

13,041) because the Sri Lankan navy has banned their boats from setting out from shore for security reasons. With all the Tiger bank robberies only one bank remains open to serve almost a million people. Nor do the banks risk loans to Tamils in such situations. The former businessman from Galle could not even get a loan to re-establish his business in the south even though he had 20 years of demonstrated business success. One of his nephews, the younger one, he told me, had joined the rebels. His sister now worried all the time. But he thought it was just as dangerous for young people if they did not join. The driver of the truck agreed. Now 26, he had been managing director of a small Tamil business that was destroyed in 1983. He had fled north for safety. Though unemployed most of the time, he would earn the equivalent of about \$9 for this three-day trip from Jaffna to Colombo and back. Three days earlier, he had been arrested, held for six hours, interrogated and then released. He had not been beaten or mistreated. "But my brother was shot in December," the man from Galle said. "He was a rice farmer. He was never political. He was just in the fields, and the army shot him."

Caught between Tamil terrorism and army repressive measures, the north has been economically devastated. Tourism is dead. Business investment is nil. There is limited transport. The fishing industry has been halted. The natural link across the 22-mile-wide Palk Straits to India has been severed. Shops are closing for lack of business. Professionals have many fewer paying clients. It is even difficult to get to the doctor or a hospital.

## CONFERENCE

*The Standing Conference of Canadian Organizations Concerned for Refugees*

### SPRING CONSULTATION

DATE: May 30, 31 and June 1, 1985  
 LOCATION: Scarborough Foreign Mission Centre 2685 Kingston Road  
 Scarborough, Ontario

## Letters to the Editor

We have, in the past, been fortunate to have a very enthusiastic spokesman on behalf of our Vietnamese Boat Refugees, Mr. Lloyd Jones of Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, of whom you have probably heard either directly or indirectly. It is due to his efforts that a keen interest has been awakened among churches and other organizations in Canada to sponsor refugees from Hong Kong. We, in turn, have offered to provide limited funds for the care and maintenance during the first year of resettlement of the refugees. I am sure you all realize how difficult it is to find donors to keep this fund

going. We have, therefore, reached the conclusion that in order to save time and money and to simplify matters we should, from now on, be in direct contact with sponsors. If there are any questions that you would like answered, please do not hesitate to write directly to us as Mr. Lloyd Jones is no longer representing Hong Kong Christian Service as Resettlement Field Coordinator in Canada.

For your information we attach our "Conditions and Procedures Governing Sponsorship Funding".

L. Stumpf, Officer-in-Charge

## HONG KONG CHRISTIAN SERVICE

### Migration Services Department Conditions and Procedures Governing Sponsorship Fund Transaction

1. Hong Kong Christian Service, Migration Services Department, Kowloon, Hong Kong, guarantees to make financial contributions, according to the following sliding scale to bonafide organizations in Canada who are sponsoring the resettlement of Vietnamese boat refugees from Hong Kong to Canada: -

Single person CD\$2,000.00  
 2 persons (or married couple) CD\$3,000.00  
 3 persons CD\$3,500.00  
 4 persons CD\$4,000.00  
 5 persons CD\$4,500.00  
 6 persons CD\$5,000.00

2. Upon request, a separate letter of guarantee will be addressed to the sponsoring agency. The letter will state the name or names of the refugees whom the Canadian agency is sponsoring, as well as the exact amount which Hong Kong Christian Service guarantees to contribute towards the resettlement of the refugee/s.

3. Once Hong Kong Christian Service has received verified evidence that the visa or visas have been issued by the Canadian immigration authorities, the amount guaranteed by Hong Kong Christian Service will be transferred without delay.

4. Hong Kong Christian Service is not in a position to transfer money to the sponsoring agency upon the agency's filing an application for a visa. Generally, a period of several months will elapse between the date of application and the date the visa is issued. This would entail the resources of Hong Kong Christian Service being frozen for a considerable period of time, without any knowledge of whether a visa will finally be granted. A negative outcome would necessitate the transfer of the money back to Hong Kong, causing an interest and exchange loss.

