a Sinhalese scholar and come to live in Colombo. Mrs. Ranasinghe shocked by the ethnic violence, felt haunted again by her past. In a poem "July 1983" she mused that she "used to wonder about the Nazi killers and those who stood and watched the killing".

She continued:

*Forty years later
once more there is burning
the night sky bloodied, violent
and abused...*

The ethnic violence in northern Sri Lanka, illustrated by the Wednesday attack in Trincomalee that left more than 20 dead, is touching the capital, Colombo, farther south.

The result is growing fear. Warnies between ethnic groups has been heightened, shattering the confidence of a cosmopolitan city that was once a model of progress and development for southern Asia.

But Colombo's residents say the new climate of violence, in which an airliner has been destroyed, a train bombed and several public buildings damaged, may only be the latest and most traumatic stage of an alienation process that began in this Indian Ocean port 30 years ago.

"Even if the ethnic Tamil-Sinhalese conflict were settled tomorrow," a Sinhalese resident said, "this city would remain deeply divided."

Both Sinhalese and Tamils attribute the split to government policies, especially the Official Language Act of 1956, in which Sinhala replaced English as the

official tongue. Such policies, they say, split residents along ethnic lines and eroded the linguistic link that might have made the separation of ethnic groups less complete.

Tamils say the effect of the language act and other laws was to eclipse their language and to ghettoize their people, who then suffered greater discrimination at work and in school. Ethnic Sinhalese make up 80 percent of the city's population.

Children are now educated in the language of their parents, without exceptions, a Sri Lankan official said.

"In the slogan 'Sinhala in only 24 hours,' we lost our link language, English," a Sinhalese journalist said. "That began a great divide that has widened over the years. Children now go to segregated schools or study in separate streams in the same school. They don't get to know other people of their own age group unless they meet them outside."

Sinhala nationalism was introduced by the Sri Lankan Freedom Party formed in 1951 by Solomon Bandaranaike, who served as prime minister from 1956 to 1959. His son is now the opposition leader.

A Sinhala-speaking writer said the policies born of Sinhala nationalism were so pervasively applied that in 1983, when rampaging Sinhalese mobs attacked Tamils in Colombo after the ambush of an army patrol, they had voter-registration lists identifying Tamil families.

The 1983 attacks on Colombo's Tamil homes and businesses cost at least 500 lives and led to the flight of more than half the city's 200,000 Tamils.

The Tamils who remained say the process of rebuilding has been difficult, most of all for their children. One father noted that chil-

dren quickly learn to switch off television programs broadcast in the "other" language.

Neelam Tiruchelvam, a Tamil lawyer and political leader who studied at the University of Ceylon and at Harvard in the United States, said the current generation of national leaders was the last to be educated in the elite secondary schools that were ethnically and linguistically integrated.

Royal College, his own school, produced the leaders who would head every major political party, including the Communists, he said. Its graduates included leftists, rightists, Tamils, Sinhalese and the people of mixed European and Asian descent known as Burghers.

"The richness of education we had as children, when our schoolmates came from every background, is gone," Mr. Tiruchelvam said. "When you lose that, you lose something fundamental."

About 20 percent of Colombo's three million people are Christians. Priests and pastors say that their churches, as outsiders to the conflict between the Tamil Hindus and Sinhalese Buddhists, wage a continuing battle against polarization.

At the century-old St. Lucia's Roman Catholic Cathedral, a visitor can observe three priests saying mass as a team in Tamil, Sinhala and English.

"We use the three languages in one mass because the people don't want separation, they don't want struggle," said the Reverend Canisius Moraes, a Sinhala speaker.

T.D.S.A. Dissanayaka, a Foreign Ministry official who soon will become Sri Lanka's ambassador to Yugoslavia, said the Christian churches in Sri Lanka had to cope with a difficult legacy after the country gained independence from Britain in 1948. Christianity was regarded as "the religion of the conqueror."

(Continued on page 18)

A decision that doesn't seem right

The decision by the Tamil United Liberation Front not to attend the meeting of registered political parties scheduled for June 25 in Colombo to receive and discuss the Sri Lankan Government's proposal relating to the devolution of power at the provincial level in the Northern and Eastern provinces of the island does not seem the right one either in principle or as a tactical response. The TULF has, in its telegram to the Sri Lankan President, Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, elaborated on the considerations and logic that made it arrive at this decision and ironically, it is the combination of factors referred to which argues that participation in an open-minded way in political exercise would be the sound course. The TULF's objection to Mr. Jayawardene playing three or four tracks simultaneously is certainly valid. Track One is the continuance of the search for a negotiated political settlement between the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil organisations using India's good offices as the key. There are two basic or substantive experiences relevant to this track involving only the TULF, the "moderates", the former elected representatives of the Sri Lankan Tamils, in the first round of the negotiating exercise; and bringing in the five major Tamil militant organisations along with the moderates directly into the process. Although the latter course seemed to carry some advantages in that the entire spectrum of Tamil political and military activity seemed now covered, the experience of the "ceasefire" and the Thimpu peace conference in 1985 demonstrated the fallacies of this approach from an Indian policy standpoint. From late-1985, India's good offices in helping Sri Lanka find a negotiated political way out of the malignant situation has returned to the approach of involving only the TULF in this round; the hope, of course, is that once a decent basis for a political settlement is identified and the gap on the

