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IMAGE OF DESPERATION



PLANTATION TAMILS HARASSED AND EVICTED

The government has ordered the eviction of thousands of Tamil families living in the Vavuniya, Mullaitivu, Mannar and Trincomalee districts. The government agents of these districts have been authorised to effect the eviction with the assistance of the security forces.

Most of the families concerned are Tamils who had been working in the tea plantations and were displaced due to racial violence in 1977 and thereafter, at least on three occasions.

These families had been settled by Gandhiyam and other voluntary organisations on lands which were previously thick jungles. The jungles were cleared at enormous cost and labour and the displaced

families were resettled and rehabilitated. They cultivated these lands on a co-operative self-help basis. Most of the people affected by the forcible eviction orders have lived in these areas since 1977.

Destroying crops

The government, through its security forces, has been harassing these families, torturing them and destroying their crops frequently for the last four years. This campaign of harassment has been the subject of several reports by delegations of the Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and

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TALKS AT A TANGENT and THE 'SINHALESE PROBLEM'

The so-called All Party talks which commenced on January 11, and were in session for several days, have not even produced a set of proposals to enable meaningful discussions to continue. The proposals that were worked out as a basis for the Conference between Colombo and New Delhi would appear to have been sidestepped, and the discussions apparently have proceeded aimlessly.

The entry of non-political party groups like the Buddhist priests, the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress and other delegations representing Sinhala-Buddhist chauvinistic vested interests has not only made the Conference too unwieldy and unmanageable, but also resulted in the conference being saddled with extraneous issues which were never expected to be considered at the Conference.

Initial expectation

The initial expectation that the Conference would start discussing at least the broad framework for a settlement of the grievances of the Tamil people on the basis of the proposals agreed between President Jayewardene and the Indian PM's special envoy, Mr Parthasarathy, has certainly been frustrated, primarily for two reasons.

Firstly, the negative attitude of the ruling UNP and the opposition SLFP, both of which have been engaged in a game of shadow boxing. Secondly, is the entry of Sinhala-Buddhist hardliners who have never conceded that the Tamil people

suffer from any discrimination and therefore are adopting various evasive and delaying tactics.

The apparent impasse is the product of the vacillation and opportunism of the President himself who did not have the courage to place before the Conference the government's own set of proposals for discussion, and therefore, the stage was set for all and sundry to put forward any idea they wanted discussed.

Grievances

The Conference which was convened to discuss the grievances of the Tamil people has now appointed a committee 'to consider the grievances of all communities'. This is a clear demonstration of the attempts by interested groups to evade discussing the substantive issue before the Conference.

It is a refusal to understand and recognise the basic reason for the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. It is a conflict arising from the fact that the Tamil people constitute a distinct nationality and they are and feel oppressed. It is not simply a question of jobs and university admissions alone.

The Tamil people have not wanted and do not want to take away anything that belongs to the Sinhala people. They can and do, in fact, have their language, religion and culture and have been and are able to maintain and preserve their identity as the Sinhala nation. The Tamil people have never presented a threat to the identity or preservation of the Sinhala nation.

Likewise, the Tamil people do not want to be deprived of their language rights, religion and culture. On the contrary, they want to retain and preserve their culture. The retention and preservation of their identity does not and need not pose a threat to the Sinhalese nation.

It is old hat to say that the Sinhalese have only Sri Lanka, that Sinhalese is spoken only in Sri Lanka and that there are 50 million Tamils in South India and Tamils can go there. That argument is worn out and threadbare. It is no use saying to the Chinese in Singapore to forego their rights they hold dear to them on the basis that there is China with one billion people speaking Chinese!

It is no good telling the French-speaking Canadians to forego their rights because there are millions of people speaking French in France!

Legitimate aspirations

It is the failure, perhaps the refusal, to recognise the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil people that has given rise to the ethnic conflict which has plagued the country for over 30 years. People often refer to the 'Tamil problem'. There is no such thing as a 'Tamil problem' in Sri Lanka.

The problem is with the Sinhalese, perhaps more with their leaders, both political and religious, who cannot reconcile their aspirations to retain their language, religious, culture and identity with those of the Tamil people. To be sure, it is essentially a Sinhalese problem.

FROM PAGE 1

Equality, which after on-the-spot investigations confirmed that there was a sustained campaign of violence, torture and destruction perpetrated upon the settlers by the security forces.

Since May 1983, Gandhiyam which has been looking after these families and catering for their needs, has been effectively

smashed by the arrest of its leaders, and the destruction of their officers in Vavuniya and other places.

'Stateless' people

Today, these helpless families are being evicted on the ground that they are 'stateless' people. It was only a month ago, when President Jayewardene was in New Delhi

attending the Non-Aligned Conference, that he said in an interview to the press that the problem of the 'stateless' people would be solved soon by the grant of citizenship.

The plight of these families is that they have no place to go to upon eviction from the lands where they have been settled. The motive of the government in harassing these people is to force them to go to India.

ALL PARTY CONFERENCE

SLFP WITHDRAWS

The prospect of reaching any consensus leading to any settlement at the All Party Conference on ethnic problems suffered a serious setback when one of the major Sinhala opposition parties, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) withdrew from participating in the Conference. Previously, the Majahana Eksath Peranumna (MEP), a small party with one MP in parliament, had already walked out.

Despite the withdrawal of the SLFP, the Conference has proceeded to set up three committees, comprising one delegate from each of the 16 delegations that are attending the Conference. One committee will look into the grievances of all communities, the second will examine decentralisation of authority at the district level while the third will investigate the causes of ethnic violence and terrorism.

It is perhaps a surprise, at least for those who thought the conference was convened to find solutions to the grievances of the Tamil people, to find that the conference is going to discuss the problems of all the people.

An embargo has been placed on the publication of news concerning what is discussed at the conference. However, at the end of each day, a press statement is issued by the Conference Spokesman, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, without revealing any details.

Rather puzzling

THE SLFP's walk-out from the Conference is rather puzzling. Mrs Bandaranaike had earlier said that her party was prepared, regardless of political differences, to assist in finding a solution to the country's ethnic problem. She had added that the minority communities should be granted their due rights within a unitary state and that the whole nation would face a major catastrophe unless a solution was found to this problem.

The SLFP gave two reasons for its withdrawal. The first was that the President was trying to steer the conference into accepting

a 'pre-arranged' settlement. But this reason contradicts the SLFP's previous position criticising the government for not placing its own proposals before the conference.

The second reason given by the SLFP was its objection to the TULF leader, Mr Amirthalingam, departing to India as soon as the Conference recessed and having talks with Mr Parthasarathy. The latter's deep involvement in initiating the Conference is a well-known fact and one cannot understand why the SLFP should have any objection to the TULF leader talking to him. If Mrs Bandaranaike went to India, Mr Parthasarathy would certainly have no objection to meeting her!

According to knowledgeable circles, the SLFP's dilemma arises more from internal reasons. One faction led by Mr Anura Bandaranaike and Mr K.B. Ratnayake are in favour of participation while the other faction led by Mr Lakshman Jayakody and the party secretary, Mr Ratnasiri Wickremaraj, are opposed to attending the Conference.

SRI LANKA-US SECRET PACT

Confidential sources in the State Department disclose that the Sri Lankan government has had secret talks with the Reagan administration to enter into a treaty of 'friendship and co-operation' with the government of the United States.

Since the assumption to power of President J.R. Jayawardene in 1977, there has been a right about-turn in foreign policy, from one of non-alignment to one of deeper and deeper involvement with the West, particularly the United States.

Deeper involvement

The Sri Lankan government has been negotiating with the US for the lease of the deep-water port of Trincomalee for the last three years and this has produced substantial local opposition within Sri Lanka and also acute concern in India. The accelerated pace of deeper involvement with the US commenced with the unannounced visit to Colombo last August of US Defence Secretary, Caspar Weinberger, who conferred with Jayawardene for two hours.

At that time, the Indian newspapers articulated the increasing concern of the Indian government which has always resisted superpower meddling in the South Asian region and the Indian Ocean in particular.

The visit by the US Defence Secretary to Colombo was followed by two new agreements with the United States, the contents of which have not been disclosed in Sri Lanka.

On January 12th, a six-man visiting team from the US House of Representatives, led by Joseph Addabbo, visited Colombo and had negotiations with Mr Jayawardene. On January 16th, the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon, visited Colombo and was given lunch by President Jayawardene.

These visits by the US officials and the secret talks that have been taking place are reliably reported to be a prelude to the 'friendship and co-operation' treaty which Mr Jayawardene expects to formally sign when he visits the US in June this year.

Emergency situation

It is to be observed that the Sri Lankan government has already entered into an agreement with the US for the setting up of the most powerful Voice of America relay station in all Asia. The secret supplement to this agreement provides that in the event of an emergency situation arising endangering the interests of the *free world*, the US can use the relay station as a communications centre linking US naval forces and military

bases in the region.

If such a situation arises, the US will have the right, without any control from Sri Lanka, to bring into the country and install all the additional technical equipment and the required military personnel.

The pro-US shift was demonstrated in clear terms at the recently held Non-Aligned Conference in New Delhi, to the consternation of several member states, when the Sri Lankan delegation, led by Jayawardene, insisted on the separation of the demand for the closing down of the US base in Diego Garcia from the issue of turning the Indian Ocean into a Zone of Peace.

MILITARY TRAINING FOR ONE LAKH SINHALESE YOUTH

It is reported that there has been a government directive that all Sinhalese MPs should recruit 50 to 1,000 youths from each electorate for military training. According to government estimates 1 lakh youths should have completed their training by now. These training programmes are said to be under way in Minneriya and Gampaha.

ARMS BUILD-UP FOR 'FINAL SOLUTION'

LETTER TO PRESIDENT REAGAN

'We have reason to believe, Mr President, that the Sri Lanka government has now embarked on a course, the grand strategy of which is to accept ostensibly the 'good offices' of the government of India and pursue a path of negotiations with Tamil leaders, while giving itself time to prepare for the 'FINAL SOLUTION' that would see an end to 'Tamil terrorism' and the Tamil demand for a separate state of Tamil Eelam, once and for all', so states PROTEG (Organisation for the Protection of the Tamils of Eelam from Genocide) in a letter addressed to President Ronald Reagan.

PROTEG, an organisation composed of Tamils from Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu, is based in Madras and has been formed after the July anti-Tamil violence in Sri Lanka.

The letter from PROTEG to President Reagan is dated December 30th and covers a wide range of matters of concern to the Tamils of Sri Lanka, including the build-up of US arms, training of Sinhala youth by military personnel in Minneriya and the high visibility of American presence in the country. The following is the full text of the letter to Mr Reagan:

We, the members of the Organisation for the Protection of the Tamils of Eelam from Genocide, wish to bring to your urgent attention the following:

The two and threequarter million Tamils in Sri Lanka who have yet to recover from the trauma of the organised island-wide violence unleashed on them in July 1983, today live in fear of another, looming, (what portends to be a more dreadful) tragedy. Heading as you do the most powerful democracy in the world, and committed as your government is to the upholding of human rights throughout the globe, we would yet not have thought it necessary to address this appeal to you, but for one reason — that we have reason to fear that your own government, unwittingly or otherwise, is siding with the Jayewardene government to drive the ethnic Tamil minority to the wall.

Arms build-up

We have reason to believe, Mr President, that, even as we write this, a large-scale induction of US arms is taking place in Sri Lanka, the kind of arms totally inadequate to meet the threat of any feared foreign invasion, but menacing enough when used against the country's own citizens to wipe out a major part of the Tamil population from the face of the country. At a time when the Sri Lanka economy is reeling under the impact of the severe dislocation caused by



the July devastation, the burning of factories and the inability of the government to meet insurance claims, with the steep drop in tourist revenue, with soaring prices and popular disaffection, the government of Sri Lanka is exhibiting every sign of embarking on an adventurist policy of appeasing the Sinhala majority by putting the Tamil minority to slaughter. President Jayewardene himself expressed the thinking of his Sinhala people when he told his party colleagues on December 10th, 'I would like to be a hero and not a traitor. I can ask the armed forces to kill all the Tamils, but I won't do that'!

We have reason to believe, Mr President, that the recent inflow of US arms to Sri Lanka include the following: 500 armoured cars from Pakistan; several hundred automatic rifles with night vision; thousands of SMGs, LMGs and pump guns with ammunition from NATO sources in Europe, apart from laser guns, sensitive grenades, and a large quantity of 303 rifle ammunition, and revolvers and pistols.