## Dear Editor

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your article "Sri Lanka's Agony" (Jan. 26). You must have had extreme courage to attempt to go to Jaffna. However, we would like to correct some of the misinterpretations.

You have labelled the Tamil rebels as "terrorists", even though you knew that they are fighting against the state-sponsored terrorism. I wonder why the media does not label the Afghan rebels as terrorists. The Tamils were pushed to the wall to take up arms. Even though we or most of the Tamils do not condone or encourage any kind of terrorism or violence, a majority of the Tamils now feel that the Tamil rebels are the only hope to protect the Tamils from the blood thirsty, Sinhala Security forces.

As you mentioned the Tamil rebels are not from the Karayar sect. In fact, the leader of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Ealam (PLOTE), Mr. Uma Maheswaran, is from the Vellala sect. Even though the leader of the Liberation Tigers of the Tamil Ealam (LTTE), Mr. V. Prabhakaran, is from Karayar sect (means one who usually does fishing as his main job), most of their fighters are from the Vellala sect. LTTE has claimed many youths, who had been killed in the battle with security forces, as their martyrs, and most of them are from the Vellala sect.

Once again we thank you for your article and beg you to do more on this subject.

C. Dharmalogan, Secretary, Eelam Association of Windsor.

## Dear Editor

Reference "Agony of Sri Lanka," published on 19th and 20th January compiled by Howard Adelman, who is supposed to be an expert on refugees. Adelman's article can be classified as another publicity stunt in favour of Tamil terrorists movement based outside the shores of Sri Lanka.

Credibility of this author is highly

questionable. If he is one of the foremost experts on refugees, he should have been in the Sinhalese refugee camps set up to accommodate innocent Sinhalese fleeing from the campaign of killings and terror carried out by the Tamil armed bandits in the north. Or else, he should have been writing about the infamous refugee camps in Thailand, Lebanon, Nicaragua, El Salvador or Pakistan. He has attempted in his story to make very obvious events sensational.

A lot of interest has been taken to dramatize the beating of a bus conductor by the soldiers in a combat zone in Sri Lanka. My question is what prompted an academic specializing in refugee activities to go into an area infested with terrorists? The bus conductor violated the internal security arrangements by accompanying a westerner who did not have any business other than visiting an anonymous Tamil lawyer residing in Jaffna. It seems, Adelman professes that any street punk brandishing the Canadian identity has the right to enter the security zone in Sri Lanka and write some adventure stories for the mere sake of getting a cheap thrill, or else to write a twisted story which damages the integrity of the people of Sri Lanka. Given the most unbiased news coverage about the events in Sri Lanka, I do not blame the soldiers for beating the bus conductor accompanying a thrill seeker who should not have been in the combat zone at all. Besides, the friendliest relationship that has been established between the Canadians and the Sri Lankans were built on mutual respect for democratic traditions and the two fundamental social and economic values that the people of these two countries believe in, not on the crocodile tears shed by handful of publicity seekers.

Adelman claims that TULF is not allowed to take part in the parliamentary process in Sri Lanka. This is an outrageous statement; in fact, it was TULF members who refused allegiance to the constitution of Sri Lanka and accept the sovereignty and unitary status of the country. It was A. Amirthalingam, leader of TULF, who burnt the constitution of Sri Lanka in 1972 in Jaffna.

Let us not forget the fact that the Tiger Movement originated from the youth wing of the TULF and A. Amirthalingam's son was a leader in this infamous terrorist gang. Will Adelman support a similar situation in Canada where the Liberal Party or the New Democratic Party advocates the partition of this country on the basis of colour, race or different languages?

It is a callous statement to say that the military occupies the northern city of Jaffna. As the protectors and guardians of the independence and sovereignty of Sri Lanka, these brave sons of Sri Lanka have the right to be mobilized and stationed in any part of that country. Adelman has attempted to misinterpret the term "occupying forces". Would anyone having a right mind say that Canadian Forces in Newfoundland, Labrador or Quebec are occupying these provinces.

