

Date and Time: Saturday, May 4, 2024 2:12:00PM EEST

Job Number: 223507935

Documents (100)

1. [Robbie joins polio fight in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

2. [Tamil raid kills 44 on strike eve](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

3. [sri lankan tamil rebels admit 6,000 killed in war](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

4. [colombo police hunt for women suicide bombers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

5. [Death does not end the mystery of Ian Travis](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

6. [90 DIE AS TIGERS RAID MILITARY BASE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

7. [Terrorists Said to Hide In Canada's Melting Pot](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

8. [Terrorist groups recruit in our cities](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

9. [THE JOB OF A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT IS NOT ALWAYS AS GLAMOROUS AS IT SOUNDS, SAYS BARBARA HOOKS.](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

10. [fighting kills 10 tamil rebels in sri lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

11. [USIA Nancy Rubin remarks to UN Commission on Human Rights](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

12. [s. lankan police arrest tamil undergraduates](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

13. [Where Women Rule, They Leave A Genderless Legacy Behind](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

14. [Guerrillas die in ambushes](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

15. [SRI LANKA : MOTHERS OF MIA SOLDIERS ORGANIZE FOR PEACE](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type

Narrowed by

News

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

16. [URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka : seen worse."](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

17. [ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

18. [ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

19. [ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

20. [ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

21. [*Tamils 'prime suspects' in suicide bombing*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

22. [*17 DIE IN ATTACK ON SINHALESE*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

23. [*Sri Lankan rebels kill seven more civilians in border village*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

24. [*Indian supreme court acquits 19 accused in Rajiv assassination*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

25. [*police arrest 45 rebel suspects in colombo*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

26. [*REBEL WOMEN SLAUGHTERED*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

27. [Tamils take to streets for support](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

28. [SRI LANKA : SOCIAL PRICE OF LABOR EXPORTS RISING](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

29. [SUMMIT IN NEW YORK : THE OVERVIEW; U.N. MEETING ENDS WITH DECLARATION OF COMMON VALUES](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

30. [Rebels claim responsibility for attack on naval craft in Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

31. [What's](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

32. [SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

33. [THE NEWS IN BRIEF](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

34. [233 killed in Tigers attack](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

35. [I WAS SHOT AND NEARLY BLINDED. BUT I WON'T HANG UP MY FLAK JACKET YET](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

36. [War crimes tribunal pressures Yugoslavia to hand over notorious suspect](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

37. [LETTERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

38. [WORLD REPORT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

39. [What U.S. newspapers are saying](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

40. [WHITAKER'S WORLD; JAMES WHITAKER'S COLUMN](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

41. [Jail Uprising Leaves Many Sad and Bitter](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

42. [ASSASSINATION IN INDIA ; Gandhi's Widow Named Head of Party](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

43. [Ten killed in Sri Lanka mine blasts](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

44. [UN Children under 18 years should not be recruited into armed forces nor participate in conflict](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

45. [35 tamil women arrested in colombo](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

46. [2002 Yearend: Faith: Bad news -- good news](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

47. [False documents raise suspicions: Ten people being detained for security reasons, but terrorist link is often weak](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

48. [FOR ALL OUR SADNESS WE FEEL AT HOME HERE'](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

49. [Diary from a war zone](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

50. [Tamils kill 36 villagers](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

51. [INTERNATIONAL POLITICS QUIZ WIN A FASHION WATCH, OR EVEN A TRIP TO TAHITI](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

52. [REPEAT](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

53. [Sri-Lanka, Bgt](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

54. [Sri Lankan navy kills four rebels outside harbour](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

55. [Rebel deserter and family members killed in eastern Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

56. [Seven women rebels killed in an ambush in northern Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

57. [Six civilians killed in crossfire in eastern Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

58. [38 Tamil civilians reported killed in rebel attacks in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

59. [Letters to the Editor](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

60. [Politics of the desperate](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

61. [Fifty die in Tamil raid](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

62. [Woman bomber carried out assassination in Sri Lanka , police claim](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

63. [LETTERS](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

64. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

65. [Sri Lanka election rally suicide bomber kills six, injures 50](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

66. [Mine explodes in Govt. office north eastern Sri Lanka , four injured](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

67. [45 more Tamil rebel bodies found in Sri Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

68. [*Two bomb blasts injure 23 in Sri Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

69. [*11 rebels killed in confrontation with troops in northern Lanka*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

70. [*No Headline In Original*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

71. [*Suicide blast kills 13 people*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

72. [*38 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees arrive in Indian coastal towns*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

73. [ARE WE REALLY DOING RIGHT THING?: AS BOMBS CONTINUE TO FALL ON AFGHANISTAN THE MERCURY'S TOP COLUMNISTS ASK THE QUESTION...](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

74. [Rebellion, anarchy, scandal... and the hoax of Hitler's 'diaries' hoax](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

75. [RELUCTANT ICON](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

76. [Reluctant icon](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

77. [Reluctant icon](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newsires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

78. [THE TIGERS' TRAIL OF DEATH](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

79. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

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News

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Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

80. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

81. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

82. [Sri-Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers, Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

83. [Sri-Lanka, NL](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

84. [Selfish Selflessness?](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

85. [Animal passions](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

86. [Sri-Lanka, Complete](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

87. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by

Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

88. [News-Shorts](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

89. [Weekend: DESTINY'S CHILDREN: Refugee children who make their way to the UK on their own have often survived appalling trauma and yet go on, given half a chance, to recover and prosper. But, Melanie MacFadyean discovers, care for them is haphazard and sometimes harsh and neglectful](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

90. [UN Commission on Human Rights adopts resolution on situation in Sierra Leone](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

91. [Letters to the Editor](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

92. [Rape victim breaks silence to testify at war crimes tribunal](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

93. ['Coconut palm war' is a catalogue of bloody horrors](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

94. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

95. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

96. [Sri-Lanka](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

97. [Sri-Lanka, Bgt](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

98. [No Headline In Original](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

99. [*South Asia's oldest English newspaper closing down*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

100. [*No Headline In Original*](#)

Client/Matter: -None-

Search Terms: "Tamil Tigers" OR LTTE

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Narrowed by:

Content Type
News

Narrowed by
Publication Type: Newspapers,Newswires & Press
Releases; Timeline: Jan 01, 1984 to Dec 31, 2002

Robbie joins polio fight in Sri Lanka

The Sentinel (Stoke)

September 22, 1998

Copyright 1998 The Sentinel

Section: Showbiz: Men & *Women*, Pg.4

Length: 130 words

Body

Rock stars Robbie Williams and Ian Dury took part in the Sri Lankan national immunisation day to rid the country of polio.

They launched the project in the war-torn district of Vavuniya, as part of a joint campaign by UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) and WHO (World Health Organisation) to eradicate polio worldwide by 2000.

Tamil Tigers and Govern-ment forces laid down their arms so every child in the country under five could be immunised.

Polio sufferer Ian and Stoke-on-Trent's Robbie were part of UNICEF delegation who gave oral polio vaccinations to children at the Vavuniya Ministry of Health office.

Robbie said: "The thing that had the most impact for me was all the smiling in the face of adversity -not the state that they live in but how they are looking for the best."

Graphic

Robbie vaccinates a child in Vavuniya

Load-Date: September 23, 1998

Tamil raid kills 44 on strike eve

The Times (London)

October 11 1988, Tuesday

Copyright 1988 Times Newspapers Limited

Section: Issue 63209.

Length: 138 words

Byline: VIJITHA YAPA

Body

Galle, Southern province, Sri Lanka - Forty-four people of the majority Sinhalese community have been killed by Tamil guerrillas who raided a village at Kongaswewa in northern Sri Lanka as Sinhalese in the south prepared for a strike yesterday to protest against elections in the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Security sources said that about 150 Tamil guerrillas, believed to belong to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, had entered 12 of the 52 houses in the village, about five miles from Vavuniya, and hacked to death or shot men, women and 18 children.

A leaflet said the killings were in retaliation for President Jayewardene's awarding medals to Army, Navy, Air Force and police officials who overran a Tamil Tigers stronghold. The raiders struck at night, eluding a Sri Lankan army camp nearby, security sources said.

Load-Date: September 22, 2000

sri lankan tamil rebels admit 6,000 killed in war

Copyright 1993 Xinhua News AgencyXinhua News Agency

DECEMBER 4, 1993, SATURDAY

Length: 167 words

Dateline: colombo, december 4; ITEM NO: 1204158

Body

sri lankan tamil rebels have admitted that at least 6,000 of its cadres and fighters have been killed during its decade-old struggle for a separate state in the north and east of the island country. some 500 of dead cadres were women, the rebel liberation tigers of tamil eelam (ltte) also announced when it marked its "heroes' day" last week in its stronghold northern jaffna peninsula. apart from the deaths, hundreds of its members were severely wounded and the limbs of most them were amputated, the ltte said. the rebel group currently has 10,000 fighters, including some 3,000 women who remain as a separate unit known as "free birds", and most of them are based in jaffna, according to local press reports. however, analysts believe that the casualty figures could be higher than what was provided by the rebel group and the colombo government. international press reports have put the death toll of the war at over 28,000, including government soldiers, ltte members and civilians.

Load-Date: December 5, 1993

End of Document

colombo police hunt for women suicide bombers

The Xinhua General Overseas News ServiceXinhua General News Service

NOVEMBER 7, 1993, SUNDAY

Length: 200 words

Dateline: colombo, november 7; ITEM NO: 1107031

Body

colombo police have thrown a dragnet around colombo and its suburbs in a massive hunt for two tamil rebel women suicide bombers believed to have slipped into the city. the two suspected women whose photographs were released to local newspapers, are believed to have gone underground and may have taken up some innocuous employment as "cover", local press reported today. the presence of the two women who got orders directly from intelligence chief pottu amman of the liberation tigers of tamil eelam (ltte), arrived here from northern jaffna for a mission or went underground awaiting further instructions. the ltte fighting to set up a separate state of the minority tamils in the north-east of the country first used a woman bomber in may 1991 to assassinate former indian premier rajiv gandhi in south india. colombo police believed that the women had slipped into the city after former president r. pramadasa was killed on a suicide attack on may day in colombo. police authorities also believed that they have captured at least eight would-be assassins after investigations were made into the ltte operations in colombo including political assassination, sabotage and arms build-up.

Load-Date: November 7, 1993

Death does not end the mystery of Ian Travis

The Sunday Star-Times (Auckland)

March 10, 2002

Copyright 2002 Fairfax New Zealand

Section: NEWS; INTERNATIONAL;

Length: 1383 words

Byline: LONGMORE Mary

Body

By Mary Longmore

in Bangkok

THE ENIGMATIC life of self-exiled New Zealander Ian Travis ended abruptly nine days ago when he was gunned down by a Thai hitman for a paltry \$ 2000 in an upmarket area of his adopted home, Bangkok.

The cropped-haired military enthusiast was driving a BMW and had \$ US15,000 (\$ 35,000) in his pockets when five bullets struck him. Even then, the burly muscleman didn't die, crawling 200m before his new young Thai wife drove him to the hospital where he died.

He had come a long way, old friends say, from his penniless debut in the Thai capital 12 years earlier. Living near Thailand's former deputy prime minister in one of Bangkok's ritzier streets in Sukhumvit, Ekatahuna-born Travis even had a maid for his beloved dog, Nikki.

But Travis had stooped too low to create his "highfalutin" lifestyle, as described by one.

"The Ian killed last week was not the Ian that we knew. The money turned him," said one.

"If he was persuading little old ladies in Australia to part with their life savings, then he'd sunk lower than I thought. He was a crook, let's be honest."

Travis was named as a Johnny-come-lately in an article in November 2001 in the Asian edition of Time which outlined the birth of Bangkok's boiler rooms.

A key figure in Bangkok's boiler room industry, Travis was a masterful telephone swindler, say ex-employees of Foreign Currency International, also known as Global Options Co and a dozen other titles the company used to avoid detection.

"Ian was one of the best telephone salesmen. He could get people to the bank in an hour," said one former broker who worked with Travis cold-calling New Zealanders and Australians persuading them to invest in foreign currency deals, options, shares, heating oil - whatever lucrative trade was flavour of the month.

After a few successful returns on small amounts, the clients were persuaded to invest large bucks - money they rarely saw again.

Death does not end the mystery of Ian Travis

Travis worked with the company's owners, Americans James and Michael Muller - key suspects in ordering his slaying.

At central Bangkok office locations which moved frequently, Travis managed the trading floor, barking orders at backpackers and expatriates flown in from the UK in search of fast money.

"He ran all these companies like the army. Travis was an all right guy . . . but in work, he was no one's friend, he was cut-throat. Even if his best friend was one minute late, he would fire him on the spot," said one ex-broker.

Travis claimed he was an orphan and his parents were killed when he was young. He had been in South-east Asia at least 12 years and authorities have been unable to find any next of kin in New Zealand.

There is dispute over his age and identity. His passport, issued in Bangkok, states he was born in June 1961. Embassy officials say they have the birth certificate from New Zealand to prove it. But friends swear he was 53.

One, John Angus, says he attended Travis' 45th birthday a few years back. And another, John Sheppard, says Travis registered at his fitness club with a birth date of 1948.

There are rumours that Travis' real name was Graham Church and that he wasn't even a New Zealander. Just married to petite 23-year-old Varaporn Pangya (also the controlling shareholder in Travis' short-lived new venture Platinum), Travis had also been ceremonially married previously to a Thai woman known by friends as "Nut". After they broke up, he said she had died of leukaemia, yet friends later bumped into her on the street.

Sporting military tattoos, Travis claimed to have been a colonel in the Australian SAS, to have trained with the New Zealand SAS, to have fought in Vietnam, and to have been a mercenary in Sri Lanka, Burma and Cambodia.

But both armies, while not ruling it out without a search of their records, say they have never heard of him, or his alias. The Australian embassy points out he would have to be an Australian citizen to serve in their armed forces.

The New Zealand Embassy in Bangkok is satisfied Travis was the 40-year-old New Zealand citizen he claimed to be and confirmed he legally married Varaporn in January this year.

Bangkok-based Briton John Sheppard met Travis in 1989 at Bangkok's Hilton Hotel fitness centre.

"He wasn't well-off, he was scratching a living selling English language courses," recalls Sheppard, who now runs several fitness centres in Thailand and Cambodia. Travis never drank or smoked and was a fitness fanatic.

Around 1992 Travis, a military history buff with a massive "Australian Armed Forces" tattoo across his back, went to Burma for mercenary work training the anti-government ethnic Karen liberation army. There, Travis allegedly shot a Karen for questioning his orders. He also claimed to be shot in the arm.

One ex-friend who knew Travis for 13 years said he "disappeared" four times on mercenary missions.

He set off on his last "job" in 1996 to Sri Lanka on a covert mission to help government forces fighting the separatist **Tamil Tigers**. Friends are tight-lipped about the mission's purpose but one rumour is Travis had his eye on the head of rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, which would have fetched a massive bounty.

Travis left a dramatic letter for a friend, saying if he wasn't killed in Sri Lanka, he would meet him at the Anzac Hotel in Pattaya on April 1 1997 at 8am for breakfast. He showed up.

Travis was away for about a year and had enough money upon his return to take a few months off, living on the beach in Naklua on Thailand's east coast with long-time girlfriend Nut.

Later in 1997, he opened a bar in Phnom Penh called the DMZ - demilitarised zone - for two years.

Death does not end the mystery of Ian Travis

But after he returned to Bangkok in 1999, the couple apparently broke up. "It would have had an enormous impact on him," says Angus. "She was his life. Women to him were commodities but not Nut." Quite suddenly, he cut off contact with his old friends.

It appears Travis fell in with bad company. "He got a taste for the high living," says one of his former crowd.

Some time after 1999, Travis became acquainted with the Mullers. At work, James Muller and Travis were a "good cop, bad cop" duo, with Travis playing the hard man.

Travis and James Muller were friends, even going on a trip to Europe together last year. Together, they spent their bucks on holidays in the Caribbean, where Muller had property, luxury cars and lavish parties .

But boiler room sources say Travis started "shaving off" money, stealing from his boss and friend. In January, just before police raided their offices, he split from the company taking client data, key staff - including Thais with senior government contacts - and possibly a large sum of money.

The day after the police raid, a full-page advertisement appeared in several newspapers, apparently taken out by James Muller, saying "Ian Travis has left the building. It is now safe to come back".

On the day Travis was killed - March 1 - the Thai police economic crime division raided FCI offices with warrants for the arrest of James and Michael Muller for fraud. Later that day, they were also being sought for masterminding a murder.

But James Muller had already flown out of Thailand and Michael was nowhere to be found. They are believed to be in the US and Thai authorities are hoping to extradite them to face charges in Thailand.

Thai national Surapatpong Ratchadrom, 28, was arrested within days of the shooting and confessed to the killing he said was ordered by James Muller's wife. He and 46-year-old Sayan Piyawat, who were Muller's bodyguards, described how they tailed Travis for days to learn his movements before shooting him as he pulled out from his driveway.