Military training for Sinhala youth

We have also reason to believe, Mr President, that arms training is being given to Sinhala youth in a secret training camp in Minneriya. This scheme is being financed by 13 Sinhala Buddhist businessmen who are being rewarded in turn with government contracts and patronage. Members of Parliament of the ruling party have been asked to furnish 500 to 1,000 youths from each constituency and the scheme envisages the training of 100,000 persons. Under the provisions of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, censorship can be imposed on all matters relating to the armed forces. These have been invoked now. On the 13th and 14th December certain military exercises were carried out and during this period all international telephone calls to and from Sri Lanka were deliberately jammed; the objective being to rehearse a possible 48-hour operation during which

time the Tamil population could be decimated, leaving the outside world ignorant of the happenings.

We have reason to believe, Mr President, that the Sri Lanka government has now embarked on a course, the grand strategy of which is to accept ostensibly the 'good offices' of the government of India and pursue a path of negotiations with Tamil leaders, while giving itself time to prepare for the 'FINAL SOLUTION' that would see an end to 'Tamil terrorism' and the Tamil demand for a separate state of Tamil Eelam, once and for all.

American presence

This is particularly disturbing to us, Mr President, for the reason that this grand strategy appears to have evolved following the visits to Sri Lanka of your own Defence Secretary Weinberger and your ambassador-at-large Walters. There is also today a HIGH VISIBILITY American presence in Sri Lanka, which presence, a sudden presence, no one is able to account for, except in military terms.

We feel that the people of the United States will under no circumstances countenance the mass slaughter of defenceless Tamil people in Sri Lanka. May we draw your attention at the same time to the treaty commitments of your own government under the Genocide Convention which categorises genocide as a crime under international law. President Jayewardene has already gone on record as stating that the Sri Lanka Tamils are 'one of the most powerful minorities in the world'. They are also one of the proudest minorities in the world. They have great powers of resilience too, and no attempted genocide is ever going to cow them down into submission, and with great respect to the undoubted US military might, Mr President, even with the aid of that military might!

Speaking with concern for the feelings of the large mass of the peace-loving American people, and conscious of the spirit of human freedom on the bedrock of which your great noble nation was founded, it would be tragic for your image, Mr President, if history were to record that you placed your nation and your people on the side of the oppressor, the racist and the human rights violator in the little island of Sri Lanka in the year 1983. We appeal to you to desist from such a short-sighted course. Even in the act of struggling to be born, the future state of Tamil Eelam extends its hands of friendship to the government and people of the United States.

Please do not spurn it. 9

'MATHEW DOCTRINE' IN KID GLOVES

by RANJITH TENNEKOON

It would be interesting to know why the government-owned *Daily News* decided, on the eve of the All Party Conference, to publish and highlight Mr N.U. Jayewardene's article on the 'The Ethnic Problem'. One can only hope that this is not an attempt to repeat an earlier performance, when an attack in the *Daily News* on Mrs B. and the SLFP just before the all-party meeting last December reduced that meeting to shambles.

As a former public servant, an ex-Governor of the Central Bank, and now an eminent businessman, Mr Jayewardene stakes a claim in this article to be the main ideologist of the Sinhala bourgeoisie. His strictly class approach, as distinct from the usual obscurantist or racist positions of other would-be ideological leaders, makes his article worthy of special notice.

Nevertheless, for all its sophistication and polish, what Mr Jayewardene has to say is basically similar to what Minister Cyril Mathew and his JSS storm-troopers say more crudely and do more forcibly.

'Absolutely right'

Mr Jayewardene says that 'Marx was absolutely right when he proclaimed that a socialised economy must control the commanding heights which he identified with production, distribution and exchange'. 'Marxists', he continues, 'recognise the supreme importance of exchange which includes banking and finance as a prime mover of the economy'.

But lest anyone should think that Mr Jayewardene has gone red, he hurries to express his opinion that the ruling class 'should read Marx, understand Marx, but NOT practise Marx'.

To cut a long story short, all this false homage to Marx is intended to buttress Mr J's main thesis — viz, that although the Sinhalese (by which he means the Sinhala bourgeoisie) have gained political power, economic power is still not in their hands, but in the hands of the Tamils, whom he distinguishes as 'indigenous' and 'dravidian' (i.e. of recent South Indian origin).

Mr J. argues that these Tamils got economic power by clever use of their positions in the private and state banks. Through the shroff system in the private banks and through Mr C. Loganathan, for many years the all-powerful General Manager of the Bank of Ceylon, bank loans were channelled to Tamil industrialists and businessmen, at the expense of their Sinhala counterparts. When, despite this drawback, the Sinhala bourgeoisie

developed independently in such spheres as omnibus transport, graphite mining, the plantations, Lake House, etc., these enterprises were nationalised by the SLFP governments.

To Mr J's mind, the Sinhala bourgeoisie should not bother about smaller issues like language, etc. He advocates that Sinhala, Tamil AND English should be made official languages — with the weight given to English as the language that can unite the bourgeoisie.

He also couldn't care less about the economic power of the foreign banks or the transnational corporation now flooding into Sri Lanka. Nor does he worry about the fact that nationalisation measures of the United Front government — especially the nationalisation of British plantation companies — undermined the economic power of imperialism, as did the nationalisation of the private banks, most of which were western-owned.

Nor, again does he mention the nationalisation measures in foreign trade, which hit sections of the comprador bourgeoisie, many of whom were non-Sinhalese by nationality.

All Mr J. wants is that the Sinhala bourgeoisie should use their political power to take economic power into their hands. He does not advocate, of course, the physical destruction of competitive Tamil enterprises, but he observes that 'it is remarkable that the establishments which were singled out for unjustifiable action by the irate Sinhala groups were those which did not conspicuously display by their own conduct a sense of belonging with the Sinhala community they lived in and profited from'.

When it comes to business, Mr N.U. Jayewardene is too hard-nosed a businessman to let anti-Tamil prejudices get out of hand. Many of the business enterprises with which he is associated have, in addition to his family members, Tamil directors and leading personnel. Obviously, Mr J. does not think this any impediment to the Sinhala bourgeoisie gaining control of economic power.

In other matters Mr J. is at one with the Sinhala chauvinists. To him, the grant of regional autonomy to any group, even within a united Sri Lanka, amounts to 'an attempt to BALKANISE Sri Lanka'. Even 'reformed' DCCs will 'destroy beyond repair the unitary character of the Sri Lankan Nation State'.

As for Trincomalee, it is, in Mr J.'s view, 'the only pawn Sri Lanka possesses in the game of geopolitics'. He trots out the familiar CIA argument that the concept of an Indian Ocean peace zone is a 'myth and mirage' and really a move to establish an 'Indian Zone'. 'For little Sri Lanka', Mr J. adds, 'Trincomalee can be a forceful counterpose to redress her defenceless state against other nations in this region', especially with US help, of course!

Perhaps after all Mr J.'s article is in the main a piece of special pleading. For an immediate step that he urges is a change in the banking system which will lead to Sinhala industrialists and businessmen being given greater aid to flourish. Such a step is already being contemplated in the starting of a so-called 'Sinhala' bank on the initiative of HPT and other Sinhala business firms. Is it an accident that Mr J. is being freely mentioned as its first Chairman?

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'GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN JULY '83 ANTI-TAMIL VIOLENCE' — says UK MP

The following are extracts from a speech made by Mr David Nellist, MP for Coventry South East, in the UK Parliament on December 20th, 1983.

On July 25th at 6 o'clock in the morning, I initiated a debate to try to alert the House to conditions facing the Tamils of Sri Lanka. I wish to refer to two replies given by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. He described Sri Lanka as a 'democracy which is to be much admired and which is a jewel in the crown of the countries with which we have been associated for so long'.

The Minister denied that there was any form of dictatorship in that country. He said: 'There is a thriving democracy, which has a serious problem with its minority. Therefore, it needs understanding, co-operation and help from us, and that is what it will receive, on the basis of our long-standing relationship with the people and successive governments of Sri Lanka.'

I regard that reply as complacent, but it has been heard more than my original speech. The reason is that the two Conservative Members who spoke in the debate enjoyed the favour of a Minister of State in the Government of Sri Lanka. Their speeches, reprinted in a pamphlet with Big Ben on its front, were purported to be the view of the House of Commons. Anyone who has seen Sri Lankan publications would realise that the pamphlet probably cost several hundreds, if not thousands of pounds, to print. My information, which came through the United Nations organisations in Geneva and others which have received copies, is that the pamphlet purports to represent the view of the whole of the House of Commons, although it refers only to the views about Sri Lanka of the Conservative Minister and his honourable Friends.

Today's debate is necessary to redress that imbalance. Anything purporting to be a House of Commons view should include all opinions — not only Conservative views. That may be a matter which, at a later date, you, Mr Speaker, might consider.

The hopes and optimism expressed by the Under-Secretary in July have not been justified. About 2,000 people died in Sri Lanka in the terrible month of July, yet the British Government continue to give aid and military training to the Sri Lankan police and the army. They are stepping up and have so far completed 80 per cent of a

grant of £113 million towards the Victoria dam.

But what aid has the Under-Secretary authorised to be given to the refugees who suffered so much in July? Tens of thousands of people were displaced by riots. It is one thing to bolster the economy of a government who caused the problems, but it would be another if the Under-Secretary announced that he would give aid to the people who have suffered in Sri Lanka.

Economic aid

Giving economic aid to the government of Sri Lanka, who, as I hope to make clear, were among the main organisers of the events of July and thereafter, is an attack on the human and democratic rights of people in that country and it misrepresents the feelings of working people in this country.

It may seem that charging the President and government of another country with having been involved in riots goes beyond our powers, but on July 28th, within hours of the debate in the house, the President of Sri Lanka broadcast to the nation and expressed not a word of regret or sympathy for the Tamil-speaking people who had been massacred or made homeless. Instead, the President, who was held up by Conservative members who spoke in the previous debate as a democratic statesman, announced: 'The time has come to accede to the clamour and the national respect of the Sinhala people.'

Ministers in the President's government took him at his word. The Industry Minister, Cyril Mathew, led groups of UNP supporters in attacks on Tamil-speaking people in July, and government vehicles were used to ferry gangs of thugs around the island. Electoral lists, supplied from within the government, were used to distinguish the houses of Tamils from those of Sinhala-speaking people.

Given what the Minister of State, Department of Employment, had said in the previous debate today about those on the Left, perhaps the government might regard my information as suspect. However, there is information from a newspaper whose editor and editorial staff are not miles distant from the stance of the Tory party. *The Times* reported on November 30th:

'Businessmen, civil servants and ordinary people have gone through race riots

before; but last July's killings and lootings were so premeditated, with the military and police playing an active role, that nothing can allay their fears.'

I suppose that Sri Lanka's Industry Minister would not be far distant from the aid that Britain is giving to the Sri Lankan government. He has written pamphlets which, by the tone of their contents, have encouraged attacks on Tamil people. *The Guardian* reported last September that a pamphlet called *The Diabolical Conspiracy* — edited parliamentary speeches by Mr Mathew — was 'a pale counterpart, but nevertheless reminiscent, of the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*'. Those are the documents that were used by the Nazis in the 1920s and 1930s to justify their pogroms and the beginnings of their form of fascism.

Other examples in *The Guardian* article mention attacks on Tamil teachers and interference with the marking of examination papers. The Industry Minister supported the attacks that took place in July.

Scapegoat

Despite the clear involvement of government officers, supporters and Ministers and the use of government vehicles and publications, the President of Sri Lanka has used the Left parties as a scapegoat for what happened in July. Two parties remain banned — The NSSP, the New Socialist Party of Sri Lanka, and the JVP, the People's Liberation Front. Those parties have been banned. Emergency powers were introduced six months ago. The regulations provide:

'Where the President is of opinion with respect to any organisation that there is a danger of action by, or of utilisation of, the organisation or its members or adherents — (a) for purposes prejudicial to national security, the maintenance of public order or the maintenance of essential services . . . the President may, by Order published in the Gazette, declare that organisation to be a proscribed organisation.'

If those emergency powers were to be implemented fairly, the UNP supporters and the army who carried out the attacks in July should have been proscribed. The regulations also provide power to detain suspects for up to 18 months without charge. Moreover, if there are fatalities as a result of security service actions, the regulations provide that inquests to establish the cause of death do not have to be held.

Nevertheless, it is the leaders of socialist and other parties in Sri Lanka who are being blamed for recent events. Their headquarters, press and literature have been seized. They have also been banned from political activity. The Leader of the NSSP, Vasudeva, is a former member of the Sri Lanka parliament and was a candidate in the recent presidential election. He is being hunted and there is a bounty of £1,400 on his head. That might not seem a large sum to us but it is considerable in Sri Lanka.