The same writer talks about lack of language facilities for the Tamils. I would like to ask does Canada provide equal status for the French language in every part of this land. On the contrary, Sri Lanka has enshrined Tamil as an official language in the constitution, and it has implemented the rights of Tamil-speaking people without any reservations.

Adelman has said Sinhalese work as estate Labourers. This statement simply blew his chances of enjoying some respect among the academicians familiar with the colonial rule in Sri Lanka. It was the British colonial rulers who brought the Tamil slaves from southern India to work in the coffee and tea plantation industry. The native Sinhalese did not want to work in the plantation industry as their economy was based on agriculture and not on cash crops like tea and coffee. Even today, contrary to the executive image Adelman has tried to build for Tamils, a majority of their clansmen are gainfully employed in the Sanitary Departments of Municipalities, local governments and other public and private institutions. In fact, the English word "coolie" was borrowed from the Tamil language.

Finally, I wish to remind Adelman

that journalism is a profession whose priority, if not the only concern, is the reporting of facts. When the facts are distorted and twisted for the benefit of interested parties, journalism loses its image to the extent that news media would cease to be trusted. Therefore, I earnestly request Adelman to refrain from making adventure stories out of a very volatile political situation where millions of innocent people will be affected.

J.T. Wickramasinghe —  
Former President of Sri Lanka United National Association Toronto.

### Dear Editor

I take this opportunity to thank you on behalf of me and the Tamil community, for publishing your independent report stating the truth without any bias. The amount of suffering our community in Sri Lanka is undergoing is similar to the suffering of the Jewish community underwent during Hitler's time. Our community has to be grateful to you for the risk you have taken and the amount of hardship you would have faced during your truth-finding mission in Sri Lanka.

I am a Tamil refugee. I came to Canada after the July '83 riots. Our house in Colombo was looted and burnt down by Sinhalese thugs. (It was government-organized violence to erase the Tamils from Colombo and its suburbs as an initial step. The Tamils will run to north and east, where the Sinhalese Army will do the rest, so that the outside world will not know about it, except for great people like you only will be able to tell the world.

Because I was born a Tamil, I was made a refugee in my own country overnight. I came to Canada to escape from horrible death, although our stay in Canada is not yet being officially recognized the Canadian people have accepted us in their heart. Although our community is an unfortunate people, we were able to survive because of good people like you existing in this world, who made the outside world know how much

suffering the Sri Lankan Tamils are undergoing. How many innocent people continue to be killed, and how the Sri Lankan Army is terrorizing our younger generation. Mr. J.R. Jayawardene is the rebirth of Hitler of Germany.

I wish to thank you again sir, our community will be always grateful to you.

R. Shanmugaretnam

### Dear Editor

I have taken the liberty to write you having read the two articles on Sri Lanka over the weekend. It was obviously a difficult assignment to be objective without great biases. And you have, in our estimation pulled through with flying colours for your honesty. There are areas where one could nitpick, but 'heck', its not very often that one has the luxury to read reports with that degree of honesty.

Asoka Weerasinghe —  
Chairperson, Project Peace for a United Sri Lanka.

### Dear Editor

Professor Adelman's articles misrepresent facts. On the use of Tamil as an official language, he writes "... the government evidently does not even have typewriters with Tamil script." Since the late 1950s the Department of Official Languages has been engaged in the translation of thousands of bureaucratic forms, manuals of procedure, from English into Sinhalese and Tamil. It has been compiling glossaries with English-Sinhalese and English-Tamil terminology for use in government business. It also provided facilities for Sinhalese public servants to study Tamil and the Tamils to study Sinhalese. Most government departments and corporations have a pool of typists to work in Sinhalese and in Tamil. Even commercial banks use forms printed in all three languages.