One ex-boiler room staffer said Travis was asking for trouble. "He's always the tough character but he just wasn't scared when he should have been. He should have left. There was a lot of money at stake. It was thieving from thieves."

An editorial in Bangkok English language daily The Nation said: "Few people are likely to mourn Ian Travis' passing. He was, according to some accounts, a personable man before he got involved in the stock scam game. The money and power turned him into a paranoid, duplicitous, friendless person."

As for Travis' life, what is fact and what is fiction is likely to remain a mystery. Shrugged one of his long-time friends: "You'll never know. No one'll ever tell you."

Load-Date: July 16, 2002

90 DIE AS TIGERS RAID MILITARY BASE

Herald Sun

June 30, 1995 Friday

Copyright 1995 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Length: 185 words

Body

COLOMBO - Tamil Tiger guerrillas have claimed victory in a major assault against a key military base in northern Sri Lanka with the death toll rising to at least 90 soldiers. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said eight rebels were killed in yesterday's commando raid on the army-held islet of Mandativu.

The deaths at Mandativu, just outside the **LTTE**-held Jaffna peninsula, raised to 166 the death toll from a 10-hour orgy of violence across Sri Lanka's embattled northern and eastern regions, military figures showed. The Voice of the Tigers clandestine radio claimed the **LTTE** captured 300 guns, a 50mm calibre gun, 150,000 rounds of ammunition, 177 grenades and four heavy machineguns from Mandativu. The radio said a self-styled Tiger lieutenant-colonel and two **women** cadres were among the eight guerrillas killed in the offensive. Another 26 soldiers were listed as missing, defence sources said. Military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said a force of 1000 guerrillas stormed the small islet, but troop reinforcements wrested back control of the facility about dawn yesterday.- APPEND OF STORY

Graphic

-KEYS- -LIB- -SECT- NEWS

Load-Date: October 1, 2003

Terrorists Said to Hide In Canada's Melting Pot

The New York Times

December 24, 1999, Friday, Late Edition - Final

Copyright 1999 The New York Times Company

Distribution: Foreign Desk

Section: Section A; ; Section A; Page 8; Column 1; Foreign Desk ; Column 1;

Length: 1489 words

Byline: By JOHN KIFNER

By JOHN KIFNER

Dateline: MONTREAL, Dec. 23

Body

All street and shop signs here, by Quebec provincial law, must be in French. But walk a few blocks from the modest bachelor apartment at 1250 Fort Street where Ahmed Ressam lived under the name of Benni Antoine Noris, and sometimes Mario Roig, and the signs tell of a rich ethnic bouillabaisse.

Here is Boutique Ali, a shoe repair shop, next to Bombay Palace-Cuisine Indienne, and then, in quick succession, Thai, Chinese, Italian, Russian and Swiss restaurants, as well as two Middle Eastern groceries and "Pandit A. B. Chowdhury, immigrant consultant for refugee claimant."

Since the arrest of Mr. Ressam, an Algerian, near Seattle last week and his indictment Wednesday on charges of trying to smuggle enough bomb-making material into the United States to flatten a building, that rich ethnic mix and the loose immigration controls that have made it possible have come under close scrutiny in Montreal and across Canada.

Officials here have been trying to explain, among other things, how Mr. Ressam managed to remain in the country after his application for asylum was refused, and even after he was arrested on charges of breaking into automobiles -- in the spring of 1998, two months after a nationwide warrant for his deportation was issued.

Mr. Ressam seems to have simply melted into the immigrant community in Montreal, which includes more than 15,000 Algerians, obtaining driver's licenses under his false names and even a Canadian passport last February, a year after the initial deportation order, by using his French-sounding alias and a forged Roman Catholic baptismal certificate. In Quebec, a baptismal certificate is sufficient identification to receive a passport.

Mr. Ressam was not alone. Critics of the government charge that as many as 10,000 people a year who are seeking asylum simply vanish from official view, some smuggling themselves across the porous border into the United States, many apparently disappearing into the population here.

A spokesman for the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service said the United States has had similar problems with asylum seekers, especially those who file for asylum after being charged with violating immigration law. A 1995 study by the I.N.S. found that 90 percent of those vanished while their applications were pending.

Terrorists Said to Hide In Canada's Melting Pot

According to a recent report by Canada's intelligence agency, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service, the country's openness to immigrants has helped make it "a haven for terrorists."

A senior intelligence official told the Toronto Globe and Mail that the agency had begun watching Mr. Ressay shortly after he arrived in early 1994 with a fake French passport and a tale of being falsely accused and tortured by Algeria's military government, which is battling Islamic insurgents. But, he added, the intelligence agency dropped the investigation.

"He has been known to us for some time," the official was quoted as saying in today's issues. "We had to drop it recently because of lack of resources. We just don't have the time and people to continue these investigations indefinitely."

Montreal's Algerians came under closer scrutiny by the city's police last October, when a team of French counterterrorism investigators arrived in Canada. Montreal had experienced a rash of car break-ins around the financial district, with cell phones and laptop computers being stolen and then peddled on the streets.

The French were conducting an investigation based on the arrest of Fateh Kamel, an Algerian Islamic militant, and they wanted to question two men they believed to be his lieutenants -- Mr. Ressay and Karim Said Atmani, who the police now say had been directing the Montreal theft ring. Mr. Ressay was not found.

Mr. Kamel, who had fought with Afghan rebels against the Soviets, was arrested by the authorities in Jordan last spring and extradited to France.

According to the French, Mr. Kamel had been the leader of a band of gangster-terrorists who carried out a series of armed robberies and shootouts around Roubaix in northern France. He had also operated out of Montreal in the 1990's and may have married a Canadian woman, and was believed to have directed a loose group of Islamic terrorists. Some of those terrorists were veterans of fighting in Bosnia, which, like Afghanistan, attracted Arab Muslim volunteers to what they regarded as a holy war.

"I think he was the leader of this group," a senior official of the French police and judicial antiterrorism task force said in Paris. "We have material evidence he conducted this group from Montreal. He moves around -- Bosnia, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Jordan."

Mr. Atmani, the other man sought by the French, had been deported last year to Bosnia because he carried a Bosnian passport when he arrived in Montreal as a stowaway on a cargo ship. His whereabouts are unknown, although officials suspect he may have slipped back into Canada.

Last week, the Montreal police arrested 11 men -- most of them Algerians -- who they said had been stealing from parked cars in groups of two and three and extorting money from other Algerians. The police said that part of the proceeds was going to finance the Armed Islamic Group, an Algerian group that has carried out massacres in villages there.

"These guys are financing organizations that train people to assassinate fathers of families, pregnant women, old people and children," said Jean-Yves Mailloux, the head of the Montreal police counterterrorism division.

As the investigation accelerated, the police found a second apartment where they believe Mr. Kamel, Mr. Atmani, Mr. Ressay and two others spent several months together in 1998. It is in Ville d'Anjou, just east of Montreal, near the working-class neighborhood where Mr. Ressay had been preparing to open a small grocery store with a license issued under his identity of Benni Noris.

Investigators also believe they have identified the second man who shared rooms at a motel in Vancouver with Mr. Ressay before he made his ferry trip into the United States. He was said to be Abdul Majid Dahoumane, an Algerian who applied for asylum here in 1995, was refused, and, like Mr. Ressay, was under a deportation order.

Police and intelligence officials say that Canada's generous immigration policies have meant that foreign terror groups can more easily establish and maintain cells here.

Terrorists Said to Hide In Canada's Melting Pot

Last year, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service reported that it had active investigations into 50 terrorist groups and 350 individuals.

The agency's director, Ward Elcock, told the Canadian Senate's security and intelligence committee last year that terrorists have been taking advantage of the system for years and that almost every terrorist group in the world had a foothold in Canada.

"Terrorist groups are present here whose origins lie in every significant regional ethnic and nationalist conflict there is," he said. "The nature of our society and the related policies concerning refugees and immigrants make us particularly vulnerable to terrorist influence and activities."

The intelligence agency's Web site lists a wide variety of foreign groups operating in Canada, including Hezbollah, Hamas, groups from Algeria and Iran, the ***Tamil Tigers*** of Sri Lanka, the Irish Republican Army and "all the major Sikh" separatists. It adds that more groups are arriving, including the Kurdish Worker's Party, "trained assassins" from the Palestinian Force 17 and the Iranian intelligence service.

Since 1992, Canada has deported only 11 people as terrorists. Before that, none.

In addition to Canada's general welcome of immigrants, Mr. Rassem was probably helped by official Quebec policy of trying to bring more French-speaking immigrants into the province. Many Algerians speak French as a legacy of French colonial rule.

In 1999, 12,600 French-speaking immigrants were admitted. Next year the number is expected to reach as high as 14,600.

"Quebec has attained its objective of increasing French-speaking immigration," the provincial immigration minister, Robert Perrault, said in a news release last month.

The number of Algerian immigrants increased markedly after 1992, when the Islamic Salvation Front started a bloody insurgency in Algeria after the military canceled elections and seized power. In 1990, 493 refugees and immigrants entered Canada from Algeria; last year the number grew to 1,914. Since 1997, the government has stopped extraditing people to Algeria because of the violence there.

Of 1,197 Algerians who applied for refugee status in 1998, 67 percent were accepted, compared with 40 percent for all refugee groups that year.

Leon Benoit of the opposition Reform Party contended that Canadian authorities cannot account for as many as 10,000 people who claimed refugee status at border points last year. Of 24,000 who made claims, he said, about 10,000 were given refugee status, and 4,000 to 5,000 more were sent away. The whereabouts of the rest, he said, are unknown.

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photos: Police officers blocked a street in Montreal on Sunday after finding a van belonging to Ahmed Ressam. Mr. Ressam has been charged with trying to smuggle bomb-making material into the United States. (Associated Press); Ahmed Ressam was one of 15,000 Algerians living in Montreal.

Load-Date: December 24, 1999

Terrorists Said to Hide In Canada's Melting Pot

End of Document

Terrorist groups recruit in our cities

Hobart Mercury (Australia)

October 5, 2001, Friday

Copyright 2001 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Length: 187 words

Byline: MICHAEL OWEN-BROWN

Body

SEVEN terrorist groups are actively recruiting members in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, a renowned international terrorism expert says.

Although not involved in directly planning terrorist acts, they are raising money and recruiting members through lectures and internet sites.

Rohan Gunaratna is a research fellow at the Centre for the Study of Terrorism and Political Violence in Scotland, and is a former principal investigator at the United Nations Terrorism Prevention Branch.

Speaking in Sydney yesterday, Dr Gunaratna called for the Federal Government to pass laws to restrict the operations of these groups and prevent them spreading "propaganda".

He named the groups active in Australia as Hamas, the Hezbollah, the Turkish PKK, the Chechen Mujahadeen, the **Tamil Tigers** and two Indian groups, Babbar Khalsa International and the International Sikh Youth Federation.

There were several hundred members in total in Australia, who recruited and indoctrinated new members in the aims of the terrorist groups, he said.

"These are terrorists who have killed many **women** and children and these groups are functioning here."

Load-Date: October 4, 2001

**THE JOB OF A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT IS NOT ALWAYS AS
GLAMOROUS AS IT SOUNDS, SAYS BARBARA HOOKS.**

Canberra Times (Australia)

January 5, 1998, Monday Edition

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Section: Part TVG; Page 6

Length: 1422 words

Body

Foreign correspondents are the glamour boys and girls of journalism, the reporters hand-picked for the top assignments and the plum postings overseas. But what, they ask, is glamorous about covering an operation to remove a machete from someone's head, or camping on a politician's doorstep for 36 hours straight, or being strafed by warplanes? "The thing that distinguishes foreign correspondents from other journalists is that the worse it is, the more we want to go to it," says Helen Vatsikopoulos, SBS-TV's multi award-winning international current affairs veteran.

"It's a sought-after job and it's certainly the best I've ever had," says Nick McCallum of his first overseas posting, to Nine's LA bureau.

"It's wonderful, like having all these delights laid out on a table and picking a bit from each plate and gorging yourself," says Dominique Schwartz, a founding reporter on Foreign Correspondent.

"Gone are the days of sitting on a veranda, sipping G & Ts under a slowly rotating fan, but you'd have to search far and wide for a more stimulating job," says Michael Maher, a roving diplomatic correspondent before his first ABC bureau posting, to Jakarta.

Foreign correspondents die in the line of duty. In fact, more journalists were killed in Bosnia than the Vietnam War.

"Journalists are now targets, like aid workers," says Vatsikopoulos, who has taken to telling little white lies about where she is going and what she is doing, so her mum won't worry as much. Vatsikopoulos was in Sri Lanka, filming illegal crossings by locals in war-torn Jaffna, when a suicide bombing mission by **Tamil Tigers** sparked a retaliatory air raid by the military.

Vatsikopoulos was also detained by "a chap with a very bad temper" in the anti-terrorism unit of a Turkish police station not a good place for a nice gal with a Greek surname to be, given relations between the two countries.

Schwartz has dodged bandits hacking and mutilating their way across Mozambique and, on a single day in Kabul, survived two confrontations by men with guns (including four waving AK47s), planes "buzzing and spraying" overhead, and an escalating riot. "It was pretty scary, and I remember thinking: 'Oh no, I don't want to die here'." TO LA journalists, public enemy number one is the Hollywood Publicist. "The first thing they learn in publicity school is never, ever, call anyone back," McCallum says. "And if you do get through, the second thing they learn is take the call on speaker phone. It sounds like you've got a million people in the room and you really can't be bothered." In Greece, Schwartz reported on an eccentric election candidate renowned for taking his clothes off and making

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political statements in the nude. He has threatened to visit her in Australia. She plans to introduce him to the breast-baring Italian politician Cicciolina then head off on assignment.

Maher found himself on Indonesia's most popular television variety show, "dancing with nubile young things" and dressed as a Roman Centurian. Maher agrees with Stuart Littlemore that he looked like "an absolute wally". But he may have the last laugh. The story was reported in seven newspapers and even the Minister of State wanted a copy of the show.

Schwartz likes to learn a few words of the local language or dialect, but she hasn't always mastered the intonation. Instead of greeting a village woman in Burkina Faso, she asked if she could marry her son. "She said, 'Yes', but he already had a couple of wives." Maher speaks reasonable Indonesian "enough to get into trouble." Among the first words he learnt were *belum*, "not yet" and *jam kared*, "rubber time" rather useful phrases to know when dealing with Indonesian bureaucracy.

Schwartz also speaks German, which has proved useful in some unexpected places, such as Tunisia, on the north-west coast of Africa. The country attracts so many German tourists, the locals know more German than English.

In places such as Mexico and Latin America, Vatsikopoulos says hostility adds to the language barrier. "People won't speak English even if they can, because they despise the 'gringos' so much. It makes the job twice as hard." There's an old foreign affairs adage about the third secretary sent abroad. After six months, he knows everything about his new country. After 12 months, he has some doubts and after two years, when he's about to be recalled, he realises he has just scratched the surface.

Schwartz says roving foreign correspondents and bureau correspondents bring a different perspective to the job. "When I lived in Japan, things I found absolutely remarkable when I first got there were no longer remarkable two years later. I'd got used to them. But you do get a deeper understanding of society if you're living there." "We're all human, so we worry about what we see around us and we all have these moral dilemmas about what we're doing," Vatsikopoulos says. "We're watching and covering this suffering, but we're in no way able to alleviate it. There are others there to do that normally, aid workers and peacekeepers. So we have to draw the line. We have to be professionals. Also, it's a survival mechanism to be able to say: 'This is a story and next week I'm going to be in another hell-hole covering somebody else's agony'." "As a reporter, it's very important to respond to things, to convey what you're feeling in a report," Schwartz says. "But you can do that without affecting the way you report the facts." One of the hardest stories Schwartz had to cover was the "abhorrent" practice of ***female*** genital mutilation in West Africa.

But by concentrating on a country Burkina Faso where the authorities were trying, with some success, to counter the social and economic reasons behind it, Schwartz says she was able to channel her emotion in a constructive way.

Her report won the Gold UNESCO Medal at last year's New York Film Festival.

In July last year, the Nine bureau decamped to Atlanta for the Olympics, leaving McCallum alone in Los Angeles.

"I'm putting my feet up and thinking: 'Well, I'm going to have a really quiet time' and then, all of a sudden, the terrible news came through that a jumbo had crashed off New York and you turn around and it's so busy you don't sleep for three days. It's not a job for people who like routine. When you leave home in the morning you don't know whether you'll be back at 5pm or 5am." Like all foreign correspondents, McCallum is on call to the network's stable of news and current affairs programs, whose deadlines range from 2pm LA time for Today to 5am for Nightline. McCallum denies he tops his PJs with a shirt and tie on such occasions, but owns up to matchsticks under the eyelids.

