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GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES MILITARY OFFENSIVE

Mercenaries Bomb Jaffna

BEGINNING MAY 17, for several days, a number of towns in the Sri Lankan northern district of Jaffna were pounded from sea and air in the latest military operation by the government. Scores of Tamil civilians died and public buildings, hospitals and homes were set ablaze and destroyed as Italian built Sia Marchetti attack aircraft piloted by foreign mercenaries hired from the Channel Islands-based shadowy outfit Keeny Meeny Services rained Pakistani manufactured bombs each weighing 55 kilos upon the thickly populated Jaffna city and other towns and villages in the district. At the same time, Israeli-built gunboats indiscriminately shelled the coastal towns of Valvettiturai, Vasavilan, Polikandy and Karainagar and surrounding villages forcing the people to flee. Simultaneously Bell 212 helicopter gunships strafed the area with machine guns.

Even the Jaffna General Hospital located in the centre of the city was not spared. It received several direct hits damaging 4 wards and injuring many inmates.

The military operation which lasted several days was launched in the wake of President Jayawardene's much publicised declaration that he and his government were going to seek a military solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. That this declaration was made and the military offensive commenced in the immediate aftermath of the four-member Indian delegation's visit to Colombo to initiate peace efforts confirmed the long-held suspicion of many that the government was not interested in a negotiated solution.

The operation began with a massive movement of troops numbering over 9,000 and recently acquired heavy weapons, including South African made anti-landmine armour plated tanks, by ship, air and road, the destination being Jaffna.

The troops, by and large, had been confined in their camps during the last year for fear of sniper-fire from Tamil militants who had also planted landmines along important approach roads to the army camps. On May 17, a three-pronged operation was undertaken with ground troops provided with air cover. While the troops attempted to move out of the army camp located within the old Dutch-built Jaffna Fort into the city, those from the camp at Elephant Pass

(the narrow causeway which links the Jaffna Peninsula with the mainland), some 20 miles south of Jaffna city, began to advance towards the city. Simultaneously, troops began to advance from the main army camp located in the military airfield at Palaly towards the city and also from the beaches along the coast and islands including Kayts, 19 miles from Jaffna city.

Strong resistance

What began as a well planned operation and initially expected to last 72 hours, according to a Ministry of National Security communique, to gain military domination of the Jaffna Peninsula, soon met with strong and stiff resistance from Tamil guerrillas. The troops from all three army camps, Jaffna, Palaly and Elephant Pass, were pinned down and their advance thwarted when Tamil guerrillas fought back with rockets, mortars and automatic weapons.

If the government had calculated an easy walkover against the militants in the wake of the LTTE-TELO fratricidal clash, and to gain military control of the Jaffna peninsula and thereafter to liquidate the Liberation Tigers and other militant groups, then the resistance the troops encountered must have given a rude shock to the arm-chair military strategists in Colombo, including President Jayawardene who only a week earlier

Continued on back page

ICE CREAM AND GRENADES

MR LALITH ATHULATHMUDALI, the Sri Lankan Minister of National Security, speaking at a recent Buddhist ceremony commented: "... while Sinhalese boys in their teens in the south are walking about with ice cream cones in their hands, the boys of the north are going about with grenades in their hands".

Does the Minister understand how this situation arose? Is it because Tamil youths have a congenital or traditional proclivity to violence or an unnatural eagerness to wield such lethal weapons, and that Sinhalese youths, imbibed with the Buddhist concepts of non-violence and compassion, are content to handle ice cream cones and not grenades? Is it not a fact that areas predominantly inhabited by Tamils had the least crime record until recently? Is it also not a fact that Tamil people, including the youth, had been as law abiding, if not more, as other people of Sri Lanka? Then, why at least a section of them have been driven to the use of violence as a means of expression? What and who pushed them into this violent course?

Human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Tamil people, including the right to be treated as equals in the land of their birth, were progressively denied. Politically and socially they were oppressed. Their education and employment opportunities were unfairly restricted. Their peaceful protest campaigns were suppressed with brute force. Their identity as a cultural and national entity was sought to be destroyed by the deprivation of their linguistic rights and by the practice of state-aided discriminatory colonisation of Tamil areas. Repositories of their cultural heritage such as libraries, temples and churches were set ablaze and destroyed. They were made tragic victims of frequent racial pogroms while the State and its forces of law and order failed to protect them from marauding mobs. Tamils in their thousands, especially the youths, were incarcerated for prolonged periods, beaten, tortured and many of them even killed. The state employed its troops to kill and maim innocent Tamil civilians in their thousands, set fire to and destroy their homes, farms and their villages. Their women were raped and children kidnapped. Thousands of them were forced to flee to other countries in search of physical security. Since the 1980s, over 300,000 Tamils have fled the country as a direct consequence of discrimination, oppression and physical violence.

To quote Mr Shelton Ranarajah, Deputy Minister of Justice, a lone and sane voice from the ranks of an insane and insensitive bunch of opportunist ruling party politicians, "The ethnic conflict could be said to have originated with the

promulgation of Sinhala as the state language. The Tamils asked for equal rights and when they campaigned, they did so through the path of ahimsa. They did not take to arms in 1958. They reposed trust in the Sinhala people and entered into the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact. Because of the opposition from some political opportunists, the agreement was torn up. By the year 1972, Tamil youth had come to believe that Tamils as a community were not only being deprived of educational opportunities and employment prospects, but also of land that rightly belonged to them. The Tamil political leadership which thought that the government of the country was systematically cheating them of their legitimate rights thought that only in a separate state could their rights be preserved ... The Sinhala people instead of trying to understand the root cause of the demand for a separate state, merely pushed themselves into a position where they began to view the Tamils with distrust, doubt and fear ... When in 1983 thousands of Tamil people who had lived together with the Sinhalese for generations in the south were attacked and their property destroyed, many of us went to their help. Many of us felt sorry for them. But how many of those who were involved in the atrocities were identified or punished? Why were they not brought under the process of the law? Several thousands of homes belonging to Tamils were set on fire. What had been done to compensate for that? Hurt and humiliated by the treatment given to them, Tamils naturally lost faith in us ... Today, the non-participation of the Tamils in our administrative and public life is a loss to our society. Tamil intellectuals, doctors, engineers and professionals in many walks of life have left this country and are lending their services to foreign countries. I have met several of them in the course of my travels in many parts of the world, and they all yearn to get back and work in their own ancestral soil, if only conditions could be created for them to come back and live with equal rights, dignity and honour ..."

The present struggle of the Tamil people reflect their desire to regain those equal rights, dignity and honour. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognising the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family, asserted that human rights should be protected by law if man is not compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression. The struggle of the Tamil people has today reached that stage of rebellion against the tyranny and oppression they suffer at the hands of the Sri Lankan state. And the guns and grenades that the Tamil youth carry constitute the tools of that rebellion.

COLLECTIVE VICTIMISATION

THE IRA carry out bomb attacks in Northern Ireland and in mainland Britain in pursuance of what they perceive as their political goals. They even tried to physically eliminate the entire British cabinet including the Prime Minister by blowing up the Grand Hotel at Brighton in 1984. But the British government did not and does not go about isolating and victimising every Irishman in Britain for the actions of the IRA. Some members belonging to the Sikh community carry out violent attacks in India and outside in pursuance of their demand for Khalistan. They even assassinated the much revered Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Even today, violent attacks by militant Sikhs continue in Punjab. But the Sikhs as a community are not victimised and continue to occupy many of the most sensitive and highest positions in all levels of Indian administration.

However, Sri Lanka is different and in that country the Tamils as a community are treated differently. That is why several hundred innocent Tamils employed in several government departments, state corporations and radio and television networks have been ordered out of their work places and sent away on 'compulsory leave' following two recent explosions in Colombo, one in an Air Lanka jetliner and another at the Central Telegraphic Office, allegedly caused by a Tamil

militant group.

What is most distressing is the fact that so far there have been no protests from either the trade unions to which the suspended Tamil employees belonged or from the Sinhalese colleagues with whom they worked, or from newspapers or opposition parties against this collective victimisation of an entire people.

The government's action demonstrates most conclusively that the Tamil people as a whole are no longer trusted; they are no longer to be treated as part of the Sri Lankan society; and everyone who is born a Tamil would be called upon to pay the penalty for any alleged act of commission or omission on the part of an individual Tamil or a group of Tamils. The government itself would appear to have come to the conclusion that Sinhalese and Tamils can no longer work together.

We have repeatedly commented in the past that the demand for a separate state by the Tamils was not one of choice; it was in fact forced on them in the context in which they found themselves. It was the actions of successive governments that pushed substantial sections of the Tamil people to support the demand for a separate state. If past acts of discrimination, oppression and violence against the Tamils had gradually made separation a psychological reality, recent actions by the government tend to make separation a physical imperative.

INDIAN GOVERNMENT CONDEMNS MILITARY OFFENSIVE BY SRI LANKA

From G.K. Reddy NEW DELHI, May 19

THE GOVERNMENT of India today condemned in the strongest possible terms, the massive military operations launched by Sri Lanka in the Northern Province, including aerial bombing and strafing of Jaffna City, which resulted in the destruction of a hospital and the loss of a large number of innocent civilian lives.

In a sharply worded statement issued after several hours of consultations at the highest level, the Sri Lankan Government was charged with duplicity in preparing for this military action, while talking reassuringly of its desire for a peaceful political settlement of the Tamil problem.

The hopeful atmosphere created by the recent talks between India and Sri Lanka in Colombo had been frustrated by the Jayawardene Government's disinclination to provide any further amplifications or clarifications to the formulations that emerged from these discussions. This negative position taken by Sri Lanka had coincided with the commencement of these military operations, which have turned the sincere efforts to resolve this tragic tangle into a pointless exercise.

The Indian statement, approved by the Prime Minister after his return from the African tour today was drafted by the new External Affairs Minister, Mr P. Shiv Shank-

er, in consultation with senior officials dealing with this problem. In view of these grave developments, Mr Shiv Shanker cancelled his trip to Brazil to attend the Group of 77 meeting and the Finance Minister, Mr V.P. Singh, left tonight to represent India at this conference.

The following is the full text of the Indian statement: "We are distressed and disturbed by reports that the Sri Lanka armed forces have commenced large-scale military operations in the Jaffna peninsula, including indiscriminate aerial bombing and strafing of Jaffna City, which has resulted in the destruction of a hospital and a large number of civilians killed and many hundreds wounded. Such continued military operations will inevitably lead to the loss of still larger numbers of innocent civilian lives and only prolong the agony and suffering of the people of Sri Lanka.

"The Government of India expresses its grave concern at the massive use of force by the Government of Sri Lanka at a time when Sri Lankan leaders have repeatedly professed their commitment to seeking a peaceful political solution to the ethnic issue. It is particularly deplorable that such operations should have been undertaken at a time when the Governments of India and Sri Lanka were engaged in discussions to find a peaceful political solution to this problem. These operations frustrate the process of negotiations. The Government of

India is also distressed by the unwarranted and baseless statements of the Sri Lankan leadership, appearing in the press, critical of the Prime Minister of India.

"The attitude of the Sri Lankan Government gives the clear impression that it is unwilling to provide any further amplifications or clarifications on the subjects discussed during the visit of the Minister of State, M. P. Chidambaram, to Colombo, nor does it seem prepared to furnish its views on alternative formulations suggested in this regard. This negative position taken by the Sri Lankan Government has now coincided with the commencement of its military operations in the Jaffna peninsula, which is indeed unfortunate.

"The Government of India would like to reiterate their firm view that there can be no military solution to the ethnic issue in Sri Lanka. The current military operations undertaken by the Sri Lankan armed forces will only lead to further worsening of the situation and add to the suffering of the people of Sri Lanka. It is our earnest hope that rather than taking recourse to the use of force and bloodshed against a significant section of its own people, the Government of Sri Lanka would do well to seek a resolution of the ethnic issue through a process of dialogue and meaningful, pragmatic measures to meet the situation and resolve the problem."

By courtesy of "The Hindu"

US Congressmen Protest Against El Salvador-Type Bombing of Tamil Areas

The following is the text of a letter dated 21 April 1986 to Mr George P. Shultz, the US Secretary of State, by US Congress Member, Mr John E. Porter:

I am writing to you to express my concern over the current situation in Sri Lanka and the problem facing people of the Tamil minority.

The 1985 State Department Human Rights Report highlighted the current problems in Sri Lanka. In the northern and the eastern parts of Sri Lanka, which are predominantly Tamil areas, the toll from politically motivated violence continues to rise. The actions of the Sri Lankan security forces have been a major source of this tension.

As a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, I am aware that the FY '87 foreign assistance request for Sri Lanka includes \$20 million in developmental assistance and \$185,000 for military training.

However, I am greatly disturbed over reports that indicate that the Sri Lankan government security forces have used military force, including aerial bombing, against Tamil villages.

The reports also indicate that there have been increased disappearances of young men from Tamil villages. According to Amnesty International, of the 180 Tamil males they have documented who have disappeared, many were discovered by their families to be in detention at police stations or army detention camps.

The situation in Sri Lanka is very troublesome. I believe that if we are to maintain funding to Sri Lanka at present levels, their government must take steps to demonstrate their commitment to improving its relations with the Tamil minority.

Mr Secretary, I would greatly appreciate any information that you have about the present situation in Sri Lanka and how we are using our influence to curb the aerial bombing and human rights violations of the Sri Lankan security forces. I also hope that you can use your influence to urge the Sri Lankan government that the United States wants to see real progress in Sri Lankan human rights.

The following is the text of a letter dated 12 May 1986 addressed to Sri Lankan President, J.R. Jayawardene, by Mr Mervyn M. Dymally, US Congress Member and Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives:

Recent news accounts and reports documenting an escalation of violence between the Sri Lankan military and Tamil guerrillas are very disturbing. It appears that both sides have opted to settle what is basically an ethnic struggle for political and democratic participation through the use of its arms.

As I review this situation, three conclusions become obvious. First, innocent civilians are killed, injured, and arrested as a result of the unrest. The indiscriminate bombings are similar to those reported from the war in El Salvador. Second, this policy invites polarisation of the Sinhalese and Tamils in a fashion likened to the making of a civil war. Third, it is very clear that this policy of armed conflict is not working. Similarly, it is clear that an alternative solution is necessary to prevent an increasingly dangerous situation.

Sri Lanka has been a success story in democratic history since its independence. Therefore, it is disappointing to learn that the core of the current problem centres around representation of the minority. I do not believe that as the world's largest per capita recipient of Western aid, Sri Lanka serves democracy well by the current unrest.

These developments have caused grave concerns in the Sri Lankan community in my State of California. As a representative of a Tamil constituency and member of the House Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs, I intend to raise this question with the committee.

I understand that Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is very interested in a negotiated solution. It is my hope that you will pursue this course with the Indian Government to arrive at a satisfactory political settlement.

Throughout this world, we are witnessing violent conflicts that involve the use of armed forces. It is my position as a member of Congress and of the House Foreign Affairs Committee that the best alternative is a peaceful negotiated solution. I urge you and officials of your government to seek such an alternative for the sake of the Sri Lankan people and democracy.

JAYAWARDENE'S REMARKS 'INTEMPERATE AND IRRESPONSIBLE'

— Shiv Shankar

THE ACCUSATIONS of President Jayawardene about the position of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka were 'intemperate' and the language used 'irresponsible', the Indian External Affairs Minister P. Shiv Shankar recently said in the Upper House of the Indian Parliament.

"It does not behove a seasoned politician of the stature of Jayawardene to speak in such a manner", the Minister said, referring to the interview given by the Sri Lankan President to the London Sunday Times in which he accused Mr Gandhi of backing the Tamil militants and appealed to the western countries for arms and money to fight them.