The professor also says that "the Sinhalese laboured for British plantation owners." The fact is they did not. That explains the presence of 825,000 Indian Tamils in Sri Lanka. A

few years back the numbers were even larger until Mrs. Bevan-Bantayan, a former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka negotiated a pact with the then Prime Minister of India to repatriate, in stages, some of the Indian labour. World market prices for tea and rubber had plummeted and such an army of unproductive labour was a drain on Sri Lanka's economy. Under the British, thousands of Indian workers were stateless and this treaty provided for the grant of Sri Lankan citizenship to those who qualified. The presence of these Indian Tamils compounds the difficulties in resolving the crisis in Sri Lanka.

The professor goes on to say that "there has been a partition of the island - in fact if not in law - for years because of the concentration of Tamils in the north and east of the country and because the Sinhalese are afraid to go into these areas." The Tamil separatists who claim that the Sinhalese occupy their "traditional" land should take note of the professor's conclusion seriously to end their terrorist activities.

On his comments relating to the excesses of the Sri Lankan security forces, Prof. Adelman says that the homes of civilians suspected of assisting terrorists in any way are dynamited. He has counted four houses blown up on the main road to Jaffna and presumably concludes that they are the work of the security forces. The professor forgot that there is sufficient evidence to prove that Tamil terrorists are equally capable of blowing up people and property. He uses logical reasoning to determine the accuracy or otherwise of statements made by Sinhalese soldiers. Yet, he swallows, hook, line and sinker, whatever the Tamils told him.

The present situation in Sri Lanka is hurting everyone. It is impossible to reach a settlement until terrorism stops and the security forces are withdrawn from the northern areas of the island. There is not much hope for an end to terrorism so long as India provides bases for the terrorists and expatriate Tamils provide them with funds for weapons.

Beatrice Goonasekera

Dear

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## Dear Editor

I write in appreciation of the two articles you published in the *Toronto Star*, on the grave situation that exists in Sri Lanka. I do hope your efforts to ascertain the truth and publish it will open the eyes of the world, to the desperate situation of the Tamils in Sri Lanka on whom, it seems nothing short of genocide is being perpetuated. The government is using its army to terrorize civilians as though every Tamil in the north and east are terrorists. Even the so-called Tamil terrorists were believed to have been begat by the injustice and racial discrimination suffered by Tamils. For over 30 years, they kept on asking for their legitimate rights, openly and sincerely professing and practising non-violent means to achieve their demands. But the reaction this non-violent movement brought was only racial violence against the Tamils; only ever increasing in severity and true to "Tyrants beget rebels"; the Tigers emerged. Even then, the powers that be did not deal with the Tigers, nor did they negotiate honestly, to bring about a just settlement, but went on harassing innocent Tamils, which only added numbers to the rebels who believe they are freedom fighters and only history will prove who they are. Even now - although the government has still not granted any of the legitimate rights asked for in practice - the majority of Tamils do not condone violence, nor do they advocate unlawful means for obtaining their rights. But the government under the guise of army excess seems to be treating all Tamils as though, they are all terrorists without exception. Does the government want to force them all to become terrorists? Is there no international body, or right-thinking nation that can intervene and bring about a just settlement? It is only dauntless persons like you, genuinely interested in the welfare of humanity without bias or prejudice, who can help to make the world aware of our plight. So please do all in your power to bring back peace and dignity to the persecuted Tamils of Sri Lanka.

I thank you again and I'm sure every Tamil will join me and be grateful for

the trouble you took and risks you faced to find out facts. How I wish you could have gone to the city of Jaffna. My mother, sisters, brother and their families live there in mortal fear and I am helpless. May God Bless you.

*Mrs. Eucharista Thambipillai*

## Dear Editor

I read with interest the report of Prof. Howard Adelman.

