

Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka

by
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Sri Lanka is an exquisite little island, rich in colour, excitement and new experience.... Her people are warm and friendly... like the sun that smiles on Sri Lanka all through the year.... Absorb the serenity of the pilgrims come to worship at the feet of the Compassionate One. Sri Lanka is all things to all people... the serendipitous isle, where happy discoveries are made, the last lovely place where time means nothing and peace holds sway, a place to stimulate, excite, warm, relax, renew you. Sri Lanka... a place to take hold of your heart. (passage from a 1981 Ceylon Tourist Board brochure)

...driving in from the airport to Colombo we found that the road was blocked on the bridge over the Kalani River. People had stopped their vehicles and a small crowd was gazing at the muddy monsoon waters swirling below.... What were they looking at?.... Bodies. They come here to see the corpses floating down the river.... Everyday the bodies float past, and on one day this week 50 were seen floating together.... They are always youths... bodies are found everywhere in Sri Lanka: on the beaches, along the roadsides, in the jungles, and in the towns. It is now customary to prevent recognition by burning the bodies with tyres, but others are thrown in the rivers as a warning to the living...". (*The Guardian* (London), 26 September 1989. Cited in *International Alert* 1989, p. 5.)

INTRODUCTION

Human rights groups estimate that between 1983 and 1988 from twelve to sixteen thousand children, women and men have been killed in the violence that has devastated the small island-state of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) located in the Indian Ocean off the southern tip of India.² Except for a five month period between January and June 1989, Sri Lanka has been under a state of emergency since May 1983. In these seven years Sri Lankans have suffered terrorist massacres; government security force attacks on civilians in retaliation for attacks made by some Tamil and Sinhalese extremists; indiscriminate security force bombings of Tamil areas (including schools, hospitals and temples); and mass arrests of citizens who are frequently held incommunicado, routinely tortured, and often killed while in detention.³

The response of the Sri Lankan government to the increasing discontent has escalated the violence to levels unprecedented in the island's history. The government has implemented the Prevention of Terrorism Act (patterned on the South African model) and emergency legislation — both of which violate Sri Lanka's obligations as a signatory to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The 1984 creation of "prohibited" and "security" zones in certain Tamil areas (including the entire coastline of the northern region) has destroyed any semblance of normal life in these areas by restricting movement of residents, closing down the entire fishing industry, and evacuating over fifty thousand families.

The Sri Lankan government has come to view the "Tamil problem" exclusively as a "military problem." Former president J.R. Jayawardene has explained it as follows: "I shall have a military solution to what I believe is a military problem. After doing so I shall tackle the political side."⁴ Accordingly, compulsory military service was reintroduced in October 1985 and the eleven thousand person-army of 1983 has more than doubled in four years to over twenty-five thousand. The total strength of the security forces has increased from thirty-three thousand to approximately sixty thousand. The ethnic composition of the Sri Lankan military is almost exclusively Sinhalese. In a country where the per capita gross national product is a mere \$363 a year, defence spending has increased seventeen-fold since 1981, and in 1987 the government spent \$500 million on its war. Sri Lanka now spends approximately \$1.3 million per day on the war. Such estimates, however, do not consider the human or other, more indirect, economic costs.⁵

The signing of the India-Sri Lanka Peace Accord in July 1987, introduced 40-60,000 Indian soldiers into the fray with the intention of disarming the rather well-organized Tamil militants of northern Sri Lanka. In its first year, the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) suffered the brunt of a guerrilla war and, only months after its arrival, its military involvement began to be labeled "India's Vietnam." The Indian Peace Keeping Force is estimated to be costing New Delhi between \$1.37 and \$3 million a day.⁶

Conservative estimates produced by the U.S. Committee for Refugees in 1988 put the number of people displaced by the conflict at over 250,000, which makes Sri Lanka the thirteenth highest "producer" of refugees in the world. Over 150,000 are estimated to be in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu alone.⁷ In the summer of 1986, the reality of the devastation in Sri Lanka touched Canada when a group of Tamils appeared on the shores of Nova Scotia seeking asylum. For many Canadians this was their introduction to the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. This essay examines why and how this country, once touted as a "model of development" and a "functioning Third World democracy," disintegrated into the present state of violence and chaos?

ORIGINS OF THE ETHNIC CONFLICT

The early history of Sri Lanka is shrouded in myth. Fourth century Sinhalese Buddhist texts chronicle a history of kings and gods, myths and magic.⁸ In this mythic history, the Buddha visits Sri Lanka and establishes the island as the repository of his teaching, thus fusing Sinhalese Buddhism, nationalism and ethnic identity. A fundamentalist Buddhist acceptance of this mythic version of history is prevalent in contemporary Sri Lanka. Although the Sinhalese Buddhists constitute the majority group, the island is shared with Hindu Tamils and Tamil-speaking Muslims. In the centuries prior to the colonial period, the multi-ethnic society in Sri Lanka experienced periods of harmony, as well as conflict.

The proximity of India and the importance of Sri Lanka in international trade made it inevitable that the ebb and flow of South Indian politics would affect Sri Lankan politics. South Indian invasions, court intrigue, and dynastic struggles occurred. When Portugal, the first colonial power, arrived in 1505, three separate kingdoms existed in Sri Lanka including the Tamil kingdom of Jaffna. Following Portugal, other colonial powers assumed possession of Sri Lanka: the Netherlands (1658-1795) and Britain (1795-1948). Sri Lanka obtained a rather perfunctory independence in 1948 following the violent and traumatic Indian struggle for independence.