The slanderous irony of the charges made against the NSSP and its leader is, in fact, that that party has consistently argued against tactics such as individual terrorism. It has supported the struggles of the Tamil-speaking peoples of Sri Lanka and favours the right of self-determination and, if it is desired, a separate state for those people. The NSSP is also well known in Sri Lanka for attempting to forge unity between Sinhala and Tamil-speaking peoples. It is a socialist party. In places of work it has fought for the unity of working people regardless of political affiliation, race or creed. Nevertheless, it is banned.

I should like the Minister to contrast that with the constitution that was established in 1978 which promises:

'Every citizen is entitled to: (a) the freedom of speech and expression, including publication; (b) the freedom of peaceful assembly; (c) the freedom of association; (d) the freedom to form and join a trade union.'

My charge is that such conditions do not exist in Sri Lanka and yet the British government hold it up as a model of parliamentary democracy and extend to it the hand of parliamentary and economic friendship. The fact remains that hundreds of people are being detained. Thousands died in July and hundreds of thousands are denied the right to join the political or industrial organisations of their choice.

United Nations covenant

Seven years ago we ratified a United Nations convention to which Sri Lanka is a signatory. It is an international covenant on civil and political rights. It says that people who have been arrested or detained are entitled to certain rights. It says that such people should be informed promptly in detail and in a language which they can understand, of the nature and cause of the charges which are held against them and be allowed adequate time and facilities for the preparation of a defence, and be tried without undue delay.

I have a list, which was completed on December 13th, of 172 people in Batticaloa and Trincomalee who were arrested as long ago as August and September. They have been detained but have not yet been charged or allowed access to facilities that will enable them to prepare a defence such as the United Nations document mentions. Several of those people are named and their date of arrest is specified. They are being

detained without charges. The Sri Lankan government argue that many of them supported terrorism or violence.

Surely our embassy, the Minister or another representative of the British government could, if they were really worried about human democratic rights in other countries, tell the Sri Lankan government to which we are giving £100 million in aid, that, if what they say is true, those who are guilty should be charged and put on trial before a jury and that those against whom charges cannot be levelled should be released. There is no justification for months of detention if evidence does not exist on which people can be brought to trial. I charge Sri Lanka, that recipient of government aid, with abrogating its right to be called a democratic country when such procedures are allowed to continue.

Is the Minister more concerned, perhaps, with the use of Sri Lanka as a military and naval base for Britain and America in future, especially ports such as Trincomalee? Is that what is behind the fact that the aid continues to be given? Is it for that consideration that the suffering of the people of Sri Lanka is being swept under the carpet? The government should end the military and political aid that they give to Sri Lanka. They should press for the restoration of the rights of people to organise in political parties and effective trade unions. They should press for the release of political prisoners.

WE ARE SHATTERED

says Rev. S.K. PERERA, President, Methodist Church, Sri Lanka

All peace-loving people, irrespective of caste, religion or creed, have been deeply shaken by the communal violence, the worst since independence in 1948, which overtook us in July 1983. The experience has shattered us all. It is a tragic commentary that we still have not been able to find a just solution to our ethnic conflict which is now the major national problem of our day. If that be so and since the final solution has to be a political one, those who rule us should give top priority to this outstanding issue, and before it is too late address themselves to the task of finding a lasting solution. The cry for separation is a recent cry and the result of our failure to find a just solution. The only answer to terrorism, violence and the cry for separation is a just and fair solution, through peaceful negotiations and dialogue, and this has to be done without further delay.

The facts of July 1983 are well known. But various interpretations have been given. Why it happened the way it did, who were responsible for it and what motivated

them should be made the subject of the impartial commission which the government should appoint.

It is said that what sparked off this orgy of violence was the killing of 13 soldiers in the North. We condemn this senseless killing. We express our deep sorrow for the families that had to bear that tragic loss. But what is more tragic is the massive counter-violence and retaliation against innocent members of the Tamil community in the South, resulting in colossal destruction and loss of life and damage to property.

We ask for forgiveness

For this present violence and destruction and suffering, the Sinhala people are mostly responsible. Being a Sinhala I feel my own hands stained by the blood of the innocent victims of senseless violence. As members of the Sinhala community, we express deep regret and sorrow for what we have done and ask for forgiveness.

It is only through repentance and for-

giveness that wrongs will be righted, broken relationships restored and reconciliation and healing take place.

Violence self-destructive

What lessons do we learn from these tragic events? We must learn that violence always tends to beget violence. Therefore, we must eschew violence. We must condemn violence wherever it is found. We must learn through bitter experience that violence is self-destructive, that retaliatory violence is self-defeating, that violence destroys the moral foundations of our common life, that violence destroys the human values on which our society is built.

The government, especially the Sinhala people, must see to it that the senseless communal violence which occurred in July 1983 never recurs. Violence in the North cannot and should not be combatted by the unleashing of violence and terror on defenceless Tamils living in the South or on Tamils living in the plantation areas.

SRI LANKA CONSUMERS PAY MORE!

'CONSUMERS hit in the stomach,' said a headline in the Colombo daily 'Sun' of January 25. Prices of a variety of flour-based products shot up, following the government's surprise increase in the cost of wheat flour by nearly a rupee on a kilo. Hoteliers, restaurants and caterers have increased the prices of hoppers, string hoppers, buns, cakes, patties, in some cases well above justifiable levels.

The price hikes snowballed into other sectors as well. Laundry owners, tailors, tradesmen have all joined in passing the buck to the consumer. The Food Department's increase of prices was effected to combat several internal factors, chief among them being depreciation of the rupee and the enhanced export duties and Business Turnover Tax.

SRI LANKA BROADCASTING CORPORATION CHAIRMAN VIRTUALLY SACKED

EX-SINHALA newspaperman and chairman of the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation Eamon Kariakarawana resigned from office on January 24.

He did so after the Minister of State, Dr Anandatissa de Alwis, wrote to him informing him that a gazette notification removing

him from office was due to be published on January 27th.

A veteran broadcasting administrator who presided over the Commercial Service for a long spell and who had been in mothballs for some time now, Livy Wijemanne, has been appointed Chairman to replace Kariakarawana.

NAVY MEN STOLE ELECTRICAL FITTINGS

THREE Petty Officers of the Sri Lanka navy were arrested in connection with the theft of electrical fittings and fans valued at Rs.2.5 lakhs from a newly constructed building inside the Trincomalee dockyard. They were remanded by the Trincomalee magistrate, when the naval officer in charge declined to take them into naval custody since they had been relieved of naval duties on orders from headquarters in Colombo.

BURDEN ON JAFFNA CITIZENS

HEALTH Minister Dr Ranjit Atapattu has appealed to citizens of Jaffna to launch a fund to purchase an 'Image Intensifier', a machine urgently needed by the new Intensive Care Unit of the Jaffna Hospital. The Minister declared this unit open amidst tight security. Dr Atapattu said that government was unable to find the funds for the full cost and it was the responsibility of the Jaffna public to maintain and develop the intensive care unit. He said that the cost of treating one single patient at the unit could be as high as Rs.3,000/- a day. The arrival of the Minister in Jaffna was preceded by a series of security precautions which included the stationing of armoured cars, tanks and battalions of soldiers around the hospital!

TAMILS HAVE TO PAY FOR THEIR PROTECTION

THE Colombo newspaper *Sun*, notorious for its anti-Tamil stance, wrote in its editorial of January 25: 'A deplorable by-product of the July ethnic crisis is the current wave of extortion resorted to by the notorious "kappan gangs". Last week, these miserable vermin stabbed and killed an innocent businessman who failed to pay his "protection money". And that is not just an isolated incident. Though it is incorrect to link up extortion to ethnic factors, it is possible that some of the lowly misanthropes have tried to pick on the minority to terrorise and squeeze out "kappan"

The *Sun* comment is typical of the attempts being made by the Colombo press, the police and the Sri Lanka government to whitewash the killings and threaten the lives of Tamils who live in Colombo, after the July riots.

The same newspaper in its issue of the following day (26th) carried the following news: 'A pavement hawker accused of knifing a Tamil trader in Pettah last Friday was arrested by a special police team in Nugegoda on Sunday.

Police recovered a knife, believed to be the murder weapon and Rs25,000 in cash buried in a backyard . . . Following the arrest **police have discontinued the former motive of extortion and are treating it as a robbery**

SINHALESE THUGS RUN AMOK AGAIN

On December 27th, 1983, an altercation arose between an assistant superintendent and two workers in an estate close to Ragala. In the ensuing fight the assistant superintendent was injured and had to be hospitalised in Podeniya.

On the same evening, some Sinhalese workers belonging to the same estate along with Sinhalese thugs belonging to the nearby villages of Ratnayakapathine and Manthirithane, looted the belongings of the Tamil workers and set fire to 20 houses.

ROBBERY IN BATTICALOA UNIVERSITY

Equipment including typewriters, photocopyers, etc. worth Rs.2.75 lakhs, were stolen from Batticaloa University. Some question papers were also stolen. Ten youths are said to have arrived in a lorry at dawn and had overpowered the watchers. The president of the University Students Union was taken into custody by the police, but was later released.

SRI LANKA ARMY GETS READY FOR ACTION

COLOMBO newspaper *Weekend* of January 22 reports: 'The Sri Lanka army will soon acquire twenty armoured personnel vehicles (APVs) installed with light armour protection. The government has placed a multi-million order with two leading British concerns — government-owned Shorts Brothers, and Hotspur, a private concern.

Shorts Brothers will make available two versions — nine Shortland basic vehicles and one with a roof hatch. Hotspur Ltd. will provide four Hotspurs with roof hatch and six Hotspur/Sandringhams with turret. All twenty vehicles according to informed sources, are troop-carrying versions, and can seat seven to nine persons excluding the driver.'

FOUR BUDDHIST MONKS CAUGHT IN HIGHWAY ROBBERY

FOUR Buddhist monks and another person were remanded by the Embilipitiya High Court judge when produced on a charge of robbing passengers in a private bus plying between Embilipitiya and Colombo. Police Inspector Douglas Peris of the Embilipitiya police arrested the five suspects.

Reporting this incident sent by the Mathara correspondent, the Colombo Tamil daily *Virakesari* said in its issue of January 21, 1984:

The private bus proceeding on its way to Colombo was stopped by armed men near Udawalawa at 3.30 in the early hours of the morning. Monies amounting to rupees one lakh and seventy-two thousand were reported to have been stolen from the passengers in the bus. When two of the passengers tried to run away they had been stabbed mercilessly and subjected to grievous injuries.

The head of the gang is reported to be the chief incumbent of a Buddhist Vihara in Matara and the other three priests attached to Viharas in Galle, Hikkaduwa and Habaraduwa. Police say that while this gang went about as Buddhist monks during the daytime they had been turning robber in the night. Police took into custody the following items in the possession of these monks: 104 love letters, photographs of two young women, Rs.2,900/- in cash, one revolver, two pistols, three face masks, one kris knife and several illustrations used for karate training.

It was reported that the bus which was stopped at gunpoint at the 99th Mile Post was forcibly diverted several miles into the jungle path before the passengers were systematically robbed.

TAMILS HAVE REASON TO REBEL, says SLFP MP

ALTHOUGH the SLFP talks with many tongues, on the question of Tamil grievances and Tamil rights, there has been one MP who belongs to that party who has been recently coming out strongly protesting against various acts of injustice perpetrated on Tamils.

In the course of a debate in the Sri Lanka parliament during the third week of January, MEP Leader and Sinhala racist Dinesh Gunawardene alleged that the terrorists in the North and the East have stolen three times the amount of money as has been spent on the three armed forces.

The Finance Minister had claimed that revenue from banks had totalled Rs.200 crores but wanted to know how many of these crores had been stolen from the banks by the terrorists. To which SLFP MP Ananda Dassanayake interrupted: 'If injustice goes unchecked, terrorists will naturally take the law into their hands.'

In an exchange of words in which Mr Paul Perera and Health Minister Dr Ranjit Atapattu were involved, Mr Dassanayake said: 'There is no safety or security in any part of the country. People are openly complaining about this. You do not find safety or security even in the jails. Those inside

the jails are afraid whether they will get back alive. . . Had the people in the North been treated fairly and justly there could not have been any terrorism.

Several injustices were heaped on these people. Even ballot boxes were stolen. It is because the people were denied their basic rights that they have taken to guns now.