The professor has apparently visited Sri Lanka in the early part of January 1985 at a time when the Tamil separatist terrorists had announced their intention to establish an independent state in the north by force of arms by January 15, 1985. The Jaffna Peninsula had been declared a security zone with special measures restricting the movement of persons (both local and foreign) to and from that area in order to enable the security forces to effectively control the threatened attacks by the terrorists. Prof. Adelman had not been denied permission to travel to Jaffna, but only warned of dangers entailed in such a journey by the government officials. Only some soldiers at a check point on the outskirts of Jaffna decided to have his travels cleared by their superiors stationed at the Elephant Pass army base. The army officers did not stop him or order him back to Colombo but arranged for a passing motorist to take him to a hotel where he would be more comfortable. On reading of his experiences in travelling to the security zone without the required permit and devoid of relevant background information pertaining to the security situation, it would appear that travel restrictions are enforced against foreigners. The Minister of National Security had informed the foreign journalists in Colombo that they were free to travel to Jaffna at their own risk, but that special security arrangements could not be made for their safety, as the 11,000-strong Sri Lankan security forces had their hands full battling the terrorist forces and maintaining order, without having the additional task of safeguarding journalists from harm or from being taken hostage by the terrorists, as in the case of the Allens from

Ohio.

Prof. Adelman has mainly spoken to members of Sri Lanka's Tamil community and published whatever had been said to him without checking others affected, which is contrary to journalistic ethics. He speaks of a priest having been shot by soldiers near Mannar on January 6, 1985. He fails to mention that the priest had been harbouring terrorists and provided storage for arms and ammunition. Further, the body of the priest said to have been shot has so far not been found by the authorities. In a BBC news report, it has been said that the supposedly dead priest had escaped with other terrorists and gone by boat to Tamilnadu in India. The shooting of a Methodist minister mentioned by him has not been reported earlier and may be incorrect. There is no attempt on the part of Buddhist Sri Lanka to eradicate Christianity by shooting Christian priests. This impression would be given the reader unless the background information relating to the terrorist involvement is not given. It is also a well-known fact that certain Catholic priests were arrested for hiding the money robbed from banks by the terrorists in Jaffna, and that the Archbishop of the Catholic church has openly said that the priests concerned should face the full impact of the law.

I do not doubt the army excesses that he speaks of. Even the Sri Lanka government has admitted to such incidents and have taken steps to halt such acts. There could, however, be exaggerations in the tales retold by Prof. Adelman, as it is known that the Tamil terrorists have carried out their murderous missions in Padaviya, Chavakachcheri, etc., dressed in army uniforms. These terrorists are also known to have killed several Tamil persons who held opposing political views, yet others on suspicion of their being informers or belonging to a rival terrorist gang. The Sri Lanka government had admitted to some civilians dying in the crossfire in shootouts with the terrorists. The 250 terrorists who attacked the Chavakachcheri police station suddenly emerged from the marketplace opposite the police station and melted away amongst the

civilians at the marketplace after the attack. Pursuit of the terrorists can therefore cost innocent civilian lives, as well.

Prof. Adelman speaks of the Tamil United Liberation Front, which is a legal political party, as non-violent separatist representatives of the Tamil people. I would question this assumption, because if he had read the "Report of the Presidential Commission of Inquiry Relating to Ethnic Violence in Sri Lanka" headed by Mr. Justice M.C. Sansoni, Q.C., former Chief Justice of Sri Lanka, he could have realized that the TULF whilst pretending to be a political party wedded to the democratic process, was pushing its demand for a separate state called "EELAM" by organizing a prolonged civil disobedience campaign with its youth movements encompassing all forms of violence involving murders, acts of arson, attempted murders, bombings, acts of mischief against public property, etc, encouraging and instigating the youth to commit terrorist acts, which was totally alien to the Gandhian principles of non-violence. The TULF may attempt to dissociate the party from the Tamil terrorist groups, but the Sansoni Commission found it to be otherwise. The Tamils are therefore the victims of their own extremist separatist policies and terrorist violence.