In Sri Lanka's early years, post-independence optimism tended to moderate ethnic antagonism. However, in the absence of a powerful foreign colonial ruler who could impose order and rules, domestic decision-making and the distribution of limited resources came to be influenced by ethnic group affiliation. Post-independence optimism rapidly evaporated and ethnic differences were thrust onto the political stage. The Westminster model of government adopted in 1948 changed to the current presidential system in 1978, patterned after de Gaulle's Fifth Republic Constitution.⁹

THE GROUPS INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT

The Sinhalese

According to tradition, the Sinhalese originally migrated from the east and west coasts of northern India sometime in the sixth century BC. According to the most recent census of 1981, they are 72.5% of the population, numbering approximately 10.8 million.¹⁰

1. Major Political Parties

The conservative United National Party (UNP) and the socialist Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) are both popular among the Sinhalese. These parties alternately formed the government until the landslide victory of J.R. Jayawardene and his UNP in 1977, in which it won 85% of the available seats. The massive UNP majority in parliament allowed Jayawardene to effect a number of far-reaching political manoeuvres: he stripped the SLFP leader of her civic rights and expelled the only Tamil party from parliament by constitutional amendment; and extended parliament through a dubious

referendum, thus avoiding general elections for eleven years, i.e., from 1977 until late 1988.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party, founded in 1951, was first led by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike — until his assassination in 1959 — and by his wife Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who maintains leadership of the Party. The SLFP thrives on a pro-Sinhala language policy and state support for Buddhism. It is vehemently opposed to the India-Sri Lanka Peace Accord and has been suspected of “consorting with the JVP [Sinhalese extremists] in an effort to topple the UNP government.”¹¹

2. The Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP)

The JVP (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna or Peoples' Liberation Front) is a Sinhalese Marxist extremist group. Its violence tends to be directed towards the state and its representatives, the UNP government and President Premadasa, for their “weak stance” against the Tamil militants. By the end of 1987, the JVP was considered to be responsible for the murder of a number of UNP members of parliament and over three hundred government officials. The JVP was also blamed for an unsuccessful grenade attack on President Jayawardene and Prime Minister Premadasa on 18 August 1987.¹² By the end of 1989, the JVP had become a serious threat to the very existence to the Sri Lankan state and the murders attributed to it are counted not in hundreds, but in the thousands.¹³

An increasing number of discontented and alienated Sinhalese youth is turning to the JVP, hoping that it can provide the rapid and profound changes which the UNP and the SLFP have failed to deliver, such as the provision of gainful employment. It is estimated that the Sinhalese government has over fifty thousand security forces tied up in the southern section of the island, trying to contain the JVP threat.¹⁴ During the parliamentary elections in February 1989, reportedly some 70,000 troops and policemen were deployed in the south in an attempt to contain the violence.¹⁵

3. The Sinhalese Buddhist Clergy (Sangha)

The nationalistic Sangha has been used to legitimize government policies and behavior, and has provided a powerful means of fusing political and religious ideology. This fusion was clearly illustrated in the ceremony presided over by Buddhist clergy in which two of the most powerful ministers of the Jayawardene Cabinet pledged Buddhist oaths “to save Sri Lanka and its people from terrorism” and laid wreaths at the statue of King Dutta Gamani, a religio-mythic hero of the Sinhalese chronicles heralded for expelling Tamils from Sri Lanka.¹⁶ Members of the Sangha have also been associated with the JVP and anti-State activities.

Anxiety over the threat of Indian and Tamil aggression is ingrained in Sinhalese culture. It has been reinforced over the centuries by a highly nationalistic and politicized Buddhist clergy, and, in particular, through religio-mythic Sinhalese Buddhist texts such as the *Mahavamsa*, the *Dipavamsa* and the *Culmavamsa*.

The Tamils

1. The Sri Lankan Tamils

Sri Lankan Tamils are of ancient South Indian origin. The historical period in which they migrated to Sri Lanka is difficult to determine. It is sufficient to state that they identify their roots in the ancient Tamil kingdom of Jaffna, in the northern part of Sri Lanka, at the time of Portugal's arrival in 1505. Some Tamils use this point to argue that the northern Jaffna Kingdom should have been given statehood when Ceylon obtained independence in 1948.

The Sri Lankan Tamils constitute 11.6% of the country's population or approximately 1.7 million people. They speak Tamil, a Dravidian language completely different from Sinhalese, and are primarily Saivite Hindu. Approximately 80% live in the northern part of the island and are divided into two groups: the Jaffna Tamils of the north and the East Coast Tamils. The remaining 20% are located in the southern areas in the country, although increased attacks on the Tamils in the south have pushed growing numbers both northwards and out of the country.

2. The Plantation Tamils

A second major group of Tamils are often called "Indian Tamils", "Hill Country Tamils" or "Estate" Tamils. They make up 8% of the total Sri Lankan population and are the descendants of migrants from South India brought over by the British during the past century-and-a-half to work on the tea and rubber estates. Within the South Indian caste system, the Estate Tamils are of a lower caste than the Sri Lankan Tamils in the north of the island. This, as well as spatial distance, has contributed to limiting interaction between the two groups of Tamils.

Shortly after independence the Estate Tamils were stripped of political rights and came to be viewed as a stateless people because neither India nor Sri Lanka would grant them citizenship. In February 1986, however, the Sri Lankan government unilaterally enacted legislation to accommodate ninety-four thousand Estate Tamils. The Jayawardene government may have hoped to win the Indian vote for the UNP. However, by eliminating the citizenship issue, the Jayawardene government may have helped remove one of the barriers to closer cooperation between the Estate and Sri Lankan Tamils.

3. The Sri Lankan Muslims

The Sri Lankan Muslims are the descendants of Muslim traders who began settling on the island in the tenth century. They make up 7% of the national population or roughly one million people, and are mainly concentrated in the Eastern Province along the east coast of Sri Lanka; they are also dispersed in various parts of the island. Although they speak Tamil, the fact that they are Muslim rather than Hindu makes them distinct from the Sri Lankan and Plantation Tamils.

The Sri Lankan Muslims occupy a key position both geographically and demographically. The central node of the Eastern Province is Trincomalee — one of the finest natural harbors in the world. This geographical fact is

strategically significant in the rivalry between the superpowers, as well as in South Asian (especially Indian) regional security. The Sri Lankan Muslims are pivotally placed in the precarious ethnic balance of the Eastern Province. They are a group capable of substantially helping or hindering either Tamil or Sinhalese initiatives to obtain political and military control. As a result, the Muslims have been both wooed and attacked by Tamil and Sinhalese extremists.

The Sinhalese response to the Sri Lankan Tamil/Muslim majority in the Eastern Province has been a long-term plan to alter the demographic composition of the northern and eastern areas of the island, so as to increase Sinhalese representation and control of traditional Tamil areas. This so-called "West Bank Scheme" envisions the resettlement of hundreds of thousands of armed Sinhalese, trained in self-defence, on government-owned land in these areas.¹⁷ Over fifty thousand Sinhalese (ex-convicts, retired military personnel, and families displaced by the massive Mahaveli water project) have already been resettled on traditional Tamil land. Unable to affect the government's colonization policy, some Tamil militants have responded with violent attacks on these armed settlements.