substantive issues concerning devolution is narrowed, a serious effort can be undertaken to persuade the militants to go along and give this package a chance. The success of Track One presupposes firmness in the Indian policy position on the core issues figuring in the political aspirations of the Sri Lankan Tamils, a skilful and flexible approach to methodology and timing, and an unwavering commitment to a moderate but substantive solution offering a decent measure of self-administering opportunities within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. Any objective or fair reading of the experience would make it clear that it is the Jayawardene administration and its handling of this political track which subverted the promise that emerged in late-1983 with the Annexure C model and the opportunities of building up towards their aspirations that it offered the Tamils. The latest "clarifications" sent to New Delhi are obviously meant to keep Track One alive.

The pursuit of Track Two — a brutal military strategy targeting in practice innocent Tamil civilians far more than militants — has undermined the credibility of Colombo's professions towards a negotiated political solution. The outrage of the May military offensive in the North, the terroristic act of bombing the heart of civilian Jaffna from the air and the ignominiously bungled effort to "conquer" it as though it were the capital of a medieval enemy state waiting to be looted, burnt and destroyed, angered and completed the alienation of the Sri Lankan Tamil component of the island. The timing of this outrage was notable: it followed immediately upon a visit by an Indian delegation led by Mr. P. Chidambaram, a Union Minister, to take forward India's good offices. The signs that point to another military offensive centring on the Jaffna peninsula are deeply worrying — this delusion is the particular specialisation of the Minister for National Security,

Mr. Athulathmudali, who represents a hawkish and completely untrustworthy element in Sri Lankan politics. New Delhi must make it clear to Sri Lanka and the whole world that it will not any longer be a disinterested spectator to any new round of military atrocities against the Tamils for whom there is a strong and growing sense of solidarity in this nation. What India can do in response to a military offensive taking on genocidal characteristics remains to be worked out in policy terms that break with the superficialities of the Rajiv-Bhandari approach of 1985 — which in a sense lowered the credibility of India's role in relation to the Tamil question in Sri Lanka. The military "solution" pursued by Colombo has, of course, proved very, very costly to the people of the island, Sinhala, Tamil and others. The fierce armed resistance by the militants in the North, and their going for civilian as well as military targets in the East and the South, have made nonsense of the claim of Jayawardene, Athulathmudali & Co. that they are in the process of winning the war against "terrorism". The induction of an assortment of reactionary elements, Israeli, Pakistani and Western mercenary, into the military strategy threatens — aside from the human rights consequences for the Tamils — to make further inroads into the independence of Sri Lanka's foreign policy. In all these ways, the impact of Colombo's actions militates against India's basic policy interest in the region of which it is an important part.

Track Three is the convening of the multiparty conference to present the latest official proposals on provincial councils in the North and the East and their specific powers and functions. The decision by the SLFP to boycott the exercise — even while arranging to look at the proposals outside this forum —

(Continued on page 23)

V. PRABAKARAN

Profile of a Tiger

AMONG the militant Tamil groups battling for Eelam, he is already a legend in his comparatively short lifetime, a larger-than-life figure whose military exploits and derring-do have turned him into something of a folk hero. Tales abound of his unerring marksmanship and his ability to hit a cigarette at a hundred paces with a pistol or strip and reassemble a revolver blindfolded in seconds. To his enemies, including rival Tamil militant groups, he is a ruthless, blood-thirsty, over-ambitious desperado, intent only on self-promotion — and self-preservation. But in the context of Sri Lanka's increasingly bloody ethnic strife, Velupillai Prabhakaran, 32, has become the predominant figure after the brief but brutal fratricidal battle between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) which he heads, and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), the two most militarily powerful Tamil groups. The TELO forces were virtually wiped out as was most of their top leadership, including Srisabaratnam, Prabhakaran's arch-rival for the Tamil guerrilla leadership.

With TELO virtually out of the picture, the supremacy of LTTE, popularly known as the "Tigers" and its chairman, Prabhakaran, is unquestioned, particularly after they reconfirmed their near-total military control over the island's northern peninsula. Prabhakaran's writ now runs supreme in the north, with the LTTE not only collecting taxes from the locals but also controlling law and order.

Prabhakaran remains something of an enigma. Stripped of the propaganda hype that surrounds him, he is still a mystery man with a paradoxically low profile. His movements are a closely-guarded secret, but he is known to spend most of his time shuttling between hideouts in

Tamil Nadu, sometimes crossing the Palk Strait to don his battle fatigues and personally direct his troops in combat.

Born on November 26, 1954, in Sri Lanka's northern coastal town of Velvettithurai, he belongs to the fishing caste though his father was an educated government servant employed as a district land officer. As a student, he was inspired by historical military heroes like Alexander the Great and Napoleon Bonaparte and by Indian freedom fighters like Bhagat Singh and Subhash Chandra Bose. As he says: "I was a studious boy in school, confined to reading books at home." When he was four years old, he was witness to the racial riots of 1958 and virtually grew up listening to stories of the brutalities committed by the Sri Lankan army on the Tamil population.