ASSASSINATION THREAT ON CHIEF JUSTICE

CID detectives are probing an alleged threat on the life of Chief Justice Neville Samarakoon according to the Colombo daily *Sun* of January 23, 1984. In a letter addressed to Mr Samarakoon, a resident of Kalutara has claimed that he was approached by a high-ranking government official who offered him a sum of Rs.112,000/- plus a bonus of Rs.10,000/- to assassinate the Chief Justice. The Kalutara resident has already given a statement to the CID in this connection.

BAN LIFTED ON JAFFNA PUBLICATIONS

THE seven-month-old ban on the publication of the *Saturday Review* and the bi-weekly *Suthanthiran* was lifted on Tuesday January 24, 1984. In announcing this, the Sri Lanka Ministry of State said that they are permitted to be published subject to censorship. The functions of censorship have been delegated to the Government Agent, Jaffna.

NEW DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR MADRAS

MR S. PIYASENA, a senior journalist and former Press Secretary of the President, has arrived in Madras to assume duties as Deputy High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Madras. Mr Piyasena joined the editorial staff of Lake House in 1948 and since then has held a number of posts in newspapers, sometimes in an advisory capacity. He joined the Presidential Secretariat in January 1982 as Press Secretary to the President.

SHOOTING IN BATTICALOA

ONE person died and another was injured in a shooting incident reported from Batticaloa on January 25, 1984, according to

the Colombo newspaper, the *Sun*.

The first incident took place at Arayampathy, a village five miles off Batticaloa, when three armed youths entered a temple, took a man, Gunasingham, 24, to a place near the Batticaloa lagoon and assaulted him. They later shot him below the knee. He was hospitalised.

The same gang then went to the house of Sathiyaseelan, 30, called him out and then shot him. He died on the spot.

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE — COMMITTEE STAGE

THE all-party round table conference in Colombo has decided to constitute two committees to examine the grievances of all communities, find solutions to them and to examine the causes of ethnic violence, terrorism and their eradication.

The terms and references of the committees as given in the conference communique are as follows:

Committee No.1 — will examine the grievances presented on behalf of communities and also examine systems of government involving the participation of people at all levels.

Committee No.2 — will examine causes of ethnic violence, terrorism and means to eradicate them.

The Committees, which will comprise a delegate from each of the 16 delegations that participated in the conference, will sit for two weeks from Monday, February 6, 1984.

The conference spokesman, Trade Minister Lalith Athulathmudali, told the government-owned newspaper 'Daily News' that the grievances that were aired were greater in volume than the solutions considered! The committees have been given two weeks to complete the work and the plenary session would be reconvened after that.

WORLD BANK TEAM UNHAPPY OVER PLANTATIONS

SEVEN executive directors of the World Bank, who left Sri Lanka on January 26th, 1984, after a four-day assessment mission of the tea plantation and the Mahaweli Scheme have been critical of plantation management according to the Colombo newspaper, the *Island*.

They have called for an increase in the country's tea production and improvement in manufacturing standards. They are reported to have told Finance and Planning Minister Ronnie De Mel that replanting

and diversification in certain areas was necessary.

They also stressed the need for more incentives to managers and workers to increase production and improvement on housing, education and health standards of the workers. The World Bank is now considering granting aid of Rs.7,800 million for tea rehabilitation over the next five years. It is already known that tea production fell during the year 1983 as compared with the previous year.

NEW CHANCELLOR FOR JAFFNA UNIVERSITY

PROFESSOR T. Nadarajah, retired Professor of Law, Colombo University, has been appointed Chancellor of the Jaffna University to succeed Mr V. Manikavasagar whose term ended recently. Professor Nadarajah is the grand son of the illustrious Tamil statesman and scholar Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam.

KILLING OF TAMIL COLOMBO TRADER

A WITNESS giving evidence before the city coroner described how the gang attacked a provision shop at 4th Cross Street, Pettah, stabbed the 'broker' of the shop, robbed him of Rs.80,000/- and set fire to the goods on January 20, 1984.

Witness, S. Kathirasan, 21, an employee of the shop, continuing evidence at the inquest of Shanmugampillai, 50, said that around 12.45 p.m. on January 20, a gang of youths numbering 15 to 20 appeared in the front of the shop, and about eight of them forced their way in and stabbed the deceased who was seated next to the witness. He said the other members threw what he thought was petrol. Some petrol slashed on his face.

When he returned to the scene, the goods in gunny bags were on fire. The injured Shanmugampillai was missing. He found that Shanmugampillai had fallen on the bags of goods in the adjoining shop and was dead.

JAFFNA LORRY ROBBED

A LORRY returning from Colombo to Jaffna was stopped by an armed gang near Poovoya Bridge, off Vavuniya and cash amounting to Rs.44,000/- was stolen. The complainant Gnanasekaram has told the Vavuniya police that the armed men were conversing in Sinhala. Following this incident many lorry owners have suspended their night runs.

NO INFORMATION ON MISSING UNDERGRADUATES

THE Minister of Education and acting Cabinet spokesman Ranil Wickremasinghe told the Colombo press on January 25 that he had still not received any reliable information about what had happened to the nine undergraduates abducted while they were on a fast to death at the Jaffna University premises. He could not say whether they were in India.

Mr Wickremasinghe also alleged that some Tamil professors, lecturers and

undergraduates had received letters threatening them with dire consequences if they did not return to Jaffna. Some of these teachers and students were returning while others were not doing so.

The government was unable to provide extra places at the Jaffna University to accommodate these students. The Minister also announced that the Cabinet had decided to recruit 1,000 teachers in the Tamil medium for the plantation schools.

DISPLACED UNDERGRADS DEFY THE POLICE IN JAFFNA

On January 11th, a few days before the Jaffna University was closed and the students on a death fast were 'abducted' by a militant youth group, over 1,000 undergraduates belonging to Jaffna University and those displaced from universities in the South, went on an unauthorised procession through Jaffna city. The procession, which began from the Jaffna University premises, was stopped by police at the Ariyakulam junction and later allowed to proceed in twos, instead of en masse.

The procession was stopped for a second time at the Wellington Theatre junction after which the proposed route was changed. The displaced undergrads argue that if in 1977 Sinhala undergrads in Jaffna were transferred to universities in the South although they were in no way harmed in Jaffna, why was it difficult for Tamil undergrads who were subject to racial attacks in the South to be transferred to universities in Jaffna or Batticaloa?

17,000 TAMIL REFUGEES IN CAMPS!

By the year end 1983 there were 17,326 Tamil refugees yet remaining in refugee camps in Colombo, Jaffna and Kilinochchi. Out of these, 9,569 were housed in the premises of two leading Hindu schools — Hindu College, Ratnalana Airport and Vevekananda College, Kottehena. The balance, 7,757, are in Jaffna and Kilinochchi Camps. Those who have been persuaded to leave the camps have been given additional aluminium pans, pots, plates, cups, mugs and jugs gifted by the Sri Lanka Red Cross Society.

SCHOOL HEADS IN NORTH & EAST IN A FIX

Heads of schools in the Tamil areas are in a quandary as schools prepared to re-open for the new academic year in the third week of January. Thousands of schoolchildren displaced by riot-affected areas in Colombo, Badulla, etc. and who have no intention of getting back to those areas, are faced with lack of accommodation, lack of furniture, and other facilities. Schools have been stretched to capacity, and the government has made no arrangements to absorb these

children into schools in Tamil areas. Some teachers from riot-affected areas who were temporarily accommodated in schools in Tamil areas have now been ordered to go back to their former schools, although in many such schools there are not enough Tamil children. Some schools in Colombo and the South have even suspended their Tamil streams.

LAND FOR SLAVES BUT NOT FOR BHOOMIPUTHRAS?

The Gampaha MP Mr S.D. Bandaranayake, said in Parliament recently that even plantation workers who were brought as slaves to Ceylon during British times are becoming owners of lands, but the real sons of the soil, the Sinhalese — at least 50 per cent of them — do not own even one inch of land. Until this problem is solved the country's ethnic problem cannot be solved, he said. The fact that 50 per cent of the Sinhalese people do not have even a piece of land is not the situation that we can expect any longer. Until this problem is solved what is the point in calling the All-Party Conference and the Round Table Conference, he said.

ARMS BUILD-UP BY SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT

Despite the unprecedented deficit of Rs.24 billion in the recently announced budget of Sri Lanka, the government has allocated \$99 million to strengthen its defences. This massive expenditure, at a time of severe foreign exchange crisis, cannot be regarded as necessary to meet any external threat, but reflects the government's attitude and determination to militarily deal with the country's 'Tamil problem'.

The government has recently also bought four US-made helicopters and one maritime patrol plane at a cost of \$12.5 million.

The purchases include two armour-plated helicopter gunships suited for counter-insurgency operations and a twin turbo-prop light transport for search-and-rescue missions in the coastal regions.

The aircrafts are two Bell 212 helicopters, two Bell Jet Ranger helicopter gunships and a Beechcraft Super King Air

200T maritime patrol plane. They will be delivered before the end of the year.

The helicopters were made by the Texas-based firm, Bell Helicopter Textron, and were purchased from Heli-Orient, Singapore, Bell's agents for Asia.

Immediate delivery

The International Air Forces and Military Aircraft Directory of London has said that the helicopters were available for immediate delivery because they were part of an order for the Philippines, but had been diverted to Sri Lanka.

The purchases come at a time when the Colombo government plans to increase its military budget to an unprecedented \$99 million next year to strengthen its defences against Tamil militants who are fighting for a separate state.

U.S. ARMS TO SRI LANKA

News Today — the Madras evening daily in a report from their special correspondent, datelined Colombo January 17th 1984, says:

The US Army and Navy would be giving training to Sri Lankans in latest warfare, both in the island and in the US, according to informed sources here.

The US offer came from Joseph Addabbo, Chairman of the Defence Appropriation Committee of the US House of Representatives and has been accepted by the Sri Lankan government.

'Defence co-operation'

Training of Sri Lankans would be part of the many-sided 'defence co-operation' between the two countries. Under the draft evolved by the Sri Lankans and Americans jointly, Sri Lanka would be getting some latest equipment for self-defence. The possibility of the US supplying re-conditioned naval vessels and a few latest type of aircraft has also been explored and some equipment not yet identified is said to be in the pipeline.

At the political level, Addabbo has pledged full support to Sri Lankan self-defence. 'Our visit was aimed at assuring the Sri Lankan government of US support for maintaining democracy in the island', Addabbo has been quoted as saying by the government-owned *Weekend* newspaper.

The paper further quoted Addabbo as saying that Prime Minister Indira Gandhi too had expressed serious concern for

democracy in Sri Lanka during the talks the delegation had with her after violence erupted in the island in July last.

The US Senate leader seems to have told the Sri Lankan government that in view of what the Indian Prime Minister had told the US delegation, India would not object to Sri Lanka getting arms aid from his country.

It may be recalled that the Sri Lanka government denied a news agency report in August that the Jayewardene government had asked for military aid from the US, UK, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The Lankan government even went to the extent of expelling from Colombo the UPI correspondent who had filed the story. Even at that time the Indian government conveyed through diplomatic channels its concern about the induction of US arms into the Island republic. At that time Sri Lanka was saying that a foreign country was behind the disturbances. It did not name the country.

Similar report

The *Times of India* in its issue of January 16th, 1984, carried a similar report, quoting their correspondent in Colombo.

The Madras-based Organisation for the Protection of the Tamils of Eelam from Genocide and other Violations of Human Rights (PROTEG) have already, in a letter dated December 29th, 1984, protested to President Reagan over the induction of US arms to Sri Lanka, (see page 4).

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TAMIL TRAINING DENIED

The French Embassy in Colombo has denied reports that 350 Sri Lankan Tamil youths are being trained by the French Foreign Legion.

It asserted that the Legion was a special unit of the French army and gave no training to any other military personnel or group, either French or foreign.

In France, the embassy said military training and military co-operation were subject to agreement on a government-to-government basis.

ARMY, POLICE CLASH: SIX SOLDIERS ON THE MAT

The Sri Lanka government which has consistently failed to take action against army personnel who killed or harassed Tamils in the North and East was, however, quick to take action in the recent incident where a Sinhalese policeman was killed by army men in Trincomalee on Christmas Day.

The CID, which investigated the army shooting and the death of police constable Seneviratne Dharmadasa, filed plaint against six army personnel. Before the Trincomalee magistrate Mr M.H.J.F. Senaratne, Mr Punya de Silva, ASP, CID, filed plaint under Section 296 of the Penal Code.

The six suspects against whom plaint has been filed are: H.H. Wipulasena, P.N. Dayaratne, P.G. Jayaweera, W.M.N. Chandrasiri, R.M. Sumathipala and K.B. Abeyrathe.