4. The Militant Tamil Groups

The most prominent Tamil group in Sri Lanka is the guerrilla organization called the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), led by the charismatic Velupillai Prabhakaran. The LTTE is by far the most powerful Tamil group and the major Tamil military force in Sri Lanka. Like other militant groups, it had had major offices in South India — in Madras, Madurai and Tiruchi — until police crackdowns, under the terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord, forced them underground. Because of LTTE's demonstrated ability to hinder Indian- or Sinhalese-imposed solutions, it must be explicitly included in any viable peace proposal.

A close ally of LTTE is the Eelam Research Organization (EROS). While EROS is a smaller organization, it too is relatively well-disciplined and well-organized. Other militant groups, sometimes in open conflict with LTTE, are PLOTE (Peoples' Liberation Army of Tamil Eelam), TELO (Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization) and EPRLF (Eelam Peoples' Revolutionary Liberation Front). These groups are smaller, less organized, and less disciplined than LTTE and have contributed to straining militant Tamil relations with both the central government of India and the state government of Tamil Nadu, by engaging in blatantly criminal activities and gun-fighting in South Indian cities.

Social dislocation created by the influx of an estimated 150-200,000 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees¹⁸ has also contributed to a decrease in South Indian support for Sri Lankan Tamils. The lessening of public support in 1987 allowed the central government of India and the state government of Tamil Nadu to crack down on militant activities within India, in an attempt to pressure the militant Tamils to come to some type of agreement with the Jayawardene government.

5. The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF)

The Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), a political party formed in 1976 in Sri Lanka, is distinct from the militant groups engaged in military activities. TULF was elected to the Sri Lankan parliament on a political platform that favored the creation of a “secular, socialist state of Tamil Eelam.” Significantly, this position was later moderated to one which would accept “any viable alternative.”¹⁹ Its representatives have been elected in virtually all areas where there are Tamil majorities. TULF was made marginal in Sri Lankan politics by its expulsion from parliament in July 1981. This came about when the UNP-dominated government, through the use of an extraordinary parliamentary procedure, approved a motion of non-confidence in the TULF leader of the opposition, A. Amirthalingam²⁰ followed later by the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution which required all MPs to take an oath to the “unitary constitution” of Sri Lanka. TULF members of parliament were subsequently expelled when they refused to take an oath of loyalty under which they would have renounced even peaceful efforts towards separatism in the north (the Sixth Amendment). This expulsion alienated the Tamil community from the parliamentary process. Consequently, political grievances came to be expressed more and more through the actions of militant Tamil groups.

India

The inherent geopolitical reality of the South Asian security system is its Indo-centric nature. That is, if any international or domestic conflict threatens to upset regional stability, then the attention of the government of India will inevitably be aroused. As a result, India has always been perceived as a threat by the government of Sri Lanka.

During the colonial period, the fear of India tended to be eclipsed by the presence of the colonial powers. However, the misgivings about Indian aggression returned at independence in 1948 and, accordingly, a Ceylon-UK Defence Agreement was immediately signed. Suggestions made by some Indian leaders in 1948, for the creation of a regional confederation to ensure India’s security, only served to exaggerate Sri Lankan fears. Furthermore, India’s intervention in the 1971 Bangladesh crisis illustrated to the Sri Lankan government that India was not averse to flexing its muscles as the hegemonic state in the region.

The Jayawardene government wanted to counteract Indian influence in the Sri Lankan conflict, mindful of the fact that the Indian government had tacitly accepted the presence of militant Tamil training bases in Tamil Nadu since the early to mid-1980s. The Sri Lankan government requested and received the assistance of a number of other countries, which may have served to make India more nervous about the intrusion of foreign powers into South Asian affairs. As well as obtaining defence equipment from South Africa, and intelligence and counter-insurgency training from Israel, Sri Lanka received training and equipment from two of India’s most threatening neighbors — Pakistan and China.²¹ It is, therefore, not surprising that the

government of India constructed the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord explicitly to prevent external powers from meddling in "India's backyard."²²

The Government of India is acutely aware that Sri Lanka could be used by foreign powers to gain access to India's exposed southern flank (including its submarine base in Cape Comorin, and air bases in Kerala). Because of these national security concerns, the Indian Government wants domestic conditions in Sri Lanka stabilized, at least to the point where external powers cannot possibly exploit the ethnic conflict to gain a foothold in the region. The signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord, and the introduction of sixty thousand Indian troops into Sri Lanka, has enabled India to block foreign power involvement in the Sri Lankan conflict. However, it has also introduced Indian troops into a quagmire which has had divisive repercussions within India.

The dominant political dynamic within India is the tension between the central government and the state governments, exacerbated by the well-recognized Indian phenomena of regionalism, factionalism and communalism. This is an important consideration in a discussion of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka because it sheds light on actions taken by the state government of Tamil Nadu which do not appear to correspond to central government directives (for example, the unsuccessful 3 June 1987 humanitarian flotilla to aid the Jaffna Tamils who were under siege by the Sri Lankan military). Tamil Nadu has long been the southern pole of a north-south regional split in India. Nonetheless, the Tamil Nadu state government was the critical intermediary between the central government of India and various Tamil militant groups of Sri Lanka.

THE DOUBLE MINORITY COMPLEX

The fact that the Sinhala language and culture have no centre outside of Sri Lanka has helped to create both a siege mentality and a regional minority complex among the Sinhalese. That is, although the Sinhalese are a majority within Sri Lanka, they nonetheless perceive themselves to be a minority in relation to the fifty million Tamils of Southern India. Thus, the categorization of groups into minority Tamils and majority Sinhalese masks a phenomenon which could be termed a "double minority complex." This complex is one of the unique characteristics of the current Sri Lankan conflict and exercises considerable influence on the perceptions and behavior of both the Sinhalese and Tamil parties to the conflict. A senior diplomat in Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo, sums it up well: "There are three minorities in this country: the Tamils, the Muslims, and the Sinhalese."²³

THE DYNAMICS OF CONFLICT

Unlike the Indian experience, Sri Lanka's attainment of independence was notably untraumatic. In effect, Sri Lanka's independence followed on the coattails of the Indian struggle for independence. The British left Sri Lanka amicably and were perceived as a trustworthy ally by both the

Sinhalese and Tamil elites (as evidenced in the 1948 Ceylon-UK Defence Pact). Many members of the indigenous Tamil and Sinhalese elites had studied in England, which contributed to the nurturing of an affinity with the British. As importantly, substantial British economic interests in Sri Lanka at independence (and presently) made preserving a friendly relationship with the former colonial power an expedient course of action. In the initial period following independence, the bonds between the elites of the two groups engendered a sense of "Ceylon-ness" which took precedence over the ethnic divisions, especially since the English language remained a common medium of communication and the medium of instruction in the secondary schools and university.