ROVING foreign correspondents try to get as many stories as possible in an intensive three or four-week shoot. "From the moment you arrive, you're up at six every morning, sometimes 3am if you need to drive to allocation," Vatsikopoulos says. "I piece it all together when I come home. But I can't make a mistake, because there's no way I

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can go back there to do that interview again." McCallum is lucky. "America is nowhere near as logistically difficult. Even the smallest town in the middle of nowhere has a television station and access to satellite." But if it took nearly two years of "groping around in the dark" before he knew who to talk to, how does one get on in Amman, or Beijing? "Often, telecommunications don't work so well," Schwartz says, making an exception for her mother, who somehow manages to fax the footy results wherever she is.

"So the best way to deal with anyone in the developing world is face-to-face. Second, there's the language barrier. And third, in a lot of places, if they don't actually see you, they don't believe you exist. Talking to people over the phone locally, much less from Australia is not something they do. They prefer to chat about it over tea when you get there.

"We also hire fixers, local people with local knowledge who can act as translators and who know their way around the system. They're indispensable." Fixers are often local journalists. Vatsikopoulos, who travels without a producer to keep costs down, likes to talk to others who have been there. Before heading for Tamil Tiger territory she phoned a British-based Sri Lankan journalist who had just been in. "Each fighter carries a cyanide pill around his neck and if they're captured, that's what they take. These are tough, no-bullshit people and it's serious everywhere. And I remember her saying to me: 'You must be prepared to die if you go in'."

Load-Date: January 5, 1998

End of Document

fighting kills 10 tamil rebels in sri lanka - Correction Appended

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Correction Appended

Length: 142 words

Dateline: colombo, september 24; ITEM NO: 0924148

Body

sri lanka's defense ministry said friday that government troops killed 10 tamil rebels of the separatist liberation tigers of tamil eelam (***ltte***) in the latest clashes in the north of the country. the ministry said in a statement that troops on thursday killed two ***female ltte*** rebels with small arms and machine guns in oddusuddan. it said troops operating ahead of defenses south of oddusuddan observed a rebels' bunker and engaged the rebels with rocket-propelled grenades and small arms, killing two of them. troops killed six more rebels in an ambush at thadduvankoddy in the jaffna peninsula, the former stronghold of the ***ltte***, the statement added. the ***ltte*** rebels have been fighting a 16-year-old war against the government for an independent homeland for minority tamils in sri lanka's north and east.

Correction

the u.n. security council friday held an open meeting on small arms, which, though small in size and light in weapons, have created big casualties in the world today. u.n. secretary-general kofi annan opened the meeting, which is held at ministerial level at the initiative of the president of the 15-nation security council, arnold peter van walsum of the netherlands. addressing the council meeting, annan said, "the proliferation of small arms, ammunition and explosives has also aggravated the violence associated with terrorism and organized crime." "even in societies not beset by civil war, the easy availability of small arms has in many cases contributed to violence and political instability," he said. the council met in a closed-door session thursday in preparation of the formal meeting. the united nations said in an early august report that the world is awash in more than 500 million small arms and light weapons, the weapon of choice in many contemporary conflicts. the united nations, long focused on nuclear weapons and conventional disarmament, has become increasingly concerned over the role of small arms, particularly in internal conflicts and in the hands of insurgents, criminals and terrorist groups. the world body plans to hold an international conference on the illicit arms trade by 2001.

Correction-Date: September 24, 1999

Load-Date: September 25, 1999

USIA
Nancy Rubin remarks to UN Commission on Human Rights

M2 PRESSWIRE

April 11, 1997

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Length: 2333 words

Dateline: Geneva

Highlight: U.S. delegation head notes continuing rights abuses

Body

The United States believes that "international human rights standards, as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Rights, are a common standard for all nations," says Nancy Rubin, head of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

"Respect for democracy, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law at home means respect for them abroad, to the benefit of all nations and all people, " she told the commission April 9.

In a statement reviewing the human rights situation in countries around the world, Rubin also made the following points:

- Cuba remains the Western Hemisphere's sole dictatorship, "denying its citizens the very tangible benefits of democracy."
- The United States "remains deeply concerned about the volatile situation in the Balkans."
- The United States "is deeply concerned with Belarus' accelerating slide toward authoritarianism."
- The United States "remains acutely concerned over the conditions in central Africa."
- Saddam Hussein's repression of the Iraqi people "has not abated, despite the great hardships to which he has put his people."
- "Burma's severe repression of human rights remains a matter of grave concern."
- We have also noticed a troubling deterioration in the human rights situation in Sri Lanka.

Rubin emphasized that the United States firmly believes that China should be held accountable to international human rights standards.

Following is the text of Rubin's remarks. Mr. Chairman:

Three times a year the United States makes formal statements on the human rights situation in the countries of the world. The first is when the annual country reports are released in late January. The second is when we speak on item 10 here at the commission. The last occasion is during the Third Committee of the U.N. General Assembly.

USIA Nancy Rubin remarks to UN Commission on Human Rights

These are not casual occasions, but opportunities we take very seriously. Our government works hard gathering reliable information to determine the extent to which human rights are respected or abused in the countries of the world.

In doing so we make no claim that our record is perfect, for it is not.

But there are reasons why we do it. First and foremost is the fact that we believe that international human rights standards, as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are a common standard for all nations. These fundamental rights and freedoms are not just for Americans; they belong to everyone, in every country. Believing this

- and believing it deeply - obliges us to speak out where we see human rights abused.

Our commitment to human rights and their applicability to all people has deep and enduring roots in our national institutions and identity. Indeed, the United States was founded on the principles that all people are created equal and that they are endowed with the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

The history of this century has clearly demonstrated that nations which respect the human rights of their own citizens respect the rights of their neighbors. Respect for democracy, fundamental freedoms and the rule of law at home means respect for them abroad, to the benefit of all nations and all people.

Those who cannot accept or understand this should reflect on the dark chapters of this century's history. From the massive horrors of World War I and II to the Soviet Gulag and the Chinese Cultural Revolution; from the killing fields of Cambodia to the cruelties of apartheid and the tragedies in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, and Burundi, the lesson remains the same. The costs of tolerating human rights abuse are very, very high.

And yet, there are nations which come here not to defend human rights, but to undermine them, not to expose abuse, but to divert attention away from it. It is some of these nations that we wish to discuss today, at the same time that we cite those who deserve praise for the progress they have made.

In our own hemisphere, the overwhelming trend over the past decade has been the consolidation of democracy and the institutions of civil society. Not surprisingly, much good has come of this: healthier economies and healthier societies. Yet there is one state which continues to deny reality, while denying its citizens the very tangible benefits of democracy. I refer of course to Cuba, the hemisphere's only remaining dictatorship, which continues to arrest, detain, threaten, and harass human rights and pro- democracy activists it considers a threat. Sadly, Fidel Castro has made it clear that he intends no political opening to accompany the limited economic liberalization measures implemented by his government in recent years.

By contrast, the final peace accord the government of Guatemala and the URNG guerrillas signed in late December closed out a year of significant improvement with respect to human rights and the rule of law in that country. The Guatemalan government has demonstrated that it has the political will to combat impunity. In a marked departure from previous years, the courts convicted members of the security forces who had been charged with human rights abuses. Further, paramilitary forces were disbanded, the guerrillas are now demobilizing, and the military is being reduced and restructured to carry out its proper role within a democratic society.

The government of Colombia is struggling to improve its human rights situation, while dealing with violent guerrilla groups, paramilitary units, and narco-traffickers. During last year's commission, the Colombian government agreed to establish an office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights in Bogota to promote and protect human rights, monitor abuse, and prepare analytical reports for the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Still, the government must continue to show the political will to address the human rights situation by arresting and prosecuting human rights abusers in the security forces, and identifying and penalizing illegal collaboration between the military and paramilitary units.

The United States remains deeply concerned about the volatile situation in the Balkans. The deterioration of conditions in Albania continues to pose a major threat to the human rights of that country's citizens, and we strongly

USIA Nancy Rubin remarks to UN Commission on Human Rights

support the efforts the OSCE, the EU, and the Italian-led multinational force to stem this potential humanitarian crisis.

While the United States welcomes the fact that the Serbian government finally agreed to permit the democratic opposition to take control of the municipalities it won in the November elections, we continue to be distressed by the Serbian government's lack of commitment to democratic reform and independent media. The United States remains deeply concerned by the continuing denial of basic human rights to the Albanian minority in Kosovo, and the Serbian government's refusal to address this issue. In addition, Belgrade has failed to live up to key provisions of the Dayton Accords and continues to protect a number of individuals accused of crimes against humanity by the International War Crimes Tribunal.

As it seeks to become part of the democratic community of nations, it is important that Croatia continue to cooperate fully with the U.N. Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia to ensure the peaceful reintegration of Eastern Slavonia while also assuring respect for human rights for all residents, returning displaced persons, and refugees. The U.S. continues to press Croatia to apprehend and surrender for prosecution all persons indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal, to guarantee freedom of the press, to guarantee local Serb community representation at all levels of the government, and to provide protection of local Serbs' legal and civil rights under Croatian law.

In Eastern Europe, the recent conduct of the government of Belarus stands in sad contrast to the positive achievements of neighbors like Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. The United States is deeply concerned with Belarus' accelerating slide toward authoritarianism. The severe restrictions which the Lukashenko government has imposed on economic reform, democratic opposition, and the media can only limit the country's hopes for development.

The United States remains deeply concerned about the human rights situation and the potential for inter-communal violence on Cyprus. We call on both the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities on that island to create a climate whereby a just solution to their differences can be found.

The African states as a whole have often been criticized because of the human rights problems in some of them. The United States does not take this simplistic view, but notes with satisfaction the progress that many African states have made over the past year. In Ghana, for example, the recent elections were free and fair. At the same time, the country has made noticeable progress economically and in strengthening its civic institutions. Mali, too, continues to make positive strides as it continues on the path to further democratization.

After several failures, the ceasefire in Liberia gives hope that that country's long descent in chaos has finally ended and the process of healing through national elections may soon begin. And in South Africa, the process of national reconciliation continues through the wise administration of Nelson Mandela's government and the careful deliberations of the National Truth Commission.

At the same time, the human rights situation in Nigeria is very poor. The regime of General Abacha has continued to rely on arbitrary detention, arrests, and wide-scale harassment to silence its many critics. Security forces have committed extrajudicial killings, tortured and beat suspects and detainees, while continuing to harass human rights and democracy activists. All these and numerous other abuses have taken place in a climate of serious infringements on freedom of speech, assembly, association, travel and workers rights.

The United States remains acutely concerned over the conditions in central Africa. We strongly urge the rebel forces under Laurent Kabila to come to an agreement with the current government in order to avoid further bloodshed and suffering in Zaire. We deeply regret the death of the human rights monitors in Rwanda last fall, and we call on the government there and in Burundi to expend every effort to bring those guilty of massive and genocidal human rights abuse to justice.

Six years after the end of the Persian Gulf War, the government of Iraq still refuses to comply with the U.N. Security Council resolutions and destroy completely its weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, Saddam Hussein's repression of the Iraqi people has not abated, despite the great hardships to which he has put his people.

USIA Nancy Rubin remarks to UN Commission on Human Rights

Meanwhile the Iranian government's human rights record has failed to improve. Their systematic abuses include extrajudicial killings and summary executions, disappearances, the widespread use of torture, arbitrary arrest, and detention, the lack of fair trials, and restrictions on freedom of speech and press. We further deplore the continuing abuse of those who practice the Baha'i faith. And we find it incomprehensible that the Iranian government has not acted to restrain those Iranian citizens who are responsible for offering a reward for the death of Salman Rushdie.

The United States continues to be deeply concerned about the crippling restrictions the Taliban have imposed on Afghanistan's women and girls. Surely, forbidding women from working when many of them are the sole source of support for their families is a cruel abuse of their rights, and a foolish policy as well. Similarly, forbidding girls to attend school can only add to the intellectual impoverishment of the country.

Burma's severe repression of human rights remains a matter of grave concern, as SLORC's military rulers maintained broad restrictions on the basic rights to free speech, assembly, and association. Meanwhile the political activities of the country's most well-known, democratic figure, Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, continued to be severely restricted.

We have also noticed a troubling deterioration in the human rights situation in Sri Lanka. Of particular concern are the unsolved disappearances of more than 700 persons in Jaffna and the slow progress made by the government in prosecuting security forces personnel implicated in human rights abuses. We are also troubled by the continuing failure of the armed forces and the LTTE insurgents to capture POWs in numbers commensurate with the scale of the conflict, since it suggests that both sides have adopted a "take-no-prisoners" policy. We call upon the government and the LTTE, therefore, to observe international humanitarian norms.

While we do not seek confrontation with China over human rights, we firmly believe that the People's Republic of China should be held accountable, and certainly at this commission, to international standards that China itself has endorsed. Chinese society has undergone significant transformation since the introduction of economic reforms, resulting in greater scope for individual choice. Nevertheless, China's government continues to commit widespread and well-documented human rights abuses and to severely restrict fundamental freedoms of speech, the press, assembly, association, and religion in violation of internationally-accepted norms.

No country should lie beyond the commission's scrutiny, Mr. Chairman. Nor should those who have made progress pass unnoticed for their efforts. Our goal at the commission is the protection and promotion of the fundamental rights and freedoms for every individual. By speaking out honestly and frankly, we can help accomplish that. For silence is evil's best companion, and light the strongest enemy of dark designs. Thank you.

Load-Date: May 23, 1997

s. lankan police arrest tamil undergraduates

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AUGUST 28, 1998, FRIDAY

Length: 104 words

Dateline: colombo, august 28; ITEM NO: 0828081

Body

sri lankan police thursday night arrested 19 tamil undergraduates of the open university at nawala, a suburb of colombo, the daily news reported friday. the undergraduates, including four **females**, were being questioned by a special police team to find out whether they have connections with the tamil rebels of the liberation tigers of tamil eelam (**Itte**). on tuesday, tamil rebel suspects shot at and seriously injured an army officer at a busy colombo intersection. sri lankan police and the armed forces then tightened security in the capital city to prevent possible **Itte** rebel attacks.

Load-Date: August 29, 1998

Where Women Rule, They Leave A Genderless Legacy Behind

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

May 10, 1995, Wednesday

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Section: THE WORLD; Pg. 1

Length: 1335 words

Byline: By Eric Weiner, Special to The Christian Science Monitor

Dateline: NEW DELHI

Highlight: Women leaders have been common in South Asia where they rarely help oppressed women

Body

WHEN South Asia's leaders posed for photos during last week's regional summit here, the image was strikingly different from most gatherings of world leaders. Three of the seven nations (Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka) have women as heads of state.

South Asian voters, in fact, have elected more women leaders than anywhere else in the world. All of them belong to political dynasties begun by men, in contrast to current women leaders in Turkey, Norway, Iceland, and Ireland.

The legacy of women leaders in South Asia is all the more surprising because of the harsh treatment that women often receive in the region. "It's amazing," says Farah Naz, research associate with the Pakistani chapter of Women Living Under Islamic Law, an international women's-rights group. "On the one hand, there are discriminatory laws against women, and yet people have elected a woman as prime minister."

Women's-rights activists had hoped that South Asia's female leaders would improve the plight of women in each country. But critics say that has not been the case.

For instance, Pakistan's Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has not challenged Islamic laws and customs that are discriminatory.

In Pakistan, a woman who claims she was raped must produce four witnesses or face imprisonment for adultery. "Women in Pakistan are as much exploited under a woman prime minister as they were under a male prime minister," says Farooq Tariq, a labor organizer in Lahore.

Throughout South Asia, girls are far less likely than boys to receive an education and are subject to many abuses. They are often harassed -- and sometimes murdered -- for not providing enough dowry to their husbands. Women rarely rise to the top of their professions and earn far less than their male counterparts.

Ms. Bhutto, for one, defends her record on women's issues, pointing out that she has opened the country's first all-women police stations, as well as a women's bank.

Other observers are not impressed. "There have been cosmetic changes, but these are model programs that affect very few people," says Paula Newberg, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington.

Where Women Rule, They Leave A Genderless Legacy Behind

Bhutto's supporters say she can't be expected to focus exclusively on women's issues. "She is not a single-issue prime minister," says Shafqat Mahmood, an adviser to Bhutto. "She ... has lots of other objectives." Perhaps more important, Bhutto's fragile coalition government includes several conservative religious parties that object to any changes to Pakistan's Islamic law.

South Asia's current female leaders seem to have taken their cue from respected female politicians of the past, including Britain's Margaret Thatcher, India's Indira Gandhi, and Israel's Golda Meir. They all made it a point to distance themselves from women's causes. "I am not a woman prime minister," Mrs. Gandhi often told reporters. "I am a prime minister."