Police Constable Dharmadasa of the Trincomalee police succumbed to gun-shot injuries when army personnel are alleged to have opened fire on a police party which arrived at the Army Camp, Fort Frederick, for an inquiry.

On a directive of the IGP, Mr Rudra Rajasingham, the CID took over the investigations which ended on December 31.

On Wednesday afternoon, after the evidence of C. Obeyesekera, HQI Trincomalee, was led, the magistrate ordered that the ten rifles used by both the police and army personnel at the time of the incident and the other productions in court be handed over to the government analyst for examination and a report.

Mr Punya de Silva also moved for warrants on the six suspects and the Army Commander directing the latter, to produce the suspect in court on January 30, when the inquiry will be taken up by the magistrate.

EVOLUTION OF THE TAMIL QUESTION

By Professor Karthigesu Sivathamby

Professor Sivathamby, who teaches at Jaffna University, is a Scholar of Tamil Language, Culture and Drama

An attempt is made in the paper to describe and analyse the gradual worsening of ethnic relations between the two major groups in Sri Lanka since 1977, culminating in the violence of July 1983 and how the actions and the responses of each of the participant groups have led them to an impasse, so much so that it has become essential for an 'external' third party to mediate between them. Each one is finding it difficult to diverge from the lines of approach each has been adopting so far.

The primary aim of this study is to present those actions and responses in a chronological and ideological perspective. So that, at this time when this problem which was once taken to be purely an inter-communal matter (in the sense of being considered just a problem of two communities within a nation and not one between ethnic groups or nations or nationalities) has turned out to be one of South-Asian geo-politics, it will contribute, at least in a very limited way to an understanding of how it has assumed these gigantic proportions. An effort is made in this paper to delineate and discuss (a) those events, in so far they affected the Tamils, and (b) those actions and activities emanating from the Tamil side having a cause and effect relationship with the former.

Brief summary of the current situation

The Sri Lankan ethnic holocaust of July 1983 has had such an international response that it is no more just another internal problem of the country. The relations between the two major communities of the island have worsened to such an extent that it had become essential for another country to mediate between them. It has become an issue involving the security of the South-Asian region, to the extent that it has been accepted in international diplomatic circles that it calls for Indian mediation.

The most appalling result of the July events has been the political vacuum that has been created among the Tamils living in Sri Lanka. There is no representation of the Sri Lanka Tamils at any institutional level of democratic participation, from parliament to local government institutions. Even the few Tamils who are yet part of the government have expressed their dissent to some of the actions done by the government or done in the name of the government.

The credibility of the government with the Tamils is so low that without a third party standing guarantee there is no possibility of any face-to-face talks, let alone a settlement.

The position of the leading political organisation of the Tamils — the Tamil United Liberation Front is such that it found itself unable to continue in parliament; the parliamentarist approach it has been advocating and adopting has collapsed. It has had to face bitter opposition from within.

The youth movement, with the proliferation of mutually opposed groups, also finds itself unable to continue with the type of attacks and actions by which, it always argued, it was exposing the in-built oppressive and anti-Tamil character of the government in power. It also accepts that time has come for different strategies.

The situation therefore is one of a real impasse, with each of the three groups, the government, the TULF, the Youth Movement, are now engaged in soul-searching reassessment. This reassessment of strategies is also being done by the Sinhala forces that determine the anti-Tamil character of the government. But that is something outside the scope of this paper.

The most important political reality of the post-July '83 Sri Lanka is the getting together of all the Tamils living in Sri Lanka. They feel that a common cause binds them together.

'Whether it is Amirthalingam, or the CWC, or Maheswaran, I told you earlier that an identification has been created by the manner in which all Tamils have been treated in the past. We have different problems but when there is a determined policy to discriminate, to harass, to persecute, to crush, then all the Tamils whether in Tamil Nadu or here or anywhere in the world feel that injustice is done.'

S. Thondaman,
Minister of Rural
Industrial Development

The Tamils feel that this insecurity is faced also by the Moslems, who, though Tamil-speaking, do not consider themselves as Tamils but as an ethnic group

A survey of Tamil political demands and activities in Sri Lanka since 1977, including an analysis of the socio-economic and ideological orientations of the struggle. Reproduced by kind courtesy of LANKA GUARDIAN.

distinct from the Tamils. This could be seen in the recent attempt among the Moslems to form a united group of all Sri Lankan Moslems.

The irony is that this worsening of inter-ethnic relations should have happened during the period of (and because of forces within) a government that had (a) allowed one of its members — K.W. Devanayagam — to be one of the founder members of the Tamil United Front (TULF) in 1972 and (b) had accepted the existence of the Tamil problem and had suggested a round-table discussion of the problem, underlying thereby the need for the abandonment of entrenched positions in order to arrive at a real solution to the problem.

However, a chronological review of the events since 1977 would reveal that, given the events from 1977 to 1982, the events of July 1983 were not only predictable, but also inescapable.

Events in inter-ethnic hostility violence

1977 — Widespread attack on Tamils following an incident at a carnival in Jaffna. Police attack on people in Jaffna and Batticaloa. Sinhalese attack on Tamils and their property in the Western coastal towns, Ratnapura and in some plantation areas.

1978 — The inauguration of the Second Republic; Tamil given a place of a national language without a proper definition of its status; described by N.M. Perera as 'too little too late' — Bombing of the Avro aircraft by the Tamil militants. — The dramatic exposure claim by Cyril Mathew of the role of Tamil examiners in the marking of Tamil medium scripts in the GCE (A.L.) examinations, much to the detriment of the Sinhalese students. This charge was never investigated officially in spite of the repeated requests for an impartial and objective investigation.

1979 — Attempt to transform Vavuniya into Sinhala-majority district by a merger of certain parts of Medawachchiya, later given up because of the TULF boycott of parliament. — Emergency 1979, consequent to the murder of Guruswamy, Inspector of Police by the Tamil youth militants. — Police and army excesses in Jaffna. — The Anti-Terrorist Act. — December 31 deadline (given in July) for the eradication of Terrorism in Jaffna. The operation was declared successful. — Appointment of a Commission of Inquiry into the powers of the intended District Development Councils (DDCs). — Attack on plantation labour. — Attack on Tamils at Trincomalee.

1980 — The Development Council Act No.35 of 1980. — The dissatisfaction of the Youth with the TULF for collaborating with the government for meagre benefits. — Rift within the TULF and the breakaway of the 'Sutantiran' group.

1981 — Attack on the Peoples Bank at Neervely and the robbery of money; unleashing of army police terror in Jaffna. — Burning down of the Public Library, TULF office, and the Eelanadu Press in Jaffna. — The fiasco of the DD C elections in which the loss of a few vote boxes could not be accounted for. — Events in Batticaloa, an inter-school match between a Sinhala and a Tamil school leading to ethnic violence spreading from Amparai. State forces play a prominent role. — Attack on Tamils living in Negombo. — The killings at Embilipitiya. — Attacks and arson at Ratnapura, Pelmadulla, Kahawatte, Rakwana and Balangoda.

1982 — Clashes at Trincomalee. — Violence in some villages within Batticaloa District. — Presidential Elections. — DDCs found ineffective. Deterioration of political relations. TULF decision not to sit in parliament beyond 1983. — Attacks by armed Tamil youth on Anaicoddai, Nelliady, and Chavakkacheri Police Stations. — Sinhala-Moslem ethnic clashes — Galle. — Referendum to extend life of Parliament. — Ordinance empowering the police and the army to dispose of bodies without proper post mortem inquiry.

1983 — Killing of Police officers at Point-Pedro. — An ambush of the army unit at Paranthan. — Attempt to bomb the Jaffna Secretariat. — Local government elections in May 1983. TULF contested; Sutanitram group and militant youths opposed TULF participation; Violence against the TULF' low turn-out at polls. — Election day attack on army by youth militants. — TULF forced to resign from local bodies. — Attack on Tamil student at Peredeniya. — MPs not attending parliament. — Armed forces attacking Tamils and their property in Trincomalee. The killing of 13 army personnel in Jaffna. — Sixth Amendment to the Constitution outlawing advocacy of separatism; demands that administrative personnel and those connected with the judiciary to sign oath of allegiance to the Constitution against separatism.

The events speak for themselves. When these events are related to the anti-Tamil cry that has been whipped up among the Sinhalese, in a planned manner and to the general worsening of the law and order situation of the country, July 1983 emerges as something not unexpected; it lay in the logic of events.

The situation in 1977

These events reveal quite clearly that there was a gradual worsening of the situation, one event leading to another, with greater intensity and more potential for fearful consequences and that the absence of a determined effort to come to grips with the problem was a causative factor in this worsening of the situation. A closer look would reveal that all these trends which assumed frightening proportions after 1977, were present in 1977 itself and it was the manner in which they were allowed to

drift that have led to the disastrous consequences.

Firstly, it should be noticed that the demand for a separate Tamil Eelam (the demand is for Tamil Eelam, not Eelam; Eelam is the ancient Tamil word for Sri Lanka derived from the term 'Hela' 'Eln'; what is demanded is the 'Tamil portion' of Eelam), had already been made in 1977. In fact it was made in 1976 when the TUF transformed itself into the TULF. The political unity forged between the various Tamil parties in 1972 (TULF) during which year the Front called itself the Tamil United Liberation Front. The use of the term 'liberation' indicates 'the socialist orientation' the front was claiming for itself.

This indicates the emergence of the TULF as the major political organisation among the Tamils. It is true that a section of the Tamil Congress under the nominal leadership of Kumar Ponnambalam, but really manipulated by the diehard anti-Christian, Hindu professional and feudal clique of Jaffna, had been articulating itself. But that was living only on the omissions of the TULF. It had no initiative of its own within Jaffna. It did serve one purpose. When Kumar Ponnambalam contested the Presidential Elections, it was possible for Tamils living outside the traditional Tamil areas to express their solidarity with the Tamils of the East and North by voting for Ponnambalam. With emerging youth militancy and changing styles of political leadership, this group went out of active, cognisable political existence. It must also be noted that the government patronage given to this group was merely to show that the TULF was not the only Tamil party.

Though the TULF was a union of the Federal Party, one section of the Tamil Congress and the CWC, it differed from the former two in that with Amirthalingam and Sivasithamparam emerging dominant leaders, with actual power in the hands of the former as the leader of the Federal Party, the leadership of the TULF was not as Colombo-based as it had been earlier. This is not to say that these two did not belong to the professional class which had given rise to the earlier leaders. It is only that they were not part of the Colombo establishment. In Amirthalingam one could see the emergence of the Jaffna-based party activist. Sivasithamparam, though a Colombo-based lawyer, has firm roots in Jaffna. They were more accessible than the previous leaders — G. C. Ponnambalam and S.J.V. Chelvanayagam. It is true that classwise there was no major change but these two men were in behaviour and spirit more typical men of the soil.

Prior to 1977, especially during the final years of the SLFP rule (1975-77), the TULF received the support of the Colombo-based Tamil professionals and

entrepreneurs, who as a class did not do well under the SLFP. With the coming of the UNP in 1977 the picture changed.

The Tamil professionals and entrepreneurs of Colombo gave their support to the UNP and pressured the TULF to come to some understanding with the government. But the new leadership of the TULF (Amirthalingam) did not belong to the Colombo-based establishment. They needed someone who comes from the establishment but sufficiently close to those in authority. And this explains the rise of Drs Jeyaratnam Wilson and Neelan Tiruchelvam within the TULF, thus enabling the dominance once again of the Colombo-based Tamils. The hostility towards the Colombo-based leadership has been building up within the FP and the TULF looks a half-way house between the Colombo-based Tamil bourgeoisie and Jaffna-Batticaloa-based middle-class Tamil interests.

Equally important were the total collapse of left activism in Tamil areas. Except in trade union matters, the left had ceased to attract political attention in the Tamil areas. And there is some organised trade union activity only in Jaffna town — not in other areas. The LSSP was the worst affected; it had lost its local leadership. The Communist Party too was not quite effective, a price it had to pay for its collaboration with the SLFP. It is significant that only those leftist groups which had cut themselves away from the 'traditional' left were able to be active. This is how the LSSP was able to come into prominence.

With the collapse at the national level of the leftist parties which were the only available political institutions in which Tamil and Sinhalese could be members with a common ideology and equal status and a say within the party, it was inevitable that ethnic division emerged as the basis of polarisation.

By 1977, the acts of political violence by militant youths too, had begun. Alfred Thuraiyappah was killed in 1976 and a few bank robberies (Puloly and Puthur) had already taken place.