Mr Shiv Shankar, who was making his parliamentary debut in the new ministry in the course of responding to points made by members of parliament during a Calling Attention Notice, said, "If these remarks were only made to get more arms and money, then they were even more unfortunate".

During the discussion on the motion, in which a dozen Opposition and ruling party members spoke, the Indian Government was urged to shake off its "vacillating and weak" response to the happenings in the island.

The Opposition members wanted a drastic remedy. Mr V. Gopalasamy (DMK), who tabled the motion, wanted the Government to give Sri Lanka an ultimatum and break off diplomatic relations in case it did not end the "genocide" of Tamils and resolve the crisis speedily. Other spoke of economic sanctions and international pressure to make Mr Jayawardene budge.

Dealing with the suggestions, Mr Shiv Shankar in his reply said that breaking off diplomatic ties would be an extreme step. Such an uncharitable view could not be taken.

During the debate that generated considerable heat, the Opposition members charged the Government with adopting a weak approach. Most of them said that the Indian foreign policy in respect of the Sri Lankan crisis was a total flop.

Mr V. Gopalasamy said that under the pretext of negotiations the Jayawardene regime was cleverly using up the time to arm itself to the teeth to crush the Tamil movement. The

Lankan authorities were out to annihilate not only the Tamil populace but stamp out every vestige of Tamil culture in the island.

Mr P. Upendra (Telugu Desam) wanted India to mobilise world opinion and bring international pressure on Sri Lanka. It would not be enough to move the Human Rights Commission. The UN itself should be approached. He wondered how India was still treating it as an internal problem of Lanka since it was the Tamil race which was being systematically butchered.

Mr Jasant Singh (BJP) criticised the Indian Government's approach which was one of helplessness. Mr Chitta Basu (FB) said it was clear that Mr Jayawardene wanted to have a full-fledged war with the Tamils, for which he had sought assistance from the Western Powers.

Mr M.C. Bhandare (Cong-I) said the State terrorism going on in Lanka was of an unprecedented dimension. The Amnesty International's report pointed to the horrors perpetrated in the name of putting down terrorism.

Mr Valampuri John (AIADMK) said that without going in for economic sanctions India could do nothing to make Lanka act reasonably. He said it was curious that Mr Jayawardene should be threatening a military solution, when he had already resorted to military action in a big way. Sri Lanka regarded India as a mere paper tiger.

Others who spoke on the motion included Mr Dipen Ghosh (CPI-M), Mr S.P. Malaviya (Lok Dal), Mr M.S. Gurupadaswamy (Janata), Mr M. Kalyanasundaram (CPI) and Mr Madan Bhatia (Congress-I).

The following is the text of the statement made by Mr Shiv Shankar on 13 May 1986 in the Upper House of the Indian Parliament:

"An Indian delegation led by Mr P.P. Chidambaram, Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, visited Colombo from April 29 to May 4, 1986. The delegation included Romesh Bhandari, Special Representative for Sri Lanka.

The delegation had extensive and detailed discussions with President Jayawardene, Minister for National Security, Laliath Athulathmudali,

and Minister for Lands and Land Development and Mahaveli Development, Gamini Disanayake. The delegation also exchanged views with the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, A.C.S. Hameed, leaders of all political parties, including Mrs. Bandaranaike, as well as representatives of ethnic minority groups in Sri Lanka.

As a result of these discussions, the delegation returned with some more detailed formulations and the extent to which Sri Lanka Government is willing to meet Tamil political aspirations. While there has been some movement on issues like overall structure for devolution of power and land settlement policy, there are still a number of crucial gaps in formulations on core issues like law and order and on the nature of the relationship between present northern and eastern provinces which are issues to which Tamils attach great importance.

The Government are evaluating formulations received from Sri Lanka Government. The Sri Lanka Government has also been requested to communicate their views on certain alternative formulations. In our view what can be put to the Tamil side is only a package of proposals which are evaluated as constituting a fair and reasonable basis for negotiated settlement. Since the process is continuing, it would be premature to draw any firm conclusions.

It is our clear position that unless the Government of Sri Lanka takes decisive steps to accommodate Tamil aspirations, the political process which has been restarted after a gap of time may suffer a setback. The Government are of the firm view that process towards political solution must be carried forward urgently and that there can be no military solution to the long-pending ethnic problem of Sri Lanka. The Government are keen to ensure that a solution is arrived at within a compressed timeframe so that the agony and sufferings of the people of Sri Lanka and particularly of Tamils in northern and eastern provinces are brought to a quick end. The Government condemn continuing violence in Sri Lanka which is vitiating the atmosphere for working towards a peaceful solution. Return of normalcy to Sri Lanka is not only essential for further well-being of that country but also for stability and peace in the region".

'Impose sanctions if talks fail'

LEADERS of nine opposition parties in India called upon the Centre to give up "soft-peddalling" on the issue of Sri Lanka Tamils and adopt a new approach to settle it.

In a joint statement, released at a press conference by Mr P. Nedumaran, president of the Tamil Nadu Kamaraj Congress, they also wanted the Government to think of economic measures against Sri Lanka, if the negotiations did not lead to a political settlement.

The situation deteriorated because of the "vacillating policy" pursued by the Government and it should take up this issue not as a mediator but as one directly connected with the interests of Sri Lanka Tamils. "It is a great mistake to consider the problem internal, affecting Tamils only".

Mr V. Gopalaswamy, DMK member of the Rajya Sabha, who played an active role getting

the joint statement, described it as a significant breakthrough in the efforts to mobilise opinion in favour of the Sri Lanka Tamils. Some of the signatories in the past took the stand that the ethnic problem was an internal affair but now they were persuaded to change their stand, he said.

Mr Nedumaran, who had toured the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka last October, said the people there looked to India for help in putting an end to the continued genocide. The unanimous view was that they could not live in peace unless Eelam was formed.

The TNKC leader wanted the Centre to give a stern warning to the Sri Lankan Government to stop the genocide and seek a political settlement. If a political settlement could not be reached, the Indian Government should recognise the struggle for Eelam.

TAMIL REFUGEES RECEIVE ASSURANCE

THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT has ruled out sending the Sri Lankan Tamil refugees back till proper conditions were created which would ensure their return to the island in safety and dignity, Parliament was told.

In a written reply to a member of Lok Sabha, External Affairs Minister B.R. Bhagat, however, said that the government would not prevent any voluntary return of the refugees to their homes. "We would welcome it", he said.

The best the Government could do to help the return of these refugees to Sri Lanka was to assist in the search for a political solution to the ethnic problem in that country, the Minister said.

"Only when this problem is resolved and suitable conditions are created in Sri Lanka can there be progress in regard to the return of the refugees", he said.

ALL-PARTY SUPPORT FOR SRI LANKA TAMILS

MADURAI, May 4

THE "Save Ceylon Tamils" conference, being held under the auspices of the Tamil Eelam Supporters Organisation, began here today. Mr M. Karunanidhi, DMK president, in his welcome address, said the conference was being held to arrive at a consensus on the basis of which "we could mobilise public opinion across the length and breadth of the country".

Mr Karunanidhi said there was a growing feeling that the rest of India was not paying enough attention to the Sri Lanka Tamils because it concerned only the Tamils. His hope was that the participation of these leaders would strengthen "our bonds of national integration".

The Government of India, he said, had failed to raise the issue in international forums. Last year when Argentina wanted to raise it in the Human Rights Commission in Geneva, India prevented it saying it was engaged in negotiations. India did raise it this year in Geneva. But it was done half-heartedly and no canvassing or lobbying was done. So it did not produce the desired effect. Since July 1983, the Sri Lankan army, paramilitary forces and police had been killing innocent Tamils. The Sri Lanka President, Mr J.R. Jayawardene, had declared in February last that he would seek a military solution. To demonstrate that he meant business, he had ordered aerial bombing of Tamil areas.

The DMK chief alleged that the Government of India had walked into "Mr Jayawardene's trap" of conducting peace talks which had given him enough time to bring in foreign elements. Today, the Sri Lankan soldiers were being sent regularly to Pakistan for training. The Sri Lanka-Pakistan nexus was active.

Colombo's alibi: India's "self-imposed restraint and vague good neighbourliness" had received the appreciation of outsiders but had not achieved anything. An Indian delegation had just returned from Colombo, but any level of talks would not produce results, unless the other party was equally serious and honest. Mr Jayawardene, being the man he was, would be the happiest to receive Indian delegations in Colombo to hoodwink the West of his earnestness for talks. "Every year before the international Aid Consortium meeting, Sri Lanka wants an alibi that it is seriously considering a political solution to the ethnic problem. India has produced the alibi for this year and Mr Jayawardene would be thankful to Mr Rajiv Gandhi for this favour", Mr Karunanidhi said.

Solidarity for Tamils: Briefing newsmen after the closed door meeting of the political parties, Mr Karunanidhi said the conference pledged solidarity with the Sri Lanka Tamils and expressed its deep national concern over the continuing intensification of the crisis in the island.

Unity of Tamils urged: He said seven groups of Sri Lanka Tamils - TULF, LTTE, TELO, EROS, EERLF, PLOT, PROTEG - participated in the conference. A request was made that all the Tamil groups should get united and work in harmony. Mr. Rama Rao, and Mr Vajpayee had also advised the Tamil groups to join hands. The Tamil organisation had promised that they would abide by the request and assured the leaders they would work in unity to achieve their common objective. It was proposed to constitute a national committee in Delhi to coordinate the work. All the political parties were requested to name one representative to the panel.

'Centre's failure': The conference called upon the Govern-

ment of India to raise the issue with vigour in international forums such as the UN, NAM and CHOGM for prompt remedial action. The Centre's policy so far towards Sri Lanka and the Tamil question had failed to produce tangible results because it was "superficial, vacillating and incoherent". The mere fact that more and more people were being killed in Sri Lanka after India expressed its concern bore testimony to this, the conference charged. The conference said that in spite of the Thimpu talks and the ceasefire, the solution seemed to be as elusive as in the beginning. Sri Lanka was acquiring arms from all over the world and moving towards a total military solution. The policy of trusting the Sri Lankan Government to achieve a negotiated settlement had, thus, proved to be sterile. Making use of the time gained by the "pretence of talks", Colombo had brought into the picture dangerous external elements unfriendly to India, adding a new dimension to the geopolitics of this region. The conference called upon all aid giving governments and international agencies not to give help to Sri Lanka which could be used to perpetrate the genocide of Tamils. It urged the Government of India to give up, what it alleged, the present casual attitude to the issue, and take up this matter not as a mediator but as a nation intimately and deeply connected with the fate of Sri Lanka Tamils. Also, it should reevaluate its policy and adopt realistic approaches to save the Tamils there.

National issue: Mr P. Nedumaran, president, Tamil Nadu Kamaraj Congress and reception committee chairman, in his address of welcome said the Sri Lanka Tamils issue cannot be deemed as a problem confronting the Tamils alone. It was a national problem, and above all, it was a human problem.

Mr Abdul Rasheed Kabuli of the National Conference (Farooq), pledging his party's support to the struggle of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, said it was not a problem of Tamil Nadu alone, but of the whole country.

Mr Balwant Singh Ramoowalia (Akali Dal) also extended his party's support to the Sri Lanka Tamils.

The BJP president, Mr A.B. Vajpayee, said India was directly affected by the issue. "The island Tamils are our kith and kin. We want justice for the suppressed people of Sri Lanka". If the genocide continued, the peace and security of the entire region would be destroyed.

Mr Vajpayee also criticised the Doordarshan for not covering the conference. "Doordarshan is the privilege of the Prime Minister," he added.

The Hindustan Front leader, Dr. Subramaniam Swamy, and Mr B. Rachaiiah, Karnataka Home Minister also spoke.

The Lok Dal leader, Mr H.N. Bahuguna, criticised the Sri Lankan President for not honouring his promises.

Mr P. Upendra, Telugu Desam leader, regretted that the pacts that had been entered into between India and Sri Lanka had not been implemented by Sri Lanka.

Mr P. Unnikrishnan, Congress (S) MP, said a "civil war" between Sinhalese and Tamils was on. The Sri Lankan President wanted to send the Tamils out of the island.

Mr K. Veeramani (DK) felt no purpose was being served by holding talks or by sending teams to Sri Lanka. He wanted the Centre to take some effective steps.

Mr Abdul Samad (IUML) regretted that despite talks between India and Sri Lanka, no solution had been found.

INDIA SHOULD TAKE A CLEAR STAND ON TAMILS' ISSUE — SAYS NTR —

From Our Staff Reporter MADURAI, May 4

THE Sri Lankan Tamils are undergoing untold hardship under an oppressive Government and the Government of India should make up its mind once and for all. New Delhi should take a definite, firm and inflexible stand to drive sense into Colombo. "It is high time we define our position and offer a clear cut solution before it is too late", Mr N.T. Rama Rao, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister, said.

Inaugurating the 'Save Ceylon Tamils' conference, organised by the Tamil Eelam Sup-

porters' Organisation. Mr Rama Rao said the moral conscience of the international community should be roused to the full to the genocidal tragedy of Sri Lankan Tamils.

The Sri Lankan Government should be made to stand before the bar of international opinion.

Mr Rama Rao said the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement should be approached to ensure the peaceful coexistence

of Sinhalese and Tamils in the island nation. The hand of the Sri Lankan Government which was bent on "diabolical designs" to annihilate the Tamils should be stayed.

"As an Indian and as a representative of six crores of Telugus, full of fraternal feelings, I am deeply and painfully conscious of the miserable and pitiable plight of my Tamilian brethren in Sri Lanka", Mr Rama Rao said and pledged as the leader of the Telugu Desam, the party's total and unequivocal support to Delhi to solve this "hydra-headed problem".

TAMIL EMPLOYEES BANNED FROM GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS

PUBLIC service employees belonging to the Tamil community working in many government departments and state corporations have been compulsorily sent away from their offices on the orders of the government. This action is explained away by the government as a 'security measure' and followed the recent explosions aboard the Air Lanka Tristar and at the Central Telegraphic Office in the Sri Lankan capital city of Colombo.

The government's move has been denounced as an act of victimisation of the entire Tamil community.

Calling upon the government to rescind its decision, the Council for Hindu Organisations in Sri Lanka stated: "In our opinion the decision of the Government to send Tamils on Special (Compulsory) leave hurts the feelings of the Tamils, widens misunderstanding between the two major communities, violates our Constitution and the United Nations provisions on Human Rights and jeopardizes the efforts to resolve politically the ethnic problem", states the President of the Council of Hindu Organizations, Yogendra Duraiswamy.

'No-Confidence in Tamils

A Press release by the President further states:

"The Council of Hindu Organizations is gravely concerned at the decision of the Government to send on Special (Compulsory) leave Tamils working in certain government institutions. According to the newspapers the government institutions which have sent away the Tamil employees are the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, the Rupavahini, Air Lanka and the Department of Telecommunications.

No formal announcement was made by the government on such an important matter. The people of this country have the right to know the reasons for this unfortunate decision, far-reaching in its implications and damaging to the long-term interest of Sri Lanka. It is regrettable that this decision tantamounts to a declaration of no-confidence in the Tamils working in the various government institutions.

It is also reported that this decision was made for security reasons and is a sequel to the bomb explosions in the Air Lanka Tristar aircraft and in the Central Telegraph Office.