The Sri Lanka government has a separate ministry for matters relating to the Tamil Language and Hindu Religion headed by a Tamil cabinet minister. I am not in agreement with some of the statistics given by Prof. Adelman nor his assessment of the rights enjoyed by the Tamils. The Tamils enjoy more rights and language services than the French in Ontario or English Canada, which are also constitutionally guaranteed although they number approximately 12.5 percent of the total population and are not a founding nation as the French are recognized in Canada and where the French account for over 25 percent. His statements that the government does not possess any typewriters with Tamil script and unsubstantiated statements that affected Sinhalese have been paid ten times the value of property damage whilst Tamils have been made to wait

or refused are damaging to the Government of Sri Lanka to say the least. In fact, even Tamils who did not have any insurance have already been compensated out of a special fund.

In the final part of his report, he mentions some important background information which have a very important base for understanding the views of the majority Sinhalese community. The Sinhalese are a proud people with a rich heritage and a 2,500-year civilization. The history of Sri Lanka is the great story of the Sinhalese people as recorded in the *Mahavamsa* which is not a sacred Buddhist text as referred to by the professor but a record of Sri Lankan history maintained by the venerable monks of the Buddhist clergy, who were the guardians of the ancient centres of learning. The Sinhalese built magnificent cities in Anuradhapura over 2,000 years ago and are the architects of a massive network of irrigation systems that helped Sri Lanka to become known as the Granary of the East. The beautiful dagobas, stone carving, and paintings are ample testimony to the creative genius of great people.

In the professor's own words, "the Sinhalese are at the bottom of the heap economically, their own current grievances build upon the historic fears." That is the lot that the great Sinhalese people who founded the nation of Sri Lanka faced when she gained independence in 1948 after nearly 450 years of foreign domination. The professor is right in the situation of the Sinhalese except that they did not labour for British plantation owners. The lands belonging to the Sinhalese in the Kandyan and other hill country regions were expropriated by the colonial rulers under the infamous Waste Lands Act and some given to British companies at a value of 50 Ceylon cents per acre, which was the cost of surveying the properties. The displaced peasants were not even hired as labourers on the newly established plantations, but replaced by South Indian Tamil labour being implanted by the British colonial regime. In post-independent Sri Lanka, the governments have had to operate more or less an affirmative action program in reverse to assist

the long neglected majority to enjoy at least a semblance of the educational / other facilities enjoyed by the privileged Tamil minority who had been favoured by a colonial ruler following a divide and rule policy. In most other western countries you hear of affirmative action programs to assist deprived minorities. The Tamil minority of 12 percent holding nearly 80 percent of the civil service positions and other economic plums in 1948 have had to concede ground with the introduction of free education and resultant competition from the Sinhalese. The Tamils have today slipped from their dominant place to around a 35 percent share in an expanded economy in 1984. In the process of striking a balance, the Tamil minority community no doubt may have been hurt, but there has not been any problem that was beyond redress, which subsequent governments have resolved in a satisfactory manner.

It is the minority Tamils who have of their own choice left the mainstream of the national decision-making process and banded together in a purely racial group under the leadership of the TULF for the sole purpose of establishing a separate state called Eelam in the northern and eastern provinces of Sri Lanka, where approximately 1.3 million Tamils reside making up almost nine percent of the total population. The Tamil residents in these parts outnumber the Sinhalese and Moors numbering about 0.3 million. A majority of the people of the eastern province oppose the move to secede. The land area sought for the independent state of Eelam is almost 25 percent of the total land area of this heavily populated land-hungry island nation. Nothing further need to be said to explain why such a demand would be opposed even without going into historical or other factors.

There is no demand for district or regional councils in the rest of the country. The TULF has not abandoned their demand for a separate state nor have they taken the oath of allegiance to a unified Sri Lanka. Therefore it is not possible to negotiate any devolution of power to the Tamils in the north with the TULF, as