South Asia's women leaders have something else in common: They were all propelled into office after the death of their husbands or fathers, often at the hands of assassins. Bangladesh's Prime Minister Khaleda Zia is the widow of former military dictator Gen. Zia-ur-Rahman. Pakistan's Bhutto is the daughter of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a former prime minister who was executed by the military in 1979. Chandrika Kumaratunga, who was elected president of Sri Lanka last year, lost both her father and her husband to political violence.

The women came to power through "an accident of association," says Pran Chopra, a political analyst with the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research. "They owe [their successes] to the memories of their husbands and fathers."

Dynasty may have indeed played an important role in their rise to power, but South Asia's female politicians argue that name alone does not explain their success. "There are many women all over the world whose husbands have been associated with politics, but how many of them try to assert themselves?" asks Najma Heptullah, deputy chairman of the Rajya Sabha, India's upper house of Parliament. "You can come to power by name, but then you have to prove yourself."

Three of the nations headed by women -- Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Turkey -- are Islamic countries. Ms. Bhutto governs the most religiously conservative of them. When her Pakistan People's Party was elected for the first time in 1989, several members of the legislature from religious parties refused to participate in the vote to ratify Bhutto's nomination. But those kinds of protests are rare. Few politicians in Pakistan have attempted to make Bhutto's gender an issue. "Islam in our part of the world does not frown upon women acquiring positions of leadership," says Najum Sethi, editor of the Friday Times in Lahore.

India, a mainly Hindu country, also has a deeply rooted respect for women leaders because "in traditional Indian society, the mother-figure is a very powerful figure," Mr. Chopra says. He points out that the Hindu goddess Durga is one of the most powerful deities in the Hindu pantheon.

The three women leaders of South Asia all face political crises at home. Pakistan's largest city, Karachi, has been caught in a spiral of sectarian violence, with more than 1,200 people killed in the past year. Sri Lanka faces an escalation of the country's 12-year civil war with the Tamil Tigers. And Bangladesh's government has endured numerous strikes and boycotts organized by the opposition party.

South Asia's endemic political violence has sometimes led to bizarre political scenarios, where wives and daughters of slain leaders find themselves pitted against one another. For instance, last year's Sri Lankan presidential election was dubbed the "Battle of the Widows" as Ms. Kumaratunga ran against Srimala Disanayake, widow of the opposition candidate, who was killed two weeks earlier in a suicide-bomb attack. In Bangladesh, Prime Minister Zia has been engaged in a bitter rivalry with Sheikh Hasina, leader of the country's leftist opposition party and herself the daughter of a slain political leader. In India, Sonia Gandhi, the Italian-born widow of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, is considered one of the most powerful political figures -- even though she holds no elected office.

Women in South Asia may have obtained the highest office, but they have mostly selected men as their Cabinet members and advisers. And few Asian women hold seats in parliament. In Sri Lanka, for instance, only about 5 percent of members of Parliament are women. In Pakistan the figure is 1 percent.

Where Women Rule, They Leave A Genderless Legacy Behind

Worldwide, women have not fared much better. Their share of seats in parliaments has dropped from 13 percent in 1991 to 10 percent in 1993. In only six countries do women hold a quarter or more of their country's legislative seats. Four of those nations are Scandinavian.

In the past, the exclusive club of women leaders has included those who have left a big mark on history, including Britain's Thatcher, Israel's Meir, and India's Gandhi.

The family of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister -- his daughter Indira Gandhi and subsequently her son Rajiv -- have played a unique role in modern India. Mrs. Gandhi was a forceful and highly controversial leader who ruled off and on for 15 years until she was assassinated in 1984.

Analysts see little evidence to suggest that the large number of current women leaders in South Asia signifies a trend. "The way these women made it into politics suggests very little about their being women and everything about their names," says Carnegie's Ms. Newberg. "These women could have been men."

India recently passed a constitutional amendment that reserves one-third of seats on local councils for women. Supporters say it is intended to nurture a new generation of women leaders who do not depend on family ties. "We want them to have an awareness from the grass-roots level," says India's deputy chairman Heptullah. "Otherwise, people will say 'Somebody's husband or father died, and she came to power.' "

Graphic

PHOTOS: 1-9)WOMEN LEADERS: From center left, clockwise: Turkey's Tansu Ciller, Sri Lanka's Chandrika Kumaratunga, Philippines' Corazon Aquino, Ireland's Mary Robinson, Norway's Gro Harlem Brundtland, India's Indira Gandhi, Bangladesh's Khaleda Zia, Pakistan's Benazir Bhutto, and Israel's Golda Meir., PHOTO MONTAGE BY STAFF ARTIST KAREN NORRIS SCHNEIDER. FILE PHOTOS FROM REUTERS, AFP, UPI, AND MONITOR STAFF PHOTOGRAPHERS

Load-Date: May 11, 1995

Guerrillas die in ambushes

The Guardian (London)

September 14, 1987

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Length: 171 words

Byline: From JOHN RETTIE

Dateline: COLOMBO

Body

At least 20 people were killed and many others injured in Sri Lanka's Eastern Province yesterday in the first serious outbreak of violence between rival Tamil groups there since the peace accord was signed at the end of July.

Most of the killings occurred in two separate ambushes of minibuses near the east coast town of Batticaloa. In a third incident, four people were found tied up and shot, two of them dead.

The vehicles were carrying members of the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) and the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Organisation (EPRLF). But some of the victims were women unconnected with either group.

Although the attackers escaped, local Tamil sources said the Tamil Tigers were believed to have been responsible. During the past 10 days, at least 25 people have died in fighting between rival groups in the Northern Province. But although rioting broke out between Tamils and Muslims last week, there has been no fighting between rival groups in the east since the peace accord.

Load-Date: June 13, 2000

SRI LANKA: MOTHERS OF MIA SOLDIERS ORGANIZE FOR PEACE

IPS-Inter Press Service

May 29, 2002, Friday

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Length: 956 words

Byline: By Feizal Samath

Dateline: KANDY, Sri Lanka, May 29

Body

Visakha Dharmadasa dreads the knock on the door or the midnight telephone call. "Families like us shudder when a policeman comes to our doorstep or when there is a call at night. We fear it is about our sons. It is absolute trauma."

Like thousands of Sri Lankan mothers, Dharmadasa has two sons in the army battling Tamil separatist rebels in the northern part of the country. And like dozens of mothers, her younger son has been missing in action since Sep. 28, 1998.

But the diminutive woman has a bigger job than most of those affected: she leads a campaign on behalf of some 2,000 women whose sons are missing in action. "Whenever I meet the rebels to negotiate their release, I don't talk about my son. I talk about the larger group that is missing and plead for their release," Dharmadasa said at her home in the central hill town of Kandy.

A ceasefire between government troops and Tamil rebels since last December has brought immense relief to the families of soldiers on the front lines of the war-torn northern and eastern regions of Sri Lanka. Rural homes, where most of the soldiers come from, are no more greeted with the sight of soldiers coming home in body bags after being killed in combat.

"There is a sense of relief all around in rural homes, and in mine for that matter. The legs of women shake in fright and uncertainty whenever a policeman comes knocking at the door. Often it is to inform the family that a father or son has been killed in the war," she said.

"The worry and uncertainty is over, at least for the time being. There is relief also on the LTTE (Tamil rebels) side. There is relief among civilians in conflict areas that they need not run away from army attacks, etc."

Dharmadasa described how a Tamil mother told her that she was forced to leave her dying child when a village came under attack from government troops. "This incident shattered me and made me feel that this was probably worse than having a son missing in action."

Dharmadasa is chairperson of two groups -- Parents of Families of Soldiers Missing in Action and the Association of War-Affected Women -- and is campaigning for much more than the concerns of soldiers and their families. She is also an activist for peace.

"She has a can-do personality and takes bold initiatives. She is an initiator and bridge-builder," noted Jehan Perera, a well-known peace promoter and media director at the privately-funded National Peace Council.

SRI LANKA : MOTHERS OF MIA SOLDIERS ORGANIZE FOR PEACE

Dharmadasa says that while there is a lot of talk of peace at grassroots level and support for the Norwegian-led peace process, there is no backing from the corridors of power in the capital of Colombo.

"The women in Colombo are more interested in cooking demonstrations or fashion shows. They are not bothered about peace because their sons or daughters don't fight in the war."

Dharmadasa's group has been interacting with civic groups "trying to persuade the ladies to join us in the quest for peace."

"I say, if you want to fight, send your children," she said, adding that she has been pushing for compulsory conscription to the armed forces for all able-bodied young persons as a way of ending the conflict. "If people are forced into war, they would put pressure on governments to stop it."

On Nov. 11, 1999, Dharmadasa's association organized a candlelight vigil at her ancestral village of Dantur, about 12 km away from Kandy, to mark war heroes day.

It was also the birthday of her missing son. Temple bells pealed in a message meant to "remind people that there is a war on," she said. Her group has since organized similar events highlighting the plight of missing soldiers, families of the victims and the futility of the war.

Some 64,000 people have died in the conflict since 1983, when Tamil rebels stepped up their bloody campaign -- after widespread attacks on the minority Tamil community by majority Sinhalese -- for a separate homeland in the north and the east where most Tamils now live.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremasinghe's United National Party (UNP)-led coalition has, since winning parliamentary polls last December, initiated a new peace process, triggering fresh hopes of a peaceful end to the conflict. The government is preparing for talks with the rebels aimed at a negotiated settlement of the conflict in late June in Thailand.

Dharmadasa is very emotional about the war and frustrated over the fact that just a few people, mostly from the rural areas, are fighting it. "It is not fair. If people want war, they must get involved...not shout from the comfort of living rooms. A few people are fighting for the country on behalf of the others."

Last week she was among civil society groups that met Norwegian Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen, who is handling the peace process, in Colombo. The Norwegians wanted to ascertain the views of civil society on current peace initiatives.

Quoting government statistics, Dharmadasa says there are 4,000 MIAs. She believes, like many others, that most of them are dead. Tamil rebels have said they have seven soldiers in their custody.

She believes her son is alive and in rebel custody, and constantly reminds herself that he is among the living. "Whenever we eat chocolates, we keep my son's share in a plastic container. It reminds us about him. This happens in every home of missing soldiers," she said.

The association's main goal is to make it compulsory for soldiers to wear dog-tags. Identification discs are provided by the army but many soldiers don't put them on.

"It is essential to wear it and enable proper identification in case of death. If you see a dead body and a disc, take it and hand it over to the authorities so they know the identity of the missing person. We need to know...so that we know they are dead," she said.

Load-Date: June 4, 2002

URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka: seen worse."

Associated Press International

October 12, 2000; Thursday

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Section: International news

Length: 3395 words

Body

Shortly after polls closed Tuesday, both the ruling People's Alliance and the opposition parties launched allegations of violence and vote-rigging against one another.

A bomb exploded minutes after voting ended Tuesday, wounding 32 supporters of Kumaratunga's party, and two of her supporters were dragged from their vehicles on election eve and beaten to death.

At least 71 people were killed during the five-week campaign and on polling day, according to the independent Center for Monitoring Election Violence. The center asked election officials to annul votes in at least 365 of the country's 9,500 polling centers.

The 17-year civil war is the central political issue in this island nation off the southern tip of India. The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels have been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland since 1983. Their quest has left 63,000 people dead and displaced an additional 1 million people.

Elections Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayake had announced Wednesday that the final results would be delayed due to alleged voting irregularities around the country.

Dissanayake told reporters Thursday, after announcing the final vote, that he had annulled votes at 22 polling stations in the south and the entire Kilinochchi area, 275 kilometers (170 miles) north of the capital, Colombo.

"I cannot interpret this as a free and fair election," he told reporters. "But in places like India, we have seen worse."

Kumaratunga likely would begin to negotiate with ally parties in an effort to bring in minor parties and win support for a coalition government and avoid a hung Parliament.

The Marxist People's Liberation Front followed with an unprecedented 10 seats. The mainstream ethnic Tamil party, the Tamil United Liberation Front, won five seats. A former Tamil rebel group, the Eelam People's Democratic Party, won four seats.

Sri Lankans on Thursday anxiously awaited results in parliamentary elections after officials halted the vote count amid widespread reports of violence and vote rigging.

On Wednesday, with more than 90 percent of the votes counted, President Chandrika Kumaratunga's party appeared close to winning a majority of the seats. Her People's Alliance had campaigned on a pledge of political stability and putting an end to the country's 17-year civil war.

URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka : seen worse."

The People's Alliance had 48 percent of the vote, or 88 seats in the 225-member Parliament. The opposition United National Party had 39 percent and 72 seats.

Although the People's Alliance gained the most parliament seats in Tuesday's elections, it still needs at least 113 seats to form its own government. Out of 225 seats in Parliament, 196 are contested directly and 29 are allocated on the basis of the total votes for each party.

Elections Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayake announced that the final results would not be made public until Thursday. Dissanayake said he had already annulled the votes from 22 polling booths in the south and the entire Kilinochchi area about 275 kilometers (170 miles) north of Colombo.

Only the central Kandy district remained to be counted.

Shortly after the polls closed Tuesday, both the ruling People's Alliance and the opposition parties launched allegations of violence and vote rigging against one another.

The Commonwealth Secretariat said in a statement that its monitoring teams had observed and received reports of pre-election intimidation of voters and ballot stuffing.

At least 71 people were killed during the five-week campaign and on election day, according to the independent Center for Monitoring Election Violence. The monitoring center asked election officials to annul votes in at least 365 of the country's 9,500 polling centers.

The 17-year civil war is the central political issue on this island nation off the southern tip of India. Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels have been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland in the north and east since 1983. Their struggle has left 63,000 people dead and displaced an additional 1 million people.

Kumaratunga who lost the vision in one eye in a Tamil Tiger suicide bombing on Dec. 18 has sought to push through a new constitution granting more autonomy to the provinces in an effort to placate Tamils and sideline the rebels.

About 75 percent of the 12 million registered voters cast ballots in the country's 11th parliamentary elections. A record 5,477 candidates were running for the 225 parliamentary seats.

Kumaratunga, whose party had a one-seat majority in the last Parliament, was prevented from passing the constitution. She saw Tuesday's ballot as a referendum on the measure.

If the People's Alliance does not get a simple parliamentary majority, Kumaratunga may have to cobble together a coalition government with minor parties.

The government will have to woo the Marxist People's Liberation Front, which won an unprecedented eight seats, and the mainstream ethnic Tamil party, the United Liberation Front, which took five seats. A former Tamil rebel group, which has become a government ally, won four seats.

The streets of the capital were quiet Thursday as this island nation observed a Buddhist holiday. Armed soldiers and police stationed at checkpoints stopped and searched cars.

Several roads were closed to traffic as the body of former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike was to be taken to Parliament for lawmakers to pay their final respects.

Bandaranaike, who 40 years ago became the world's first **female** prime minister and was the mother of Kumaratunga, had a heart attack on Tuesday, shortly after casting her vote.

The Sinhalese majority make up about 76 percent of the population, and most are Buddhists. Tamils, who make up about 14 percent, are mainly Hindus. The remaining 10 percent are Muslims and other minorities.

URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka : seen worse."

On the Net:

Tamil rebels: <http://www.eelamweb.com>

Sri Lankan government: <http://www.priu.gov.lk>

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Only the central Kandy district remained to be counted, although there appeared to have been polling problems there as well.

Dissanayake held closed-door meetings with party leaders on Thursday to discuss the voting irregularities before he officially announced the final results.

Other politicians gathered at the Parliament building to pay their last respects to former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike. The three-time prime minister, who became the world's first ***female*** head of government in 1960, died shortly after casting her vote Tuesday.

A state funeral will be held for Bandaranaike, who was Kumaratunga's mother, at the family's ancestral home Saturday.

Shortly after the polls closed Tuesday, both the ruling People's Alliance and the opposition parties launched allegations of violence and vote-rigging against one another.

A bomb exploded minutes after voting ended Tuesday, wounding 32 supporters of Kumaratunga's party, and two of her supporters were dragged from their vehicles on election eve and beaten to death.

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The 17-year civil war is the central political issue of this island nation off the southern tip of India.

Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam rebels have been fighting for an independent Tamil homeland since 1983. Their struggle has left 63,000 people dead and displaced an additional 1 million people.

Kumaratunga who lost the vision in one eye in a Tamil Tiger rebel suicide bombing on Dec. 18 has sought to push through a new constitution granting more autonomy to the provinces in an effort to placate Tamils and sideline rebels.

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About 75 percent of the 12 million registered voters cast ballots in the country's 11th parliamentary elections. A record 5,477 candidates were running for 225 parliamentary seats.

URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka : seen worse."

Kumaratunga, whose party had a one-seat majority in the last Parliament, was prevented from passing the constitution. She saw Tuesday's ballot as a referendum on the measure.

Although the People's Alliance won the most seats in the Parliament elections on Tuesday, it still needs at least 113 seats to form its own government. Out of 225 seats in Parliament, 196 seats are contested directly and 29 are allocated on the basis of the total votes for each party.