'Innocent Tamils Penalised

No legal judgement has been made as to who was responsible for these deplorable acts, and according to our Constitution "Every person shall be presumed innocent until he is proved guilty". Conceding for purposes of argument that a Tamil individual or a group was responsible, why

should the innocent Tamil employees working in other government institutions be penalised? More so, when senior government leaders on many occasions have repeated that their fight is against "Tamil Marxist terrorists" and not against the majority of the Tamils and that the problem is not an ethnic one.

Where will this lead to? Another explosion and other government institutions may follow suit. Private institutions may take the hint and act accordingly. The result would be the removal of Tamils from government and non-governmental institutions, the widening of the cleavage and the polarization of the communities. Tamils resident in Colombo and other areas in the South would be constrained to trek back to their "traditional homelands" and de facto separation would take place, much against the wishes of those who want a united Sri Lanka. The need for security will then not arise!

Terrorism is not unique to Sri Lanka. It is prevalent in many parts of the world. The actions taken by other governments in such situations are worth considering. Though Sikh terrorists have killed many innocents and have hijacked Indian Airlines planes, yet Sikhs continue to hold offices at all levels in the Central and State governments of India. The confidence bestowed on them by the Indian government was so great that a Sikh General was directly in charge of Operation Blue Star to rid the Golden Temple of Sikh terrorists. Similarly, despite Irish Republican Army (IRA) attacks on British installations, Irish Catholics are not sent on compulsory leave from offices in London.

Unconstitutional

The decision of the government violates its own Constitution. According to Chapter 3 paragraph 11 it is stated, inter alia, that no person shall be subjected to degrading treatment. In paragraph 12 (1) all persons are considered equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the Law and in paragraph 12 (2) it stated that no citizen shall be discriminated against, inter alia, on the grounds of race. It is also clearly stated in the Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties that "the State shall strengthen national unity by promoting co-operation and mutual confidence among all sections of the people of Sri Lanka, including racial religious, linguistic and other groups." The decision to send Tamil employees on Special (Compulsory) leave because they were Tamils does not strengthen national unity nor does it promote mutual confidence among all sections of the people.

The decision also violates the United Nations instruments on Human Rights. Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights states, inter alia, that every one has the right "to just and favourable conditions of work". The International Labour Organisation Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation defines discrimination as including any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis, inter alia, of race, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation.

In our opinion the decision of the government to send Tamils on Special (Compulsory) leave hurts the feelings of the Tamils, widens misunderstanding between the two major communities, violates our Constitution and the United Nations provisions on Human Rights and jeopardizes the efforts to resolve politically the ethnic problem. We, therefore, appeal to the government to rescind this unfair decision."

All Tamil Customs officers asked to do desk jobs

All Tamil customs officers below the rank of Deputy Collectors manning the baggage sector passenger terminals and air cargo section of the Katunayake Airport and the Bloemendhal Road Tricot Warehouse have been transferred to desk jobs for security reasons.

According to custom sources around 30 such officers have been transferred, and are now working in non-sensitive areas of the Customs Departments.

Most of them, according to this source, have been asked to do paper work and desk jobs.

The transfers are expected to be effective until such time as the security situation returns to normal.

The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation and Rupavahini last week sent over 160 Tamil officers employed by them on special leave also for security reasons.

TULF wants leave order withdrawn

The TULF yesterday appealed to the government to immediately "rescind its punitive order" in sending "Rupavahini, SLBC, Telecommunication Department and Air Lanka employees on compulsory leave."

The following is the full statement issued by the TULF's Colombo office:

The decision of the Rupavahini Corporation, SLBC, Telecommunication Department and Air Lanka to place its Tamil employees on compulsory leave is an illegal and unconstitutional act.

The Government should immediately rescind this punitive order if it does not seek to embarrass and punish employees who have committed no offence whatsoever.

To discriminate between employees on racial grounds serves only to heighten ethnic animosity and hostilities in the work place and in the country at large."

NO GAS IN NORTH: 20,000 AFFECTED

The disruption of the supply of LP gas to the North one and a half months ago has badly affected over 20,000 consumers in the Peninsula and compelled eight authorised dealers of gas in Jaffna to put up shutters.

Gas supplies to the North were halted in March following an explosion at the Gas and Water Company's Mabima plant, which killed one employee.

Police alleged that that bomb which caused the explosion had been concealed inside an empty gas cylinder which had been sent from the North.

The General Manager of the Colombo Gas and Water Company, Mrs R.R. Nalliah, yesterday pointed out that the supply of gas to Northern Peninsula could not be resumed until adequate security measures were introduced to the Mabima plant to scan consignments of empty cylinders coming from the North.

"Security has been intensified and every empty cylinder irrespective of from where they come are thoroughly checked. But we are still not prepared to receive consignments from Jaffna dealers", she said.

Asked how much longer the company would take to resume supplies to consumers on the North, Mrs Nalliah replied: "We are trying our best to resume supplies in another two weeks or so".

COPTER CRASHES: SEVEN HURT

A security force helicopter at the Elephant Pass camp crashed to the ground on 22 May morning after rising a few feet on take-off, injuring seven persons, including its crew, according to security sources.

The injuries to the crew were reported not serious, said the source.

Bomb Scare In Survey Head Office

The Survey Department Headquarters in Narahenpita closed office for the day an hour after it opened for business yesterday following a bomb scare in the Department which made police, Army and Military Police units to cordon off the area and launch a search of the building.

No bomb was found, police said, but employees refused to enter the premises through fear of an explosion.

The bomb scare, police said, took place after the Narahenpita Police and the Military Police Unit received anonymous telephone calls warning that most of the Tamil employees in the Department were on leave today and a bomb had been planted in the building.

Police sources said that hundreds of employees who were watching from a safe distance, however, refused to enter the building even after police declared it safe.

"Stop The Slaughter"

The mounting number of tragic deaths in the battles in Jaffna and in the wanton attack on a vehicle carrying refugees in Dehiwatte, Serunuwara further point to the urgent need for a peaceful and political solution of the worsening conflict, states a Joint Press release issued by the LSSP, CP and the SLMP.

The Release adds: "The deaths of combatants on all sides are to be deplored: but specially tragic is the slaughter of innocent non-combatant Tamils and Sinhalese.

"Meanwhile, the country is heading for economic and political ruin.

"As we have pointed out before this is a war in which all are losers and through which the country will be destroyed.

"This slaughter must stop. We call upon the fighters and the Government to end this intolerable situation. Let them recognise the fact that there is an ethnic problem to be solved. Let them recognise that the solution must be reached on the basis of ensuring the integrity of the nation and the unity of the country.

"Let the will of all who are revolted by the killings, the destruction and the unbearable tensions generated by the conflict prevail. Let that will prevail in order to bring about a peaceful political solution that will enable all communities to live together in peace."

BAR ASSOCIATION ON RIGHTS OF DETAINEES

The sub-committee of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka recently met to discuss the right of suspects in Police custody to obtain the services of lawyers.

The sub-committee unanimously agreed that the Police must, when a person is taken into custody, inform a friend, relative or an Attorney-At-Law of the arrest, and also permit an Attorney-At-Law to watch the interests of the person arrested.

The Committee has also suggested that the Criminal Procedure Code be suitably amended to empower a Judge of the High Court to immediately inquire into any complaint regarding the detention of a suspect.

The Committee further recommends that if a person has made more than one statement to Police the 'B' report filed by Police should contain reference to that.

It has therefore suggested that Section 115(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure and Section 65 of the Police Ordinance be amended accordingly.

The Committee also took the view that a Habeas Corpus application did not serve expeditiously to obtaining relief where Police have exceeded the twenty-four hour rule of detention of a person without a charge.

CTO SUSPECTED RELEASED

L.L. Reginald Perera who had been remanded to Police custody in connection with the bomb explosion at the Central Telegraphic Office on 7 May, was discharged on 16 May by Fort Magistrate, Mr Quintus Perera due to lack of evidence that would suggest his involvement.

Court was informed by Police Sergeant Wickremarachchi of the Fort Police that there was no evidence against the suspect in connection with the bomb blast.

The bearded suspect, from Kalutara North, had been taken into custody when he was spotted taking to his heels soon after the explosion.

Reginald Perera's defence was that he had fled in fear.

LTTE EXPLAINS...

The following is the full text of a press statement dated 30.4.86 issued by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in regard to its clash with the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation.

"It is with great sense of sorrow that we wish to inform that there has been a major clash between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) in Jaffna. Armed confrontation broke out following the kidnapping of two leading members of the LTTE and the murder of one of our senior commanders, Capt. Lingam, by the TELO. The LTTE guerrilla formation were compelled to take punitive action by raiding TELO bases in Jaffna peninsula to rescue the kidnapped members and in that process several TELO guerrillas have been killed and arms and ammunition captured.

The quarrel started when the armed TELO members attacked the public in Jaffna for observing hartal in memory of an LTTE field commander, Major Aruna, who was killed in a sea battle with the Sri Lankan navy on Friday. The TELO members, irritated by the overwhelming support given by the people of Jaffna to the LTTE, attacked the civilians blaming them for not commemorating their dead fighters. When two senior members of the LTTE intervened to protect the public, they were manhandled and abducted. Thereafter one of the senior commanders of the LTTE approached TELO leaders to seek the release of the kidnapped members. The TELO responded by shooting the LTTE commander dead.

This unprovoked murder and abduction forced the Tigers to take armed action to secure the release of our senior members. LTTE guerrillas raided several TELO bases and in the clashes several TELO guerrillas were killed and a large number surrendered with their weapons. One of our fighters was killed.

The LTTE is deeply grieved over the unfortunate incident precipitated by the irresponsible and undisciplined conduct of the TELO."

Editor's Note: The LTTE (UK Branch) has made representations that, in the light of the Tamil Times publishing the statement of the Eelam National Liberation Front on the LTTE-TELO clash in its May 1986 issue, their explanation also should be given publicly.

"COLONISATION OF TAMIL AREAS WITH SINHALESE SHOULD BE DROPPED" – MIRJE

The text of a pamphlet issued by the Movement for Inter-racial Justice and Equality (MIRJE):

The settlement of peasants, on dry zone lands brought under irrigation, has been one of the key elements in policies for agricultural development followed by successive Governments in Sri Lanka since the 1930s. The State has undertaken the construction of the irrigation works, the clearing of land, the selection of allottees to occupy the land and the construction of basic housing and other amenities. Up to about 1981, 488,000 peasant families have been settled in over a million acres. More families have been settled since then in the areas brought under irrigation by the Mahaweli project.

Safety Valve

State-aided land settlement on this scale was essentially a strategy of the extension and preservation of peasant production. Its motivation was the politically conceived need of the ruling elite to placate an impoverished peasantry who were suffering from a scarcity of arable land and the lack of employment opportunities in other sectors; it was thus firmly rooted in the context of electoral politics based on universal franchise. It also had the advantage of preserving traditional agrarian relationships in other parts of the country by relieving peasant pressure.

This process acquired ethnic overtones with the expansion of such colonisation schemes into areas that had been traditionally occupied by Tamil people since the greater number of selected allottees were Sinhala. The practice was defended on the ground that (1) the expenditure came from the National budget & benefits should therefore be shared among all citizens and (2) there were not enough Tamil peasants to take up all the available lands.

The implications of such settlements for ethnic relations in the country were recognised by the political leaders of the Sinhala and Tamil people. The demography of the predominantly Tamil areas, particularly in the Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Vavuniya, and Mullaitivu Districts was being slowly changed putting into jeopardy the ability of the Tamil people to reproduce themselves as an ethnic group with a linguistic and cultural identity of their own.

This was one of the main grievances expressed at the convention of the Federal Party in 1956: it called for "the immediate cessation of the colonisation of the traditional Tamil speaking areas with Sinhalese people". Since then land settlement has been one of the main areas of ethnic tension.

The importance of this issue was recognised in the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam pact of July 1957 "it was agreed that in the matter of colonisation schemes the powers of the regional council shall include the power to select allottees to whom lands within the area of authority shall be allocated and also power to select personnel to be employed for work on such schemes". The alienation of lands under the Gal-o-ya scheme was however left undefined.

The lack of any agreed procedure for the colonisation of such lands after the collapse of the B-C pact and the continuing settlement of such peasants in these areas made the problem more acute. It is this recognition that underlay the more specific provisions of the aborted Senanayake-Chelvanayakam pact of March 1965: "Mr. Senanayake further agreed that in the granting of land under colonisation schemes, the following priorities will be observed in the Northern and Eastern Provinces: (a) first, the landless persons in the District; (b) second, to Tamil speaking persons resident in the Northern and Eastern Provinces; (c) third, to other citizens of Ceylon, preference being given to Tamil residents in the rest of the island."

This formulation makes it quite clear that the intent was to prevent changes in the demographic composition of the areas inhabited by Tamil speaking people. However the settlement of Sinhala people in these areas continued and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that it was a policy of political aggrandisement consciously and deliberately adopted by the Sinhala political leaders.

The present proposals of the Government to settle 250,000 Sinhala peasants in the Northern and Eastern areas is a more naked continuation of previous policies and is designed to alter for good the population mix in these areas, to dilute the political power of the Tamil people through a dilution of their electoral bases and to deny them the territorial basis of their separate identity.

The further proposals to give these settlers training in weaponry and to arm them is an indication that they are also being thought of as auxiliaries to the Security Forces in their war against the armed separatists. The move should therefore be seen as one of ethnic confrontation in line with recent statement about the 'border'. It is only in this context that the Tamil people will perceive the proposal.

Thus it can be concluded that this proposal is an integral part of the

solution to the ethnic problem being now pursued by this Government: the suppression of the armed separatists and of the Tamil people by military force and the subsequent installation of systems of local Government for areas of mixed ethnicity. Recent proposals to take under State protection and care Buddhist places of worship in the Northern and Eastern areas and to redefine some district boundaries should also be seen as part of this strategy. All this amounts to a denial of Tamil ethnicity.

In calling for a political solution that encompasses a genuine devolution of power to the Tamil people, we have expressed our opposition to a military solution. We now wish to express our total opposition to the proposals for the State-sponsored and State-aided settlement of Sinhala people in the predominantly Tamil areas. We believe that this will only exacerbate the tensions between the two people and increase the propensity for violent clashes. It will postpone the day when the two people can live together in a harmonious relationship.

We call upon the Government to drop this proposal and to proceed forthwith to work out with the representatives of the Tamil people a political solution that recognises their territorial, linguistic and cultural identity.

Muslims Protest

The Council of Muslims of Sri Lanka has protested to the Chairman and members of the Land Commission against the commission's recommendations for a set of uniform "laws of succession" for Muslims throughout the country.

This recommendation was made in the interim report submitted by the Land Commission to President J.R. Jayawardene recently.

The Secretary of the Council of Muslims Mr. A. Aziz stated that the Commission in recommending these proposals had stated there was a "social necessity" today for such laws.

The Council in its protest had stated that the Muslims of Sri Lanka have a personal law of succession which had been in force, with acceptance, amongst all Muslims, Mr. Aziz stated.

Antidote for Hepatitis?

TWO MEDICINAL plants found in South India – Eclipta Alba and Phyllanthus Niruri – have been able to completely inactivate the dreaded Hepatitis-B virus.

The virus can cause chronic liver ailments like Cirrhosis and Hepatoma (liver cancer), according to studies made at the Post Graduate Institute for Basic Medical Sciences (PGIBMS) in Madras.

The plants' roots and shoots were dried and administered orally to volunteers carrying the virus, which was completely inactivated in some cases, the deputy head of the PGIBMS microbiology department, Dr. S.P. Thyagarajan, who conducted the study, told PTI.

The successful use of these plants has attracted world attention and Nobel Laureate, Prof. Baruch Blumberg, Assistant Director of the Chase Cancer Centre, Philadelphia, USA, is monitoring the results obtained by Dr. Thyagarajan.