Gradually, however, post-independence cohesion eroded. The Tamils of both Tamil Nadu and Sri Lanka share a similar "historical accident" in that both experienced extended periods of English language education which worked to their benefit during (and subsequent to) colonial rule. The Sri Lankan Tamils, as well as other minorities on the island, mastered the English language and excelled in the British administrative system as well as the professions. Various suggestions have been put forward to explain the apparent advantaged position of the Sri Lankan Tamils at independence: British "divide and rule" policy; access to superior English medium education; economic necessity (i.e., the poor quality of land in the traditional Tamil areas forced them to earn a living in non-agricultural activities like business); Tamil "industriousness." No doubt each suggestion contributes to the explanation. However, the consequence of this phenomenon was that, at independence, the Tamils came to be viewed by the Sinhalese as being "over-represented" in higher education (particularly engineering and medicine), the professions, and the civil service. This became a source of discontent and a political target for Sinhalese nationalists.

The ethnic differences proved to be a temptation too strong not to be exploited and manipulated by politicians who quickly learned that an ethnic majority could be transformed into an electoral majority. It was the harnessing of ethnicity for political purposes and the explicit cultivation of Sinhalese nationalism that first swept the Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP) under the leadership of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, to power in 1956. It is the same strategy that is prevalent in contemporary Sri Lanka.

As the Sinhalese nationalists assumed control of the government through the electoral process, they enacted legislation which limited Tamil employment and educational opportunities. As a result, the Tamil's share of government jobs dropped from 50% to 11% between 1956 and 1980.²⁴ Sinhalese control of university education was instituted in 1971 through a government-initiated admissions scheme. Tamil youths were required to score higher on entrance tests, and were subjected to district quotas, which drastically restricted Tamil admission to university programmes (especially engineering and medicine).²⁵

A "Sinhala-only" language policy adopted in 1956 served to increasingly marginalize Tamils and restrict their access to education and employment (particularly government service). A compromise was reached between the

government and the Tamil community in 1957 (the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact), allowing the use of Tamil in Tamil districts as well as providing for Tamil regional councils with powers in agriculture and education among other important areas. However, the Buddhist reaction rallied by the Sangha and J.R. Jayawardene — then a leading UNP member of the opposition — was so strong that the compromise agreement was dropped. As early as 1956, “language riots” began to flare up, resulting in the deaths of hundreds. Thousands of Tamil refugees fled from the Sinhalese south to Tamil areas in the north.²⁶ Thus, the elevation of Tamil and English to the status of official languages, under the terms of the India-Sri Lanka Accord of July 1987, is intended to alleviate ethnic tensions rooted in language discrimination. However, the efficacy of this action can be determined only after thorough and conscientious implementation.

CONFLICT ESCALATION: 1977-1987

The 1977 landslide victory of J.R. Jayawardene’s UNP over the Sri Lanka Freedom Party was followed by an outbreak of violence. Although it began as a confrontation between UNP and SLFP supporters, it was quickly redirected towards both the Sri Lankan Tamils resident in the Sinhalese south, and the Plantation Tamils in the Central Province. Perhaps because the defeated SLFP had earlier extended its rule under unpopular emergency legislation, Jayawardene was hesitant to declare a state of emergency. The widespread killings, assaults, rapes, looting and destruction were allowed to continue over a period of two weeks. Thousands of Tamil refugees were pushed northwards in search of security. The violence reinforced Tamil distrust of government promises to improve Tamil-Sinhalese relations.²⁷

In August 1981, the next wave of communal violence swept the island. Increased Tamil militancy in the north, the detention of Tamil youths incommunicado, and the retributive police looting and arson in Jaffna escalated tensions; but now the violence was organized and systematic. Tamil sources claimed that attacks had been organized by “people close to the government” and that the police and armed forces did not intervene until a state of emergency was declared days after the violence had begun.²⁸ President Jayawardene stated: “I regret that some members of my party have spoken in Parliament and outside words that encourage violence, and the murders, rapes and arsons that have been committed.”²⁹

Despite Jayawardene’s expression of regret, the government was unable to avoid the anti-Tamil violence that erupted in July 1983, when thirteen Sinhalese soldiers were killed in an ambush by Tamil militants in Jaffna. This incident is usually identified as the cause of this round of violence, but it is more accurate to identify the ambush as the match that lit the fuse to the powder-keg of ethnic tension. Extremist Sinhalese groups used the ambush effectively to rally another organized war on Tamils throughout the island. Eyewitness reports stated that, where the armed forces were present during acts of violence, they would either stand by and ignore, or actually participate in, the attacks on Tamils and their property.³⁰ Similarly, on 25 and 27 July,

fifty-three Tamil political prisoners, arrested under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, were murdered at Welikade Prison in Colombo while soldiers and prison officials stood by. Official estimates of the number of persons killed in the violence of the last week of that July is just under four hundred. Conservative, unofficial estimates are around two thousand.³¹

From the carnage of 1983, the ethnic violence escalated into a civil war in 1986-1987. Civilian Tamil communities were subjected to the terror of both the Sinhalese military and Tamil guerrilla groups. By comparison, very few Sinhalese civilians were attacked by Tamil militants, despite repeated and frequent atrocities carried out by the security forces upon unarmed Tamils.³²

Conditions deteriorated to the point where, in January 1987, the Jayawardene government imposed a fuel and economic blockade on all of the Tamil areas of northern Sri Lanka — essentially putting the entire area under siege — and simultaneously initiated a full-scale military offensive, which included regular artillery shelling and air raids on residential areas containing hospitals, schools and temples, as well as Tamil homes.³³ The justification for these actions was offered by an official government spokesperson: “The government reserves the right to attack such targets ‘till such time as the killing of civilians is stopped, and the peace process is allowed to continue.”³⁴ The rhetoric of Sinhalese political leaders became increasingly antagonistic, as illustrated in the speech in parliament by Prime Minister Premadasa on 24 April 1987: “When the lives of our people are in danger, we are not prepared to go in for a political solution ... any friend who tells us to find a political solution will be considered as the biggest enemy.”³⁵

Until this stage in the conflict, the central government of India had been erratically trying to play the role of mediator through the offices of the state government of Tamil Nadu in Madras. However, the political jostling between the state government and the central government of Rajiv Gandhi’s Congress I Party served to hinder communication and mediation efforts.