If the People's Alliance does not get a simple majority, Kumaratunga may have to cobble together a coalition government.

The government will have to woo the Marxist People's Liberation Front, which won an unprecedented eight seats, and the mainstream ethnic Tamil party, the United Liberation Front, which took five seats. A former Tamil rebel group, which has become a government ally, won four seats.

The streets of the capital were quiet Thursday as this island nation observed a Buddhist holiday. Armed soldiers and police stationed at checkpoints stopped and searched cars.

Several roads were closed to traffic as the body of Bandaranaike was to be taken to Parliament. Politicians from all parties briefly put aside their differences and gathered for the ceremony. Kumaratunga, who rarely leaves her residential compound for fear of further assassination attempts, arrived by helicopter and shook hands with rivals and supporters.

Opposition leader Ranil Wickremesinghe and Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremanayaka shook hands and quipped.

"We're good friends and the election is over, the fighting stage is over," Wickremanayaka said, as both men laughed.

On the Net:

Tamil rebels: <http://www.eelamweb.com>

Sri Lankan government: <http://www.priu.gov.lk>

President Chandrika Kumaratunga's governing party won a majority of the vote in parliamentary elections, officials said Thursday, but failed to gain enough seats to form its own government.

Her seven-party People's Alliance coalition won 107 seats in the 225-member Parliament, according to final results. The opposition United National Party won 89 seats.

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Kumaratunga likely would begin to negotiate to bring in minor parties and win support for a coalition government and avoid a hung Parliament.

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Shortly after polls closed Tuesday, both the ruling People's Alliance and the opposition parties launched allegations of violence and vote-rigging against one another.

URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka : seen worse."

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Dissanayake told reporters Thursday, after announcing the final vote, that he had annulled votes at 22 polling stations in the south and the entire Kilinochchi area, 275 kilometers (170 miles) north of the capital, Colombo.

"I cannot interpret this as a free and fair election," he told reporters. "But in places like India, we have seen worse."

On Tuesday, a bomb exploded minutes after voting ended, wounding 32 supporters of Kumaratunga's party, and two of her supporters were dragged from their vehicles on election eve and beaten to death.

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President Chandrika Kumaratunga's coalition came out ahead in parliamentary elections, officials said Thursday, but failed to win the majority needed to form a government.

The seven-party People's Alliance won 107 seats in the 225-member Parliament, short of the 113 majority. The opposition United National Party won 89 seats in Tuesday's election, one of Sri Lanka's most violent and contentious.

Kumaratunga, known as a tough negotiator, now must begin talks with smaller parties to create a coalition government. She must do so while grieving for her mother, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, three-time prime minister and the world's first female leader, who died of a heart attack after casting her vote Tuesday.

Although Kumaratunga's alliance did not win a simple majority, the People's Alliance gained two more seats since the last Parliament. She also withstood harsh criticism from the country's powerful Buddhist monks and nationalists who frown on her attempts to grant greater autonomy to ethnic Tamil minority.

Kumaratunga campaigned on a pledge to stabilize the government and end the 17-year civil war with Tamil Tigers, rebels seeking an independent homeland for minority Tamils. The war has left 63,000 people dead and displaced 1 million people.

The Sinhalese majority make up about 76 percent of the population, and most are Buddhists. Tamils, who make up about 14 percent, are mainly Hindus. The remaining 10 percent are Muslims and other minorities.

"My feeling is that small parties will accept Kumaratunga's offer of positions in the government," said Jehan Perera, an analyst with the independent National Peace Council. "When they are offered actual positions, coupled with the promise to do better this time, her leadership and charm will be almost irresistible."

The first session of the country's 11th Parliament was scheduled to convene Wednesday.

Kumaratunga who lost vision in one eye in a Tamil Tiger rebel suicide bombing on Dec. 18 has sought to push through a new constitution granting more autonomy to the provinces in an effort to placate Tamils and sideline rebels.

Unable to pass the proposed constitution, the president saw Tuesday's ballot as a referendum on the measure. Any hope of securing that constitution now depends on the president's ability to win over the smaller Tamil and Muslim parties to gain the necessary six seats for a simple majority to form a government.

URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka : seen worse."

The Marxist People's Liberation front followed the two leading parties with an unprecedented 10 seats. The mainstream ethnic Tamil party, the Tamil United Liberation Front, won five seats. A former Tamil rebel group, Eelam People's Democratic Party, won four seats.

About 75 percent of the 12 million registered voters cast ballots in the elections. A record 5,477 candidates were running for 225 parliamentary seats.

Elections Commissioner Dayananda Dissanayake had announced Wednesday that the final results would be delayed due to alleged voting irregularities around the country. He spent the morning huddled with party leaders, listening to their allegations over vote rigging and demands that he annul votes in at least 47 polling stations.

Dissanayake told reporters Thursday, after announcing the final vote, that he had only annulled votes at 22 polling stations in the south and the entire Kilinochchi area about 275 kilometers (170 miles) north of the capital, Colombo.

"I cannot interpret this as a free and fair election," he told reporters. "But in places like India, we have seen worse."

Shortly after the polls closed Tuesday, both the ruling People's Alliance and the opposition parties launched allegations of violence and vote-rigging against one another.

A bomb exploded minutes after voting ended Tuesday, wounding 32 supporters of Kumaratunga's party, and two of her supporters were dragged from their vehicles on election eve and beaten to death.

At least 71 people were killed during the five-week campaign and on polling day, according to the independent Center for Monitoring Election Violence.

The streets of the capital were quiet Thursday as this island nation observed a Buddhist holiday. Armed soldiers and police stationed at checkpoints stopped and searched cars.

After failing to win enough parliamentary seats to form a government on its own, Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga's party labored Thursday to assemble a coalition government.

Her seven-party Peoples' Alliance claimed late Thursday to have won support from two minor parties for a joint government. Kumaratunga was to be sworn in as prime minister Friday, spokesman Sripata Suryarachchi said.

The People's Alliance won 107 of the 225 Parliament seats, but fell short of the 113 needed for a majority.

The opposition United National party won 89 seats in Tuesday's election, one of Sri Lanka's most violent and contentious ever.

On Thursday, two smaller parties and one independent member-elect of Parliament agreed to back the alliance, giving the coalition 116 seats, Suryarachchi said.

"We have worked out the numbers and we are going to form the government," he said. Parliament is scheduled to convene Wednesday.

Kumaratunga's ability to carry out a pledge to end 17 years of civil war hinges on her success with a new coalition government.

She campaigned on a promise to stabilize the government and bring an end to war with separatist **Tamil Tigers** who are seeking an independent homeland for minority Tamils. Some 63,000 people have died and 1 million have been displaced by fighting.

The president who lost vision in one eye in a Tamil Tiger suicide bombing on Dec. 18 has sought to push through a new constitution granting more autonomy to the provinces to placate Tamils and sideline rebels.

Her coalition, with a one-seat majority in the last Parliament, has been prevented from passing the constitution. She saw Tuesday's ballot as a referendum on the measure.

URGENT COLOMBO, Sri Lanka : seen worse."

The People's Liberation Front won an unprecedented 10 seats. The Marxists, who twice waged deadly armed rebellions against the government, announced in 1998 that it was reorganizing to win power through election not gunfire, and campaigned on a pledge to improve workers' rights.

The mainstream ethnic Tamil party, the Tamil United Liberation Front, won five seats. A former Tamil rebel group, Eelam People's Democratic Party, won four seats.

Final results were delayed because of allegations of voting irregularities, including claims of vote-rigging by both the ruling People's Alliance and opposition parties.

The elections were also marked by violence, with 71 people killed during the five-week campaign, and on Tuesday a bomb exploded minutes after voting ended, injuring 32 people. Two of Kumaratunga's supporters were beaten to death on the eve of elections.

The streets of Colombo were quiet Thursday, a Buddhist holiday. Armed soldiers and police stationed at checkpoints stopped and searched cars in the capital.

Several roads were closed to traffic as officials prepared to transport the body of Kumaratunga's mother, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, to Parliament. Bandaranaike, the world's first **female** prime minister, died shortly after casting her vote Tuesday.

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On the Net:

Tamil rebels: <http://www.eelamweb.com>

Sri Lankan government: <http://www.priu.gov.lk>

Load-Date: October 12, 2000

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ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

IPS-Inter Press Service

March 6, 1996, Wednesday

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Length: 1065 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, Mar. 6

Body

The on-going "clash of civilizations" between the United States and Asia is likely to be fuelled by the latest edition of the State Department's 1995 human rights report which offers little to cheer about across the Pacific.

The 1,500-page report, released by Secretary of State Warren Christopher today, finds Asian economies and free markets booming, but with a few notable exceptions relatively little respect for civil and political rights. It also finds abuses of labor rights and varying degrees of discrimination against women and girls throughout the region.

China, North Korea, and Burma are singled out as major human rights violators, but the State Department also finds fault with the performance of some economic stars, notably Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore.

Vietnam and Cambodia also get mixed reviews, while "significant" rights abuses persist in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and India, where the situation in Kashmir and Northeast is especially severe, according to the report.

The truly bright spots in the region, according to the report, are to be found in Taiwan, which is described as "close to completing its transition to a democratic, multiparty system" and South Korea where "problems remains in some areas," notably the use of national security laws against suspected dissidents.

The Philippines is also given relatively high marks for improved human rights performance due to a reduction in fighting between the government and insurgents and greater intolerance for abuses on the part of the public.

The report, which is submitted to Congress each year to help it make policy and aid decisions, reserves its harshest words for China and Burma.

"Although there was greater emphasis on legal reform (in China), by year's end almost all public dissent against the central authorities was silenced," the report starkly asserts.

Only two years ago, the administration, in justifying its de-linking of human rights conditions from China's preferential trade status, argued that increased trade and prosperity would bring improvements in Beijing's rights performance.

But the 1995 report reaches a somewhat different conclusion: "The experience of China in the past few years demonstrates that while economic growth, trade, and social mobility create an improved standard of living, they cannot by themselves bring about greater respect for human rights in the absence of a willingness by political authorities to abide by fundamental international norms."

ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

Despite this assessment, however, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor John Shattuck said the U.S. policy of "comprehensive engagement" will not change. "We do not believe that curtailment of trade or sanctions...would, in fact, enhance human rights in China," he said today during the report's release.

"We believe that economic growth has had a positive impact on human rights in many other parts of the world; certainly, that's the case in other parts of Asia, be it Taiwan, the Philippines, South Korea and other countries," he told reporters. "But economic growth is not, in and of itself, the ultimate sufficient condition for a full flowering of human rights."

Burma, according to the report, continues to be ruled by a "highly authoritarian military regime." Despite a "few potentially significant moves on the political front," notably the release from house arrest of opposition leader and Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, "the government's severe repression of human rights continued essentially unchanged."

The report also criticized the continuing practice by the army of forcing ordinary Burmese "on a massive scale (including women and children) to 'contribute' their labor, often under harsh working conditions on construction projects."

The Department similarly found little good to say about North Korea with which it concluded a path-breaking denuclearization agreement last year. The government, it said, "subjects its citizens to rigid controls" and denies them elementary human rights, according to the report.

The report on Vietnam says the country's rights performance continued "to be poor" during 1995 with the government continuing "its longstanding policy of not tolerating most types of public dissent and of prohibiting independent religious, political and labor organizations."

Neighboring Cambodia, whose coalition government came to power after U.N.-supervised elections two years ago, suffered a worsening of the human rights situation during 1995, notably through an increase in political intimidation and even summary killings by suspected government agents, according to the report.

But, it adds, the situation "continued to be better than during previous regimes."

Of the Southeast Asian states, Indonesia was the most harshly criticized, with the report noting "serious human rights abuses," including summary killings, disappearances, and torture, in East Timor, Aceh, and Irian Jaya.

It commended the government for prosecuting some of those responsible for these abuses, but criticized it for suppressing efforts to develop free trade unions.

In Singapore, the Department found no improvement or deterioration in the human rights situation. Similarly, in neighboring Malaysia, the government "continues arbitrarily to arrest and detain citizens without trial and to impose long-term restrictions on movement without due process hearings."

In Thailand, "police brutality continued to be a serious problem."

The record in South Asia was mixed during 1995. The report calls the human rights situation in Pakistan "difficult, particularly in light of ongoing clashes in Karachi between the Mohajir Quami Movement and security forces." The report also notes that child and bonded labor remain common, and that girls fell behind boys in basic measures of health care and education.

In India, serious human rights abuses, including summary executions, torture and rape, continue to be reported in Kashmir and other areas of secessionist activity, but notes "significant progress" in easing security laws and permitting the International Red Cross access to Kashmiri prisons.

In Sri Lanka, the report's mainly complaint is directed against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) insurgency and generally praises the government of President Chandrika Kumaratunga for improving the human rights performance of the security forces and to punish specific abuses.

ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

Load-Date: March 14, 1996

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IPS-Inter Press Service

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ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

Load-Date: March 16, 1996

End of Document

ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

IPS-Inter Press Service

March 6, 1996, Wednesday

Copyright 1996 IPS-Inter Press Service/Global Information Network

Length: 1065 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, Mar. 6

Body

The on-going "clash of civilizations" between the United States and Asia is likely to be fuelled by the latest edition of the State Department's 1995 human rights report which offers little to cheer about across the Pacific.

The 1,500-page report, released by Secretary of State Warren Christopher today, finds Asian economies and free markets booming, but with a few notable exceptions relatively little respect for civil and political rights. It also finds abuses of labor rights and varying degrees of discrimination against women and girls throughout the region.

China, North Korea, and Burma are singled out as major human rights violators, but the State Department also finds fault with the performance of some economic stars, notably Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore.

Vietnam and Cambodia also get mixed reviews, while "significant" rights abuses persist in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and India, where the situation in Kashmir and Northeast is especially severe, according to the report.

The truly bright spots in the region, according to the report, are to be found in Taiwan, which is described as "close to completing its transition to a democratic, multiparty system" and South Korea where "problems remains in some areas," notably the use of national security laws against suspected dissidents.

The Philippines is also given relatively high marks for improved human rights performance due to a reduction in fighting between the government and insurgents and greater intolerance for abuses on the part of the public.

The report, which is submitted to Congress each year to help it make policy and aid decisions, reserves its harshest words for China and Burma.

"Although there was greater emphasis on legal reform (in China), by year's end almost all public dissent against the central authorities was silenced," the report starkly asserts.

Only two years ago, the administration, in justifying its de-linking of human rights conditions from China's preferential trade status, argued that increased trade and prosperity would bring improvements in Beijing's rights performance.

But the 1995 report reaches a somewhat different conclusion: "The experience of China in the past few years demonstrates that while economic growth, trade, and social mobility create an improved standard of living, they cannot by themselves bring about greater respect for human rights in the absence of a willingness by political authorities to abide by fundamental international norms."

ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

Despite this assessment, however, Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor John Shattuck said the U.S. policy of "comprehensive engagement" will not change. "We do not believe that curtailment of trade or sanctions...would, in fact, enhance human rights in China," he said today during the report's release.

"We believe that economic growth has had a positive impact on human rights in many other parts of the world; certainly, that's the case in other parts of Asia, be it Taiwan, the Philippines, South Korea and other countries," he told reporters. "But economic growth is not, in and of itself, the ultimate sufficient condition for a full flowering of human rights."

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ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

Load-Date: March 19, 1996

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IPS-Inter Press Service

March 6, 1996, Wednesday

Copyright 1996 IPS-Inter Press Service/Global Information Network

Length: 1065 words

Dateline: WASHINGTON, Mar. 6

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ASIA-HUMAN RIGHTS: U.S. CRITIQUE FINDS LITTLE TO CHEER ABOUT

Load-Date: March 15, 1996

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Tamils 'prime suspects' in suicide bombing

The Independent (London)

May 3, 1993, Monday

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Section: INTERNATIONAL NEWS PAGE; Page 8

Length: 183 words

Body

COLOMBO (Reuter) - Sri Lankan police said yesterday they had found evidence linking the assassination of President Ranasinghe Premadasa with Tamil separatists. The director of the Police Crime Detection Bureau, Lionel Gunatillake, told a news conference that the **Tamil Tigers** were the prime suspects.

He said the suicide bomber, who may have been only 14 and who was beheaded by the blast, had a broken piece of a cyanide capsule embedded in his neck. Tamil rebels wear cyanide capsules around their necks to swallow in the event of capture.

The separatist rebels, who have fought for 10 years for their own homeland, have denied involvement.

Twenty-four people, including the president, died in the explosion on Saturday. Thirty-eight others were injured. The dead included seven police officers, civilian and party supporters.

Yesterday hundreds of people queued for hours to pay their last respects to Premadasa, known as "the common man's president". Many elderly **women** collapsed in tears when they reached his flag-draped coffin. But elsewhere firecrackers were set off to celebrate his death.