Equally well established was the pattern of state violence against the people. The action of the police during the Fourth Conference on International Tamil Studies held at Jaffna had led to deaths of innocents.

And the post-1977 events show that it was these trends that worsened, interacting upon each other, and assuring fearsome proportions until at last they climaxed in 1983. The trends as they stood in 1977 had worsened consequently and demanded a political solution. The absence of such a determined attempt towards a real political solution was all the more tragic, as the UNP had, before coming to power, realised the need for such a solution:

'The United National Party accepts the position that there are numerous problems

confronting the Tamil-speaking people. the lack of a solution to their problems has made the Tamil-speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate state. In the interests of national integration and unity so necessary for the economic development of the whole country, the Party feels that such problems should be solved without loss of time. The Party, when it comes to power, will take all possible steps to remedy their grievances in such fields as (1) Education (2) Colonisation (3) Use of Tamil Language (4) Employment in Public and semi-public corporations. We will summon an All-Party Conference as stated earlier and implement all its decisions.

*The Manifesto of the
United National Party for the
General Elections of 1977*

It behoves the student of Sri Lankan politics to identify in clear terms the factors which inhibited the UNP from implementing the remedies suggested by itself and, more importantly, how sections of UNP took to open campaigning against the Tamils in these very four areas.

Quick succession

The actions and activities leading to events in inter-ethnic hostility are inter-linked and they came in such quick succession, making it difficult to know which was the cause/effect of which. Acts of the militant youth and the excesses of the army had such a relationship. But whatever the sequence was, the Tamil masses were being subjected to harassment by the army and the police. The fear of the armed forces with increasing difficulties in obtaining legal redress, alienated the people from the government.

The actions and activities relating to the Tamil Question could be seen at two levels:

(I) the parliamentary level at which the UNP tried to solve the question unilaterally and in association with the TULF, which had emerged as the main opposition party in parliament.

(II) the extra-parliamentary acts of expressing the grievances, and the actions taken to contain such acts through the use of the armed forces and the police.

Before discussing the characteristics of the activities at these two levels, it is important to identify the main grievances of the Tamils that arose out of and were getting heightened with the events in and after 1977.

The first one undeniably is the increasing insecurity of Tamilian life and property in both the Sinhalese and Tamil areas. In the Sinhala areas it came from the Sinhala militants and in the Tamil areas it was through the army and the police. This explains the demand for Home Guards as

part of the constitutional provisions. This feeling of insecurity is felt by all Tamils.

Closely connected with this is the real loss of traditional Tamil areas to Sinhala settlers and colonists. The process of Sinhalisation, carried out first in the Negombo and Puttalam district, was being continued in the Gal Oya Project Region, Amparai District, the only district where there was a Moslem majority was subjected to a demographic change. The most crucial change was undertaken in the Trincomalee district, Trincomalee with its strategic harbour was not attracting big power attention. The pattern was the establishment of state-sponsored agricultural settlements to which Sinhalese not already resident in the area were brought and settled as colonists. Such state-sponsored demographic changes were made in Mannar and Vavuniya districts too. The worst was in the Batticaloa district, in the Kalkudah and Padiruppu electorates. This problem began to have new dimension, when plantation labourers, displaced from plantation areas due to the Land Reform measures of 1972 and 1974 began to take up residence in these outlying agricultural areas. Plantation labourers were the worst hit by the ethnic violence of 1977 and 1981. After the constant attacks on them, they migrated mainly to settlements in Trincomalee and Vavuniya districts. Much of the Sinhala fury was directed against them. In fact, a closer look at the July events of 1983 would reveal that those were an all-island extension of what was going on in Trincomalee in May and June.

The Sinhala colonisation was being done with the full blessings of the administration. The best example is the attempt to make Vavuniya a Sinhala majority district. There was also an allegation made that migrant Sinhala fishermen were also being used to threaten the traditional residents of the areas.

The use made of the Buddhist symbols of worship — the bo-tree and the stupa in consolidating both legitimate and illegal settlements is significant. These provided a religio-cultural legitimisation to the process of Sinhalisation. In this connection the

emergence of sacred cities in these areas of colonisation — Seruvila and Digavapi — deserve close study. The use of the Buddhist 'intrusion' into Tamil areas could also be seen in the controversy over the Buddhist statue in Vavuniya town.

The significance of the above two grievances is that these exposed the lower strata of the Tamil population to the cruel vicissitudes of ethnic disharmony, which until the sixties were largely confined to the middle classes.

The full fury of state terrorism was turned against Tamil inhabitants living near these areas of newly established Sinhalese settlements.

The attack on Hindu temples has been a characteristic feature during this ethnic violence and the worst damage occurred in the Trincomalee district. The periodic statements issued by such organisations like the MIRJE (Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality) and the CRM (Civil Rights Movement) testify to the damage caused to life and property.

Intensity of discrimination

With oppression thus widening and bringing within its vortex hitherto unaffected persons and areas, it cannot be said that the intensity of discrimination in education and employment faced by the middle classes was on the decrease. It was becoming worse.

The Tables I and II provide the percentages relating to employment in state and public sectors in recent years. The figures provided relate to 1980.

In the field of education, the main source of irritation has been the number admitted to the universities. And here again the admission figures for 1981, '82 and '83 reveal the real position relating to the intake. (See Table III)

The District Quota system of admissions, no doubt, provided an opportunity for a larger number of Tamil medium students from districts like Mannar, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa to enter the university. But this was mainly for the arts

I State Sector (excluding Corporation Sector) (Employment)

Category	Percentage of:	Sinhalese	Tamils	Others
Professional and Technical		82%	12%	6%
Administrative and Managerial		81%	16%	3%
All Categories		84%	12%	4%

II Public Sector (State and Corporation Sectors Combined) (Employment)

Professional and Technical	82%	13%	5%
Adm. and Managerial	83%	14%	3%
All Categories	85%	11%	4%

stream and very soon this gave rise to severe disappointments, for after three to four years, there was graduate unemployment in areas where the social expectations through university education were very high.

The lack of education facilities in the

Tamil areas at the secondary education level is something which has not been highlighted. Even in Jaffna district, a good number of the schools are understaffed and no proper facilities are provided at the secondary school level.

The most frightening development in the field of education was the attack on the Tamil students at Peradeniya University (May 1983). The fact that this could take place at Peradeniya, yet the major university in Sri Lanka and the pacesetter of intellectual liberation was seen as a sure indication of the increasing insecurity of Tamil life and property.

III Admission Figures

1981

	Sinhalese	%	Tamils	%	Others
Arts	82.8		13.3		3.9
Physical Sciences	63.5		31.8		4.7
Biological Sciences	72.5		24.3		3.2
Engineering	67.2		28.1		4.7
Medicine	72.7		23.1		4.3
Law	73.0		16.2		10.0
Total	76.4		19.2		4.4

1982

Arts	79.4		16.3		4.3
Physical Sciences	61.1		33.5		5.5
Biological Sciences	71.7		21.1		2.2
Engineering	66.9		28.5		4.5
Medicine	72.4		25.3		2.3
Law	68.8		24.0		7.3
Total	74.3		22.0		3.9

1983

Arts	77.1		14.4		6.6
Physical Sciences	73.4		23.1		3.6
Biological Sciences	70.3		23.1		3.6
Engineering	66.4		28.1		5.5
Medicine	72.8		22.1		5.1
Law	78.5		11.5		10.0
Total	75.0		19.3		5.7

Economic neglect

The other major grievance of the Tamils is the economic neglect of the Tamil-speaking areas in terms of development. There has been no major utilisation of the physical resources of these areas and the only economic activity that was doing well — the cultivation of subsidiary crops — in Jaffna was affected badly by the liberal import policies of 1977. Perhaps one of the few favourable aspects of the impact of the open economy on the Sri Lankan Tamil rural population was that it enabled them to go abroad for manual labour. This exodus of manual labour, unheard of in these areas since the days of travel to the Federated Malay states helped to ease problems and paved the path for higher earnings at certain lower levels.

A look at these grievances brings out clearly what Thondaman has described as the common cause that today unites all Tamils as Tamils.

It is against this background that one has to review the political activities taken at the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary levels.

BIGGEST BANK ROBBERY IN SRI LANKA'S HISTORY

Jewellery worth Rs.36 million and Rs.240,000/- in cash were reported to have been robbed from the Kattankudy People's Bank in a daring daylight heist by an armed gang on Friday, January 13th. The robbery, police said, was committed in the populous, predominantly Moslem eastern province town of Kattankudy off Batticaloa. According to a Sri Lankan newspaper report, twelve youths arrived in a Hiace van and six of them entered the bank when it opened for the day's business. The bank manager, S.M. Maharoof, was taken hostage when he returned from the police station after collecting the safe key.

The safe lock mechanism, working on a time schedule was, however, no problem for the robbers who coolly bided their time until they could open the vault, having bundled the bank employees into a room earlier. A bank official who had the second key had been brought at gun-point to get at the cash and valuables. Telephone lines had been made inoperative before the robbery.

Within hours of the robbery, a massive

joint army-police search both by land and sea was set going, but even after one week no breakthrough has been reported. The government has meanwhile announced a Rs.10 lakh reward for any information leading to the arrest of those involved.

Bigger than the Neervely People's Bank cash robbery (Rs.8.1 million) and the Kilinochchi Bank grab (Rs.7.9 million), the Kattankudy robbery was, unlike the previous ones, carried off without any casualties.

Although it is widely believed that a Tamil militant group was responsible for the operation, no claims were forthcoming during the week after the robbery.

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SRI KRISHNA: Action rightly renounced brings freedom;
Action rightly performed brings freedom;
Both are better
Than mere shunning of action.
— Bhagavad — Gita

OTTOWA 'COMMITTED' TO HELPING TAMILS

In the glow of the street lights, the army officer ordered the businessman out of his car and cocked his sten gun as he forced him to kneel at the side of the busy road. His hands raised over his head, Ratnasingam Subramaniam said his 'last prayer'.

But as he waited in terror for the first burst of bullets, a jeep pulled up with a squeal of tyres and another officer jumped out. Instead of allowing the execution to go ahead, he accepted Subramaniam's denials that he was a terrorist and freed him.

Six months later in a crowded Toronto meeting hall, Subramaniam recounted his 'miraculous' escape from death. 'That was when I decided to go. This was not the country for me,' said the 36-year-old father of two, who fled Sri Lanka with his wife and two children last year.

On January 8th, three federal Cabinet ministers reassured a meeting of more than 400 Sri Lankans that the government was 'seriously committed' to addressing the problem of Sri Lanka's Tamil minority, of whom Subramaniam is a member.

Temporary residence

Tamils here are being provided with temporary residence status, said John Roberts, Federal Minister of Immigration and Employment, who was joined by Multiculturalism Minister David Collette and David Smith, small business and tourism minister. The future of Tamils in Canada will depend on the outcome of events in Sri Lanka, he said.

But Canada does not want to declare that there is a 'tremendous crisis' while 'there is some hope' Sri Lanka's troubles can be set-

tled internally, Roberts said. However, a policy of genocide is being practised against Tamils, said Hassan Sheriff, general secretary of the Society for the Aid of Ceylon Minorities, which organised the meeting.

Before his chilling arrest in July, Subramaniam had been forced to live in disguise after a mob drove him from his home and burned down his business. Moslem neighbours hid him and his family before they went to a secret refugee camp.

Horrrifying fate

But more horrrifying was the fate of six relatives of his wife, Viji. They were deliberately burned to death in a car, he said.

Sri Lanka is known to travellers as paradise, but to its Tamil minority life on the beautiful Indian Ocean island is becoming marked by terror. Racial violence by the Sinhalese majority, who number about 11 million against its 2 million Tamils, left hundreds dead in July.

The wave of violence was triggered after a small group of Tamil terrorists ambushed and killed 13 Sinhalese soldiers. But it unleashed a deeper resentment against the Tamils, who are Sri Lanka's businessmen, generally wealthier than the Sinhalese.

Since July, hundreds of Tamils have come to Toronto. Many, like Subramaniam, are uncertain whether they will be allowed to stay because they don't have relatives here to sponsor them. Thousands more Tamils are crowded into refugee camps in Sri Lanka, waiting to leave the country.

Subramaniam says all he wants is the opportunity to be able to work to support himself and his family, but while he awaits immigration status he can't get a job. 'As far as I am concerned, I will do any kind of work.' A former schoolteacher, he said that harassment of Tamils forced him to give up a career in education in 1979.