As the Jayawardene government became set on the “final military solution,” the Indian government found itself unable to influence events within Sri Lanka. As a result, India’s credibility as a mediator rapidly evaporated. The Indian parliament and media responded by stepping up their calls for direct intervention by Indian troops. However, the first step towards direct Indian intervention came not from the central government in New Delhi, but from the state government of Tamil Nadu in Madras, in the form of a “humanitarian flotilla” of aid that sailed from the Tamil Nadu port of Rameshwaram to Jaffna on 3 June 1987. Not surprisingly, the Sri Lankan Navy quickly blocked the flotilla and forced it to return. However, not to be undone, the following day Indian Air Force cargo planes, flanked by Mirage 2000 fighter jets, succeeded in dropping twenty-two tons of emergency relief supplies into Jaffna.³⁶

Indian intervention was preceded by a period of intense negotiation between the governments of India and Sri Lanka. No doubt a central consideration in Jayawardene’s mind was the fear that India might be planning a more long-term intervention strategy if the conflict continued to

threaten regional stability. However, the Tamil militant groups could not be persuaded to participate in the negotiations, primarily because the “on-again-off-again” actions of both the Sri Lankan and Indian governments had eroded their trust. The result of negotiations was the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 29 July 1987.

The Accord was an important point in the Sinhalese-Tamil conflict because it marked the redefinition of India’s role from mediator to power broker. The Accord restructured the conflict and pushed it into a new stage. In the regional context, the Accord allowed India to assert its status as a hegemonic state and to exclude outside power involvement in the Sri Lankan conflict. Under the terms of the Accord, India acquired substantial control over Sri Lankan foreign policy: Sri Lanka must ensure that foreign military and intelligence personnel on its territory would “not prejudice Indo-Lankan relations”; Sri Lanka must ensure that Trincomalee and other ports would “not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India’s interests”; India would undertake with Sri Lanka the restoration and operation of the Trincomalee oil tank facilities; and Sri Lanka must ensure that all foreign broadcasting facilities on its soil would “be used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military or intelligence purposes.” For its part, India agreed to provide training facilities and supplies to the Sri Lankan military; “deport Sri Lankan citizens found to be engaging in terrorist activities or advocating separatism or secessionism”; disarm the Tamil militants and “establish peace and normalcy in Sri Lanka.”³⁷

The success of the Accord rested on the ability of the Indian government and the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to convince, or coerce, the Tamil militants to enter into negotiations on Indian terms. However, the exclusion of the militants from the Accord’s formulation and its presentation to them as a *fait accompli*, made their acquiescence unlikely from the start. The subsequent refusal of the LTTE to endorse the Accord made it highly unlikely that the document would lay the foundation for a lasting peace in Sri Lanka.

Direct military confrontation with the Tamil guerrillas began shortly after the IPKF arrived in Sri Lanka. The Indian Government decided to disarm forcibly the LTTE and pursue a military option in order to obtain control of the Tamil areas. As a result, by 15 December 1987, the IPKF had lost 350 men with 1,100 more wounded.³⁸ By the time the Indian troops left on 24 March 1990, it was estimated that 1,155 soldiers of the IPKF had been killed and 2,984 wounded.³⁹ The quick foreign policy victory that Prime Minister Gandhi may have been hoping for — in part, to buoy up his sagging domestic popularity — seemed to have backfired. Indeed, by cracking down on Tamil militants in South India and by pursuing its new role as power broker, India lost the leverage it once had over the Tamil militants and may have actually sacrificed its ability to play peacemaker in the conflict.

The introduction of Indian troops into the north of the island allowed Jayawardene to redeploy Sinhalese troops to the south in an attempt to stem the tide of rapidly escalating violence by Sinhalese extremists, the JVP. However, Sri Lanka’s foreign policy concessions to India provoked reactions

from a large number of Sinhalese nationalists. Reaction was especially strong among the Buddhist clergy and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, but there were also objections from within the UNP itself, including then Prime Minister Premadasa. Thus, while the Accord might have enabled Jayawardene to buttress his government militarily, it weakened party loyalty at a time when the government was bracing itself against unprecedented political and military challenges from Tamil and Sinhalese extremists in the north and south of the island.

THE PRESENT: 1987-1990

Following the signing of the Accord, Jayawardene found himself stuck between a rock and a hard place as Sinhalese and Tamil extremists became more and more polarized. Jayawardene's age, eighty-two, gave rise to jostling within his party by members waiting to replace him. Dissension within the party grew as members competed for political support by aggravating and pandering to Sinhalese fear. Internal party discord was illustrated in the resignation of Jayawardene's long-time finance minister — since 1977 — Ronnie De Mel, who crossed the floor to the hard-line opposition, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, in mid-1988. No doubt, volatile party politics and the on-going violent dislocation of Sri Lankan society contributed to Jayawardene's decision not to run in the December 1988 presidential elections. However, the same political landscape confronts the new president, Ranasinghe Premadasa.

The period from July 1987 to March 1990 contains elements of both change and continuity. Most conspicuous, is the change in the heads of state of both India and Sri Lanka. In India, V.P. Singh and the Janata Dal government replaced Rajiv Gandhi and the Congress I Party. In Sri Lanka, Ranasinghe Premadasa was elected President and his United National Party won a majority in the election of early 1989. These changes may allow both the Indian and Sri Lankan governments more room for manoeuvre since neither leader is personally constrained by their predecessor's policy trajectory. Indeed, this may have been an important factor contributing to an agreement to finally send the Indian troops home.