17 DIE IN ATTACK ON SINHALESE

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

March 5, 1988 Saturday

Late Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Pg. 18

Length: 180 words

Byline: Source: The Guardian

Body

COLOMBO, Friday: Seventeen villagers, including nine children and three women, were killed yesterday in the Trincomalee district of Sri Lanka.

Sixteen of the dead were Sinhalese, and one Tamil who worked for a Sinhalese family.

They were among nine Sinhalese families who lived in harmony with 400 Tamil families in a remote village just inside the Trincomalee district on the border of Anuradhapura.

The village is known only as "Unit One" and, according to Brigadier Denzil Kobbekaduwa, the Sri Lankan Co-ordinating Officer for the Trincomalee district, the two communities have lived there happily together since the 1950s.

He said the attackers had escaped and had not been positively identified. But he had no doubt that they were Tamil Tigers who did not want the two communities to live peaceably together.

The remaining 26 Sinhalese in the village fled in terror to a nearby Sri Lankan air force camp and are being temporarily housed there.

All Sri Lankan governments have sought to maintain control of Trincomalee port and its hinterland, which is in a predominantly Tamil area.

Load-Date: July 20, 2007

Sri Lankan rebels kill seven more civilians in border village

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

October 23, 1995, Monday, BC Cycle 06:32 Central European Time

Copyright 1995 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 135 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Suspected Tamil rebels shot and hacked to death seven more civilians, including women, in a village in southeastern Sri Lanka, bringing the death toll to 73 over the past three days, police said Monday. The rebels, armed with small arms and knives, attacked the villagers early Monday in Siyambalinduwa in the Monaragala district and set their houses on fire.

Six other civilians were injured in the attack. Rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) at dawn on Saturday massacred 66 civilians in three separate attacks in the eastern part of the country. The Siyambalinduwa village, about 325 kilometres southeast of Colombo, has been under rebel attacks for the past several years because it borders the eastern province where the LTTE usually carries out its raids on villagers. dpa
ad wp

Load-Date: October 27, 1995

End of Document

Indian supreme court acquits 19 accused in Rajiv assassination

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

May 11, 1999, Tuesday, BC Cycle 06:30 Central European Time

Copyright 1999 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 144 words

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

The Indian Supreme Court Tuesday acquitted 19 of the 26 people accused and sentenced to death by a lower court for the assassination of the former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

In its verdict on the accuseds' appeal against a designated court's judgement in the case, the country's highest court upheld the death penalty against four and reduced the sentence of three to life imprisonment.

The 26 accused, including five women, were said to be sympathizers or activists of the Sri Lankan separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

Gandhi was killed by a Sri Lankan Tamil woman suicide bomber while he was campaigning for his Congress Party in a parliamentary election on May 21, 1991.

Special judge V. Navaneetham who had sentenced the 26 to death held the LTTE and its leader, Veluppillai Prabhakaran, responsible for the assassination. dpa mvb jh

Load-Date: May 11, 1999

police arrest 45 rebel suspects in colombo

The Xinhua General Overseas News ServiceXinhua General News Service

SEPTEMBER 11, 1993, SATURDAY

Length: 148 words

Dateline: colombo, september 11; ITEM NO: 0911163

Body

police detectives have arrested 45 rebels suspected hard-core tamil militants, including five **women**, in colombo in search and cordon operations. the 45 suspects were identified to be members of the rebel liberation tigers of tamil eelam (**ltte**) among over 400 persons rounded up in the city by the crime detective bureau of police. all of them were living in colombo on the pretext of awaiting an opportunity to go abroad for employment, police said. some of the arrested suspects, found with possession of very sensitive documents, admitted they are in the intelligence wing of the **ltte**, one police officer said. investigations have revealed that almost all of the arrested have taken part in attacks against security forces in the north and east, where the rebel group has been fighting to set up a separate state of minority tamils during the past decade, the officer said.

Load-Date: September 12, 1993

End of Document

REBEL WOMEN SLAUGHTERED

COURIER-MAIL

August 1, 1995 Tuesday

Copyright 1995 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Length: 189 words

Body

KEYWORD-HIT Rebel women slaughtered COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels said yesterday that 128 women, including two suicide bombers, were killed in an abortive attack on four army bases on Friday after a "traitor" had tipped off the military. The Tigers' radio, broadcasting from the northern rebel stronghold of Jaffna, said 180 cadres were killed in Friday's assault in the north-east Welioya area, 128 of them women. QNPIt made no mention of dead children seen lying in rows in pictures taken by the Defence Ministry after the fighting. The armed forces scored their biggest victory over the Tamil Tigers in 12 years of war on Friday and accused the guerrillas of sacrificing young girls and boys in the front line. The army said the bodies of 182 Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam fighters were recovered but that the toll would rise. State radio said the Tiger toll was 500 after bodies strewn along the beaches were counted. Only one home guard and one soldier were killed in raids on which they had received a tip-off, the military said. Tiger radio said a traitor had tipped off the military, which is why they were ready.

Load-Date: October 1, 2003

End of Document

Tamils take to streets for support

The Sun Herald (Sydney, Australia)

August 20, 1995 Sunday

Late Edition

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Section: NEWS; Pg. 31

Length: 186 words

Byline: ROCHELLE TUBB

Body

MORE than 1,000 Sydney Tamils rallied in Martin Place yesterday before marching through the city to protest outside Parliament House.

Tamils of all ages, including **women** in traditional dress and children holding peace placards, were calling on Australia to support the end of Sri Lanka's military oppression of the Tamil nation in Sri Lanka.

Australasian Federation of Tamil Association spokesman Ana Pararajasingham said Sydney Tamils were hoping to persuade the Sri Lankan Government to seek a negotiated political solution to the conflict involving the Tamil people.

"Ten years ago we used to talk about the threat of genocide but now that is becoming a very real possibility," he said.

"Ten to 15 people are killed a day in this conflict and last month more than 100 were killed when a church was bombed.

"The Sri Lankan Government has stopped letting vaccines in for the infants and they have stopped the Red Cross from supplying food for the Tamil people."

Waving placards supporting the **Tamil Tigers** or "Freedom Fighters", the protesters listened to guest speakers Federal MP Laurie Ferguson and State MP Paul Zammit.

Graphic

ILLUS: PROTEST: Tamils call for end to military oppression. Picture: JOE CASTRO

Load-Date: July 23, 2007

Tamils take to streets for support

End of Document

SRI LANKA: SOCIAL PRICE OF LABOR EXPORTS RISING

IPS-Inter Press Service

August 2, 2002, Monday

Copyright 2002 IPS-Inter Press Service/Global Information Network

Length: 1081 words

Byline: By Feizal Samath

Dateline: COLOMBO, Aug. 2

Body

Thousands of young Sri Lankan women work hard in the Middle East to support their families back home, but what worries President Chandrika Kumaratunga most is that they leave behind a trail of social problems with few easy remedies.

"The case of the migrant worker is a complex issue and the victims -- often for life -- are innocent children," the Sri Lankan leader told IPS in a rare interview this week.

She said social problems like incest, adultery, child abuse and child neglect often have few remedies through politics and public policies, so "perhaps the answers are of a moral and spiritual nature".

But Kumaratunga, who was replying to written questions sent to her, noted that the increasing number of women in the expatriate workforce and their new earning power also made them a social segment with a lot of clout.

In recent months, trade unions backing migrant workers have been campaigning for voting rights for women abroad. Last month, the government further acknowledged their contribution to the economy by opening an exclusive lounge at the airport for them.

Kumaratunga agrees that female migrant workers, who represent the majority of the one million Sri Lankans working in the Middle East, leave behind a host of negatives like broken families, neglected children, alcoholic and unfaithful husbands and incest.

"There are no easy solutions," she said. "We have tried to educate the women about investing and saving. Many do invest in a home and education for their children. We should perhaps encourage the young and single to go as migrant workers rather than mothers."

She rejected a growing view in society that women should be restrained from working abroad as domestic workers particularly because of abuse by foreign employers and social upheaval at home, saying the government should not dictate to women.

Migrant workers remit more than one million dollars a year, the large quantum of foreign exchange for the country.

"We need to work with home governments to ensure proper safeguards for our women. Perhaps there is a role for NGOs and other voluntary organizations to assist our women who are abroad," she added.

SRI LANKA : SOCIAL PRICE OF LABOR EXPORTS RISING

The 57-year old president, now fighting the biggest political battle of her career having to work with a hostile opposition government, also spoke on a range of issues including the peace process between the government and Tamil Tiger rebels, education reforms and violence against women and children.

Kumaratunga, despite a bitter confrontation with some ministers in Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP) government and her own distrust of Tamil rebel leader Velupillai Prabhakaran, said she was prepared to talk peace with the rebel leader and was backing the government's peace initiatives wholeheartedly.

"I am prepared to negotiate with Mr. Prabhakaran of the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) on behalf of the country," said the president, who lost her eye in an assassination attempt by Tamil Tiger rebels two years ago.

"After all, I corresponded with him during our previous peace bid in 1995," she said, when asked whether she was prepared to sit at the same table with the rebel leader and discuss a political solution to end the 19-year long ethnic conflict.

The government and Tamil rebels are due to start peace talks in Thailand in August or September, and a ceasefire between the two sides that has been holding since December. More than 64,000 people have died in the bloody revolt for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka.

Since her ruling People's Alliance (PA) lost parliamentary polls in December 2001 to the UNP, Kumaratunga has had a lone battle in the Cabinet against allegations of corruption.

While facing political turmoil, she says she has a clear vision on the future of her teenage children -- they would not take to politics.

"I believe I have convinced and persuaded my children to pursue their careers and serve their communities through private rather than public life," she said, adding she had no regrets about her turbulent life, in which she lost both her father and husband to political assassins.

If her children -- both studying in British universities -- follow the advice of their mother, it would bring the curtain down on the Bandaranaike dynasty in politics, one of the most prominent political families in South Asia.

Kumaratunga's brother and sister are both in their mid to late 50s and are either unmarried or divorced.

Their father, Solomon Dias, was shot dead by a Buddhist monk when he was prime minister in 1959. Their mother Sirimavo survived longer and was prime minister for three different terms until her death from illness two years ago.

Kumaratunga's actor-turned-politician husband, Vijaya, was killed by suspected left-wing rebels in 1988.

The Bandaranaike family, along with the Gandhis in India and the Bhuttos in Pakistan, were the dominant political families that straddled the political spectrum in South Asia for close to half a century.

This is the first time that Kumaratunga has expressed a wish that her children should give a wide berth to politics.

"There has clearly been a heavy price my family and I have paid in the cause of public service and public office," the president said when asked whether she had regrets over being surrounded by security and not being able to spend time with her children.

"The constant vitriolic criticism directed at me is a soul-destroying character assassination that is almost as hard to bear and has been difficult on my children too, to have their mother foul-mouthed in the vilest manner," she added. "But this is part and parcel of public life in this country, especially if you are not part of the establishment."

Two weeks ago, the prime minister turned down a request by Kumaratunga to sack controversial Commerce Minister Ravi Karunanayake, who has been the president's bitterest critic in Cabinet.

SRI LANKA : SOCIAL PRICE OF LABOR EXPORTS RISING

But the president sent another letter citing powers under the constitution which gave her the right to appoint or dismiss ministers, putting the shaky seven-month co-habitation arrangement between the two opposing parties -- the People's Alliance and the United Nations Party -- in disarray.

Yet despite the acrimony, Kumaratunga says she is committed to working with the government on the peace process.

She suggested that it is necessary to lift the ethnic problem from the local political divide and make it a consensus policy, like the PA-UNP agreement on pursuing a market economy for Sri Lanka.

Load-Date: August 12, 2002

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SUMMIT IN NEW YORK: THE OVERVIEW;
U.N. MEETING ENDS WITH DECLARATION OF COMMON VALUES

The New York Times

September 9, 2000, Saturday, Late Edition - Final

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Distribution: Foreign Desk

Section: Section A;; Section A; Page 1; Column 6; Foreign Desk; Column 6;

Length: 1462 words

Byline: By BARBARA CROSSETTE

By BARBARA CROSSETTE

Dateline: UNITED NATIONS, Sept. 8

Body

Three days of brainstorming by the leaders of virtually all the world's nations ended tonight with a brave attempt to agree on a set of goals for the next millennium, and common values by which to govern.

It was not easy, but more than 150 leaders and few stand-ins tried to mesh the demands for universal democracy, the rule of law and human rights, including the equality of women -- all important to the developed world -- with demands by poor nations for better balance in the world's economy and more benefits from the rise of globalization.

"We will spare no effort to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for pursuing all of these priorities," a declaration issued today said. "The fight for development for all the peoples of the world; the fight against ignorance, poverty and disease; the fight against injustice; the fight against violence, terror and crime; and the fight against the degradation and destruction of our common home."

Few would expect the eight pages of ambitious pledges to be fulfilled, any more than citizens of any one country would believe the same promises from politicians. But the endorsement could not come from any higher authorities.

"This has been the mother of all summits," Kishore Mahbubani, Singapore's representative at the United Nations, said. "It also confirmed that the U.N. provides the only viable setting to develop a village council for a global village."

Stripped of the ceremony usually associated with events like this, the largest gathering of leaders ever held had in the end turned into an impromptu forum for examining the performance of the United Nations.

There were many who felt that the organization could be doing more to help the poor and keep the peace.

The final round of speeches was its own corrective, illustrating the passions that still run high on both sides of the divide between the north and south, the rich and poor. President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe was the most blunt.

"If the new millennium, like the last," Mr. Mugabe said, "remains an age of hegemonic empires and conquerors doing the same old things in new technological ways, remains the age of the master race, the master economy and

SUMMIT IN NEW YORK : THE OVERVIEW; U.N. MEETING ENDS WITH DECLARATION OF COMMON VALUES

the master state, then I am afraid we in developing countries will have to stand up as a matter of principle and say, 'Not again.' "

President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, taking a more optimistic line, said he thought that a lot of listening was going on and that the sheer number of government leaders gave the meeting "the sort of weight that it needs."

"Because of that kind of participation," Mr. Mbeki said in an interview, "it becomes possible to say what are the matters around which there is consensus in the world." He sees agreement that all nations have to deal with the challenge of world poverty and an understanding "that in fact the resources and the means are there within the world economy to deal with this matter."

"I think that's a very important conclusion, because it gives the possibility to say what is the next step we then take," he added.

That step, he said, is to reform the major international institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.

"Some people might say this is cynical," Mr. Mbeki said. "But if you look at the almost 60 Chinese whose bodies are found in the port of Dover in England, they traveled all the way from China, pushed out of China by poverty. So you can't sit in the United Kingdom and say we're insulated from poverty in China because it's far away. When those bodies land at the doorstep, then you know that you actually are not insulated from that poverty."

In a week of meetings that brought together not only political leaders, but also corporate executives, religious figures and all varieties of protestors, many more events were outside the General Assembly hall than in it. At roundtables, government leaders exchanged ideas more informally than in set speeches.

Secretary General Kofi Annan met dozens of leaders privately to discuss situations confronting the United Nations around the world. At least 185 meetings between government leaders took place at United Nations headquarters, to add to the dozens of others held in hotels and diplomatic missions around New York.

About 85 nations signed or ratified a total of nearly 300 treaties and conventions. The most attention was given to two conventions, one that bars children younger than 18 from participation in armed conflict and the other a prohibition on the sale or use of children, particularly for sex or pornography.

A memorial to child soldiers killed, wounded, missing or taken prisoner of war on several continents was announced at Unicef, the United Nations children's fund. An aluminum slab inscribed with the names of scores of children, the memorial will travel around the United States to spread awareness of the more than 300,000 children thought to be fighting in wars in 30 countries. Many are forcibly conscripted or abducted by rebels of the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, the **Tamil Tigers** of Sri Lanka and several groups in Colombia.

Inside the iron fence that separated the people riding in limousines from the ones who were swamped by the traffic jams that the motorcades left in their wakes, the United Nations headquarters groaned a little, too. A 50's-era building with vintage elevators and escalators designed for 51 member nations whose leaders did not travel with small armies, the complex is under increasing strain, now with 189 member nations. It was 188 until this week, when the flag of Tuvalu (population 10,000) was raised.

New York will have a chance on Sunday to bask in some gratitude for shouldering the inconvenience and expense of security, blocked intersections, intrusive motorcades and booked-up restaurants caused by all of the high-level caucusing. Windows on both sides of the Secretariat Building, the glass box on the East River, will be lighted to spell out, "Thank you, N.Y." Mr. Annan, who must not have left the building very often, thanked New Yorkers today for their "courtesy, understanding and support."