He was a student when he began playing an active role in organising protest movements against the Government and acquired a Marxist image. When he was 16, in protest against the Government's discriminatory education policy, the "revolutionary youth", as he describes his fellow-travellers, distanced themselves from the existing Tamil political party and formed the Revolutionary Youth Federation.

Prabhakaran was 17 when he joined the "armed struggle" and began learning how to use hand grenades and small-bore revolvers. One version has it that he received some military training in Cuba. Whatever the truth, he rose rapidly in the guerrilla hierarchy as the movement expanded. In 1972, he was confident enough of his leadership abilities to form the Tamil New Tigers which he renamed as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in 1976, appointing himself as

chairman of the organisation's central committee and commander-in-chief of its military wing.

As a ruthless guerrilla fighter dedicated to spilling "the last drop of blood" for Eelam, Prabhakaran's name first hit the headlines in 1975 when he assassinated Jaffna mayor Alfred Duraiappa. He also personally led the group that ambushed a military convoy in 1983, killing 13 soldiers and triggering off the 1983 Colombo riots. Says Tilakar of LTTE, a delegate to the Thimpu talks: "He is always intensely alert. This has helped him in our fights against the Sri Lankan army. He has an uncanny hunch about impending military attacks, helping him escape numerous attempts to capture him."

Prabhakaran is the chief architect of the highly-disciplined and well-entrenched military set-up of the LTTE that has been modelled on Fidel Castro's original guerrilla movement. It is a tightly-controlled organisation that has managed to keep its strategy and movements secret through public executions of alleged informers. All LTTE members keep a vial of cyanide on their person in case they are captured and tortured. However, Prabhakaran's war against TELO has been seen as part of his growing leadership ambitions. Says V. Balakumar, convenor of the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation: "Ultimately, leadership is something which will have to be conferred on you by the people. It is not right to think that your status will go up if you artificially build an aura around yourself." Other militant groups have criticised his recent penchant to issue instructions to his men in the battlefield from the safety of his Tamil Nadu hideouts and there are strong rumours that his military authority is beginning to be questioned by his district commanders.

But in terms of discipline, Prabhakaran has always set a personal example. He doesn't drink or smoke, tea or coffee are taboo and he is very strict about field training and exercise. There is considerable mystery, however, about the source of LTTE's seemingly limitless funds. The Sri Lankan Government believes he is being funded by the communist bloc which he denies vehemently. But in the current conflagration, Prabhakaran's destiny is linked inextricably with the Eelam struggle and the legend can only grow larger.

Dark-skinned, with close-cropped hair, a bushy moustache and a disarming smile on his thick lips, Prabhakaran looks the antithesis of the legendary dreaded terrorist that he is supposed to be. He looks more like a prosperous and pleasant-mannered family man, which, incidentally, he also is. His wife Madivadani has just given birth to their second child, Dwaraka, a week-old last fortnight. Prabhakaran is not normally accessible to the media. Last fortnight, however, he made an exception for INDIA TODAY when he agreed to speak to Assistant Editor PRABHU CHAWLA and Madras Correspondent S. H. VENKATRAMANI in the LTTE's Indira Nagar office in south Madras for an interview. Excerpts:

Q. What, in your view, will be the next chapter of the Sri Lankan problem?

A. Sri Lankan President J. R. Jayewardene (JRJ) will come to the negotiating table only if he been able to gain some military advantage. Till then, he will only be continuing the military option.

Q. Don't you think it is possible for the Sri Lankan Government with all its resources to ultimately militarily crush your movement?

A. JRJ may think he can find a military solution to the ethnic problem. But he can only succeed in bringing about genocide on a large scale. We have with us

young boys who are willing to die one after another till we are able to achieve our objective.

Q. How do you estimate LTTE'S strength vis-a-vis the Sri Lankan Army?

A. I cannot reveal any military secrets, but we have the capability to send the army out. I can assure you that LTTE is capable of mobilising enough support to defeat the Sri Lankan army.

Q. Do you have a specific time frame for achieving an independent Tamil state of Eelam?

A. I can't say specifically when we will attain Eelam. But we will certainly attain it. It will also to a certain extent depend on the international situation, the economic pressures that Colombo faces and will face because of our armed struggle. Once his foreign supporters realise that JRJ is not capable of holding the country together they will desert him. His guns, bombs and tanks have not been able to deter us from launching a sustained offensive against his regime.

Q. But don't you think you can negotiate an honourable settlement with the Sri Lankan Government?

A. We have crossed the stage of being able to visualise a solution within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. We have come to a point of no return with regard to the Eelam ideal.