Last year, Viji gave up the government job she has held for 15 years because of harassment for belonging to a trade union that had a Tamil president. But Subramaniam's fortunes soared when he went into business for himself. When he left Sri Lanka he was employing 15 people.

He and his family are staying with friends in a Scarborough apartment. But he will have to leave soon because their parents are coming from Sri Lanka to live with them. 'I want to stay in Canada. I don't want to go back and be killed,' he said.

By kind courtesy,

TORONTO STAR, Jan 9th, 1984.
Digitized by eSangam Foundation
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By kind courtesy,
FINANCIAL TIMES, Feb 13th, 1984.

SRI LANKA UNDER PRESSURE FROM IMF

Sri Lanka and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are at odds over the size of spending cuts and the amount by which the country's currency should be further devalued before the Fund grants a further standby credit.

The IMF is seeking further cuts of up to 3.5 billion rupees (\$240 million), or about 7 per cent of planned expenditure this year and a devaluation of the rupee against the dollar from its present level of 25 to at least 27.

Tough debate

The Sri Lankan Cabinet this week began what is expected to be a protracted and tough debate over how far the country can afford to go in meeting the IMF requirements. Mr De Mel, Sri Lanka's Finance Minister, has negotiated skillfully with the IMF for over a year, but he is now likely to meet stiff opposition from colleagues who argue that the Fund is dictating Sri Lanka's economic policy.

There is also real concern of the possible effect of a further devaluation at a time of the soaring inflation and in the wake of last July's ethnic riots which left the island economically weak and politically divided.

Agreement with the Fund is critical for Sri Lanka. In the first place, the country needs the additional \$50 million on offer. More important, the Fund's stamp of approval on Sri Lanka's economic policies would clear the way for a \$210 million structural adjustment loan from the World Bank and an estimated \$400 million from the aid consortium countries meeting in Paris in June.

Lack of concern

The IMF is worried about the apparent lack of concern among some ministers over the need for fiscal and monetary discipline and is likely to drive a hard bargain. It is, so far, even refusing to agree to send a mission to Sri Lanka — which was originally expected in March — to finalise the standby facility.

Sri Lanka's last budget was regarded as 'soft' by the Fund, and there is growing concern that a credibility gap between the government's intentions and its actions could erode its international standing.

TRIBUTE TO

V.S.A. PULLANAYAGUM

In a tribute to the late V.S.A. Pullanayagum who passed away in late December in Colombo, Colombo lawyer C.V. Vivekananthan, writing in *The Island* of January 9th, quotes Lord Eldon's words to describe him: 'He lived like a hermit and worked like a horse.' 'Truth, justice, fair play and liberty,' says Mr Vivekananthan, were Mr Pullanayagum's 'governing passions and it was loyalty to those ideals that was the keynote to his whole career'. It will be remembered with gratitude that Mr Pullanayagum gave his legal talents freely and without charging a fee to defend several Tamils who were held under the notorious Prevention of Terrorism Act.

WITHOUT COMMENT

The following are extracts from a letter to the Editor of the SUNDAY NEW NIGERIAN of September 18, 1983, written by Mr U.W. Sirisena, Chief Internal Auditor, Unijos, Nigeria. Mr Sirisena is a Sri Lankan Sinhalese living and working in Nigeria:

'I happened to be in Sri Lanka during the period July 31st to August 23rd, 1983, and I have seen things in reality.

'The Public Service is the mainstay of Tamils in Sri Lanka wherein a disproportionate share of the high posts are their monopoly. The Inspector-General of Police and several of his deputies are Tamils. In the professions and business enterprises, Tamils dominated. It is these business and industrial places that were the main target during the disturbances.

'The reason: They openly financed the Liberation Tigers (Tamils) in their campaign to bring down the legally constituted government of Sri Lanka by the use of arms and establish a separate state. The Indian business entrepreneurs had also to suffer losses in their industrial undertakings as they were known to give financial support to the Liberation Tigers covertly.

Highly exaggerated

'The figures appearing in the cartoon are incorrect and have been highly exaggerated according to statistics released by the Sri Lankan government as appearing in the newspapers, which come under government censorship.

'It is a fact that political prisoners were killed. The victims were dangerous Tamil terrorists who broke into banks and attempted to stage a coup. The fellow Sinhalese prisoners were so angered by the massacre of 13 Sinhalese army personnel in Jaffna on July 23,

1983 (which sparked off the violence) that they assassinated their Tamil counterparts. Some of the coup leaders have fled to India where they have gone underground and the Sri Lankan government has offered cash rewards for the arrest or evidence leading to the arrest of those terrorists. Of the 300 civilians said to have been massacred, a majority of them are stateless persons who were living illegally in Sri Lanka.'

The following are extracts from the Rejoinder from M.A. Cruz, Sokoto, Nigeria, published in the SUNDAY NEW NIGERIAN of October 16th, 1983:

'... Mr S says about the Tamils being the privileged class, etc. This statement could have had an element of truth before 30 years or so, but has not got an iota of truth in it now in 1983.

'Adding further, he claims there are Tamils in the police force. A handful of Tamils who happened to be in such posts were there either after having had their promotions several years overdue, or after having earned the credentials of being the stooges of the government for selfish ambitions. Many of the deserving claims had been forced to accept premature retirements or had been shelved to corners of departments without having any meaningful responsibilities. Some had also been 'honourably elevated' to the position of Ambassadors to countries after having been stripped of their executive functions. They now readily become 'handy showpieces' of the government to show the world in times like this. The proportion of the Tamils to the Sinhalese in the armed forces is alarmingly negligible — not even one per cent!

'Mr S says cynically that the people massacred in the prison and the bus-

iness industries and the houses destroyed were all "terrorists", "their supporters" and properties of such people. In fact, the prisoners killed were suspected political prisoners. They include priests, teachers, lecturers, and welfare workers. The inability to catch the 'real tigers' had resulted in the arrest of many innocent Tamils and their subsequent death in the hands of Sinhala criminals and prison guards. The industries destroyed were accomplishments of the hard-working Tamils; some of these people were pillars of the nation's economy. This mischievous detrimental attack was a premeditated one, planned to its detail well ahead of the ambushing of the 13 soldiers who were a nuisance in the North. This bloodbath and destruction were organised and initiated by the Sinhala extremists and thugs who had infiltrated even the Cabinet levels.

Justifies slaughter

'Mr S rejoicingly justifies the slaughtering of the civilian Tamils by declaring them as "stateless persons". Like many of his comrades, Mr S also believes in a game of 'give it a bad name and hang it' — a typical third grade inhuman mentality of the Sinhala extremist. I do not understand under what definition Mr S classifies these Sri Lankan Tamils as "stateless persons", and my fear is that when his "ingenious definition" (if there was any) is extended, even he himself will be one of the stateless persons who are living "illegally in Sri Lanka", because most of the Tamils killed were in a position to trace their history as a community in Sri Lanka to even more than 2,500 years, and I have my doubts whether Mr S could do this with his own community without distorting the history to his whims and fancies.'

The Fund is worried about:

- Sri Lanka's ambitious development programme. In its present form it is regarded as 'indigestible' by the Fund. The IMF has pointed out to the government that aid and budget appropriating for 1983 were underspent by at least 25 per cent. A major target for the Fund is Air Lanka, the country's airline, whose aircraft purchasing programme is widely regarded as a luxury.

Runaway growth

- Runaway growth of the money supply last year. Sri Lanka's Central Bank has recently tightened credit, but inflation is

still running at an annual rate of more than 20 per cent.

- Poor export performance and excessively high imports. The Fund wants to see a further devaluation of the rupee, major cuts in the country's public investment programme and the encouragement of export-orientated industries.

High tea prices, Sri Lanka's major export, have given the economy an unexpected boost this year. But the IMF wants to see Sri Lanka's chronic current account deficit reduced from 13 per cent of GDP in 1982 to 10 per cent in 1984. This target seems optimistic, given the slow recovery of the island's key tourist industry following last July's unrest.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

*Lull me not into languid dreams;
Shake me out of this cringing in the dust,
Out of the fetters that shackle our mind,
make futile our destiny;
Out of the unreason that bends our
dignity down under the indiscriminate
feet of dictators;
Shatter this age-long shame of ours,
And raise our head
into the boundless sky,
into the generous light,
into the air of freedom.*

BOOK REVIEWS

I must congratulate Mr K. Gnanasoorian who lives several hundred miles away from the lands of Tamil culture, for having written this handy volume which gives a bird's eye view of Tamil culture. Written in a simple style of English, I am sure that this book can be read and enjoyed by youngsters and elders alike.

As a student of history I read this book with absorbing interest and found the correct blending of history with cultural features of the Tamils living in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka.

The language and literature are mirrors reflecting the culture of the people over the centuries and they have been aptly highlighted by Mr Gnanasoorian. Tamils have always excelled in fine arts and healthy traditions have been built over the ages, par-

'AN INTRODUCTION TO TAMIL CULTURE', by K. Gnanasoorian, MSc. Second edition published January 1984, revised and enlarged, 272 pages. Reviewed by K. NAMBIAROORAN, Professor, Department Tamil Studies in Foreign Countries, Tamil University, Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.

ticularly in the realm of music, dance, temple architecture, sculpture and iconography.

This volume contains very useful information on Tamils living in different parts of the world and on the study of Tamils at school and university levels in various

countries. As a research scholar, Mr Gnanasoorian has indicated the areas pertaining to Tamil studies in which more research has to be undertaken by us.

He is also concerned with the economic problems faced by the Tamils in Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka, and makes a strong plea to the affluent Tamils living outside those two countries to pool their resources through a voluntary international Tamil organisation and help their less privileged brethren who are the real torch-bearers of Tamil culture.

An Introduction to Tamil Culture is available at £6, excluding postage, from the publishers, the Institute for International Tamil Renaissance, 72 King Edward Road, London, E17, or from Messrs Paari Nilayam, Madras-1, Tamil Nadu, India.

In this small but beautiful volume, which is an incisive analysis of the constitutional framework of Sri Lanka, there is a brief epilogue which epitomises the essence of the work. It relates to the ethnic violence that broke out in July 1983 and this is what the writer has to say:

'In many ways the 1983 riots signalled an end to the 'liberal' consciousness which had been the basis of elite decision-making. The hallmark of this liberalism was the tolerance extended to the cry for a separate state, a tolerance reminiscent, for example, of the Canadian approach to Quebec nationalists. That tolerance is no longer a reality in Sri Lanka.'

The author had described the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution as one done 'in haste'. Of the army, she says that it is no longer the loyal servant of those in power. 'The Sandhurst-trained commanders have gradually faded away and are being replaced by new officers who perhaps see for themselves a different role in national affairs' — a point which President Jayewardene should have to take note of. There is a timely warning that if the Indian initiative on the Tamil problem, which may lead to positive results, fails, the cycle of violence 'will only escalate'.

'The ideas and institutions spelled out in the text of the book will be of no significance in a Sri Lanka where rational dialogue and democratic decision-making have given way to **irrationality and authoritarianism.**' (Emphasis added)

Taking the 1972 Constitution for a searching probe, the author has said that it did not embody a concept of separation of powers and despite the heralding of parliamentary sovereignty (in the Republican Constitution) parliament had become more of an instrument for 'ratifying' the decisions of the supreme policy-framing body, the Cabinet, than the forum where the gov-

'SRI LANKA, THE CRISIS OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL TRADITIONS IN A DEVELOPING SOCIETY', by Radhika Coomaraswamy, Published by Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd, price Rs.95. Reviewed by M. PATTABHIRAM

ernment and the opposition would normally seek to accommodate each other.

And, in the words of the author, this state of affairs aided by large parliamentary majorities would characterise Sri Lankan political life in the 70s and 80s. Further comment is superfluous. And it would be interesting to note that under the 1972 Constitution 'a declaration of emergency limited parliamentary scrutiny of executive acts, prohibited judicial review and suspended the Bill of Rights protecting individual citizens'. In short, the executive was given power to rule without accountability.

Constant agitation

Tracing the history of the 1972 Constitution to the 'Sinhala Only policies of the Fifties', the author says that despite the constant agitation of the Tamil political parties, the Constitution enshrined the expectations of Sinhala Buddhist nationalists 'without a single concession to the Tamil-speaking minority'. The Tamil political parties united under the banner calling for a separate state of Tamil Eelam in the north and east precisely for the reason that the government totally disregarded their demands, culminating 'in the growth of youthful political movements which were

soon to use violence as a means of political expression'. This is a highly realistic assessment of the position.