In March 1990, it was reported that the last of the Indian Peace Keeping Forces had finally been pulled out of Sri Lanka.⁴⁰ The political costs of keeping the IPKF in Sri Lanka had risen too high for both New Delhi and Colombo. For India, the death toll of Indian soldiers mounted and domestic criticism grew louder as it sank deeper into what increasingly appeared to be a no-win guerrilla war. For Colombo, the domestic opposition to the IPKF fuelled the flames of anti-government Sinhalese extremism almost to breaking point. Ultimately, the IPKF succeeded in galvanizing almost all major factions in Sri Lanka against it. Premadasa has attempted to use the wide-spread opposition to the IPKF to his advantage. In May 1989, formal peace talks began with the LTTE, even while the Tigers were militarily engaged with the IPKF.⁴¹ Then, in June 1989, Premadasa publicly demanded

that India withdraw its troops by the end of July. With some reluctance and delay, the Indian troops were finally pulled out.

The removal of the IPKF may help to increase domestic support for President Premadasa while weakening support for the JVP. However, the withdrawal has removed the military pressure on LTTE to negotiate with Colombo. By removing the IPKF buffer zone between Tamil and Sinhalese, the government is now confronted with the dangerous possibility of a two-front civil war if the LTTE talks do not succeed; against the JVP in the south and against the LTTE in the north.

The spectre of even further violence looms large on the Sri Lankan horizon in light of the rapid increase in the strength of the JVP and its ability to challenge the government's authority in the south through a wide-spread and effective programme of terror. Sadly, the JVP violence has elicited an equally deliberate policy of reprisals by government security forces, including police.⁴² Recent reports have documented in grim detail the violence in the south.⁴³

Violence spilling-over into Tamil Nadu has increased and consequently the Tamil Nadu government's position towards Sri Lankan Tamils has hardened. In March 1990, the Tamil Nadu government refused permission for two passenger vessels carrying over 1,200 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees to berth at Madras harbor. The decision came in the wake of growing violence involving Sri Lankan Tamils in Tamil Nadu including a shoot-out in Ramanathapuram district in which two policemen were killed and over a dozen civilians injured in an exchange of fire between Tamil militants and local police.⁴⁴ While the vessels were not permitted to dock in Tamil Nadu, they were re-routed to another Indian port further north. To make sense of the State Government's decision, it is necessary to point out that the vessels were believed to be carrying EPRLF militants, their families, and "large quantities of arms".⁴⁵ If the vessels were, indeed, carrying armed EPRLF militants then the incident can be viewed as a consequence of the Indian government's policy of financially and militarily supporting the EPRLF in order to off-set the strength of LTTE in the north. The withdrawal of the IPKF not only removes the buffer between the Sri Lankan military and LTTE, it also eliminates much of the support base for the EPRLF, which was forced to rely on Indian government patronage to make up for lack of popular Tamil support. Clearly, the flight by EPRLF members — including Varatharaja Perumal, Chief Minister of the North-Eastern Province — is based on the fear that the LTTE's reassertion or "consolidation" of control in the North and North-East will be bloody.

The dynamics of violence may have altered, but violent death and teetering civil war are still dominant facts of life in Sri Lanka. In January 1989, emergency regulations were lifted only to be reimposed in June of the same year.⁴⁶ While Premadasa is on the public record as declaring his aversion to the use of violence, his Foreign Minister Ranjan Wijeratne has told Western correspondents: "We have to deal with terrorists in the most ruthless manner... we have taken a hard line. There is no question about that."⁴⁷ Acting in his capacity as deputy defence minister, Wijeratne

announced a series of measures to deal with the growing JVP violence and control in the south: "We have given orders to shoot at sight, arrest, detain, or deal with inciters including trade union officials, strikers and all troublemakers attempting to disrupt normal life."⁴⁸

An important wild card in future violence is the role of India. Having gone from being an ineffective mediator to an ineffective power broker, the question that remains is what role it will play in the future. Although India may be unable to impose a settlement, it is able to inhibit a settlement. Thus, India will continue to be a major factor in any attempt to manage and resolve the Sri Lankan conflict.

THE FUTURE

In 1962 and 1966, factions within the army and police attempted two *coup d' etats*.⁴⁹ More recently, there is evidence that the rapid increase in the Sri Lankan military has enabled substantial JVP infiltration.⁵⁰ President Premadasa may have yet another front of opposition to contend with if the military decides to assume a role in domestic politics, beyond the constraints of constitutional structures.

A certainty in any conflict, but particularly true of ethnic conflict, is that the longer it continues, the deeper it becomes entrenched and the further it becomes institutionalized. The ability to resolve, let alone manage, the conflict becomes increasingly difficult. The present generation of Sinhalese and Tamil youth are growing up in conditions in which polarized and antagonistic relations between ethnic groups is the norm. Through the media, through school textbooks, and most of all, through the attitudes and behavior of their parents, the youth of Sri Lanka are learning a culture of ethnic violence. Once an entire generation has been affected, the society will witness the outbreak of a new and more hardy strain of ethnic hatred.

The Tamil community's trust in the Sri Lankan government has been severely undermined. If the division of Sri Lanka into two sovereign states (Tamil Eelam and Sinhalese Sri Lanka) is to be averted, then the present Sinhalese government will need to become a truly Sri Lankan government, capable and willing to represent and protect minority interests.

Endnotes

1. I would like to thank Dianne Demille, Tracey Goodman, Fen Hampson, Brian Tomlin, and John Rabot for their help and support in the writing of this paper. I also thank Norman Uphoff and two other referees who remain anonymous for their comments on an earlier draft. The views expressed in this paper are the sole responsibility of the author.
2. Until 1988, the violence was primarily the result of Sinhalese-Tamil conflict. Since 1988, there has been an explosion of violence in the south of the island by an extremist Sinhalese group called the JVP (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna). The extent of the violence is variously presented. Amnesty International reports that 1,000 people a month are slain in the violence. *New York Times (NYT)*, 14 December 1989, p. A 18. Sanjoy Hazarika of the *New York Times* reports that "at least thirty people die every day because of the civil war." "In Sri Lanka. The Dainty and the Dead," *NYT*, 5 September 1989, p. A 11. In August 1989, diplomatic sources estimated that 30-40 people were killed every day in Sri Lanka.