Dr. Thyagarajan said long-term studies on Swiss albino mice had shown that the medicine prepared from the plants had no side effects. The plants are commonly used in the indigenous system of medicine in combination with some herbs to treat jaundice quite effectively, he added.

Dr. Blumberg has now undertaken the "DNA Polymerase Enzyme Estimate", the "ultimate" test for proving the efficacy of the plants' medicinal properties, which could be carried out only in advanced countries, Dr. Thyagarajan said.

Before a virus can become active, an enzyme has to be produced to synthesise its genetic matter. If this activity is noticeably controlled by the medicine prepared from the plants, then it is proof enough of their efficacy, he added.

Dr. Thyagarajan said the Hepatitis-B virus was a silent killer as it remained dormant in many people, causing liver ailments which later get activated. The virus could also be transmitted to healthy persons through blood transfusions and injections without sterilised needles.

The virus should be inactivated in the carrier, particularly as there was danger of the affected person's progeny developing liver cancer, with the dormant virus suddenly manifesting itself.

CONFERENCE CONDEMNS ACTS OF OPPRESSION & GENOCIDE

Text of the resolutions unanimously adopted at a Conference of delegates of constituent organisations of the Coordinating Committee for struggle against the oppression of the Tamil speaking people, held recently in Jaffna:

This Conference vehemently condemns the various acts of oppression, economic strangulation and genocide perpetrated by the Government of Sri Lanka on the Tamil speaking people and the following steps taken by it in furtherance of its policy:

(a) The expulsion of the representatives of the Tamil speaking people from the Parliament by adopting the sixth amendment to the constitution, which act itself is the culmination of a policy of oppression of the Tamil speaking people, commencing from the disenfranchisement of the plantation workers in 1948. (b) The continued daily killings of innocent Tamil speaking people, maiming large numbers of them, and the destruction of their property by letting loose the armed forces of the state. (c) The detention of large numbers of the Tamil speaking people in prisons and detention camps under the emergency regulations and Prevention of Terrorism Act. (d) The extension of emergency, month by month and the enactment of repressive regulations like the Thousand Metre Security Zone, Prohibited Sea Zone etc. which endanger the lives, property and occupation of the Tamil speaking people. (e) The colonisation of Tamil speaking areas

on a racial basis, the provision of arms to those colonists and the driving away of Tamil speaking people from these areas. (f) the Resort to false propaganda, deception, double dealing and hypocrisy in negotiations in respect of the rights of the Tamil speaking people.

CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FORMED

Eleven organisations in Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka have decided to coordinate their activities in the struggle against the oppression of the Tamil-speaking people.

They are: Joint Committee of Trade Unions, Mothers' Front, Eelamists' Front, Rural Employees' Union, Vigilance Forum, National Students' Forum, University Students' Organisation, Women's Reawakening Front, Ceylon Progressive Writers' Association, Rural Workers' Union and the Rural Progressive Women's Front.

They have set up a Coordinating Committee to plan out the strategy for the common struggle.

This Conference demands the Government of Sri Lanka to: (a) Settle the

national issue, in a manner acceptable to the Tamil speaking people, by recognising their right to Self Determination, on the basis that the Tamil speaking people are a distinct nationality. (b) Cease forthwith all military operations against the Tamil speaking people and withdraw the entire armed forces of the state from the Tamil speaking areas. (c) Release unconditionally all political prisoners and detainees. (d) End the emergency, which paves the way for the oppressive regulations like the Thousand Metre Zone, the Prohibited Zone for fishing etc. which endanger the lives of the Tamil speaking people and cause destruction to their economic pursuits. (e) Stop state-sponsored racial colonisation in the Tamil speaking areas and arming of such colonists. (f) Halt all types of violence against the Tamil speaking people in the North-eastern, Eastern and Hill-country areas.

This Conference unanimously resolves to declare a 'Day of Protest' against the acts of oppression and genocide perpetrated against the Tamil speaking people by the Government of Sri Lanka.

This Conference also calls upon the entire Tamil speaking people, in the Tamil speaking areas, to stop all work on that day and assemble at public places between 8.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. on that day and express their opposition to the genocidal acts of the Government.

Punjab Problem And Tamil Militancy Are Different

NEW DELHI, April 7

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Mr. M.G. Ramachandran, today cautioned against clubbing Punjab terrorism and Sri Lankan Tamil militancy in the same category.

Mr Ramachandran utilised the National Integration Council forum for explaining the nature and genesis of the trouble on the island. In Sri Lanka, the Tamil youth fought against the armed forces in the absence of protection of the law or justice. When the entire state machinery was against them and they did not have a political apparatus of their own to voice their

grievances, they were driven to the extreme position. The case was different in Punjab, which had an elected government and where a few misguided elements indulged in terrorist activities against their State and its people.

But Mr. Ramachandran saw a common link with an international background behind all these problems. Any policy to deal with this situation had to take into account both the national and international context, he said, urging the Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, to take up with the Sri Lankan Government the question of indiscriminate violence by the

island's armed forces against Tamils. This was necessary to create a congenial climate in this country, particularly in Tamil Nadu.

Joint move by neighbours: Mr Ramachandran saw a joint move by Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and others to come together to contain the so-called hegemony of India. This had created problems in all border States.

The Tamil Nadu Chief Minister referred to the help secured by Sri Lanka from Pakistan for training its armed forces as also to the employment of Pakistani military personnel in its operations against the Tamil minority. He cited a recent report of a Pakistani pilot being killed in a training flight and Sri Lanka's purchase of arms and ammunition from Pakistan, South Africa and Israel.

By courtesy of "The Hindu"

Rs. 10 cr. for World Tamil Sangham

MADURAI, April 15

By courtesy of "The Hindu"

The Tamil Nadu Government would set apart Rs. 10 crores for the World Tamil Sangam at Madurai, the Chief Minister Mr. M.G. Ramachandran, said here on Monday night, inaugurating the Sangam and laying the foundation-stone for its building.

The Chief Minister, who spoke for about ten minutes, said the Government would provide more funds if required. There was no place for politics in the Sangam and he sought people's

cooperation for its efficient functioning.

In a voice choked with emotion, he said that with the inauguration of the Sangam, the dream of the Tamils had come true. It would help to develop the language and serve as a link among the Tamils spread all over the world. It would also strive to spread the glory of Tamils throughout the globe.

On behalf of the Chief Minister, the Finance Minister, Mr. V.R. Nedundchezhian, announced a number of schemes for providing

more facilities to the citizens of Madurai.

The Tamil Nadu Government had announced schemes costing Rs. 11 crores during the inauguration of the fifth World Tamil Conference here in 1981, he said.

Spelling out the objectives of the World Tamil Sangam, Mr. Nedundchezhian said it would establish links with the Tamil Sangams in other States in the country, and spread Tamil language throughout the world by sending books, teachers and through correspondence facility so that the people in other States and abroad could learn the language. The Sangam would also bring out a journal.

A MILITARY SOLUTION – Neither Feasible Nor Desirable

AT A MEETING of citizens of Sri Lanka and India held in Bangalore on April 15 and 16 it was held that the citizens were in complete agreement that a military solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic problem was neither feasible nor desirable and that the problem should be solved politically.

The meeting was held to ascertain through an exchange of views as to how best they could assist in the effort to restore peace in Sri Lanka and move forward to a just and equitable solution of the ethnic problem.

The participants at this meeting were:

Mr Godfrey Gunatilake, Director, Marga Institute; Mr Challes Abeysekera, President, Movement for Inter-Racial Justice and Equality; Mr Olcott Gunasekera, formerly Ceylon Civil Service; Mr A.M.M. Shabdeen, Chairman Leaders' Group of Companies and formerly of the Ceylon Civil Service; Mr Mervyn de Silva, Editor, Lanka Guardian; Mr M.A.M. Hussain, former Member of Sri Lanka Judiciary; Mr P. Devaraj, Director, Congress Labour Foundation, representing Sri Lanka and Dr R.R. Diwakar, Chairman, Gandhi Peace Foundation; Mr C. Subramaniam, former Union Minister and Vice-President, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan; Mr P.S. Kailasam, former Judge, Supreme Court of India; Mr Thomas Abraham, former Indian High Commissioner to Sri Lanka; Mr Rajmohan Gandhi, Resident Editor, Indian Express, Madras; Mr S. Ramakrishnan, Executive Secretary, Bharatiya Vidya

Bhavan, Bombay and Mr S.R. Venkatachalam, Bharatha Vidya Bhavan, representing Bangalore.

A Press release by the Marga Institute states:

"The meeting is in complete agreement that a military solution is neither feasible nor desirable but the problem should be solved politically.

The first step to such a solution would be the cessation of violence by both sides and the restoration of mutual confidence so as to enable the resumption of negotiations. Perpetuation of mutual conflict should be avoided in the interests of innocent citizens and future generations.

"The meeting is unanimous in its view that solutions will have to be found within the framework of a united Sri Lanka. It noted that the Government of Sri Lanka had already agreed to the creation of Provincial Councils.

"The devolution of power to the Provincial Councils to the maximum extent possible is vital if satisfactory progress is to be made towards the peaceful solution of this conflict.

"The meeting holds the view that it is essential for the democratic government of Sri Lanka to devise ways and means to enable all sections of the community to participate effectively in the political and national life of Sri Lanka at all levels.

"The participants agreed to continue their consultations to help in the process of finding solutions to these problems."

POLITICIANS HAVE RUINED SRI LANKA

– Buddhist Monk

"POLITICIANS have ruined the country after independence. The aim of political parties was to capture power. The 1983 July ethnic trouble will show that the inciters were safe and poor masses who were like brothers and sisters were victims. The country's economy is affected and no one is worried about the progress of the nation. There should be a solution to the ethnic problem," said Ven. Kurunegala Piyaratane Thera, chief incumbent of the Sri Pada Privena, Nawalapitiya at a seminar held to discuss ways and means to solve the ethnic issue.

Mr S. Balachandiran, President of the Nawalapitiya Hindu Cultural Association, presided over this seminar.

The Thera said in 1956 the entire educational system was changed. Before this, children of all communities studied in one school. There was no communalism. They lived in unity. But later the entire set-up changed. Sinhalese schools preached about Dutugemunu

and his deeds against the Tamils. In the same way Tamil schools preached about Elara and his deeds against the Sinhalese. Due to this, from childhood hate was planted in the minds of the young. The remedy for this is to change the educational system.

Children of all communities should be admitted to one school where Sinhalese, Tamil and English should be made compulsory subjects. In the same way temples and kovils should be put up in one building so that both communities would maintain a close relationship.

Politicians would never solve the problem. The Sinhalese and Tamils came from India. We should not fight with each other, but should get together and preserve peace and order in the country. If we listened to the advice of politicians we would be in trouble because they were not patriotic.

Mr S. Ramanujan, President of the Hill Country Progressive Front, also spoke.

U.S. Asks Sri Lanka To End Army Action

WASHINGTON, May 24

The Reagan Administration last night frowned upon the Government of Sri Lanka for its switch to military action to settle the Sri Lanka Tamil issue and asked it to cease such action immediately and seek a political solution.

The White House Deputy Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Edward P. Djerejian, was asked about the escalating situation in the island caused by the switch to military action including bombing the Tamil-dominated city of Jaffna allegedly to deal with militants and about the serious repercussions it was having in Tamil Nadu.

"We have advocated and continue to advocate that a political solution and negotiations must be the venue of approach to resolve the problem in Sri Lanka and the Tamil insurgency", he said.

"We hope the military action that the Government has taken by now has ceased or will cease promptly in order to give political solution and negotiations enhanced prospects. It is a serious situation, and we hope that a political solution can be found promptly."

The State Department earlier made a similar statement expressing concern over the military action taken by the Colombo authorities when negotiations were already under way with the Government of India for a peaceful solution. "Negotiations are the only way", the Department's statement asserted. "Negotiations must continue to bring an end to the war. Peace will come only through negotiations to Sri Lanka. Peace must be restored for the good of the entire region.

"We do not believe in a purely military solution to the problem. A military solution is not possible because it will not and cannot bring peace to the region."

Call for all party meeting

THE State Council of the CPI and CPI(M) on 25 May urged the Tamil Nadu Government to convene an all party meeting to discuss the deteriorating situation in Sri Lanka.

They appealed to the Centre to take immediate steps to end the killings of innocent Tamils in Sri Lanka. The genocidal attack on Tamils had caused anxiety and anger among the people of the State who expected the Government of India to initiate steps to end the indiscriminate killings on the island.

In a joint statement, Mr A. Nallasivan (CPI-M) and Mr P. Manickam (CPI) today strongly condemned the ethnic killings. They said that hundreds of Tamils had been killed and thousands injured in the aerial attacks resorted to by the Sri Lankan armed forces in the last few days. Many houses and hospitals had been destroyed in the attack and the injured were being prevented from getting treatment in hospitals by the island Government, they said.

Towards Peace and Tolerance or Tribalism and Barbarism?

The Committee for Rational Development

SINCE its inception in 1983, the Committee for Rational Development has been advocating the need for a just political solution to our ethnic problem. It was our belief that the longer we delay, the more likely it was for the forces of destruction to express themselves in ways and means which would destroy the very fabric of our society. We recounted in detail how Sri Lanka is ill equipped to handle a "dirty war" and how the process of Lebanonisation will only escalate the violence leading to the creation of a security conscious garrison state where democratic values will be forfeited for repression and intolerance. The Tristar explosion and the bomb placed at the CTO are reminders of the immense cost of this war. As a society we have nurtured the habit of pointing out scapegoats and betes noires and cultivating a sense of injured innocence. And yet, we can never escape from the reality with which we are confronted. No rhetoric can detract from the fact that this undeclared war is taking a tremendous toll on all our lives and is tearing apart the foundations of our society. According to Samakali, a document put out by Women for Peace, this war is costing us Rs. 17 million a day. There are about 150,000 refugees island-wide - not to mention the 200,000 who have left the country - and it is costing the government Rs. 16 million each month just to feed them. The total number of dead and disappeared has yet to be counted. Despite all this we find ourselves in a no win situation.

In our earlier writings, The Committee for Rational Development has been especially critical of the government for stalling a political settlement and for wavering between political negotiations and an imposed military solution. We still continue to believe that it is only the Sri Lankan government, in collaboration with the Indian government which can force through a solution to our conflict. It is only the Sri Lankan government which has the resources at its disposal to create a climate of accommodation which will make such a solution acceptable to the vast majority of people in this country. We accept the political difficulties faced by the government especially in light of the fact that the leading opposition party seems to be more concerned about catering to jingoistic tendencies. But, this does not detract from the fact that a political solution is imperative at this point in our history. It would also be naive to believe that peace will come to Sri Lanka the day after an accord is signed. We have to accept the fact that isolated acts of violence will continue for some time after such an accord. However, we believe that only a political solution will begin to

reverse the current process of destruction and only such a solution will help marginalise the more extreme and intransigent elements committed to what has been termed a "Pol Potish" solution to our ethnic conflict.

In our earlier statements, we have also criticised the behaviour of the Sri Lankan security forces and paramilitary units such as the home guards, especially in their campaigns in the North and the East. We did so in the recognition that modern nation states are limited in their actions by human rights norms, norms that have been negotiated at the highest international levels especially after the Nazi holocaust of World War II.

We felt that it was unnecessary for Sri Lanka to relearn the lessons of history that violations of human rights especially in a politically conscious modern world, do not only shock the conscience but will only lead to resistance and rebellion by those who are its victims.