Q. What is the geographical territory you want to liberate as Eelam?

A. Eelam was already existing. There was a distinct Tamil homeland. We are now trying only to retrieve that.

Q. Have you yourself been on the field?

A. Yes, I have taken part in a number of military operations. In fact, in our group, all of us have to.

Q. What was your first important military operation?

A. My first major military encounter was in 1975 when I shot and killed the former mayor of Jaffna, Alfred Duraiappa. Subsequently I have taken part in a number of military actions of our group: I was very much there in the Nilaveli operations, and I led the ambush on the military convoy that killed 13 soldiers in Tinneveli in 1983.

Q. Can you tell us how many people you have personally killed in the course of military struggle?

A. I cannot tell you that, but I have been in a number of our military actions. I can operate every thing from a pistol to a rocket-ranger.

Q. What were the reasons for your waging a war on TELO? Don't you think disunity among the militants can only weaken your movement?

A. In our struggle we have to adopt a unified approach. Any disunity among us will be a weakness for the entire Tamil movement. But it is precisely this disunity that was developing. In my opinion there must only be one dominant militant group to lead the struggle. And it is we Tigers who were able to foil the Sri Lankan Army's offensives in many cases. And it is very dangerous for the Sri Lankan Army to deal with a single unified movement. It is a single unified Tiger movement now.

Q. But couldn't you have brought about unity by discussions?

A. How could we discuss anything with the other groups when they were themselves hopelessly disunited within?

Q. Is eliminating the other groups the only way to a unified approach?

A. We did not wipe out any movement. We only taught TELO a lesson. TELO was killing our LTTE leaders, and if we had not tackled them the Tiger movement would have gradually ceased to exist. You will appreciate that even when we had problems with

the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front, we were very patient. Even in the case of TELO, though around 100 militants were killed, we only took into custody over 400 TELO fighter and seized their arms and ammunition. The only principle was that these people need not wield arms if they cannot fight the real enemy. While our cadres were really keeping the Sri Lankan Army at bay, these other groups were indulging in antisocial activities. And Jaffna people said it was good for us to take total charge of the liberation movement.

Q. What do you say to Jayewardene calling you terrorists?

A. We are not terrorists. We are the representatives of people who want to get out of the clutches of state terrorism.

Q. What is your reply to Jayewardene's allegation that you are getting arms from communist countries?

A. If I was getting arms from communist countries, I would have given you an interview in Tamil Eelam.

What political set-up do you visualise for Tamil Eelam?

A. It would be a socialist state of Tamil Eelam. And there would be a single political party supported by the people. I am opposed to the multi-party democracy. It is through the one-party rule that we can develop the Eelam faster. In a socialist set up people's needs are more important.

Q. Would you have parliamentary democracy?

A. No, it would be a people's democracy, a model similar to that of Yugoslavia where people elect a single party.

Q. What kind of foreign policy would you like to follow?

A. We will definitely like to be closer to the socialist block because these are the ones who are helping us now.

Q. Do you go to Jaffna these days?

A. My movements are a secret. But all my cadres are my trusted lieutenants. They keep in touch with me.

Q. LTTE has the reputation of having a strict code of conduct...?

A. We do impose a moral code. For example, we do allow our members to marry, but we wouldn't allow loose morals. We don't allow our members to drink, and they generally don't smoke. We ensure a life within social norms.

Q. Jayewardene accuses you of launching your military struggle from Indian soil. How do you react to that?

A. Our struggle is taking place in Eelam. We are conducting the war there. And when necessity arises we will go there. We have no desire to fight from here. We are here to carry on an international political campaign and not to launch a military struggle.

Q. Can you name some of the countries which are helping Jayewardene?

A. Racist and authoritarian governments like South Africa, Pakistan, and Israel, and of course the SAS mercenaries.

Q. What is your equation with the Government of India now?

A. The Government of India is sympathetic to our cause. Our being allowed to stay here also shows the magnanimity of the Indian Government. India has been good enough to give refuge to all our exiled political leaders.

Q. What is your response to the Government of India's mediatory efforts?

A. We fully support the Government of India's peace initiatives: We support India's role fully.

Q. But India wants a solution within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. Whereas you are bent on Eelam. Doesn't that mean you are at cross purposes with India?

A. We are representing the political aspirations of our people. We don't think the Government of India will go against the aspirations of our people. India's support is important to us. But we also have a right to self-determination.

Q. What will you do if Rajiv asks you to get out because he doesn't take kindly to terrorism?

A. We don't think Rajiv will ask us to pack our bags. But then if we are asked to go we will have to go. Our homeland is always waiting for us with open arms. But we are convinced that he has full sympathies with the Tamil people.

— INDIA TODAY

Ethnic . . .

(Continued from page 14)

Taking a visitor to Colombo's new Anglican cathedral, where he attends services, Mr. Dissanayaka said that Christian leaders had developed "enlightened policies" to meet the challenge, and had earned a liberal reputation as a result.

When the Archbishop of Canterbury recently visited the cathedral, which is built in Sri Lankan architectural style, Buddhist monks were given prominent places in the congregation, he said.

Mr. Tiruchelvam, who represents a moderate Tamil political movement that would like to reach an acceptable settlement with the central government, acknowledged that pockets of ecumenism and liberalism still existed in Colombo.