More than 1,000 members and supporters of Premadasa's ruling UNP alone are estimated to have been killed since Premadasa's election in December 1988. *Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER)*, 17 August 1989, p. 17. By November 1989, James Clad reported that "in recent months... a couple of hundred murders take place every week." *FEER*, 9 November 1990, p. 37. He later revised his estimate to "300-400 bodies a week." *FEER*, 16 November 1990, p. 59. The *Wall Street Journal* reports that 15,000 have died in the last six years. 30 October 1989, p. A 6. Ninety-four political killings were recorded on the day of presidential elections alone (December 1988), and 417 killings in the 13 days after the election. *Sunday Times*, (London), 15 January 1989, p. A 3.

3. For detailed accounts of outbreaks of violence see: Patricia Hyndman, *Sri Lanka: Serendipity Under Siege* (Nottingham: Spokesman, 1988); Hyndman, "The 1951 Convention Definition of Refugee: An Appraisal with Particular Reference to the Case of Sri Lankan Tamil Applicants," *Human Rights Quarterly* 9, no. 1 (February 1987), pp. 49-74; Hyndman, "Democracy in Peril, Sri Lanka: A Country in Crisis," Report to the Lawasia Human Rights Standing Committee, 7 June 1985; Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 1987* (London: Amnesty International Publications, 1987); Virginia A. Leary, "Ethnic Conflict and Violence in Sri Lanka," A Report of a Mission to Sri Lanka in July-August 1981 on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists, ICJ, Geneva, 1981; Tarzie Vittachi, *Emergency '58: The Story of the Ceylon Race Riots* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1958). See also Endnote 32.
4. *The Times*, (London), 26 January 1986.
5. All estimates presented in Mary Anne Weaver, "The Gods and the Stars," *The New Yorker*, 21 March 1988, pp. 39-84. Kumar Rupesinghe estimates that Sri Lanka's military response to domestic violence has led to a 500% growth in real terms since 1981. Kumar Rupesinghe, "Ethnic Conflicts in South Asia: The Case of Sri Lanka and the Indian Peace Keeping Force," *Journal of Peace Research* 25, no. 4 (1988), p.339. For a brief discussion of the increase in the Sri Lankan defence budget, see: Rohan Gunasekera, "Sri Lankan Armed Forces Switch Focus," *International Defense Review* 21, no. 5 (1988), pp. 509-512. The *SIPRI 1987 Yearbook*, using 1987 price figures, charts Sri Lanka's military expenditure from Rs 478 million in 1977 to Rs 10,700 million in 1986 (Appendix 6A, p. 165). Expressed in constant price figures (in US \$m. at 1980 prices and exchange rates) Sri Lankan military expenditure grew from 45.3 in 1977 to 346 in 1986 (Table 6A.2, p. 169).
6. The estimate of \$1.3 million is provided by Ralph R. Premdas and S.W.R. de A. Samarasinghe in "Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict: The Indo-Lanka Peace Accord," *Asian Survey* XXVIII, no. 6 (June 1988), p. 676. The estimate of \$3 million is provided by Mary Ann Weaver, "The Gods and the Stars," p. 81. A middle estimate of 1 million pounds (Sterling) is provided by Dennis Austin and Anirudha Gupta, "Lions and Tigers: The Crisis in Sri Lanka," *Conflict Studies* no. 211, (1988), p. 17.
7. For a discussion of the Sri Lankan refugee situation in India, see: "Returnees in Sri Lanka: Life Starts Again," *Refugees*, no. 63 (April 1989), pp. 19-33.
8. For an excellent discussion of myth, history and political power in Sri Lanka see: Bardwell Smith, ed., *Religion and the Legitimation of Power in Sri Lanka* (Chambersburg, PA: Anima Books, 1978).
9. A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, *The Gaullist System in Asia: The Constitution of Sri Lanka* (1978) (London: Macmillan, 1980), for a critical analysis of this constitution.
10. All population figures are from the 1981 Census unless otherwise indicated.
11. *FEER*, 29 September 1988, p. 38. Indeed, in the belief that it was going to win the 1988-1989 elections, the SLFP is reported to have offered the JVP three ministries. *FEER*, 27 October 1988, p. 30.
12. Austin and Gupta, "Lions and Tigers," p. 15.
13. For a detailed account see: International Alert, *Political Killings in Southern Sri Lanka: On the Brink of Civil War*, A Compilation and Report by Eduardo Marino (London: International Alert, 1989).
14. Weaver, "The Gods and the Stars," p. 81.