Recent history in Sri Lanka will serve to confirm our judgement. Aerial bombardment of the civilians of one's own country and the use of mercenaries who have no concern for this land or its people will only serve to accentuate the deep sense of grievance and alienation. Reports of International Human Rights Organisations which place Sri Lanka as one of the top ten offenders of human rights especially with regard to disappearances may be dismissed as untrue by the more nationalistic among us. But we feel that such a response is only to escape from the realisation that something is fundamentally wrong with our society and that the tactics used to destroy a movement can actually be counterproductive and may help sustain conflict for many years to come. We must accept the fact that the excesses of the security forces and the nature of the security operations conducted in the North and East of this country have contributed to a great extent to the radicalisation of the Tamil population and to the rapid brutalisation of the present conflict. Whatever our nationalistic feelings, this is a dark and shameful period of our history and the excesses have been recorded for all posterity in the annals of the United Nations and other international organisations. To accept national responsibility for these acts is perhaps a coming of age for the Sri Lankan nation-state.

The CRD in its previous statements has also commented on certain actions of the militant groups. The question of whether violent dissent is ever justified and at what point, and to what extent, is an age old historical debate and CRD does not wish to pursue this inquiry at this present

The CRD, a group of concerned Sri Lankan academics and intellectuals, has issued statements, from time to time, on the ethnic conflict. Its recent publication on the issue was entitled "Myths, Realities and Perspectives".

juncture. However, we are all united in condemning blatant acts of terrorism where civilians are the only targets of attack. Any group which engages in such activity loses legitimacy especially when it puts itself forward as representing the sovereign will of a civilised people. The CRD has always stood for the position that the Tamils of Sri Lanka have a just cause and that substantial devolution of power in the form of regional autonomy is the only solution which will satisfy their aspirations. We have condemned the excesses of the security forces and the determination of the government to pursue a military solution to what is essentially a political problem involving one large section of our population. We have stood for these positions even in the most hostile of climates and despite the hysteria of racialism which has often conditioned political debate in the South. However, we are convinced that attacks such as the one against civilians in Anuradhapura, or against the Air Lanka Tristar or against the personnel at the CTO are inexcusable and debase any political cause which is fighting for social justice. Such acts only send us further down the road of tribalism and barbarism. As a society we have been forced to accept an unprecedented proportion of brutality and violence and no community is innocent of this bloodletting. And yet, though one must insist that the government carries the major responsibility for instituting and implementing the processes of peace, we are also of the belief that the time has come for all sections of our society to begin to work for the values of humanity, peace and tolerance without which no society can survive.

India gifts books on Islam to Grand Mosque library

A press release of the Colombo Grand Mosque states: The Board of Trustees of the Colombo Grand Mosque has decided to establish a library in the Grand Mosque premises exclusively on religious matters. This library will only be for reference purposes. On an appeal made to several embassies in Sri Lanka and the general public, the High Commissioner for India, J.N. Dixit, made a donation of a set of books on Islam and Islamic studies to the President of the Grand Mosque Alhaj, M.H.H. Dahlan, on Friday at the High Commission Office.

Trustee Alhaj M.L.M. Fauz and Administrative Secretary Mr U.L.M. Sahabdeen were also present.

DIARY OF INCIDENTS

BY KIND COURTESY OF TAMIL
INFORMATION & RESEARCH UNIT,
MADRAS, SOUTH INDIA.

MARCH 13

- Eye witness accounts in Jaffna newspapers talk of pathetic scenes in the largely peasant-populated area of Myliddy South in Jaffna peninsula, consequent to two indiscriminate helicopter attacks on the area. A dumb person, Velautham, was seen carrying on his shoulders his three-year-old male child Vijayakumar who was among three who were killed instantly. The child's brains had been blown out and the father was seen soaked with blood. In another incident, a 16-year-old girl, Rathinam Sumathy, who was working in an onion plantation, was killed and her body brought to their home. While her family members, including her younger brother Rathinam Sathiswaran and her elder sister Rathinam Shanthi (18), were mourning beside their sister's body, another direct hit on the home killed 5-year-old Sathiswaran, leaving the paralysed elder sister alive but with two of her fingers blown off. Among the several injured were three women - Rasathy Manickam (40), Yogamalar Selvarasah (36), a widow with four children who was looking after her children by undertaking menial jobs, and Kundumany Velautham (53), an aunt of the dead boy Vijayakumar. Several houses were also damaged in the attacks.
- A small platoon of about 25 black-uniformed and green-uniformed soldiers emerged out of the Dutch Fort army camp in Jaffna City, around 9 a.m., advanced for about a furlong, but withdrew to the Fort thereafter.
- Three more armed forces camps are to be set up in the eastern Batticaloa district. They are likely to be located at Ayithiyamalai, Vavunathivu and Sippimadua.

MARCH 14

- Two naval ratings, H.A.A. Jayatileke and W.P. Gunasena, were killed and two others injured at "Kottiya" culvert near Trincomalee when a landmine exploded under the truck in which they were travelling, lifting the vehicle nearly fifty feet off the ground and blowing it to pieces.
- A large funeral procession in Jaffna, for schoolgirls Thanewary and Udayapatham, killed in a factional clash at Muththiraichanthai, Nallur on the 12th. Slogans calling upon militant movements not to kill members of the public and not to interfere with newspaper freedom were displayed. Meanwhile, Vadamarachchy area observed "hartal" for the third day, in protest against the killings at the Jaffna hospital and at Nallur.
- A young farmer from Paranthan, Velachamy Thinakaranathan (23), who was on his way to Paranthan junction to buy spares for his tractor, was shot dead by soldiers in an army convoy.
- An army detachment consisting of nearly 100 soldiers going from Kaddaiparichchan to Koonithivu in Mutur was attacked by LTTE guerrillas. Details of any casualties not known.
- About 2,000 residents in Valvettiturai area fled from their homes and took shelter in schools, following repeated shelling from the army camp and from the sea.

● In Colombo, D.I.G. Police, in charge of Personnel and Training, warns that police personnel who refuse to serve the compulsory 6 months stint in north and east will be served with "vacation of post" notices.

● Confrontation between armed forces and Tamil militants reported from Triyai, north of Trincomalee. A subsequent LTTE statement claims 4 soldiers were killed and a quantity of arms seized.

MARCH 15

- The hundred-yard long road bridge at Thondamannaru is blasted by LTTE guerrillas. This bridge provided direct access from Thondamannaru army camp to Valvettiturai army camp 1½ miles away and Point Pedro army camp 7 miles away.
- At least three people died and about 30 were injured when a Jaffna-bound "Yal Devi" from Colombo was derailed at an exploded culvert at Paranthan. 16 injured passengers admitted to Jaffna hospital say that they saw army men talking to the railway guard at the Kilinochchi railway station where the train had stopped immediately before the incident occurred. They also saw some youths in the area making urgent signals to the engine driver in response to which the train suddenly slowed speed; as a result only the engine and the first three compartments were affected.
- An EPRLF statement carried in Jaffna newspaper said that six navy men were killed by their militants and the boat in which they were travelling destroyed between Karainagar naval base and Kadalkottai. The church at Kayts was damaged later in the afternoon when the town was subjected to shelling from Karainagar naval base.

MARCH 16

- Several killings reported in various parts of the north. At Vaddakachchi in Kilinochchi district, men belonging to the armed forces in civils travelling by tractor confronted about 10 other persons also in a tractor. Government troops opened fire, killing four and wounding two others. In Colombo, the National Security Ministry, referring to the incident, claimed "7 terrorists" in a tractor were killed in a shoot-out. It is not clear whether the victims were Tamil militants or farmers. In a related incident near the second culvert at Kilinochchi the same tractor load or armed forces had opened fire on a group of 20 men and women working in a farm, killing one and injuring several others.
- At Valvettiturai a group of about 35 soldiers who were seen in ambush positions about 500 yards from the army camp were set upon by LTTE guerrillas and six of them believed killed.
- In another incident, where about 200 soldiers from the Thondamannaru army camp came out in the direction of Palaly army camp along the beach and the beach road, one elderly resident of the area was killed in indiscriminate firing, and several houses damaged.
- At Myliddy north, black uniformed com-

mandos and armed forces in civils surrounded the area and set fire to several houses, making people flee through Tellipalai to other areas like Mallakam, Chunnakam, Uduvil, Erlalai, Arali and Kofdavil, seeking refuge in the homes of their relatives. About 53 families who were earlier given notice to vacate in 48 hours could not meet the military commander, although arrangements were made.

● In Vavuniya, two persons, Kovinthan Selvan (27), and a boy, S. Logeswaran (14), were killed by soldiers from the Vavuniya army camp.

MARCH 17

- Thousands of Tamils who had pawned items of jewellery, with the government-owned Peoples Bank in Jaffna, began agitation outside the bank branches, demanding the return of their jewellery. The bank has been refusing to part with the jewellery even after monies for the redeeming of the jewellery had been paid.
- At Kilinochchi, rotting human corpses cause a stench in the absence of qualified doctors at the Kilinochchi hospital. The last qualified doctor went on transfer in January and had not been replaced. Out of the 11 bodies awaiting post mortem, nine were victims of gun shots.
- A 15-year-old youth, Kathirkamanathan Balamurali, employed in a glass factory in Navatkuli, who was returning after work, was shot dead from the army camp.
- Five Muslim Tamils were shot dead at Mallikaithivu junction in Mutur by armed forces in civils. When the acting Mutur magistrate went to the spot to hold an inquiry he was told that the men had come back and set fire to the bodies. In another incident, two "Home Guards" at Kinniya were shot dead by LTTE guerrillas. A third "Home Guard" was injured and admitted to Anuradhapura hospital.

● An exodus of people from Kayts, Karainagar and Paruthiaddaippu has been reported, following continuous shelling from the sea. It is learnt that earlier a naval boat attached to the Kayts naval base had been damaged by a sea mine, but no details known about the incident.

● The army camp at Santhiveli Batticaloa is to be expanded by taking over another private rice mill.

● In Vavuniya, the military authorities decide that no further refugee camps would be opened for Tamil refugees in the district.

MARCH 18

- Armed forces in large numbers terrorise the villagers of Manalchenai and Peruvelli in Mutur district. Several houses looted, several set on fire and some shops and houses completely destroyed. The villagers flee for safety and many of them take refuge in the Iruthayapuram church premises.
- At the 4th mile post in Murasumoddi in Kilinochchi district, a confrontation between Tamil militants and armed

forces reported. Details of casualties not known. Following this, men in civils opened fire at farmers in a paddy field killing four and wounding several others. K. Sundaralingham (28) of Kokuvil West, who had gone to Kalmunai with a consignment of cigars, was shot dead by police commandos. Another person who went with him, also from Kokuvil, Shanmugarajah (30), escaped with injuries.

● Two ships arrived on the north coast and remained stationed in the sea between two army camps. One ship is believed to be foreign-owned. Several gun boats were seen surrounding the ships. Huge crates were seen being unloaded from the ship under heavy security and taken to Karainagar naval base. Planes and helicopters were also seen providing aerial cover.

● At Navatkuli, about 25 soldiers who attempted to advance from the army camp through paddy fields, retreated to the camp soon after, when they were attacked by Tamil militants with hand grenades and hand bombs.

● A retired Sinhala teacher, Ratnayake Mudiyanalage, from Gokkerella in Kurunegala, who was found a month ago in Jaffna, and was detained by some Tamil youths, was released.

● In Colombo, two people were killed and three injured when an oxygen cylinder exploded at Oxygen Limited, Modera. The incident occurred when a cylinder was being refilled, police said. One of the three injured is in hospital in a critical condition. Police said they suspect that the cylinder which exploded was brought down from Jaffna. A Tamil driver and cleaner who unloaded the cylinder at the yard were taken into custody for questioning.

MARCH 19

● A mass protest by fisherman, their families and sympathisers in Jaffna demanding the revocation of the ban on fishing. An estimated 10 thousand persons including women, children and elderly persons from Gurunagar, Pasaiyur, Navanthurai, Colombuthurai, and from Vadamarachcha areas like Valvettiturai, Point Pedro, Thalaiaddy, march in procession and submit a petition to the government agent.

● At Kiliochchi, a post-mortem is at last held on the 10 bodies which were lying in a decomposed state. Since eight of them were not identified, cremations at state expense were ordered.

● 75 Muslims are made "Home Guards" at Kattankudi, Batticaloa and each given a rifle and a hand grenade. This action has brought concern to several religious and community leaders in the area who had been trying to promote unity between Tamils and Muslims.

● At an inquiry held into the killing of five Muslim traders at Mallikaithivu on the 16th, an eye witness, Shahul Hameed Akbar (30), giving evidence, said that five carts loaded with paddy were coming from the direction of Thopur. When a party of soldiers at the junction ordered them to stop, all five carters got off their carts and came towards the soldiers with their arms raised but the soldiers promptly shot all of them down. In fear he had rushed into the nearby hut and escaped.

DIARY OF INCIDENTS

● 84 Tamil youths from the Trincomalee district detained at the Boosa camp released at Trincomalee in the presence of Mr K. Sivapalan, President of Trincomalee Citizens' Committee. 41 others from Batticaloa-Amparai district were also released.

● Army men shot at two youths on a motor cycle opposite CTB depot in Batticaloa for failing to stop when ordered. One escapes but the other was killed.

● About 12 persons in Mannar were arrested by the army.

● Referring to the confrontation between Tamil militants and armed forces at Murasumodai in Kilinochchi, TELO said in a statement that six soldiers were killed and one TELO fighter, Kirupakaran, shot himself dead after being injured.

MARCH 20

● At Nedunkerni at least 15 Tamils were killed when about 300 black uniformed commandos surround a village called Eeti-murinthan on the Padaviya road and terrorise the population. About 14 others were taken into custody and several reported missing. No less than 35 houses were set on fire and several houses looted. Among those killed in this "house-to-house" search were a married woman, Ravindran Kamalakumary (25), Perumal Sirirangan (60) and A. Nehru (45).

● Referring to the Nedunkerni incident, a government report in Colombo said "security forces shot dead 12 terrorists and captured 17 others in an operation in Nedunkerni."

● At Kilinochchia, near the 2nd culvert, stalks of paddy harvested from a 30-acre field were set on fire by black uniformed commandos.

● Nearly 500 persons in Batticaloa, including women, children and elderly persons without discrimination rounded up and taken for questioning to the military camp in several trucks. Some of them were returning from their working places and schools.

● Nearly 5,000 persons in islets of Analaithivu and Eluvaitivu face starvation, following the disruption of sea traffic after the Nainathivu incident of the 17th.

● About 12 masked armed men entered the house of a grape farmer at Karanaivai South and robbed Rs. 4 lakhs worth cash kept for the purchase of a lorry, another Rs. 4 lakhs worth jewellery and other goods valued around Rs. 2 lakhs. Three families were living in the house and the property belonged to all three of them.

MARCH 21

● A 1½-year-old child, Rahu Sivakumaran and a young woman, Senathiraja Premalatha (20), were killed at Koddady, Jaffna, when government forces began shelling from the Dutch Fort army camp from the early hours of the morning till noon. Simultaneously, LTTE claims in a

statement that several soldiers were killed in confrontation with their guerrillas near Navatkuli army camp and near the Dutch Fort. Several youths donate blood at Jaffna hospital for the benefit of the large number of people injured.

● Government lifts ban on fishing in the Jaffna lagoon area only.

● In the Mullativu district at least seven persons were reported killed, including two women, when black uniformed armed forces surrounded the village of Puthukudiruppu. Looting was also reported.

At Thondamannaru army camp a helicopter about to land took off again when the militants attacked it with rockets. In the heavy strafing that followed, a 65-year-old man who was on his way to the Sellasanathy temple was killed.