But he said he feared that the city's middle class, "which supported these liberal qualities and gave the city its cosmopolitan air," had changed.

"This very progressive, creative segment has become deeply polarized, almost filled with bigotry," he said. "The educated middle class are the caretakers of our conscience. But they are failing to carry out that role."

— NEW YORK TIMES

Towards N. A. M. 8

South Africa raises the NAM Curtain

The 6th summit of Nonaligned States opens in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, in September. As usual the largest community of States outside the U. N. will take up questions that have been on the NAM agenda for two decades, such as the cluster of issue covered by the Third world's demand for a New International Economic Order. But the focus of NAM 'Summit' is often determined by the urgencies of the moment. By a coincidence, world attention is sharply focussed right now on the struggle in South Africa which of course is of the most direct concern and importance to the host of the 8th summit, Zimbabwe, one of the targets of a South African Air Force attack only a few months ago. Interestingly, another victim of South African aggression was Zambia, the host of 3rd summit.

Pretoria's pretext was that Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe were sanctuaries for the African National Congress, the organisation spearheading the liberation struggle in AZANIA today. Since support for national liberation movements is as much a cardinal principle and commitment of the N.A.M. as much as the struggle against Racism, the South African issue, which is in any case has a magnetic hold on International attention at the moment, will inevitably over-shadow all other questions at the Harare conference. **In the run-up to the Summit, the L. G. plans to publish commentaries on both general and specific issues.**

Non-alignment, despite the word itself, is not so much an ideology as an international movement with some broad ideological bases. The growth of the movement, particularly the rapid increase in numbers and the hete-

rogeny of the nation-states and governments joining the organisation, has quite logically contributed to greater flexibility than to rigidity. Membership of the movement also defines the declared foreign policy of each member-state. But that foreign policy, in practice, of course is conducted by the government of each country, and regimes change.

Contributing also to the flexibility — and in a sense to the dynamism — of the movement is the rich diversity of cultures which characterise the N. A. M. The cumulative impact of all these influences on the movement as a whole was ably expressed by Prof. K. P. Misra, Dean of the School of the International Studies at Nehru University in his contribution to **"The Principles of Nonalignment"**. An internationally recognised interpreter of non-alignment, the theory and practice, Prof. Misra observed: "These countries belong to different continents and cultures, their nature and level of socio-economic development is not the same, their geo-political compulsions vary considerably, their historical experience is distinctive, and above all, the international political perspective of their ruling elite, though broadly similar, are far from identical".

Although Prof. Misra's general observation on the affective factors that shape the collective character of N.A.M. and condition the individual behaviour of member-states can be accepted as valid, it is also necessary to stress at the same time the prevalence of ideas which have helped not only to keep the movement alive but to maintain its surprisingly high degree of cohesion. The present writer's own contribution to the same collection of essays notes, vis-a-vis

the issue of 'de-colonising information':

"But whatever the preoccupations of the movement at any given time or definable period, the non-aligned community has held on steadfastly to an aim which we must accept as its central or core value: an end to domination. Nothing illustrates this better than the basic documents which punctuate the movement's history. "Domination" and associated ideas like "subordination" and "dependence", together with connected phrases such as "in all its forms or "in any form" or "in all its manifestations" have been worked and re-worked into the movement's literature until these terms have entered the liturgical lexicon". (PRINCIPLES OF NON-ALIGNMENT, THIRD WORLD CENTRE PUBLISHERS, London).

It is precisely because this historical phenomenon of dominance-dependence has now emerged as the main target of the Third World's aspirations for total emancipation, that is emancipation beyond formal political independence, that the efforts by western theorists of nonalignment to impose a different orientation on N.A.M. have signally failed. Such western attempts, indirectly supported by a few nonaligned exponents from within the movement, have sought to distort the true meaning of nonalignment.

Yes, "NON-Alignment" by definition means not aligned to....." To whom? To the superpowers. That is the broad doctrinal position, a by-product of the global reality of two power blocs which existed when the non-aligned movement was formed.

However, in practice — and this constitutes the learning process of N.A.M., and the increasing

maturity of its perception of the complexities of the global power-structure — Third World **dependence** continues, despite the transfer of **political** power, peacefully or violently, to the colonised by their imperial masters. The sources of **domination** were still the old metropolitan centres, and its agencies were the trans-national firms.

Sovereignty was not fully meaningful without economic independence. That was the first step in self-awareness because political freedom had no substance if it could be translated in terms of a better life for the people. Thus, the demand for a new economic order grew. The second stage came when the Third World countries realised that there was a third sphere of near-total dependence and exploitation — the field of ideology and culture, specifically communications. Again the owners and controllers were the same metropolitan centres, the agents the communication giants. In Algiers, and more clearly in Colombo (5th summit) the Action Program which included 'Information' became the second front opened by NAM. In both fronts, NAM is not at war with the Soviet Union but with the US-led western alliance.

The attempt to interpret "non-alignment" by equating the two superpowers produced many concepts, including the Yugoslav 'equi-distance' theory, and more lately the western notion of "genuine non-alignment", meaning again, NAM must attack both superpowers **equally** as evidence of the genuineness of its non-alignment.