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it would only amount to another step on the road to separation. The main objective of the TULF still remains the achievement of Eelam which the Tamil separatist terrorists also seek militarily overnight. Unlike Canada, the USA, India, and Australia which have federal systems of government, Sri Lanka is a tiny island nation of 25,000 sq miles, which is approx. 1/20th the size of Ontario, and does not warrant such a system. Furthermore, it is a developing country which could ill afford a third level of government thereby adding to its non-productive bureaucracy and resultant waste of resources and skills which should be available to the nation as a whole instead of a miniscule district or province within the island. Furthermore, Sri Lanka has been a unitary state and would only weaken in such devolution, whilst Canada was made up of separate British colonies that came together to win independence and gain by federation. You cannot therefore look at it through Canada's experience and advocate devolution of power merely to concede to separatist demands, which are clouded with other dangers such as the creation of hostile borders and opening our northern shores to infiltration by Tamilnadu which will only give rise to our historical problem of northern invasion and consequent eradication of the language, culture and only homeland of the Sinhalese people. The Sinhalese have no other choice in the face of Tamil separatist terrorism but to resettle Sinhalese and others in the north and all other regions of Sri Lanka on the basis of ethnic population ratios. The government does not intend to expropriate land belonging to the Tamils but establish the new settlements on newly developed crown lands coming under national development schemes such as the Mahaweli River Diversion Scheme which are being paid for by the entire nation. Sri Lanka is a unitary state which belongs to all her citizens of whatever ethnic background, and there is no region in the country to which any ethnic group could claim exclusive rights. As in Canada, Sri Lanka citizens have the freedom of mobility within the island and for set-

ting wherever they may choose, as in the case of 1.3 million Tamils who have settled amidst the majority Sinhalese community. Ultimate defeat of the Tamil Separatist terrorists and the emergence of stability and peace is seen in this direction.

Irresponsible reporting of this nature by so-called experts who visit a country for a few hours or days and make assumptions on mere hearsay can do irreparable damage to the image and reputation of the Government of Sri Lanka and the Sinhalese people. It is quite clear that the professor's background knowledge of Sri Lanka is scrappy and his conclusions are misleading to say the least. Sri Lanka is a small developing country and one of the few surviving democracies in the far east which has been drawn into a guerilla war by Marxist-oriented Tamil Separatist Terrorists supported by 50 million Tamils in South India and the international terrorist movement. Whilst Sri Lanka is battling to defeat the terrorists with her limited resources, she also has to contend with baseless criticism from instant experts in the western media which could only hurt this pro-western democracy and help in being dragged under the communist boot.

I trust you would publish my letter in full by giving the necessary space as you did in carrying Professor Adelman's report.

*Mahinda Gunasekera*

### Dear Editor

I wish to thank you most sincerely for the articles you gave to the *Toronto Star*, after your return from Sri Lanka. You are a brave man indeed, to have travelled to the Northern region of the island at this time, when the Sinhala Buddhist government has lost all sense of decency, and has ordered the "guardians of the law" to kill innocent Tamil people and burn up villages of poor hard-working folks.

I am an elderly woman - a Christian Tamil whose home is in Colombo. My parents' homes were in Jaffna. We moved to Colombo in search of jobs about 40 years ago. I have wit-

nessed six communal attacks from 1956 to 1983. Whenever our representatives in parliament pointed out injustices in the admission system to Universities; appointment of jobs, government funded colonization of only Sinhala thugs in the predominantly Tamil areas and passing hills to make Sinhala only, as the official language of the island almost overnight, the Sinhalese thugs attacked the Tamils mercilessly, possibly with the blessings of the ministerial thugs in the government! no apologies or compensations were given to the Tamils. For over 30 years we were patient and hoped and prayed for a political solution. In the meantime, the youth were getting frustrated and impatient with the politicians. A few hundred, who should have been scholars and research students and brought credit to any university or country because of their A grades, in all the subjects at A.L. exams but failed to enter the universities, and others who had qualified professionally, but could not get jobs, just because they were Tamils have become "Tigers" or "Liberation Fighters". They are fighting to have their own territory to develop and sink or swim, without the feeling of being ruled by the so-called Righteous Sinhala Buddhist government, who want a unified Sri Lanka! Do they actually mean it?