● Rs. 5 lakhs worth of aluminium cables belonging to the electricity office of Jaffna Municipal Council was reported stolen by an unknown person. Municipal Commissioner Mr C.V.K. Sivagnanam made an appeal for the return of the cable.

MARCH 22

● G.A. Vavuniya lodges strong protest at the siting of an army camp at the Jaffna road junction. He says this will discourage the public from coming to the kachcheri to transact official business and thereby weaken the civil administration.

● At Tellippalai, a low-flying helicopter drops stacks of propaganda material asking people to disown militants.

● Two men and two women belonging to the same family were injured in an army shooting at Mullativu - a postman, Mylvaganam Kanagasooriyar (40), his brother-in-law Vijayanathan, an employee of the government Land Development office and two sisters-in-law, Padmavathy Sobanathan (32) and Jayanthi Sobanathan (22).

● In Colombo, the government claimed three militants were killed in a surprise attack by armed forces at Mullativu and their bodies handed over to the local hospital, while two others who were injured were carried away by their comrades.

● 57-year-old Kanthiah Chelliah of Nedunkeri, now admitted to Jaffna hospital, said when black-uniformed commandos entered his house on the 20th, he raised his hands pleading them not to shoot; despite which, and with no provocation whatsoever, they shot him in both arms and injured him.

A mysterious ship was sighted off Kankasanturai harbour on the northern coast, apparently not delivering cargo but guarded by several gunboats.

● At Kallarua in Batticaloa, a youth named Sugumaran who tried to escape after being held, was shot dead by armed forces, according to a government claim.

● In Colombo, 19-year-old Sundararajah Padmanathan of Mannar, a member of the "Tamil People's Protection Front" sentenced under the Prevention of Terrorism Act to three years R.I. on a charge of concealing information about "terrorists".

Continued on page 15

PART II – (Continued from last issue) Dr Mervyn D. De Silva

Non-ethnic Causes of Crisis in Sri Lanka

THOSE strutting the corridors of power never reflect the probable repercussions to their actions. At that time the corridors of power were overcrowded with foreign aid missions, foreign and local industrial collaborators, representatives of non-governmental organisations of all descriptions, hordes of expatriate nationals, foreign experts, and the usual supporters and crossovers – all falling over each other in offering generous support. They did not realise that politically motivated actions against leaders could undermine public faith in and respect for, the law of the country.

(x) Political machinations:

When the civic rights of the leader of the SLFP or the Sinhala Section of the opposition were removed, questions began to be raised about the legality of her continuance as the leader of that party and the government used the situation advantageously to sponsor a split in the party.

(xi) Solid foundation for lawlessness:

The disruption of the opposition was celebrated as a victory for the ruling party little realising that such public displays can gravely warp the attitudes of men. Nor was it recognised that all the double talk, double standards, and double crossing by the leaders could damage any respect for all codes of decent behaviour and conduct.

The conduct of the people in power influence the thinking of the people at all levels, and therefore they can be accused of being collectively responsible for the loose discipline prevailing in the country today.

(xii) Political psychopaths:

While the exit of the leader of the SLFP enhanced the position of the leader of the opposition (Tamil), the obsession of the ruling party to destroy the SLFP continued relentlessly. The much publicised episode about the acquisition of their headquarters, out of 'sheer concern' for a breach of peace, after in the first instance handing over the keys to the leader of the splinter party, are all actions that puzzled and shocked the ordinary people.

5. THE TIDAL WAVE OF CORRUPTION

(i) The range:

With accelerated development and huge investment programs on all fronts there arose never-ending allegations of acceptance of commissions, bribery, malpractices in the award of tenders, smuggling of gold bars, junkets and joy rides abroad for henchmen and relatives, unjust appointments, diplomatic posts for relations of party supporters, appointment of unqualified persons contrary to established terms of recruitment, life styles that cannot be explained by the known earning power and assets originally owned. The politicians and the bureaucrats of the new administration had created an augean stable with no Hercules in sight.

(ii) Glaring acts

Of the many reports of alleged corruption the most glaring and daring is the case of the member of parliament who was allegedly caught smuggling gold bars. But how did the government so dedicated to eliminating cor-

ruption react? Wasn't democracy made a mockery of when it removed the member, but appointed his sister?

The new device of appointing members of parliament to fill vacancies, and shuttling them from constituency to constituency, has made a joke of the democratic process. If this is how those entrusted with the government of this country react to corruption, what can be expected from the people, the younger generation? In the current wave of lawlessness it is obvious that the people concerned are following the examples given and standards set by their leaders who have thrown honesty, sincerity, and morality to the winds for the sake of money, the all-powerful God of Sri Lanka.

(iii) High post for corrupt:

When top-rank politicians are removed from office for alleged connections with tender malpractices and then, after a short period of purgation are given equally high posts, the ideals of integrity in public life are torn down. Can these ideals be inculcated in the minds of the people, particularly the younger generation who perhaps in desperation are taking to drugs. The time has come to purge our political and social systems of all its injustices, dishonesty, hypocrisy and insincerity by having a free and fair General Election so that the people can select their representatives without interference as in the pre-1977 days.

6. POLITICS SAYS HONESTY

(i) PR system:

When the government assumed power in 1977 it promised the people a new constitution and amendment of the election laws for conducting elections on the proportional representation basis. However, before long, faced with the prospect of having to encounter a stronger opposition if elections were held under this very system, elections were abandoned and a referendum to extend the life of the 1977 parliament expiring in August 1983 was conducted in December 1982 on the phony claim of imagined Naxalites.

(ii) Presidential system and reversal:

One of the reasons advanced for adopting the Gaullist Presidential system was to have a strong executive head of state. It was argued that since the elections to office of the latter takes place 6 months after the general elections, the transfer of power would be made without post election violence. Accordingly, the general elections were to be held in July 1983 and the Presidential elections in February, 1984.

By 1982 however, the economic conditions in the country began to deteriorate rapidly and inflation increased exponentially. In fact the government's own mentor, the World Bank, predicted severe financial status by the end of 1983 and the beginning of 1984, the due date for the Presidential elections.

Although the government had a life of one and a half years more, and the incumbent president two years, it seemed politically expedient to hold elections in 1982 when the people were still enrapt in the magic of consumerism and the open market economy.

The announcement of 1982 as election year at first shocked the people and led them to suspect a catch. It gave rise to much discussions on the mechanics of the transfer of power under the presidential system.

Would there be a tussle between parliament and the incumbent president, who may belong to the defeated party? How could the incumbent president chair a meeting of the cabinet of ministers formed by the majority party and not his own? What would happen in case he formed a cabinet drawn exclusively from the minority group of his own party? And, then there was the suggestion that parliament may have to storm President House, if he refused to resign! With all these in the air, like a bolt from the blue came the decision to reverse the sequence and hold the Presidential elections in October 1982, before the General Elections.

In this case parliament is not dissolved and the members of parliament will hold power and will have access to government machinery.

(iii) The Presidential elections:

With that decision, the prolonged sermons from every conceivable platform in defence and in praise of the new PR system was forgotten. The credibility of the government, eroded when they saw the wide gap between preaching and practice.

With the whole opposition in disarray, their party organisation's bankrupt. With the members of parliament still in power and wielding that power at the election, the results of the election was a foregone conclusion. There was solid and abundant financial backing for the ruling party and the shared interest groups. All Ministries went into full gear, a total control of mass media played a major role. However, in spite of all the odds against the last minute candidate the opposition candidate put on a valiant fight and barely lost and with him so did the people.

(iv) Referendum or tribal war:

The referendum was held in December 1982, to decide on the extension of parliament that expired 6 months from that date, for a period of 6 years. The opposition did not get even breathing space to assemble its forces. The masses did not understand the significance of the referendum.

They were puzzled as to why the leader of the SLFP, unable to contest the presidential elections, could canvas at the referendum. They were all confused, but hesitantly surrendered to the assaults on democracy as they were aware that the principle, the end justifies the means, was a basic tenet accepted and practised by the ruling party.

(v) Government group silenced:

Just prior to the referendum, undated letters of resignation were given by the elected representatives of parliament including the Prime Minister, to the President. The purpose of these letters ostensibly was to enable the President to remove members wanting in their stewardship. What is significant is that in terms of the law that existed at that time, when an MP resigned his seat, no by-election was possible, and the General Secretary of the party to which the MP belonged nominated a person of the party's choice to fill such vacancy. Thus, the MP elected by the majority of the people was to be removed by the hierarchy of his party and another appointed in his place, not by the will of the people.

What a commentary on the quality of the members of parliament who willingly relinquished their powers in exchange for a continued 6 year period.

DIARY OF INCIDENTS

Continued from page 13

MARCH 23

- 10 civilians injured at Kattaiparichchan during a 24-hour search operation by the army. Helicopters gave aerial protection. Villagers fled to neighbouring areas.
- A new army camp opened at Sava-laikaddai junction in Amparai district, and three new army camps opened in Batticaloa — at Vavunathivu, Ayithiamalai, and Sippimaddu.
- The Assistant Superintendent of Police, Teldeniya, Mr A.K. Mythiripala (35), was shot dead in his bedroom by unknown persons.
- 10 youths taken into custody at Periyativu yesterday were brought to Elephant Pass camp.
- Six fisherman on three motorcycles were arrested by the army at Murukandy and taken to Kokkavil army camp.
- One person was killed and 10 injured in an army shooting at Koonithivu.

MARCH 24

- Tension in Jaffna City when armed forces emerged out of Jaffna fort. People started running. Some of the soldiers took cover behind buildings. Others who tried to crawl into ambush positions were challenged by militant fire from the lagoon side and they all withdrew to camp.
- Direct confrontation between militants and soldiers at Navatkuli. Bombs, hand-grenades and guns were used in the battle. LTTE claimed that three soldiers were killed and four injured.
- Boat service between the Jaffna islets and mainland resumed after Citizens' Committee members of Karainagar, Analaithivu and Kayts met Co-ordinating Officer Mr H. Rupasinghe and Navy Captain Quintus Wickramasinghe.
- Two persons injured when soldiers from Thallady army camp in Mannar opened fire while on patrol duty.
- An attempt by Tamil militants to blow up the Palaly airport runway was thwarted by security forces according to a government report. It was stated that a gelignite landmine found buried in the air strip set to go off on impact with an aircraft landing was defused.

MARCH 25

- Militants set fire to Colombo bound "Yal Devi" and blasted its engine at Omathai, in Vavuniya district at about 1.30 p.m. after asking passengers to get off. All 12 bogies were destroyed.
- Nearly 10,000 people participated in a peace march in the plantations organised by the Savodaya Movement and police to rebuild unity and peace of all communities.
- Air Force "Siamarchetti" trainer aircraft crashed into the sea about 200 yards off the coast of Beruwella killing Flying Officer A.T.K. Seniveratne and Cadet Officer R.T. Punchihetti; according to an eye witness, the plane was doing aerobatics.
- Batticaloa G.A. Anthonimuthu and officials of the Citizens' Committee launched peace moves to reduce tension in the district between Tamil and Muslim communities.

- Three soldiers were killed and 10 injured in two separate incidents. At Anuradhapura road near Vavuniya junction, a landmine damaged a jeep, injuring seven soldiers. On Kantalai-Habarana road in Trincomalee, three soldiers were killed and three seriously injured when hit by a landmine.
- 27 persons including some women were taken into custody at Sambalthivu and Aaithimooddai in Trincomalee.
- Five policemen were believed injured in a landmine blast on the Vavuniya-Madawachchiya road. In an exchange of fire between militants and police that followed five civilians were reported killed.
- The government is to pay Rs. 15 lakhs as compensation for damages caused to Nagapooshani Amman temple by armed forces, according to civil administration authorities who took up the matter with the government.
- LTTE announced that in a series of operations during the past two days, Corporal Ranjan Nimal was killed and another corporal and two army privates injured on an attack at the Navatkuli army camp. Lt. Hettiarachchi was killed and many others injured and two jeeps and an armoured car damaged in a landmine explosion on the Kantalai-Habarana road; and some security forces men and "Home Guards" who were coming from Dollar farm were killed or injured.

MARCH 26

- Despite government claims that aerial bombing had been stopped, a helicopter carried on strafing for nearly 2½ hours in Tellippalai, Kurumbacitty, Kadduvan, Vasavilan areas, killing one person and injuring three others, including a 16-year-old girl, M. Ambika, of Kurumbacitty and 68-year-old bakery employee Kesavan Anandarajah, also of Kurumbacitty. Damage was also caused to several houses in the areas.
- Two fishermen, Manikkam Regupathy (30), and Arumugam Sellathurai (55), who were reported missing on the 21st, were found to be detained in the Jaffna fort army camp.
- Following a landmine explosion in Mannar, details of which are not known, government forces shelled the area, injuring Tajuddin (40) and Suren (19).
- The bodies of four victims of army firing lying near Sellacannathi temple were removed. All those killed belonged to the over-50 age group.
- Four large houses worth several lakhs at Valvettiturai near the army camp were dynamited and destroyed by the army. 25 such houses had been earlier destroyed in order to ensure security for the army camp.
- Three soldiers from Thondamannaru army camp who attempted to cross the steel bridge were attacked by the militants and one killed in the process.
- Seven idols were stolen from the well-known Hindu temple of Thirukoneswarar in Trincomalee; the annual festival had been put off as a result.

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THE JAYAWARDENE REGIME'S PERFDY

THE THWARTING AND abandonment, at least for now, of one visible part of the Jayawardene-Athulathmudali coterie's grandiose "final military offensive" against the armed Tamil resistance (chiefly the LTTE militants) and the unarmed people can be regarded as an instructive episode along the track of the unwinnable brutal war that the Sri Lankan state has been waging over the past two years and more against an important part of its population. The terroristic act of bombing the heart of Jaffna town from the air, the cold-blooded strike against a major hospital and the killing of innocent children, women and men – once the columns of Sinhala troops sent out of their camps in a "search and seize" operation to wrest control of the vital town of Jaffna from the Tamil militants found themselves in trouble amidst a hostile population – pointed to the state of near-desperation of a regime out of touch with the elementary realities on the ground, especially in a political sense. Sri Lanka might be a small country of some 15 million people, but such has been the tragic divide in mood, perception and experience imposed on both the Tamil and Sinhala people by the policies of Jayawardene, Athulathmudali & Co. that Jaffna must loom large before their eyes as the capital of a medieval enemy state waiting to be "conquered" – or, at least, to be looted, burnt and destroyed. Such are the military illusions, or delusions, that experienced or intelligent men in political life can get trapped in – once elementary democratic facts and problems are grossly mishandled and there is increasing resort to any means to blast a way out of a socio-politically created mess. Still, it would be dangerous for the Sri Lankan Tamils (and all those who are in solidarity with them in their unprecedented time of troubles) to underestimate the military strengths, the reserves, and the tactics of those who have assigned themselves, outrageously, the role of the "enemy". For one thing, there has been in the very recent period a considerable transfer of troops from the South to the North and these forces have been put partially in place for coming engagements and reprisals. For another, the external inputs – Pakistani, Israeli, Western mercenary and so forth – should not be taken lightly. A very nasty experience of blood-letting could be on the agenda, as the Sri Lankan Government goes after the "military solution" (to the problem of "terrorism") that its leaders have bragged about in moments of blowing hot rather than cold vis-a-vis India.