This introduces the latest idea of "equal responsibility" i.e. the predicament of Third world nations, the burdens their peoples must bear, the conflicts and tensions in different parts of the world, can be attributed to both superpowers and the guilt apportioned **equally** to both.

Interestingly, this 'theory' accompanies the Reagan administration's own policy of trying to divide and weaken N. A. M. by dealing on a case-by-case basis, and rejecting multi-lateralism for

unilateralism, in US relations with Third World states. In effect, it is a policy of selective bribery, intimidation and coercion. Using both 'concepts' — equal responsibility and case-by-case unilateralism, Washington reinforces the unusually aggressive US policy on N. A. M. ever since Mr. Reagan moved into the White House.

It is always events and actuality that undermine and wreck strategies and tactical calculations. Like neighbouring NAMIBIA South Africa presents a case of a national liberation struggle pitted not just against an imperial master but against a **racist garrison state**, a state in which the vast majority of the natives do not enjoy minimum political rights. Now how does Mr. Reagan, and his ideological soul-mate, Mrs. Thatcher respond to the barbarities of apartheid — with genuine non-alignment of their own kind? Equi-distant between the apartheid State and the oppressed black population. For the second time in months, the US and UK vetoed a N. A. M. resolution on South Africa.

U. S., U. K. kill nonaligned move on Pretoria

UNITED NATIONS

The United States and Britain, vetoed a resolution in the U. N. Security Council to impose economic sanctions against South Africa. France abstained and the 12 other members, including Australia and Denmark, voted for the proposal submitted by five nonaligned States — Congo, Ghana, Madagascar, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Arab Emirates. It was meant to censure and punish South Africa for the June 5 attack on the port of Namibe in Angola.

The resolution called for suspension of all new investments in and guaranteed export loans to Pretoria, a ban on all new contracts in the nuclear field and

restrictions in sports and cultural relations. A ban on sales of computer equipment and Krugger-ranes and all other coins minted in South Africa was also proposed.

An earlier bid by the same five countries for a selective embargo was vetoed by the U. S. and Britain on May 23. Last month, South Africa had been under fire for attacking Zimbabwe and other frontline neighbours.

The western powers' double-veto left Angola in "despair and frustration." The U. S. and British delegates gave their usual explanations saying they wanted to end Pretoria's apartheid system, not bring down its economy.

Though a global conference on sanctions opened in Paris this week, the French Ambassador, Mr. Claude de Kemoullaria said time was not opportune to apply obligatory sanctions against South Africa.

The vote came just minutes after the U. S. House of Representatives approved a package containing similar sanctions. But the U.S. delegate, Mr. Herbert Okun, said his government's long-held opposition to mandatory sanctions "has not changed. Punitive economic sanctions would represent an abdication of our responsibility to those seeking a peaceful end to apartheid."

While deploring the violations of the Angolan territory, Mr. Peter Maxey, British delegate, said "We remain opposed to economic boycotts because they do not work."

An exasperated Angolan Ambassador, Mr. Elisio de Figueiredo, told the council that the "history of South Africa will be written in blood" because that was the only language the racists understood. He had a feeling of frustration about the usefulness of the council in view of continued use of veto by the U. S. and Britain.

(Continued on page 24)

I don't want this war

Gamini Akmeemana

Hating violence is not simply an intellectual exercise. To those who haven't actually been through a passage of violence — whether street crime, demonstrations that become bloody riots, or war — a lecture-hall verdict that violence is bad lacks a gut feeling. The shootouts always seem like fun.

Exhortations, or guided tours to the killing fields, only have very short term results. As the pragmatic Bertolt Brecht once said, war is like love. It always finds a way. This is not intellectual defeatism, merely a laconic acknowledgement of what is almost a sacred truth.

There is war, and there is also civil war. In general, it is full-scale war that begets anti-war movement. People get together and say "We don't want another war." Somehow, we haven't seen so many placards saying, "We don't want another civil war." (Though the Lebanese, once they get back their breath, just might say that). The reason may be that a civil war is a mainly domestic affair which, once the family quarrels are settled, no one wants to mention the belief that such nasty things could never happen again could conceivably be sincere.

Our big bad thing is both war and civil war. We are not unique in having either. But we were unique in the belief that these things wouldn't happen to us. We lived in paradise.

We no longer do. Now there is a macabre phenomenon in Colombo. When the latest bomb goes off, people throng the pavements that lead to the accident ward of general hospital. They crowd the cumbersome pedestrian bridge that is closeby. As the ambulances scream past and screech to a halt, the faces show the result of a mental process which has

passed through bewilderment, rage fear — and now slow understanding.

And in that understanding of the nature of violence lies the spark of rejection; if this is what violence can do to people, then we don't want it happening to us. It's the beginning of an instinctive movement against violence.

Admittedly, it is a long way from Jaffna. We have no idea what it is like to be a civilian casualty of an anti-terrorist operation there. There are always the statistics, only comprehensible to the cold-blooded accountants of human error.