15. Manik de Silva, "Vote of Confidence," *FEER*, 2 March 1989, p. 13.
16. *FEER*, 21 February 1985, p. 37.
17. Weaver, "The Gods and the Stars," p. 67; *FEER*, 21 February 1985, p.39.
18. Rajagopalan Sampatkumar, "Returnees in Sri Lanka," *Refugees*, no. 63 (April 1989), p.19.
19. For successive failures in attempts by Tamil political parties to negotiate viable alternatives, see: A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, *The Break-Up of Sri Lanka: Sinhalese-Tamil Conflict* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1989).
20. On 13 July 1989, two TULF leaders, Appapilai Amirthalingam and V. Yogeswaran, were gunned down in Colombo. This is a true loss for the struggle for moderate and peaceful governance in Sri Lanka. Although the LTTE are accused of the murders the identities and affiliation of the gunmen remain unknown. *FEER*, 27 July 1989, p. 10-11.
21. P. Venkateshwar Rao, "Foreign Involvement in Sri Lanka," *Round Table* 309 (1989), pp. 88-100.
22. See the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement to Establish Peace and Normalcy in Sri Lanka, Annexure to the Agreement, Exchange of Letters, 2:i, 2:ii, 29 July 1987. The full text of the Agreement and associated documentation are presented in Barnett R. Rubin, *Cycles of Violence: Human Rights in Sri Lanka Since the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement* (Washington: Asia Watch Report, December 1987), Appendix A.
23. *FEER*, 21 February 1985, p.36.
24. Weaver, "The Gods and the Stars," p.40.
25. For details refer to: Chandra Gunawardene, "Ethnic Representation, Regional Imbalance, and University Admissions in Sri Lanka," *Comparative Education* 11, no. 1 (1975); Judith Kapferer, "The Demand for Education in Sri Lanka: Antecedents and Consequences," in Kenneth Orr, ed., *Appetite for Education in Contemporary Asia* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1984); Robert Kearney, "Educational Expansion and Political Volatility in Sri Lanka: The 1971 Insurrection," *Asian Survey* 15, no. 9 (1975); C.R. De Silva, "Education," in K.M. De Silva, ed., *Sri Lanka - A Survey* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1977); C.R. De Silva, "The Impact of Nationalism on Education," in M. Roberts, ed., *Collective Identities, Nationalisms and Protest in Modern Sri Lanka* (Colombo: Marga Institute, 1979).
26. For details see: Vittachi, *Emergency '58: The Story of the Ceylon Race Riots*.
27. See Endnote 3.
28. Virginia Leary, "Ethnic Conflict and Violence in Sri Lanka."
29. Quoted in *NYT*, 11 September 1981, A 2.
30. Patricia Hyndman, *Sri Lanka: Serendipity Under Siege*. See also: Gananath Obeyesekere, "The Origins and Institutionalization of the Violence," in James, Manor ed., *Sri Lanka in Change and Crisis* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 153-174.
31. A detailed account of the communal violence in July 1983 is presented in: Hyndman, *Sri Lanka: Serendipity Under Siege*, pp. 5-52. Her estimates of the direct results of the violence are found on pp. 26-27.
32. This assessment is also held by LAWASIA (the Association of Lawyers for Asia and the Pacific). See Hyndaman, *Sri Lanka: Serendipity Under Siege*, p. 53.
33. See: *Frontline* 4, no. 12 (13-26 June 1987), pp. 4-16. For further details on the extent of the Sri Lankan military offence refer to: "Four Tamils Killed," *The Hindu*, 22 January 1987, p. 9; "20 Killed in Fighting in Batticaloa Dt.," *The Hindu*, 29 January 1987, p. 1; "200 Civilians Killed, Says LTTE," *The Hindu*, 31 January 1987, p. 1; "Sri Lankan Planes Strafe Village in Mannar," *The Hindu*, 7 February 1987, p. 9; "Sri Lanka Armed Forces Launch Major Attacks," *The Hindu*, 7 February 1987, p. 9; "Massive Army Operations in Mannar," *The Hindu*, 8 February 1987, p. 2; "22 Militants Die as Battle Continues," *The Hindu*, 9 February 1987, p. 9; "Massacre in Mannar," *The Hindu*, 11 February 1987, p. 1; "50 Civilians Killed, Tamil Village Wiped Out," *The Hindu*, 12 February 1987, p. 9; "Tamils Facing Starvation, Says LTTE," *The Hindu*, 14 February 1987, p. 1; "Unacceptable Response from Colombo," *The Hindu*, 24 February 1987, p. 8; "Jaffna

- Operation Leaves 30 Dead," *The Hindu*, 9 March 1987, p. 1; "No Let Up in Sri Lankan Army Attack on Civilians," *The Hindu*, 11 March 1987, p. 1; "Gunships Attack School," *The Hindu*, 13 March 1987, p. 1; "Jaffna Civilians to Get Some Relief," *The Hindu*, 13 March 1987, p. 1; "20 Die in Jaffna Shelling," *The Hindu*, 30 March 1987, p. 1; "11 Patients Killed in Jaffna Shelling," *The Hindu*, 31 March 1987, p. 1; "Sri Lanka Planes Bomb Jaffna," *The Hindu*, 23 April 1987, p. 1; "Over 150 Tamils Killed as Bombing Continues," *The Hindu*, 24 April 1987, p. 1; "MPs Want Jaffna Bombing Condemned," *The Hindu*, 24 April 1987, p. 9; "Jaffna Bombed for Third Day," *The Hindu*, 25 April 1987, p. 1.
34. *The Hindu*, 22 April 1987, p. 1.
 35. "Talks Only After Peace," *The Hindu*, 25 April 1987, p. 1.
 36. For details see: Manoj Joshi, "Mission Eagle Accomplished," *Frontline* (13-26 June 1987), pp. 10-13.
 37. The full text of the Agreement and associated documentation are presented in Rubin, *Cycles of Violence*, Appendix A.
 38. "[A]t nearly seven percent of the men who fought, the rate was almost twice as high as in the wars against Pakistan Sources in South Block confirm that the ratio of officers to men of other ranks killed in Sri Lanka is at an all time high." *India Today*, 31 January 1988, cited in Austin and Gupta, "Lions and Tigers," p.16.
 39. "Last of the Indian Troops Leave Sri Lankan Shores," *India Abroad* XX, no. 26 (30 March 1990), p. 1.
 40. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
 41. The distance between Colombo and New Delhi at this point is illustrated by the fact that during the first four days of the talks between Colombo and the LTTE, at least 80 IPKF soldiers were killed in fighting with the LTTE. Manik de Silva, "Tigers at the Table," *FEER*, 25 May 1989, p. 28.
 42. The widespread human rights abuses by Sri Lankan security forces prompted Rep. Stephen J. Solarz, the U.S. Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs subcommittee to state: "It's simply not acceptable for a government to deal with a threat to the stability and tranquility of a nation by permitting the security forces to organize death squad-type operations against individuals who not only have [not] been arrested, but haven't been tried." Quoted in: Aziz Haniffa, "Government Blamed for Killings," *India Abroad* VI, no. 24 (16 March 1990), p. 6. In the face of such violations, Solarz warned that the United States may seriously consider suspending aid to Sri Lanka. Solarz's comments stand in stark contrast to his recommendation in 1987 that Rajiv Gandhi and J.R. Jayawardene be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. *FEER*, 31 August 1989, p. 20.
 43. See: International Alert, *Political Killings in Southern Sri Lanka*.
 44. Nambi Marthandam, "Two tamil Refugee Ships Barred," *India Abroad* VI, no. 24, (16 March 1990), p. 6.
 45. *Ibid.*
 46. *FEER*, 6 July 1989, p. 23.
 47. *Ibid.*, 6 July 1989, p. 23.
 48. *Ibid.*, 20 July 1989, p. 13.
 49. Richard F. Nyrop, et al., *Sri Lanka: A Country Study*, Area Handbook Series, (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1985), pp. 446-449. For a detailed study see: Donald L. Horowitz, *Coup Theories and Officers' Motives: Sri Lanka in Comparative Perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980).
 50. See, for example, "Colombo Sacks Soldiers Having Links with JVP," *The Hindu*, 20 April 1987, p. 1.