The malignant "ethnic crisis" of Sri Lanka puts to test the firmness, the capabilities and the methods of India's foreign policy in an area of frontline concern to it. India's "good offices" to help the island and its people get out of the mess came into the picture in mid-1983 and public opinion (at the national political level but especially in Tamil Nadu) has been concerned over the fact that the results to date have been quite uninspiring. After the experience of "Operation change-round of troops", the perfidy of exploiting India's good offices to raise a diplomatic-political camouflage for the

pursuit of a brutal confrontationist solution puts great pressure on the good neighbourly policy. This policy during a good part of the Rajiv Gandhi administration has been marked by elements of superficiality in the approach to the core issues, vacillation in the face of setbacks and obstacles, a dubious choice of official personnel to handle the policy on crucial occasions and a tendency to compromise on the baseline in the attempt to find a quick solution. There has been in the most recent period an endeavour to correct the framework of the exercise on the understanding that, sooner rather than later, India might be in a position to narrow the substantive gap between the Sri Lankan official position and the (pluralistic) Tamil side and, then, to make an independent recommendation to the two sides as the basis for a political settlement. Mr Rajiv Gandhi's public posture that India is not "a party" to the dispute between two sections of Sri Lankan society and that New Delhi does not see itself as a negotiator called upon to make detailed substantive proposals has not squared with the natural expectations of the role. The latter expressed itself in 1983 in the formulation of a promising, well-crafted and moderate basis for negotiations at an All Party Conference. Given goodwill on both sides and an element of luck, the situation could have evolved in the direction of major progress towards satisfying the Tamil aspirations for substantial autonomy (or self-administering opportunities) in the North and East and the formation of a single linguistic Tamil state or region and also the official Sri Lankan concern over keeping the island united. But Mr Jayawardene went

back on the commitment he made to the Government of India, and the story of stop-run, half measures and blow hot and cold in the negotiations right up to the present is too well known to need recitation here. In August-September 1985, the Rajiv-Romesh Bhandari policy on Sri Lanka seemed to be tripping up unnecessarily with the shaping of a foundation that the Tamils could not possibly accept; but this embarrassing situation was gotten out of. In the latest Indian experience of talking to Mr Jayawardene and his associates, there has clearly been another let-down – in that Colombo promised to improve its political offer to the Tamils and then, when it came to the phase of offering clarifications of the specifics of devolution and improvements, backtracked and refused to honour its commitments to India. The time has certainly come for India to arrive at a realistic, no-nonsense assessment of the overall Sri Lankan situation and work out what it can and needs to do by way of expressing solidarity with the Tamils and pursuing its specific national policy interests. India's locus standi in this matter is very strong. There is no need for high-level decision-makers to feel defensive or apologetic about this involvement or role, or to explain (in season and out of it) what India might or might not do under speculative or hypothetical circumstances. The situation is evolving in a very disturbing direction: if the Sri Lankan regime is not willing to heed the call of elementary humanity, political good sense and decency in bilateral relations, it must meet with the consequences of Indian disapproval and displeasure.

(Editorial, THE HINDU, 31.5.86)

Canada Urged To Suspend Aid To Sri Lanka

Canada and other aid donors, whose investment in Sri Lanka is wasted by the conflict, perhaps less directly but no less tragically, have a responsibility to help this troubled island save itself. To do so, they will have to influence the Sri Lankan Government to curb its human rights abuses and to enter into meaningful talks with the Tamil community's exiled leaders. Ottawa should:

- Seek British support for a Commonwealth mediation effort. Sri Lanka's political elite cares about the maintenance of its international reputation as a liberal, democratic society and may heed appeals from a body which it holds in esteem. (The Old School Tie still counts for much in Colombo).

- Announce at the Sri Lanka aid donors' meeting in June that Canada will formally suspend its involvement in the Madura Oya development

scheme until a political accommodation is reached (one which includes equitable sharing of the scheme's irrigation benefits between Sinhalese and Tamil settlers).

- Convert the remainder of Canada's foreign aid to Sri Lanka into relief assistance for both Tamils and Sinhalese displaced by the conflict (as Norway has done). The 30,000 Tamils sheltered in refugee camps in south India and victimized by malnutrition are in particular distress.

Canada has sufficient humanitarian and economic stakes to warrant such moves. Moreover, it has a political self-interest in the survival of binational states. We know from experience the peril of what Lord Durham called "two nations warring in the bosom of a single state." In Sri Lanka, a Canadian initiative could help avert such an apocalypse.

("The Globe & Mail", Toronto, 8.4.86)

THE SRI LANKA REFUGEES IN INDIA

The dynamic department of Statistics of the Madras Christian College, under the inspiration and leadership of Dr. J. Vijayathilakam undertook the first ever Scientific Survey of the Sri Lanka refugees in India. They have brought out a very useful report full of factual information about the refugees. The report is an accurate profile of Sri Lankan refugees. We are pleased to publish an extract from the report.

Thirty five percent of the refugees say that they have lost their house in Sri Lanka while only 29 percent of the refugees from Mannar reported the loss of their houses. The houses were either burnt down or partially damaged. More than 50 percent from all other districts reported the loss of their houses. About 25 percent of the people from Mannar were not sure what might have happened to their house after they left. About 25 percent of the refugees said that they had lost their jewels. Proportionately more people from Kandy, Colombo and Jaffna had lost their jewels compared to the people from Mannar.

More than 20 percent of the refugees say that they had lost one or more members of their family. This probably includes those who were killed and those who were missing. This percentage includes not only the direct members of the family, but also the relatives of the refugees.

Reasons For Leaving Sri Lanka

More than 90 percent of the refugees left Sri Lanka because of their fear of the army and the police. Fifty percent said that they were directly affected by the ethnic conflict. Among those who were directly affected, businessmen were more affected than the fishermen or agriculturists. About 40 percent, though they were not directly affected, said that their neighbour or a relative was affected. The proportion of refugees for whom a neighbour or a relative was affected remained the same for all professions. In either case of being directly affected and neighbour or relative being affected there was no difference between Tamils of Indian origin and Jaffna Tamils. Irrespective of their origin and native district, the Tamils, have fled Sri Lanka mainly because of the fear of being attacked by the army or police personnel.

Almost all the districts in Tamil Nadu have refugee camps for the Sri Lankan Tamils. Their camps are located in old cinema theatres, community halls, small schools, cyclone shelters or common rest houses. In a few places, special housing schemes have been sanctioned to accommodate them. In most of the camps proper medical aid, toilet facilities and in a few camps there was scarcity of drinking water. Though the government had made arrangements to supply essential commodities at subsidised rate, the refugees felt that the money given was not enough for them. Some of them tried to get some employment outside the camps which was not allowed. In many camps there were people belonging to various professions and possessing many skills but they had to idle away the time. Education of children was another problem. There was no concrete arrangements for it and the children spend all their time playing. In some camps, the elders had taken the initiative to organise classes for the children. Admission into schools outside the camps were difficult as their children did not have any of the necessary certificates.

In many camps there was no privacy for the members of the family consisting of men and women of different age groups. An extra dimension to the problem of the refugees seemed to be the growing rate of child births in camps.

The refugees were asked about their expectations in India and how far these had been fulfilled. While 33 percent said that their expectation of food and shelter had been fulfilled, 67 percent said that it was only partially fulfilled. Regarding education of children for 33 percent of the refugees it was either fully or partially fulfilled, 37 percent expected that it was likely to be fulfilled. The expectation on employment had been fully or partially fulfilled for 10 percent, 35 percent expected it to be fulfilled and 55 percent did not consider it likely that they will get any employment. For financial help the corresponding figures were 5, 15, 20 and 60 percent.

Fulfilment of the Expectation of the Refugees in Camps

	Fulfilled	Partially fulfilled	Likely to be fulfilled	Not likely to be fulfilled
Food Shelter	33	67	—	—
Cloths	20	80	—	—
Vessels				
Education	17	16	37	30
Employment	5	5	35	55
Financial Help	5	15	20	60

Figures are in percentages of the number of people who responded to the particular question.

When the refugees in the camps were asked their future plans, it was interesting to note that almost all of them were quite certain of what they wanted to do. Seventy percent of them wanted to go back to Sri Lanka if normalcy is restored and 25 percent did not want to go back at all. About 5 percent say that they would stay on in India if they get a good income here. More Jaffna Tamils were particular about going back to Sri Lanka than Tamils of Indian Origin. Eighty percent of the Jaffna Tamils and 40 percent of the Tamils of Indian Origin were definite about going back to Sri Lanka if normalcy is restored. Analysing their future plans according to their profession in Sri Lanka it was found that 90 percent of those involved in fishing wanted to go back while only 40 percent of the small business men wanted to go back. Seventy five percent of the agriculturists and professions wanted to go back. In case of other occupations, the percentage of people who wanted to go back was around 50.

(Courtesy Exodus)

Jaffna Muslims Protest Against U.S. Bombing

An effigy of US President Ronald Reagan, wrapped in the American flag, was burnt on Thursday 17th April in Jaffna at the end of a march to protest the American bombing of Libya. The March was organised by the Islamic Youth Movement in Jaffna.

The 2000-strong protesters shouted slogans denouncing US bombing. Jaffna observed a hartal on Thursday.

Militant organisations, meanwhile, have put up posters throughout Jaffna denouncing the US and Israel and expressing solidarity with Libya.

The Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO) have issued strongly-worded statements condemning the US aggression.

"INTEGRATION YES, BUT NO ASSIMILATION" – CWC

THE CWC has recently been challenged to state its views on integration. Our position was set out many years ago and we have repeated the same ever since. **The Ceylon Workers Congress is for integration of the population of the island to create a common Sri Lanka nationality, as long as its component parts like the Tamils of recent Indian origin are able to retain their social, cultural, religious and linguistic identities. Integration yes, but no assimilation.** This, we think is the only way that the ideal of national unity in diversity can be secured in a multi-racial, multi-linguistic and multi-religious society such as we have in Sri Lanka. It is for this reason that we accepted the policies of J. R. Jayawardene and the Constitution of 1978 and have co-operated with him and the Government.

The Council, however, is of the view that integration and the building of amity, peace, national reconciliation and unity cannot be achieved without bringing the Citizenship Laws still on the Statute Book in line with the Constitution. The Constitution recognizes only one nationality, that of a citizen of Sri Lanka. And there is therefore no need to retain the special citizenship laws enacted in the years 1948 to 1951. It is unfortunate that many governmental authorities are still guided by these outdated laws which divide citizens into several categories. The time has come, in the national interest, to implement the Constitution provisions to recognise only one kind of Sri Lanka citizenship and nationality. This will help to eliminate separatist trends and thinking.

The council also feels that for national integration and unity, it is essential that there should be total political participation of all

people who have this country for a home and are qualified to be citizens. But there is bound to be a time lag before a unified system of Citizenship Laws in consonance with the Constitution can come into operation and there is therefore need to have some interim measure to ensure full participation of the people in local government and national institutions.

As an interim measure we would suggest that the Government should consider placing on the electoral lists all those who were born in the island and have not applied or opted for the citizenship of any other country. With the proportional representation system now in vogue, fears about swamping by one group or another will not arise.

It is only when there is full political participation of this kind that it will be possible to formulate national, provincial or district plans and programmes that will be acceptable to the people and not be detrimental to the national interest. It is regrettable that there are attempts to formulate and implement plans under various grandiose names like a Plan for the Hill Country. We will not accept any such plan if it is drawn up without our co-operation and our concurrence, especially when the plan will only serve sectarian, segregationist and divisive interests.

It is a pity that even after so much has happened to bring the country into the present mess with such sharp communal conflicts, many people have not learnt the lesson that stares everyone in the face. The C.W.C. will therefore oppose any plan that will tend to divide and not unite the country. The C.W.C. wants integration without assimilation to ensure national unity and will oppose all plans and programmes that run counter to this.

CALL FOR BAN ON AID TO SRI LANKA

THE LONDON based Human Rights Council of the Standing Committee of Tamils (SCOT) has called upon all governments to stop all aid, military and otherwise, to Sri Lanka in the context of the government's pursuit of a military solution to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. A press release, 18 May 1986, issued by HRC (SCOT) stated:—

The President of Sri Lanka, in recent interviews, has repeated his decision to bring an end to the ethnic conflict by military means. What this implies is the intensification of the current indiscriminate shelling and aerial bombing raids in Tamil areas of Sri Lanka. Already the ruthless actions relentlessly pursued by the government and its security forces have brought about catastrophic consequences for the Tamil speaking people of the country.

Several hundreds of villages in the eastern province have been literally destroyed. Those who escaped death have fled to other areas which they regarded as safe. Besides those who had fled to South India, there are an estimated 200,000 Tamil refugees leading a pitiable life of misery and destitution in schools, church and temple halls and make-shift sheds. Now even those 'safe' areas have become dangerous due to 'security operations'.

Fishermen have been prohibited from going to sea and deprived of their means of daily existence. Those living in coastal areas have been ordered to abandon their homes and move interior where they have not been provided with alternative living accommodation.

People living in proximity to army

camps – and there are many – also have been ordered to move out and, in a number of instances, the abandoned homes blasted to the ground with explosives by the security forces.

Part of this sustained campaign of attrition against the Tamil people has included the destruction of dozens of Hindu temples and Christian and Catholic churches. The historic Selva-sannithy Hindu temple in northern Jaffna has been completely destroyed by the army.

In the continuing unequal combat between the Sri Lankan army equipped with modern military weapons, helicopter gunships and attack aircrafts and the Tamil militant groups, the main casualties have been the innocent non-combatant Tamils, women and children included, and their property. The island has been turned into a land of refugees.

The description that the 'war' conducted by the Sri Lankan government is solely directed against Tamil militant groups which have taken up arms against the government is belied by the havoc and destruction that have been already visited upon the civilian Tamil population. The Sri Lankan government would appear to have adopted the simple but cruel logic that,

if the armed Tamil militants could not be identified, apprehended, confronted or eliminated individually or collectively, then the only way to achieve that would be to collectively destroy and obliterate the Tamil community as a whole in the hope and expectation that armed Tamil militants also would fall victims in that generalised campaign of destruction and obliteration.

In the context of the bulk of the Tamil masses presently surviving on a knife-edge between life and death, President Jayawardene's attempt to seek a quick military victory deserves the severest condemnation and counter-measures from the international community. Instead of applying his energies to the pursuit of a political solution through negotiations, the President has hired foreign mercenaries to carry out bombing raids in Tamil areas inflicting death and destruction as part of his military option. Without grasping the offer of assistance by the Indian government in reaching a political solution, the President is making fervent appeals to the 'English speaking world' for support to carry on war against a section of the island's people.

We call upon all governments and human right organisations to bring pressure upon the government of Sri Lanka to abandon its militaristic course and to seek a political solution through negotiation with the representatives of the Tamil people. We also call upon all governments to forthwith stop all aid, military and otherwise, to Sri Lanka which the government is able to employ in the pursuit of a war against a section of its own people.

Book Review

A. Jeyaratnam Wilson
(University of Brunswick, Canada)

The Politics of Communalism

JANE RUSSELL in her *Communal Politics under the Donoughmore Constitution 1931-1947* (Dehiwala, Tisara Prakasakayo Ltd., 1982) provides us with the seedbed of what was to happen in the years following independence. In this work of hers, so rich in insights into the political culture of the petty squabbling between persons and people entirely unaccustomed to the workings of an altogether strange and eccentric constitutional mechanism, we get some idea that 1948 and after was nothing to be surprised about. The writing was there on the wall.

What strikes the observer is that there are three British constitutional documents, the Colebrooke-Cameron Report of 1833, the Donoughmore Report of 1928 and the Soulbury Report of 1945 each of which created dissidence and dissatisfaction among the minority ethnic and religious groups. The British, who were so adept at discovering formulae to still the pace of discontent in Guyana among other territories, did not desire to choose the cautious route in Sri Lanka. The analyses of the three reports referred to could form a study in themselves. Briefly Colebrooke-Cameron laid the foundations of the unitary state, Donoughmore turned its face against multi-ethnicity and Soulbury hoped Westminster will take root when the Commissioners would well have been aware that their hero, Don Stephen Senanayake, had only a few more years to live.