A spokesman for the meeting, Therese Gasteau, said today that 8,000 delegates and 5,500 journalists swelled the ranks of 4,500 Secretariat employees who run the United Nations. The final tally of leaders included 100 presidents or other heads of state, including the president of Switzerland, which is not a United Nations member; 47 other

SUMMIT IN NEW YORK : THE OVERVIEW; U.N. MEETING ENDS WITH DECLARATION OF COMMON VALUES

government leaders; 3 crown princes; and a few vice presidents, deputy prime ministers and some "high ranking officials," a category that included Yasir Arafat.

United Nations officials, especially the protocol and security staffs, have abundant experience handling plumed personalities and ruffled feathers, so there were no major diplomatic incidents that anyone could think of today. There was only that glitch in the group picture, which showed a few more faces than expected. Most of them were quickly identified as invited extras. But one, at first known officially as "the interloper," was not. Fred Eckhard, Mr. Annan's spokesman, spoke today of a diplomatic decision not to put a name to the face, but the man in the upper left corner was Count Carlo Marullo di Condojanni, of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, which is not a member of the United Nations..

Outside a church in Harlem on Thursday night, Mr. Mugabe was served with papers from a suit in federal District Court in Manhattan that complains of widespread abuse of power before parliamentary elections this year in Zimbabwe. The lead plaintiff, Adella Chiminya Tachiona, says in the suit that her husband, Tapfuma, was killed on April 15 by members of Mr. Mugabe's governing party under his direction, according to Theodore M. Cooperstein, a lawyer for the plaintiffs.

While leaders dined in hotel suites, ballrooms and banquet rooms, many others, from United Nations officials to New York City police officers, headed for the United Nations cafeteria.

The run on the cafeteria meant long days for Michael Friend, who manages most of the building's eating and drinking places. He and his cooks had to show up by 4 a.m. to fire up the breakfast grills, squeeze the oranges and prepare for the daily attack on the espresso corner.

At the sandwich counter, Elaine Rivas and Nicky Glasgow said they were making 500 sandwiches a day instead of the usual 200. The summit meeting ate its way through 3,000 pounds of chicken, 2,000 pounds of beef, 300 pounds of pasta and 100 gallons of tomato sauce.

Mr. Friend took a philosophical approach. "I think of those people in their offices moving a pile of papers from one box to another," he said of the work going on upstairs. "What do they have to show for it? Here people are happy. People are fed."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Graphic

Photo: With so many world leaders at the United Nations for the summit meeting, about 85 countries took the opportunity to sign or ratify a total of nearly 300 treaties or conventions. Here, Foreign Minister Ismail Cem of Turkey, seated, signed treaties dealing with sex discrimination and the rights of children. (Marilynn K. Yee/The New York Times)(pg. A4)

Load-Date: September 9, 2000

Rebels claim responsibility for attack on naval craft in Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

September 21, 1994, Wednesday, BC Cycle 17:21 Central European Time

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Section: International News

Length: 157 words

Dateline: Colombo, Sept 21

Body

Tamil rebels in Sri Lanka have claimed responsibility for an attack on a naval craft off the northwestern coast in which at least 27 naval personnel were reported killed, civilian sources said Wednesday.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) said one of their **women** suicide squad cadres was involved in the attack and had captured the captain of the naval craft which was blown up at midnight Monday in the Mannar district.

Analysts believe that the rebels may have carried out the attack to show their strength and strengthen their position for bargaining with the government.

The deputy minister of defence, Anuruddha Ratwatte, was quoted by state-run radio as saying that the government would continue its peace initiatives despite the attack.

The **LTTE** has insisted that a ceasefire should be declared in the north and eastern parts of the country before any negotiations, but the military is against such moves. dpa vc

Load-Date: September 21, 1994

What's

THE BRISTOL POST

February 7, 1998

EP FIRST EDITION

Copyright 1998 Bristol United Press

Section: Pg.2/ 3

Length: 194 words

Body

Paddington Bear - he's 40 year's old this year, and no crows' feet in sight.

Thomas Pescod, the new Cap'n Bird's Eye.

Actor John Hower, 76, who's played the salty old sea dog since the Titanic went down, is being put out to trawl.

Prince Charles in Sri Lanka, braving the threat of the Tamil Tigers. It's unlikely however that he'll pop to see '2001' author Arthur C Clarke, who's doubtless seen the future and wished he hadn't.

Red hot actress Helen Baxendale of Cardiac Arrest fame, now to star in sitcom giant Friends at 60,000 an episode.

Richard Branson (when isn't he hot?) who wins his bitter libel case against Camelot boss Guy Snowden.

Simone Bendix - the new woman in the Gold Blend coffee ads. She plays a sexy photographer with coffee breath.

What's

Saddam Hussein - not that liberals and women's peace camps would agree. Just misunderstood, they say.

Brian Harvey from pop group East 17 - he was fined 1,000 and more than 2,000 costs for assaulting a photographer outside Stringfellow's nightclub in London. He maintained his innocence and reckons it all stems from his comments about ecstasy last year, which were all "taken out of context.

Yeah, right.

Load-Date: October 20, 1998

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

SUNDAY MAIL (QLD)

November 26, 1995 Sunday

Copyright 1995 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Length: 1555 words

Byline: GEORGE A

Body

KEYWORD-HIT

Sampling the

raw of

the Sri

Lankan lion

The good, the

bad, the ugly of

war-torn island

Despite the escalating war, Sri Lanka is still drawing tourists.

ADRIAN GEORGE of the South China Morning Post travelled extensively around the island, keeping notes of some of the more memorable aspects of his journey

To read that war has begun where your plane is about to land can concentrate the mind. The previous day, the **Tamil Tigers** had broken a truce and attacked a naval base at Trincomalee, killing 12 and wounding 60 Sinhalese.

I looked round the plane, but no one seemed particularly concerned: Sri Lankans were chatting and eating, tourists drinking, an English cricket team playing the phlegmatic card games of "rain stopped play".

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

Perhaps they didn't know; perhaps they were used to it. The war has
QNP

been off and on for the past 12 years . . . 50,000 dead.

Colombo. Bright sunlight, black shadows.

The trees are astonishing _ all shapes, all varieties _ palms and
blossoms are splattered with crows. Japanese cars, bullock carts,
luridly decorated trucks, stray cows.

A drunken buffet of architecture _ colonial, modern, seedy,
ludicrous and sad _ image houses with great painted Buddhas,
red-striped mosques, a neoclassical Parliament, a Roman church like a
miniature St Peter's
and Hindu temples.

I stepped into the darkness of one temple.

Inside the great smoke-
blackened hall were more, smaller temples, individual to the
divinities.

In one were two prostrate worshippers and a near-naked, wild-haired
priest performing a service with flowers, bells and water, swaying and
chanting in clouds of incense _ the rites of the oldest religion in the
world.

Outside in the street, a snake charmer, more reptilian than his
charge, was waiting for me.

G IGGLING, he performed his magic trick _ m aking an egg disappear,
he then lunged forward to my crotch . . . abracadabra, the egg
reappeared out of the bottom of my trouser leg. The crowd was
hysterical with glee.

And then the rain came.

People sheltered in the roots of banyan trees like prisoners in
jails.

In the evening, I went for a walk along the seafront, where a thin

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

man wearing a baseball cap and sarong sat with his back against the wall, grinning cheerfully.

A creature of darkness sidled up.

"Excuse me, sir, what you want?" he whispered.

"Girls? Nice small, young girls?"

I carried on walking.

"Boys? Young boys?"

I turned into the Galle Face Hotel, "the oldest hotel in Asia", where guests have included the Aga Khan, Nixon, Prince Philip et al.

I sat in the bar _ a lovely Somerset Maugham affair, open to the sea and with ceiling fans and rattan furniture _ and drank too much arrack before walking back to my hotel.

The man in the baseball cap was still grinning. Actually, he was dead.

SATURDAY: The early morning drive north-east to Polonnaruwa was delectable _ the countryside luscious with rivers and paddy fields.

We stopped at a rest house for breakfast _ hoppers, a delicious form of pancake, and fish curry _ and watched the water buffalo as we drank from a decapitated coconut.

POLONNARUWA is one of the great ancient sites of Sri Lanka, its capital from the 11th to the 13th century.

It is a holy site, and one feels it _ the air heavy with incense from cinnamon trees.

In the extensive park, temples and pagodas are being cleared and restored after eons of neglect in the jungle

.

Among these mysterious glories, a 10-metre Buddha, carved from the rock, lies on his side: his final sleep.

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

I was back at the main road when I heard the sirens _ a long
cortege of ambulances was bringing back the dead and wounded from a
Tiger ambush
just 20km up the road.

Trouble in paradise.

I asked my driver if he knew about the war. He did. His soldier
brother had been killed by Tamils last year.

It was dusk as we drove towards Habarane, a small village centrally
placed for the main ancient city sites, and thus endowed with hotels.

"Where is the war zone?" I asked the driver.

"Here," he answered.

"Are you scared?" I asked.

"Yes."

In the distance there was groaning thunder; lightning flashed. At
least, I hoped that was what it was.

Our hotel consisted of luxurious cabins in a forest setting. No war
here.

There was a pool and a large restaurant where gargantuan northern
Europeans towered over their delicate hosts and lumbered around the
buffet tables, piling their plates indiscriminately with food from both
East and West.

It was said of Ceylon in the 19th century by the Bishop Hever:

"Every prospect pleases, only man is vile."

SUNDAY: North to Anuradhapura.

We were waved through Tiger-trap roadblocks: "Tourists are not a
target."

Gold-pinnacled shrines the size of great pyramids, reservoirs and a
spider's web of irrigation canals remain from one of the most
remarkable of civilisations.

IT WAS abandoned in the 10th century and swallowed by the

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

omniverous jungle, until its rediscovery in 1820.

Within these holy sites stands a bo tree tended by an uninterrupted succession of guardians for 2300 years.

The oldest tree known to the world, it was brought here from Bodh Gaya in India, and is said to be a cutting from the tree beneath which Buddha himself reached enlightenment.

We had lunch in a roadside restaurant _ rice and wild pig ""caught in the jungle" _ before moving on to Sigiriya

Sigiriya is a most glorious folly, an immense red monolith 200m high, like a giant tent peg hammered into the wilderness.

In the fifth century, it was turned into an impenetrable fortress by King Kasyapa, the deranged son of the King of Anuradhapura. He killed his father and, to escape the vengeance of his brother, retreated to this mountain top, where he lived in splendour for 11 years before unwisely coming down to fight.

At the second terrace, I saw the two monumental lion's paws _ all that was left of a gigantic sculpture lion, its mouth open, through which only a fool would ascend to the very top of the rock.

There I saw the remains of the gardens, the swimming pools, the dancers' terraces, the stone throne and the outlines of Kasyapa's palace.

MONDAY: Nature is unnaturally lovely in ""the garden of Buddha".

T REES already glorious are garlanded wi th pink bougainvillea, as though decorated for the poya festival of the full moon.

We drove up the winding road to the old mountain kingdom of Kandy and stopped at a shop selling spices, herbal remedies, Ayurvedic medicine.

""If you like my shop, you must see my backside."

I hesitated, but she led me around the side to the back garden,

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

where I was given samples to sniff and taste of tamarind, betel and cardamom.

"We have very good number-one top spices."

She looked at me smiling.

"Cure baldness, sir, increase virility

."

TUESDAY: "Little England" is 2000m up in the mountains, in a landscape that more closely resembles Scotland or the Lake District _ there are fir trees here, and cool mists drift over the hillsides and valleys, where tea plantations follow their folds like a viridescent sari dropped from the sky.

At the top of the mountain is the British tea planters' town of Nuwara Eloiya, with its gardens, Edwardian architecture _ and the Hill

Club.

The Hill Club is rather odd: a gravel drive, kempt lawns, topiary peacocks and a Tudorish, baronial mansion built in 1876.

A gentleman's club (one may have temporary membership), it has an austere interior with beamed ceilings, wooden echoing floors, walls from which hunting trophies _ deer, water buffalo and a leopard _ glassily stare down.

At supper, the Hill Club waiters, wearing white gloves, served

"English" food _ cauliflower soup, goulash and butterscotch pudding.

Guests must be "properly" dressed.

I had coffee and brandy before a roaring fire in a soft, chintzy, English lounge.

I WENT up to my bedroom, and a servant leaped from the shadows to thrust a hot-water bottle into my hands.

I wouldn't have been surprised to have found a teddy bear on my pillow.

WEDNESDAY: The Tamil tea ladies were going to work on the

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

plantations

.

Their baskets hung down their backs, supported by a strap worn around the forehead.

I drank some toddy at a liquor stall. It was made from fermented coconut sap.

It tastes disgustingly of its origin. The tea workers drink it to blur their existence.

We drove past spectacular waterfalls towards Adam's Peak, the holy mountain, on whose summit is a footprint of either Buddha or the Hindu god Shiva, or (for the Muslims) Adam when he was expelled from paradise, or (for the Christians) St Thomas. All faiths are accommodated and respected

.

THURSDAY: From my hotel balcony in Colombo, I watched the lightning dance on the Indian Ocean.

The town was alive with rumours that the Tigers had 20 suicide bombers, lurking with intent, pregnant with explosives.

During dinner that night, there was a massive bang outside the restaurant, and the diners looked at each other and decided that this time it was thunder _ it's so difficult to tell in the tropics.

On the road outside, a Japanese car slithered sideways through deep, muddy water into a bullock cart.

Animal life _ the symbol of the Sinhalese people is the lion.

In legend, the race began when a **female** ancestor absent-mindedly copulated with a lion.

The minority Tamil people call their guerrilla army ""Tigers".

Lions and Tigers _ fighting over the beautiful teardrop of Sri Lanka.

SAMPLING THE RAW OF THE SRI LANKAN LION

In reality, there have never been either
lions or tigers in Sri Lanka, only leopards.

ABOVE: The fortress of Sigiriya built in the fifth century, the
glorious folly of a deranged prince. BELOW: Where it is

Graphic

PICS OF THE FORTRESS OF SIGIRIYA IN SRI LANKA AND A MAP OF THE AREA

Load-Date: October 1, 2003

End of Document

THE NEWS IN BRIEF

Christian Science Monitor (Boston, MA)

November 15, 1995, Wednesday

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Section: THE NEWS IN BRIEF; Pg. 2

Length: 1449 words

Byline: Compiled by Cynthia Hanson, Abraham T. McLaughlin, and Peter Nordahl

Body

The US

Federal workers - from Embassy staff in Egypt to District of Columbia garbage collectors to White House butlers - were sent home yesterday. Despite a last-ditch morning meeting, White House and GOP congressional leaders were unable to strike a compromise. President Clinton apparently did not accept the GOP's Monday-night offer to drop a Medicare increase in return for agreement on a plan to balance the budget in seven years. Also, Clinton cut short his planned trip to Japan this weekend in order to deal with the budget. House Democratic leader Richard Gephardt said Monday the shutdown could last several days; but Speaker Gingrich said there was a "fair chance" for an agreement yesterday. (Story, Page 1; Editorial, Page 20.)

In a sign of progress in Dayton, Ohio, Secretary of State Christopher was to drop by Bosnian peace talks there yesterday on his way to Japan. But "we still have a long way to go to reach an agreement," a State Department spokesman said. The main stumbling block: whether Sarajevo will be partly controlled by Bosnian Serbs or will be a unified city. Separately, Speaker Gingrich and Senator Dole sent a letter to Clinton Monday warning that congressional support for sending US peace-enforcing troops to Bosnia is "virtually nil." They said Clinton still needs to show the move is critical to US interests, well-defined, achievable, and the best available option. (See also World In Brief.)

Shuttle Atlantis and space station Mir were set for a 245-mile-high linkup today. Atlantis was to attach a 9,000-pound docking bay to Mir that will make future linkups easier and safer. Today's maneuver is thought to be good practice for the tougher moves still to come as NASA starts building the international space station Freedom.

The search continued for Joe Waldholtz, campaign treasurer for his wife, Rep. Enid Waldholtz. Utah state GOP leaders had apparently been warning Mrs. Waldholtz that the \$ 1.8 million she spent on her 1994 campaign was suspect. The FBI is investigating. Mr. Waldholtz disappeared Saturday in Washington.

Sony Corp. will start selling its own line of personal computers with Intel circuitry next fall, the firm said Monday. Also, IBM chairman Louis Gerstner said at the Comdex computer show in Las Vegas that his firm is jumping into "network-centered computing" - a system in which relatively simple, low-cost personal computers rely on high-speed networks and high-power central computers to store most software and perform most computing tasks. Also, Intuit Inc. said it will soon offer on-line banking through America Online, the popular subscriber network.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF

Hate crimes reported to police declined in 1994, the FBI said Monday. Some 5,852 incidents were reported in 1994 compared to 7,684 in 1993. As before, about 60 percent of hate crimes were motivated by racial bias. Religious and homosexual bias are also common motivators for the crimes.

A tax cut could be in voters' pockets just weeks before next year's election, according to a tentative plan by congressional Republicans. A deal struck by House-Senate negotiators, due to be ratified by the two chambers this week, would make a \$ 500-per-child credit retroactive to Oct. 1, 1995. The refunds would be mailed out Oct. 1, 1996.