Whether the blood, broken bones and viscera is here or there at least it isn't anyone's exclusive property any more. What we used to watch on screen and — people in Europe going to war, going through war, families separated, friends, brothers, relatives lost — with such complacent detachment is now the harsh reality of our own existence.

One thing no one can afford to forget; violence begets violence. To turn the other cheek is very well in theory, but the conditioning of tradition, and the instinct of self-preservation demand otherwise. We hate violence, but we also hate those who force it upon us. This is the usual short-term view. And those who feed the nation that wars can always be won are walking through a dangerous minefield.

History is strewn with examples of bloody wars which proved to be inconclusive. The nature of today's warfare is subtle and self-destructive. The philosophers are right; in the end, whenever that might be, both sides lose. From Cambodia to Lebanon and El Salvador, this is proving to be the case.

And what if the war is won? The terrorist, or freedom fighter

(your choice) is a remarkably obstinate man. Nothing will convince him that his cause is lost. As long as he can go on killing people, left, right and centre, he is convinced that he is winning.

As someone put it succinctly not long ago, so what are we to do, write poems? Poetry (which decries violence) has always been indigestible to the promoters of violence. The idea is that when real men go off to fight, the rest fall back on poems and anti-war sentiments. This is the macho mentality that earned Spanish poet Garcia Lorca a bullet through the heart during the Spanish Civil War; which got American conscientious objectors branded as traitors during the Viet Nam War.

The fact is that we are still far from a genuine anti-war movement. The feeling is there, but it also makes a lot of people feel uneasy. It makes people feel unpatriotic. Children who donate their pocket money to the good cause are given publicity in the press; so how could the grown-ups say it's bad and should be stopped?

Our military growth is in its infancy. The country and its people have a massive inferiority complex about their inability to defend themselves. The military deficiencies were glaringly evident during the 1971 insurrection, when foreign military aid had to be called in to stop bands of tomboys with weapons normally used for a rabbit-shoot. Ten years later, the military were again hard-pressed against bands of tomboys, this time equipped with a mind-boggling arsenal.

These are the contradictions. We have come to a point where people take pride in displays of new military strength and hardware (it makes them feel more secure). But they are also stunned and bewildered when the bombs go off. The government

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Part II

A close look at Rupavahini

Jeanne Pinto

Organisation of the News Room; Operating Practices

As the Rupavahini newsroom is small, it does not need a top-heavy hierarchy: with an intelligent roster, key jobs can be assigned with fairness, and an easy movement within the unit established, for greater enthusiasm and efficiency.

There are, however, two posts in any newsroom, print, radio or television, which are permanent and must be assigned with care — the News Editor/Director and Copy Editor/Chief Sub-Editor. TV, in particular, tends to go outside the organisation to fill these posts: and it cannot be reiterated often enough, that this is totally wrong and vitiating practice.

Here, first, is the definition of the role and requirements, based on international, universal standards, of the qualifications and role of the:

News Director/Editor

He must, above all, be a general reporter, with a solid background of news: he must have "come up from the news."

He must work incredible hours, cover a variety of functions, have organisational ability, a wide network of contacts:—

Administrative functions

He must be responsible for: equipment; working rosters; correspondence — especially letters to the editor; complaints, corrections — especially those likely to lead to libel actions; representing the newsroom (internally) — speak for his staff to administration, advertising, transport etc: budgetary control. He must know what to delegate and when.

Management of personnel

Success in the newsroom depends on what can be got out of the staff: whether they are properly motivated — and protected. Therefore, a News Editor/Editor must have a knowledge of the particular competence of members of his staff, station officials

and key Ministry personnel: as complete a knowledge of the market to convey to and convince staff. He must be able to hold together a variety of individuals, with different personalities, talents, quirks; convince staff of an "acceptable way" of doing things; use staff strength, not weaknesses — encourage reporters to generate stories, seek out areas of specialisation; stand between staff and management; be discreet with punishments for carelessness, irresponsibility — he should be the ultimate deterrent.

(As this is a sensitive area, especially where young staff are concerned, the guidelines should be flexible and fair — with, first a verbal warning, then a written one, never a fine, suspension perhaps. Standard government rules are unusually harsh and generally unnecessary in an institution, which presumes to be creative and is only incidentally government-owned/controlled)

The News Editor/Director must have the respect of his staff.

And his importance in a small newsroom, with limited staff resources has been underlined often by every visiting expert — the point about one wrong appointment, in an institution influenced by governmental practices, is that the individual stays on and festers, infecting the area around him intolerably: when he is finally removed, it is with utter humiliation. Meanwhile, the damage done by his incompetence takes too long a time to repair itself.

Copy Editor/Chief Sub-Editor/Scriptwriter

This is another key post that the TV newsroom tends to think it can do without.

— Every newspaper has a full sub-editing desk, headed by a qualified chief-sub, through which every copy passes.

— Radio has a minimum of three editors to every language, who share responsibility for the scripting of every news bulletin.

— Television leaves the writing of copy to reporters with grossly uneven skills in their particular language: and here's where selection on O-Level performance shows up inadequate.