The depressing account which Russell relates in each of her chapters tell their story of Sinhala intrigues and the Jaffna Tamils' search for the holy grail of communal ratios which might stem the tide of the new flood of electors caused by the introduction of universal suffrage. We have the familiar picture of the atomization of Tamil politics and G.G. Ponnambalam's valiant effort to close the loopholes. But he failed to gain the unconditional and whole-hearted support of the minorities which mattered. The Sinhalese fared better. They knew what was in store. They did not chafe at the restraints. Instead they went along with the system knowing full well that at the end of the road the bonanza of a single unitary state would be the prize for loyal and unstinted cooperation in the war effort.

Here we find the men of destiny beginning to use their tools to carve their respective niches in history. D.B. Jayatilleke opted out. Don Stephen Senanayake, more a creation of the Wijewardene newspapers, emerges a paper tiger. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike gave the latter a good run for his money. J.R. Jayawardene with Bandaranaike were dabbling in Sinhala Buddhist politics - denominational schools, the official language, the national anthem, the national flag. G.G. Ponnambalam ultimately emerges as the charismatic uncrowned king of the Northern Tamils. S.J.V. Chelvanayakam was biding his time but with uncanny foresight was able to anticipate all the calamities that would befall the Tamil community in the post-independence

years. I like Russell's quintessential portrait of Chelvanayakam.

... Chelvanayakam was seriously concerned with the political effect of Sinhalese Buddhist cultural resurgence on the future of the Ceylon Tamils. Chelvanayakam was a thoughtful man; as a politician he displayed (the) integrity ... His Tamil communalism was not the froth of an opportunist but a deeply felt and considered judgement backed by an appreciation of Tamil culture which amounted to blind loyalty. Chelvanayakam's attachment to the Ceylon Tamil culture came much closer to a true Tamil nationalism and his gloomy views and oracular attitude proclaimed him the heir to the Ponnambalam Arunachalam who had turned in his bitterness from the ideal of a United Lanka to the concept of a Tamilnad or Pan-Tamilan state in his solstitial years. Although S.J.V. Chelvanayakam did not present a differentiated policy to that of Ponnambalam in 1947, his political approach augured a radical change in the tone and demeanour of Ceylon Tamil politics in the post-independence period (PP. 1321-22).

Jane Russell has correctly discerned the character of the man who was to alter the political history of Sri Lanka. The most prickly problem for the Tamils at this time was, however, the folly of the Jaffna Youth Congress and the antics of C. Suntheralingam. Together the two made a mess of a Ceylon Tamil movement which might have otherwise fared better. The National Congress held its ground as a low country Sinhalese organisation. They knew they had got on to a good thing, universal suffrage, and they meant to stick with the British on it. The British imperialists for their part realised that the future protection of their commercial and military interests as well as the maintenance of the Commonwealth tie lay in working with one man, Don Stephen, not with any organisation.

The beginnings of the dispute on ethnic proportions in the public services are pinpointed by Russell but for quite different reasons advanced by the Sinhala ethnonationalists of contemporary hue. In 1937, the Selangor Unemployment Enquiry Committee enquired into the retrenchment in government service in the Federated Malay States in 1937, noted:-

So far as the Jaffna Tamils are concerned, in days that are now gone, the Jaffna Tamil was the backbone of the government Clerical Service and the Railways. Jaffna was then the only country which had an over-supply of English-educated men.

So it seems obvious that the British did not prefer the Tamils to the Sinhalese or the Malays or Chinese. The simple fact was that the arid peninsula offered the Tamils very little opportunities of alternative employment and they therefore took to government service. It is clear from Russell's analysis of the disputes between the Sinhalese and Tamils on the subject of representation, that the Tamils feared for their future having, as Russell has made obvious, no other recourse to alternative sources of employment.

Yet another pressing question that reared its ugly head during this phase was the presence of Indian Tamil plantation workers in the Kandyan Sinhalese areas. On this question, the Ceylon and Indian Tamils acted in unison while the Kandyan Sinhalese increasingly realised that in unity with



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their low country Sinhalese fellowmen lay their strength. The problem was left unresolved both by the Donoughmore and Soulbury Commissions giving rise in the end to irreconcilable conflict between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities.

Ceylon was unfortunate in the governors the island had during the twenties and thirties. Hugh Clifford was unpredictable, barely in poise. Russell thinks Caldecott was dim. Manning liked intriguing. Which leaves us with Herbert Stanley, Reginald Stubbs and Monck-Mason Moore. Were the members of the Donoughmore and Soulbury Commission any better? Had the island been in surer hands, the ills we are prey to presently could have been avoided.

Russell's book is invaluable for any student wishing to probe into the contemporary politics of Sri Lanka. As a scholar, she has successfully understood the mentality of the numerous political figures she has investigated. She has studied the literature and produced a work of considerable value.

(Tamil Refugee and Immigrants Welfare Association)

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Marriages

JACOB-SELVARATNAM. The marriage took place on Monday 26th May 1986 at Putney Methodist Church, London SW15 of Shanthakumar (son of the Rev. S.M. and Mrs Joyce Jacob), with Shirabdi (daughter of Mr S.C. and Mrs Eunice Selvaratnam). The service was conducted by the bridegroom's father and the homily preached by the Rev. A. Cooper, former Superintendent of the Kollupitiya Methodist Church.

NATARAJAN-JUMARANAYAGAM. The marriage was solemnised recently at New Woodlands Hotel, Mylapore, Madras 4, of Natarajan (son of late Mr S. Palaniappan, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Madras), and Prathursha, daughter of Mr and Mrs T. Kumaranayagam, and granddaughter of Mr M. Theagarajah of A/19, Anand's Apartments, 7 Venkataraman St., Madras 17. Mr Natarajan is the Chief Finance Officer, Corporation Hospitals of USA, San Diego.

RAJASINGHAM-SELLATHURAI. The marriage took place on 10th May of Mohan Rajasingham (son of Mr and Mrs K. Rajasingham, 20 Eton Avenue, New Malden, Surrey), and Ranjani, daughter of Mr and Mrs S. Sellathurai of 35 Chadacre Avenue, Clayhall, Ilford, Essex. Mr Rajasingham, former Deputy Commissioner of Inland Revenue, Colombo, was President of the Co-ordinating Committee of Displaced Employees set up in 1983. Mr. Sellathurai is a trustee of the Sri Murugan Temple, Archway.

SABARATNASINGHAM-CELLIAH. The wedding took place at St. Mary's Church, Kopay, on 10th April of Mathitharan, son of the late Mr N.S. Sabaratnasingham and Mrs Sabaratnasingham of Allen Road, Karainagar and Sakunthala, daughter of the late Mr G.S. Chelliah, Principal, Kopay Christian College and Mrs Selvi Chelliah, Thanga Vasam, Kopay.

SELVARATNAM-RAMANADEN. The marriage was solemnised at St. James Anglican Church, Calgary, Alberta, Canada of Hiran Selvaratnam (son of Donald and Chandra Selvaratnam) with Sherine Dushyanthi (daughter of Theodore and Rita Ramanaden).

Deaths

KANDIAH, V.A., former Secretary, Bulgarian Embassy, husband of Anandi, father of Gowri (UK). Cremation Colombo, 27th April. 28/2, Pereira Lane, Wellawatte.

MAHESAN Arumugam, J.P.U.M., Attorney-at-law. Cremation 18th May. 29/3, Station Road, Wellawatte.

NAVARATNAM, T.N., formerly of Kaduna, Nigeria, father of Raveendran (UK), Sri Ranjini, Yogendran (UK), Sri Shanthini, Muralikrishnan (University, Jaffna), Sri Retnambika and Namasivayam. Cremation 5th May, at Kombayanmanal Cemetery. 14, Udayar Lane, Kandarmadam, Jaffna.

PATHMARAJAH, Appiah, former Ambassador of Sri Lanka, husband of Saku, father of Tara, Meera and Mark. Cremation in Geneva on 23 April. 9, Chemin des Colombettes, 1202 Geneva, Switzerland.

RENGANATHAN, P., Attorney-at-law, Trincomalee, died under tragic circumstances. Cremation 12th May. 37, Orr's Hill, Trincomalee.

SHERARD Ponnammah Ruth, Tutorial Staff, St. Thomas Prep. School, Kollupitiya, wife of the late William Sherrard of the Govt. Printing Office, died at Johannesburg, South Africa. Ashes interred at Kanatte Cemetery, Colombo, 6th April.

SIVAGNANASAMPANTHAR, Mrs Maheswary, wife of the late Sivagnanasampanthar of 13, 55th Lane, Colombo 6 and her daughter, Jayanthi, mother and sister of Jayakumaran, Bavani, Ramani and Gowry, died under tragic circumstances in USA. Funeral 24th April in UK. No. 4, Magnanels House, Barmug, Maidstone, Kent, UK.

THURAIRAJAH, Robert John, retired Director of Physical Education, Jaffna College, husband of Soundaramani, father of Rev. Rajkumar Thuraiarajah, Rajini, Ranjini, father-in-law of Kirupaimalar, Mahendran (New Zealand), Yogan Joseph (Saudi). Funeral service at 5, Dutch Road, Chavakachcheri, 7th April.

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At present we have 66 children and 3 adults on roll. Three teachers and four parents teach these students in seven classes. From January 1985, Mrs Sivasakthy

Sivanesan has been on the staff, teaching Carnatic Music and Bharatha Natyam. Mr Balashree Rasaiah joined the school as a Mridangam instructor in January 1986.

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Mr S. Kanagasundaram (Secretary) 01-680 5552

Mr T. Kulathurgam (Treasurer) 01-777 5552

GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES MILITARY OFFENSIVE

Continued from page 1

had said, "I can and I will wipe out this trouble in one month".

The main objective of the government's offensive was no doubt to gain military, administrative and physical control of the Jaffna Peninsula through military means by firstly setting up a string of army camps within easy reach of each other, and secondly to clean up the major roads in densely populated areas which apparently had been mined by the Tamil militants. The Minister of National Security was careful enough to conceal the main objectives of the operation by describing it as an attempt to "turn around troops with the objective of securing all the security bases". An army spokesman said that the aim of the advance was to secure the roads between Elephant Pass, which marks the start of the peninsula in the south, the island of Kayts to the west and the airbase at Palaly to the north, and the main fort in the middle of Jaffna town.

Bombing raids

Although outnumbered and outclassed by the quality of the weapons in the possession of the armed forces, the Tamil militants were able to put up such a resistance that troops failed to make the expected headway. Indiscriminate bombing and strafing from the air were commenced once the troops met with unexpected resistance. Helicopters dropped leaflets warning of more raids unless the Tamil guerrillas dismantled their machine gun positions.

The Sri Lankan English daily, *The Island* of 20 May 1986 reported, "Air Force planes and helicopters were also reported to have bombed and strafed Jaffna with at least 54 persons reportedly injured. A Defence Ministry source said that the bombing had to take place because the Army camp was under attack by the terrorists. The sources said that the civilians were warned before the attack to clear the area".

Humphrey Hawkins reported from Colombo in *The Guardian* (London) of 20 May 1986, 'Sri Lankan air force planes and helicopters bombed and strafed the centre of the northern city of Jaffna as army convoys tried unsuccessfully for the third day running to retake the Tamil separatist stronghold.

The use of air power marks a sudden change in the strategy of the army operation to wrest control of the Jaffna peninsula, from Tamil militants. Jaffna, the island's fourth largest city, has been in rebel hands for a year.

Residents said that two light attack planes, swooping as low as 300 feet, dropped between seven and 10 bombs around the city's main commercial district during the 40-minute raid while

helicopters strafed the area with machine-gun fire.

Among the buildings hit was the general hospital. Several patients were injured, and one had to have emergency surgery.

There was no word last night from the military about the bombing, the community leaders said that up to 12 people may have died. The head of the city's hospital said that at least 54 people were treated at the hospital, and another 30 were said to have been taken to private clinics.

The hospital made urgent appeals for blood.

Residents said that shops were set ablaze and that several buildings were damaged in the afternoon attack. People took cover in homes and offices and only the Tamil guerrillas, manning machine-gun posts, were on the street.

After the raid shelling was reported from Jaffna fort overlooking the town centre, which is still in army hands. . . .

Community leaders said that more than 60 people may have died in the three days of fighting and up to 170 injured. Only civilians had been killed in the air raid, they said."

Indian protest

The indiscriminate nature of the aerial bombardments and the heavy civilian casualties raised international protests. India was particularly incensed. The Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, Mr J.N. Dixit, called on President Jayawardene on May 20, under instructions from New Delhi, to convey India's grave concern and urge him to halt the military operations in the Jaffna Peninsula. It is reported that, at one stage of the discussion, the Minister of National Security, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, was called in by Jayawardene to tell the Indian envoy that it was the Tamil militants who launched the offensive which was timed to coincide with the scheduled turn-around of troops in the northern province.

Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, in a statement made in the Sri Lankan Parliament, indulged in patent falsehoods that were full of contradictions to cover up the indiscriminate attacks by his security forces. He claimed that the General Hospital in Jaffna was not hit during the bombing raids by his airforce, and added, "In fact one of the mortars fired by the terrorists fell in the Jaffna Hospital premises and exploded". He described the government's offensive as one of self-defence.

Hospital damaged

However, there is irrefutable evidence that during the bombing on May 19, wards numbers 12, 15, 16 and 29, besides the outpatients

department, were damaged along with several other buildings in Jaffna that had no military significance. The Defence Ministry spokesman in Colombo had been talking during his daily press briefings of a three-pronged drive by the Sri Lankan army to regain control of Jaffna, while Mr. Athulathmudali had been claiming that the government had been acting in self-defence in the context of attacks by Tamil militants. In the face of the mounting protests, after four days of military operations, the Ministry of National Security stated on May 20 that it was suspending its operations and bombings in the context of the unexpected resistance. The Minister described the suspension as a 'temporary setback'.

However, aerial bombardments, naval shelling and strafing from helicopters were resumed the following day, May 21, with greater intensity. *The Times* (London) of May 22 reported that towns in the Jaffna peninsula were pounded from sea and air; people began to flee as the helicopters and planes strafed and bombed the coastal town of Valvettiturai; at least 30 bombs were dropped at the same time as navy ships shelled the area; and patrol vessels also shelled the towns of Polykandy and Vasavilan.

Fierce attacks

Vilma Wimaladasa reported from Colombo in the *London Daily Telegraph* of May 22, "Sri Lankan fighters and helicopter gunships launched fierce attacks yesterday on the coastal fishing town of Valvettiturai in the troubled north, bombing and machine-gunning this key base of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The air raids were accompanied by shelling by naval patrol boats . . . Unofficial reports said more than 75 civilians and several soldiers were killed. About 50 houses were damaged . . . Residents in Jaffna spoke of injured civilians fleeing to the jungle in fear and others lying on the streets bleeding, with no transport and no one to take them to hospital".

Besides the death and devastation, the latest military operations by the government have further alienated the Tamil people and made them think that their only defenders are the Tamil militants. According to Humphrey Hawksley's report in *The Guardian* of May 21, "The operation appears to have won the militants considerable support from the local population who had criticised them for the bloody feuding earlier this month between two rival groups". Professor Sivathamby of the University of Jaffna goes even further. "Before the bombing, there was a line, however thin, that was drawn between the militants and the people. Now that line has disappeared", he said.