The 1983 holocaust was island-wide and well organized. With voters' lists in hand groups of men, women and even children went about hacking Tamils and burning houses and all business establishments, belonging to Tamils, while the rulers and the guardians of the law watched, for a week without taking any action! It was at this time that some of my loved ones lost everything they owned and came to Canada, and sought refuge here.

My niece and young family are living here. They suffered much, without decent jobs and ill health, etc. She had a new baby recently and could not afford to pay a babysitter. That is why I came here as a visitor, to help her out in her time of need.

After my arrival here, there seems to be more trouble in Sri Lanka. Colombo is "safe" they say - chiefly

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because of the foreigners there, and our rulers want to "save face" or preserve the "good image" of our country, by keeping violence out of Colombo. But I have heard of many of my kith and kin losing their lives and limbs or hiding in fear — leaving their homes to be mobbed by the army. Those who are arrested are not charged in court. They disappear!

I am glad, sir, that your life was spared. Ours was a paradise island when we had a common language — English — and when merit was the criteria for appointments to jobs. Now it is a godless land, where man has become a beast. I am sorry to say.

I am worried about my own son who lives in fear. One never knows when your nearest neighbour will become your enemy and attack you, just because you belong to the minority community!

I shall soon get back to Sri Lanka. But I am afraid now — after hearing of all the shootings of innocent people. I wish to God, that this lovely Christian country will stretch out her arms of love and take in more Tamil young people and their dependants. They will work hard and add to the prosperity of this country, I can assure

you. The Tamils are a race of hard-working people.

Could you use your influence with the immigration authorities and help more of our young men and women here? Else they will perish, by the ruthless behaviour of the army there.

I decided to write and congratulate you for the article and for your courage; but I'm afraid I have rambled too much. Please forgive me for taking your time.

Thank you once again. May God bless you.

*Name withheld*

### *Dear Editor*

I am writing to you to express my great appreciation and gratitude for writing about "Sri Lanka's Agony". I am a Sri Lankan Tamil who lives in Fort McMurray, Alberta. Only yesterday I had a chance to read the article, which my friend in Toronto sent me. So far the Sri Lanka Government is successful in not letting out any news of the army's atrocities against Tamils. I greatly appreciate your courage and I wish some journalist could do the same. I don't think the

journalists lack courage, but they may not think about who wants to know about what is happening in Sri Lanka. There are hundreds of innocent people who are massacred every week, yet the TV or other media have never focused on Sri Lanka after August 1983. That is exactly what the Sri Lankan government wanted to achieve, and they are succeeding in that. If the same thing happened in Poland, Nicaragua or Lebanon, would the media have the same attitude?

It was too bad and unfortunate for the Tamils that you weren't allowed to enter Jaffna. Otherwise, the world, at least Canada, would have had the chance to know what is happening to the Tamils in Jaffna. In my estimate, there are at least 50 innocent Tamils dying every day since December, 1984. There are four Tamil families who now live in Fort McMurray. All of them lost at least one relative during the past 12 months. I lost my uncle and aunt on December 23, 1984. He was a doctor. Both were stabbed to death by Sinhalese. Another family in Fort McMurray lost their cousin. He, a university lecturer, age 33, was killed after five months of marriage. He was stabbed and taken to the hospital. One Sinhalese orderly poured acid on his head and he died there.

Now, my wife's family fled to India in fear of their safety. There is no food supply. No banks open. There is one bank which is in the Army Camp. No one wants to go there. The Sri Lanka government is systematically killing Tamils. Their solution to the problem is Genocide. "If there are no Tamils, there is no problem for them." Yet the world turns a blind eye and that encourages the Sri Lankan government to do more.

I am truly glad that you went to Sri Lanka and published your article. It gave us and so many Tamils, a great satisfaction reading your writing. I am relieved to find out there are still people who care to find out what is happening in a remote island like Sri Lanka. I thank you for the great work and Tamils will always be grateful to you. I wish to see more people like you. Best wishes to you and your work.

*R. Braman*

## REFERENCE SOURCES

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