The only way to ensure homogeneity of script in a news bulletin is to assign one copy editor to each language, who must have: a sound knowledge of the language; a solid background in news; a special "feel" for writing for television — or specific training in this art.

(To be continued)

A decision . . .

(Continued from page 15)

has devalued the exercise before it has started. To add to the complications, the Sri Lankan Government has announced, aimlessly, its intention to implement the proposals "unilaterally". The situation on the ground is extremely mixed up reflecting the disastrous interchange of military and political solutions — which, at best can prolong the bloody stalemate at a certain low-grade, no-win level and, at worst, will plunge the island nation into another blood bath that is certain to bring about the end of civil society and any prospect of Sri Lanka surviving as a united entity. The TULF's decision, read along with the reasons adduced for it, appears to represent an insufficiently thought out and tactically weak response to the challenge ahead. Pressure must be exerted on all sides, and especially by India, on Colombo to halt and dismantle Track Two. But keeping an open and realistic mind on the substantive issues, going after half-chances and any opportunity to talk seriously about the basis of a political solution that might be acceptable to the Tamils (whatever suspicion one entertains about the motivations on the other side) and maintaining a democratic political organisation's independence of line and tactics vis-a-vis militants who might have other ideas are equally important.

— HINDU

I don't . . .

(Continued from page 21)

says it is winning the war. And yet, factory workers, office workers and people who board public transport to get home after a hard day's work do not know whether death or despair is lurking for them in surroundings they take for granted.

It is democracies, not hard-line regimes, that have given birth to anti-war movements. Such a movement does not necessarily reflect defeatism. It's a sign of emotional maturity as well as human decency. There is a belief, in some circles, that anti-war movements are left-oriented and aim to undermine the base of democracy. But isn't it a fact that no credible anti-war movement has emerged from or rather survived in, any communist state? Japan's strong anti-war sentiment become dominant only after that country became democratic.

In today's uncertain geo-political climate, every state has the right, and should have the capability, to defend itself. That is all. To blow the military role out of proportion is to create a snowball — which is what happened in the Philippines, whose military strength grew tenfold in the Marcos era; the military advisers demanded more and more to put down the local insurrections. But the insurgents are still there, in ever larger numbers.

Whether the groans of the amputated are in Sinhala or Tamil, the message is the same. People do not want to live in constant fear. They do not want to feel strangers in their own country. I once walked into a poor man's house, far away, which had been set ablaze in reprisal to an attack elsewhere by some people who did not leave their calling cards behind. The walls were blackened, the roof was gone. Inside were the charred remnants of all that the family had possessed; a bicycle, a sewing machine, a framed photograph, a pair of size four tennis shoes. I don't want this war to go on.

How the Battle for . . .

(Continued from page 13)

destroy and re-locate project had been mostly wound down, aspects of it were still continuing. About 500 people were missing. Many of them were believed dead. In the past two weeks two Tamil settlements had been burnt down. It was thought that homeguards were responsible.

Mr Sivapalan has lost his two sons in the violence. One was bludgeoned to death by Sinhalese mobs in a hospital foyer during the communal riots of 1983 in Colombo. Another was shot through the heart by a soldier at the gate of his farmhouse in Nilaveli a year ago during the raids on Tamil villages.

In response to that and seven other murders that day, the guerrillas blew up the Moonlight Beach Hotel, a favourite watering hole for the security forces in the village and initially designed for European tourists. Elephants now drink out of the swimming pool.

"There's going to be more blood spilt," said one resident. "It's not a war we've got here. It's a series of massacres."

— GUARDIAN (U. K.)

South Africa . . .

(Continued from page 20)

Before the resolution was put to vote, India's permanent representative to the U. N. Mr. N. Krishnan said "never has the chasm between professed values and practised politics been greater or more ludicrous. Never have beliefs universally cherished and respected been so easily flouted by a small coterie of entrenched interests. Never has the stereotype satire of the U.N. as a forum immensely capable of speech but flaccid and shy of action been truer than in the chronicle of its failure in South Africa.

"And, let us not forget, never has the chance to redeem our promise been greater than it is now, if we only can summon the courage and united purpose we need."

Soviet Union, China, Australia, Denmark, Venezuela, Thailand and Bulgaria all voted for the resolution besides the sponsors.

— M. de S.

Letter

ARGUE WITHOUT LOSING

(Reply to V. P. V. and dedicated to the unlamented, phoney Dr. Costain de Vos and his other avatars)

*If you wish to argue and never be a loser
One artful ruse you must employ for no other, will do Sir,
Call yourself by any name except your very own
And give yourself a title you cannot claim to own
Your pseudonyms will hide your name, class,
real creed and sins
The title may well give some point to views best deposited
in dustbins.*

Carlo Fonseka
University of Colombo.

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RESTS ON OUR DEEP CONCERN FOR YOUR FUTURE
WE ARE TRUSTED GUARDIANS OF YOUR HARD-EARNED
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FOR YOU AND YOUR DEPENDENTS' TOMORROWS**

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