Following the United National Party's landslide victory in the 1977 elections under the leadership of the 'an iron-willed strategist' such as J.R. Jayewardene, a new Constitution came into being in 1978. Its main concern was stability, which found expression in the introduction of the presidential system of government and an electoral scheme of proportional representation. Even granting that developing societies require stability the author has given expression to the feeling that the presidential system is not so much the 'last stance of democracy but the first step towards dictatorship'.

Severely critical

There is also the fear that the concentration of power in a highly exalted office may have disturbing consequences. The author has been severely critical of the 1978 Constitution though praise has been showered on some aspects of it. First, it is remarkably concerned with technological improvements which would update the institutional processes of government. Secondly, it displays in its text an unusual fear of an independent judiciary and an independent public service. Thirdly, neither parliament nor the bureaucracy has been granted incentives to create processes which will meet the challenges of a modern nation state. Fourthly, the Constitution as enacted did not contain any structures for participation at the local level though legislation for decentralised participation to meet some of the demands of the Tamil minority was instituted at the end of 1981.

But the district councils, the author affirms, did not allow for much autonomy at the local level since the national executive

THE ELIEZER AWARD FUND

Professor Christie Jayaratnam Eliezer retired in December 1983 and in recognition of his many and varied accomplishments and services to society, La Trobe University, Victoria, Australia, intends to establish an Award in his name, to be presented to one or more students in the Department of Applied Mathematics.

During a career spanning five decades and four continents, Dr Eliezer has lived a full life as a Christian and as a scientist, scholar, writer, public speaker, barrister, administrator, broadcaster, and community leader.

Research interests

He has worked with great men like Paul Dirac and Homi Bhabha in his research fields of Relativity and Quantum Mechanics. His other research interests have included Inequalities and functional Equations, and more recently Lie Symmetries in Classical and Quantum Mechanics.

Dr Eliezer's early training at Hartley College and University College (Ceylon) and his later studies in the University of Cambridge led to his becoming a Cambridge Wrangler. Whilst at Cambridge he won the 1951 Royal Exhibition, the Isaac Newton award and the Charles L. Meyer award of the United States Academy of Science. He held a Fulbright Scholarship while on a visit to Princeton Institute for Advanced Studies. He was also a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, from 1946-1949.

Next, he took up an appointment as Professor of Mathematics in the University of

Ceylon where he was to spend a further ten years. During this time he was for a period Dean of the Faculty of Science. He was also, for two years, Vice-President of the YMCA in Colombo.

He has attended the United Nations 'Atoms for Peace' Conference at Geneva



Professor Eliezer

(1955, 1958) and the International Atomic Energy Commission at Vienna (1958).

In 1959 he was appointed to the chair of Mathematics in the University of Malaya, where he served as Dean of Science, and as a Deputy Vice-Chancellor for four years.

While in Kuala Lumpur, Dr Eliezer became President of the Rotary Club and Vice-President of the YMCA.

In 1968, he and his family moved to Australia where he became the first Professor of Applied Mathematics at the

newly founded La Trobe University in Melbourne. During his fifteen years at La Trobe University, Dr Eliezer has served for two periods as Dean of the School of Physical Sciences and has acted as Deputy Vice-Chancellor. He has been much involved in the activities of the Ceylon Tamil Association of Victoria which elected him President, and more recently Patron of the Association.

Much appreciated

His work over the years in broadcasting is well known and much appreciated. He was responsible for several radio programmes on Radio Ceylon, and Radio Malaysia on religion, science, and community matters, and lately has been co-presenter of Melbourne's 3EA Radio Tamil programme. For relaxation he enjoys a game of bridge or chess, whilst on the turf he has an occasional flutter or sometimes a game of golf.

It is felt that many of Dr Eliezer's colleagues, former colleagues, students and friends would wish to acknowledge his substantial contributions towards Mathematics, Science, Peace, Education and Religion by playing a part in the setting up of a Professor C.J. Eliezer Award. Contributions to the fund could be sent to Finance Branch, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Victoria, Australia 3083. Cheques should be made out to La Trobe University, Professor C.J. Eliezer Fund. Contributions are tax deductible in Australia. A full receipt will be forwarded.

and parliament maintained strict control. With the Tamils demanding a separate state, any scheme of decentralisation was seen by the Sinhalese mainstream as being a concession and it is in this context the author would have it that the possibility of further decentralisation to ensure maximum participation and autonomy at local levels would require a conceptual separation of the issues of decentralisation from those of ethnic reality.

Warning

The author approvingly quotes the warning of F.A. Hayek, that a 'free Constitution' is a licence to the majority in Parliament to act as arbitrarily as it pleases to describe the situation in Sri Lanka 'from 1971 to the present'.

A stimulating work covering other aspects, such as political participation, fundamental rights, women's status, etc., and dealing with some of the ideological conflicts which find expression in the Sri

Lankan Constitution. The text of the 1978 Constitution finds a place as an appendix and there is a useful bibliography for those interested in a further study.

VAITILINGAM NADARAJAH

Mr V. Nadarajah (Volkart) of Malakam, Jaffna, passed away in London on January 27th 1984 and the cremation took place on February 1st at the East Ham Crematorium. He is survived by his wife — Sathiyalakshmy; children — Jeyagowri (Malaysia), Jamunasrigowri (UK), Senthilkumar (Universal Travels, Sri Lanka), Udayakumar (UK) and Ushakumari (UK); sons-in-law — Ayathurai (Malaysia), Pushpanathan (UK) and Ganendran (UK); daughters-in-law — Niranjandevi (Sri Lanka) and Rita (UK) and grandchildren — Chitra, Uma, Dharmaraj, Nirmalan, Prashani, Rachel, Ami and Gajen.

Inserted by the bereaved family

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A dinner and dance in aid of the Tamil Centre was patronised by nearly 500 people on December 23rd at the luxurious Civic suite in Wandsworth.

The formation of the Tamil Centre was inspired by the poet Bharathi's eulogy '... of all the languages there is none so sweet as Tamil ...' and his exhortation '... its nectar should be dispersed the world over'. Negotiations are currently under way towards establishing the Tamil Centre within a 5,000-sq.ft building in Wimbledon.

This building will house a large Tamil library, a periodicals reading room, Tamil typewriters and word-processing facilities, a conference room, recreation and refreshment room, record, audio and video tape libraries. There will be facilities for research and subsequently a printing press may also be introduced. Culture awareness study groups are to be organised, and

TAMIL CENTRE IN LONDON



it is reported that many similar institutions abroad have volunteered their support.

Such a large undertaking requires manpower and money. Those willing to assist

physically or financially are being requested to write to: The Tamil Centre, 106 Augustus Road, Wimbledon, London SW19.

10 MILLION PETITION U.N.

'A petition with 10 million signatures demanding UN intervention in the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka which was submitted by the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Tamil Nadu, Madras, will be considered by the UN Commission on Human Rights,' said the Indian Foreign Minister Mr P.V.

Narasimha Rao, speaking in the Indian parliament.

MILITARY CAMP IN KACHCHATIVU?

Mr Lakshman Jeyakody MP demanded in the Sri Lanka parliament that a permanent Sri Lankan military presence should be established on the island of Kachchativu, which lies midway between the shores of

India and Sri Lanka. He felt that such a move was necessary to prevent movement of what he termed as terrorists between the two countries.

He appears to have forgotten or perhaps prefers to ignore the treaty with India about this island. At the time India agreed to grant sovereignty over Kachchativu to Sri Lanka one of the conditions imposed was that the island would not be put to any military use.

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RELEASE OF 16 DETAINEES

Sixteen people detained without charge or trial since July last year are reported to have been released by the authorities in Sri Lanka in late November and early December. They include a 60-year-old lawyer, **Prins Gunasekera**, a prisoner of conscience whose case had been taken up by AI for adoption.

They had been held under Emergency Regulation No.17 since the government's banning of three opposition parties on July 30th 1983.

AI welcomed news of the releases in a letter to the Ministry of Defence of December 29th and asked if 21 other people detained at the same time were also to be released.

AI noted that it was unaware of any charges having been brought against the remaining detainees, who have now been held for some six months.

On December 29th, 1983, AI wrote also to the Sri Lankan Minister of Internal Security, Y.B. Werapitiya, to inquire about reports that an estimated 170 members of the Tamil minority had been arrested in recent months under the Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA). Most of the arrests are understood to have taken place in October, November and December 1983, in the Bat-

ticaloa and Trincomalee districts, although a few arrests were also reported in the Jaffna district.

AI has on a number of occasions expressed concern to the Sri Lanka Government that people arrested under PTA provisions were detained without trial for many months, sometimes incommunicado and subjected to torture and ill-treatment.

In its letter to the Minister of Internal Security, AI expressed concern about the safety of the 170, especially since some of them had been transferred to Welikada Prison, where 53 Tamils had been killed in July 1983.

Specific assurances

AI asked the Minister for specific assurances that the detainees would not be tortured; that relatives be immediately informed of the place of their detention, and that their relatives and lawyers have immediate and regular access to them.

AI also drew attention to the fact that during the recent discussion of Sri Lanka's report to the Human Rights Committee in Geneva in October 1983, several members of the Committee expressed concern that the detention provisions of the PTA had

given rise to 'allegations of arbitrary arrests by the government' and appeared to derogate from Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (against arbitrary arrest or detention).

*AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
NEWSLETTER - February 1984*

COLOMBO REFUSES TO ACCEPT INDIA'S REQUEST

Sri Lanka has turned down India's request for a second entry point for Indian Airlines flights from South India at Jaffna, capital of the Northern Tamil province of the island.

A high-level Indian delegation, led by the Civil Aviation Secretary, Mr M.M. Kohli, which visited Colombo last month, failed to persuade the Sri Lankan Civil Aviation Authority to permit Indian Airlines to revive its service between Jaffna and Tiruchi, which was suspended in 1970, according to Indian Airline sources.

The reason for the refusal is stated to be 'political', as the Sri Lankan government does not want free flow of passengers between Tamil Nadu and Jaffna in view of the recent ethnic disturbances.

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SLFP SPLITS AGAIN

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) led by Mrs S. Bandaranaike has split for the second time in two years.

This time, the split of the SLFP arose from within the Bandaranaike household. The persons who spearheaded the split and gave a new direction to the breakaway group, which has declared itself as a new political party under the name of Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP), were Mr Vijaya Kumaranatunga and his wife, Chandrika Kumaranatunga who is the second daughter of Mrs S. Bandaranaike. The President of the new party is the veteran, T.B. Illangaratne.

The new party had its first public meeting on January 22 at the Sugathadasa Indoor Stadium which was attended by nearly 15,000 people, a big turn-out for an infant in organisational terms.

Public meetings

Since then, reports indicate large attendances at the SLPP's public meetings and all signs point to its popularity in relative

terms. The breakaway group took with it the SLFP's party daily paper *Dinakara* which carries every day long lists of names of people who had defected from the SLFP to join the new party. In some cases, almost the entire regional members would appear to be defecting.

Dismissive manner

Although Mrs B. has publicly treated the split in a dismissive manner and Mr Anura Bandaranaike has attempted to personalise the issue and poke fun at his brother-in-law, the apparent popularity of the new party would appear to be causing them enough worry, according to inside sources.

Mr Vijaya Kumaranatunga, the General Secretary of the SLPP, in replying to a critical comment in an article in a recent issue of the *Lanka Guardian*, states: 'Let me assure him — and all who care to know — that I condemn racism even today. I believe we can be the proud inheritors of Ruvanveliseya and Sigiriya without being racist.' 'Only time will tell', retorted the author of the original article, Dayan Jayatilake.

FUSS OVER AD IN CALENDAR

MR Arthur de Silva, Sri Lanka's Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations Mission in Washington has protested to Pan Am over a 1984 wall calendar that carried a paid advertisement by the Eelam Tamil Association of America.

The calendar, with the airline's logo, carries the slogan 'Independence is our birth-right'. On the bottom left is a map of Sri Lanka showing the area covered by the proposed state of Tamil Eelam.

Mr T. Sri Thillaiampalam, speaking on behalf of the Eelam Association, stated that 2,000 calendars which have been printed for the association by Pan Am's printers were sold for \$10 each, in addition to being distributed free to members of the US Congress, Washington-based diplomats and UN representatives.

He said: 'The slogan was a popular cry during the American war of independence. Our objective is to publicise our just cause in the American context. We are a registered, tax-exempt, charitable organisation and Pan Am knows too well that it is a violation of our rights to deny us our right to use our message in the calendar. The whole issue is blowing up out of proportion and we are glad we are getting a lot of mileage out of it. We have no more calendars to meet the heavy demand.'

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