More than 500 cases of US service personnel missing in Vietnam will never be fully resolved "regardless of any future effort," the Pentagon said Monday in its first formal acknowledgement that some cases have so little information as to make them impractical to pursue. But after an individual review of all Vietnam-War-era MIA cases, the US will continue to follow leads for almost 1,500 missing servicemen and women.

A plot to blow up civil rights groups, welfare offices, abortion clinics, and gay bars came to light as self-described prophet Willie Ray Lampley, his wife Cecelia, and John Baird were charged Monday in Muskogee, Okla. One other person is sought in connection to the antigovernment plot.

The World

FBI agents headed to Saudi Arabia today to help investigate the bombing of a US training facility that killed five Americans and one Filipino. A little-known group, Islamic Change Movement, and the previously unknown Tigers of the Gulf claimed responsibility. Meanwhile, the Clinton administration said the incident won't weaken its resolve to keep US forces in Saudi Arabia, but security at US military sites will be improved. Middle East analysts suggested Monday the attack was in response to Saudi Arabia's heavy-handed policy toward political opponents.

Two Bosnian Serbs indicted for war crimes will keep their posts despite US pressure to remove them, the Bosnian Serb news agency reported yesterday. But sources close to the Bosnian Serb leadership confirmed that Serbian President Milosevic is pressing Bosnian Serb leader Karadzic and General Mladic to leave their posts once a peace deal is sealed. (See also US In Brief.) The Yugoslav war crimes court rejected most pretrial defense motions from Bosnian Serb Dusan Tadic - the only suspect in custody of 52 so far indicted. His is to be the first international war crimes trial since the Nuremberg and Tokyo tribunals.

Brazil and Venezuela Tuesday were the latest to withdraw envoys from Nigeria to protest the execution of nine minority rights activists, including author Ken Saro-Wiwa. The US threatened further sanctions Monday; South Africa barred Nigeria from an African soccer tournament; and Germany froze development aid. In a tit-for-tat retaliation, Nigeria withdrew its envoys from abroad. (Editorial, Page 20.)

Acting Israeli Prime Minister Peres promised yesterday Israel would not delay handing over West Bank lands to Palestinian self-rule. Peres's handover of the West Bank town of Jenin Monday was a week ahead of schedule. And Peres and his right-wing rival Benjamin Netanyahu agreed Monday to restore "restraint and civility" to the bitter land debate. (Opinion, Page 19.)

The main political headquarters of the Tamil Tigers was captured by Sri Lankan forces outside Jaffna, civilians arriving in the northern town of Vavuniya said yesterday. At least 1,800 people have been killed in the month-long offensive.

South Korea's probe into ex-president Roh Tae Woo's slush funds yesterday delved into funding for the 1992 presidential election won by Kim Young Sam. Also, in an effort to mend relations, Japanese Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama apologized to South Korea for Japan's early-1900s colonial rule of the country. (Related story, Page 6.)

Talks among nations of the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum about putting free-trade principles into action moved closer to agreement yesterday, two days before APEC's annual summit in Osaka, Japan.

THE NEWS IN BRIEF

Rescuers continued to search yesterday for hundreds of foreign trekkers stranded in the Himalayas by heavy snowfall. By midday, helicopters had plucked 477 people, including 178 foreigners, from the area. And an avalanche death toll increased to 49 when rescuers found seven more bodies.

A group of senior Pakistani military officers has been plotting an Islamic revolution to overthrow the government, Defense Minister Aftab Shaban Mirani said yesterday. The allegations came more than a month after the arrest of as many as 36 Army officers on suspicion of trying to stage a coup.

Etcetera

Humans are wiping out the world's plants and animals at "an alarming rate," according to a UN-sponsored report released yesterday. The Global Biodiversity Assessment said over 30,000 species are now endangered.

Wendy's dad wants all children to have fathers and mothers. Dave Thomas, who named his hamburger chain after his daughter, is himself adopted. Now, with help from first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Thomas has announced a foundation to help find homes for children without parents.

Scientists at the University of California have revived a 1,288-year-old seed from China. It's a relic from a lotus crop cultivated by Buddhists long ago. Researchers hope to discover the secrets of its longevity.

Credit Card Satisfaction

A recent survey of credit-card holders found that quality of the billing and payment process, card acceptance, and speed of approval are more important to consumers than low interest rates and annual fees. Of 21 major credit card issuers rated, the following scored highest.

1. AT&T
 2. Discover
 2. Household Bank
 3. Bank of New York
 4. Bank One
 4. Citibank
 5. First Union National
- J.D. Powers and Associates (Agoura Hills, Calif.)

" They're entitled to be happy, and we are entitled to be content because they are happy. Their happiness is not our problem. It is our promise.

- Prime Minister Shimon Peres, on Israel's handing over of the West Bank town of Jenin to Palestinians.

Graphic

THE NEWS IN BRIEF

PHOTOS: 1) Trying to catch snowflakes on his tongue, Adam Fulkersin of Bloomsburg, Pa., enjoys a storm that dumped more than 2 inches of snow on the area Monday., DAVID J. MAIALETTI/AP; 2) Sheik Mahfoudh Nahnah, a moderate Algerian Islamic activist, is a candidate in Algeria's presidential elections tomorrow. Muslim rebels are trying to disrupt the elections by increasing bomb attacks., MAHFOUDH NAHNAH/AP; 3) Kristina Bischoff holds Miss Greeny at her home in Denmark. Cat experts are at a loss to explain why the kitten was born with green fur., ALEX HUTZELSIDER/AP. Map, Nepal., DAVE HERRING - STAFF

Load-Date: November 18, 1995

End of Document

233 killed in Tigers attack

THE AUSTRALIAN
March 7, 1997, Friday

Copyright 1997 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: WORLD; Pg. 8

Length: 168 words

Body

COLOMBO: A Tamil Tiger attack on an army base in eastern Sri Lanka yesterday left at least 233 dead on both sides, defence officials and State radio said.

Dozens of gunmen from the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) pulverised the Vavunativu military camp in a pre-dawn mortar attack.

AFP

The bodies of 68 soldiers and two officers were recovered while ground troops confirmed killing at least 160 Tiger guerrillas at the army base, officials said.

Among the casualties were two **women** soldiers killed when a mortar bomb hit brigade headquarters at Vavunativu. Several weapons had been stolen.

The camp did not fall to the Tigers though. And the Defence ministry said two key **LTTE** leaders, the head of the Tigers' "Beirut Base" jungle hideout and a bodyguard to the region's top rebel leaders, were among those killed.

The fighting ended a two-month lull in major rebel attacks in the eastern province and came barely two weeks after troops wrested control of a key highway in the north-west.

AFP

Load-Date: March 1, 2002

I WAS SHOT AND NEARLY BLINDED. BUT I WON'T HANG UP MY FLAK JACKETYET

The Sun

April 25, 2001

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Section: INTERVIEW; MARIE COLVIN; COVER STORY

Length: 1499 words

Body

WAR CORRESPONDENT MARIE RECALLS MOMENT SHE WAS HIT

MARIE COLVIN has chosen a job which constantly puts her life in danger. As a war reporter, the 45-year-old American is one of only a handful of women who work on the frontline. She has bravely covered some of the world's most dangerous troublespots, including the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, Chechnya and Zimbabwe.

Last week, on an assignment in Sri Lanka, the award-winning Sunday Times correspondent was shot and wounded by government troops. Mistaken for a patrol from the rebel Tamil Tiger organisation, Colvin and her group were fired on and she was hit in the head by grenade shrapnel. Here, from her hospital bed in New York, Marie describes her incredible escape.

IT was 10pm, on the forward defence line of the Sri Lankan Army at Parayanlankulam, about 3 1/2 miles from the Madhu road junction.

I was lying in an open field with a clump of tall weeds for cover. The night was pitch black.

Every five minutes or so a flare, fired from the nearby Sri Lankan Army base, seemed to expose every blade of grass. Advancing soldiers intermittently raked the field with automatic weapons fire.

I thought of how I came to be here.

A week earlier I had secretly entered the Vanni, a 2,000sq mile area of northern Sri Lanka. It had been the refuge of the rebel Tamil Tigers since 1995. The Sri Lankan government bans journalists from travelling there.

I had travelled through villages in the Vanni and found an unreported humanitarian crisis - people starving, international aid agencies banned from distributing food, no mains electricity, no telephone service, few medicines, no fuel for cars, water pumps or lighting. I had filed the story and had been trying to leave the Vanni to return to the government-controlled south for three days.

Each night I tried to leave, guided by local Tamils. But each time they decided it would be too risky to cross army lines.

Monday night was meant to be third time lucky.

"Tonight, you will be in my father's house sipping milky tea," the leader of the group said.

I WAS SHOT AND NEARLY BLINDED. BUT I WON'T HANG UP MY FLAK JACKETYET

The plan was to reach his family's house in the government-controlled area that night. I had a last cigarette as the sun went down.

There would be no smoking, talking or even coughing as we walked the next seven miles to sanctuary.

We trekked single file along narrow jungle trails and waded waist deep round the edges of a lake, eyeing the lights of an army base on its far edge.

At about 8pm, we crept through dark scrub about half a mile from the road. We waited crouching in a marsh, letting the mosquitoes bite because slapping could alert a soldier.

I took off my shoes to walk more quietly. At a signal from the leader, we followed him to the road. We negotiated our way through barbed wire on both sides of the road and seemed safely across. We were running through the last, dark field for the jungle ahead when the silence was broken by the thunder of automatic weapons fire about 100 yards to the right.

I dived down and began crawling for some cover. For a few minutes, someone was crawling on top of me - protection or panic, I don't know. Then I was alone, behind weeds.

A tree was ten yards away but it seemed too far. The shooting went on and on, coming from an army post nobody had seen.

The shooting stopped. There had not been a sound from my side. I could not tell where anyone was.

I had a few mad moments of thinking it was over, I had survived. But I knew this was not true. We had been spotted and the army would think this was a Tamil Tiger patrol and would come after us.

I lay there for half an hour under the penetrating glare of the flares, worried that my white skin would reveal my hiding place.

I just wanted to lie still and wait for it all to go away.

I had three options. I could crawl away. But if one soldier had night vision goggles, I would be the only moving object on the field and would be shot.

If I was not spotted, I would still be alone in the jungle with no shoes. If I lay here until the soldiers stumbled on me, they would shoot first. If I shouted and identified myself as a journalist they might shoot anyway.

Bursts of gunfire began across the road about half a mile away. The search-and-destroy patrols had come out.

If I didn't yell now they would stumble on me and shoot. I began to shout.

"Journalist! Journalist! American! USA!"

A soldier sighted on the sound and fired.

The shot hit me with an impact that stunned me with pain, noise and a sense of defeat. Blood was pouring from my eye and mouth on to the dirt. I felt a profound sadness that I was going to die.

Then I thought it was taking an awful long time to die if I was really shot in the head (it was actually shrapnel). So I started yelling again. "English! Anyone speak English?"

There were more shots and lots of hysterical shouting from the soldiers. It seemed that I would die anyway, so I just kept shouting.

Searching for a word that non-English speakers might recognise, I fixed on "Doctor" and shouted over and over that I needed one. Finally a voice screamed in English: "Stand up, stand up."

I WAS SHOT AND NEARLY BLINDED. BUT I WON'T HANG UP MY FLAK JACKET YET

I stood up slowly, hands in the air, saying: "Don't shoot, American"...and whatever else I could think of just so that they would keep hearing a foreign voice. "Take off your jacket," came the voice. I dropped my blue jacket and stood straight up, hands in the air.

Blood poured down my face so I could not see much. Someone yelled: "Walk to the road." I stumbled forward.

I made it to the road and was shoved to the ground, flat on my back and was kicked by shouting soldiers.

I am not sure how long I lay there on my back. I was searched for weapons, then told to walk at gunpoint.

I thought the soldiers were taking me somewhere to shoot me. I remember thinking that they were all scared and that I should act scared and vulnerable.

I reached the limit. I could not walk any more and fell, telling them to get a doctor. They relented and put my arms round the shoulders of two men.

The nightmare seemed endless. We reached some lighted space outdoors and I was thrown on the ground on my back. I kept saying: "Journalist. I need a doctor."

An officer, or someone in authority, came on the scene and the questions changed into an interrogation: "Where did you get your training? How many people were with you? Where is your vehicle?"

Then began an endless series of journeys. I was put in the back of a truck and driven, bouncing over potholes, hyperventilating because I could not seem to breathe.

I thought it was shock. Later I found that my lungs had been bruised by the shock of a grenade and were filling with fluid. Someone kind was in the truck. He kept telling me in English: "We are taking you for medical treatment. You are going to be okay."

At the first hospital, the military hospital in Vavuniya, shrapnel was taken out of my head, shoulders and chest.

I was then driven for another hour to Army Victory Hospital in Anuradhapura, where an X-ray revealed shrapnel in my eye.

A truck took me to a third hospital, the Anuradhapura General Hospital. I was never out of army custody

The doctors seemed scared for me and I asked one to call the American embassy. It seemed that my request to be taken to Colombo was going to more senior people.

At one point I heard a conversation in English. A soldier was saying: "No, she cannot come to the phone. What is your message?"

I heard him trying to pronounce the name of Steve Holgate, the personable public affairs officer of the American embassy.

I shouted: "Give me the phone." I had a huge sense of relief that someone knew where I was.

At dawn I was put aboard a military helicopter and flown to Colombo. At the eye hospital, I was shoved on a stretcher against a wall in the crowded emergency room surrounded by hostile soldiers. Miraculously, Holgate showed up moments later, clipboard in hand, and simply told the soldiers he was taking me into the custody of the American embassy.

It was like the moment in a classic Wild West movie when the quiet guy faces down the armed and dangerous gang. I was safe.

Why do I cover wars? I have been asked this often in the past week. It is a difficult question to answer.

I WAS SHOT AND NEARLY BLINDED. BUT I WON'T HANG UP MY FLAK JACKETYET

I have never been interested in knowing what make of plane had just bombed a village or whether the artillery that fired at it was 120mm or 155mm.

It has always seemed important to tell people what really happens in war.

That war is about those who are killed and limbs that are severed. It is terror. It is mothers, fathers, sons and daughters bereft and inconsolable. It is about traumatised children.

I am not going to hang up my flak jacket as a result of this incident.

I have been flown to New York, where doctors are going to operate on my injured eye in about a week's time.

They have told me it is unlikely I will regain much use of it as a piece of shrapnel went straight through the middle. All I can hope for is a bit of peripheral vision.

But what I want most, as soon as I get out of hospital, is a vodka martini and a cigarette.

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End of Document

War crimes tribunal pressures Yugoslavia to hand over notorious suspect

Associated Press International

November 1, 2000; Wednesday

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Section: International news

Length: 1206 words

Byline: JEROME SOCOLOVSKY

Dateline: THE HAGUE, Netherlands

Body

In an apparent attempt to turn up the heat on the new Yugoslav leadership, the U.N. war crimes tribunal said Wednesday it is seeking one of the Bosnian war's most notorious figures, who is alleged to be hiding out in Serbia.

Bosnian Serb paramilitary leader Milan Lukic was indicted in 1998 in connection with the burning alive of 135 Muslim men, women and children, and for other atrocities. However, the indictment was kept secret in the hope that NATO peacekeepers in Bosnia would catch him off guard.

Chief Prosecutor Carla Del Ponte's spokeswoman, Florence Hartmann, said Lukic's name has now been released because "the suspect knows he is under indictment" following the arrest of co-accused Mitar Vasiljevic earlier this year.

Tribunal spokesman Jim Landale called on new Yugoslav president Vojislav Kostunica to hand over the suspect if he is sheltering in Serbia, beyond the reach of NATO troops.

The tribunal also named as the third and final suspect in the indictment Lukic's cousin Sredoje Lukic, also a member of the "White Eagles" paramilitary gang.

Persecutors say the gang terrorized Muslim inhabitants of the area around Visegrad on the Bosnian-Serbian border throughout the 1992-95 ethnic conflict.

The indictment charges that the three "committed, planned, instigated, ordered or otherwise aided and abetted" the slaughter of 135 Muslim civilians, who were locked inside two houses in Visegrad and in the suburb of Bikavac in June 1992.

The suspects boarded up the doors and windows of the homes, lobbed grenades inside and shot at victims trying to flee, the indictment says.

Landale said the two men are charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity "for their alleged participation in the mass murder, torture and cruel treatment" of Muslim civilians between May 1992 and October 1994.

French troops serving in the NATO peacekeeping force arrested Vasiljevic last January. His trial is expected to begin within a few months.

War crimes tribunal pressures Yugoslavia to hand over notorious suspect

But according to New York Times reporter Chuck Sudetic, the arrest of the lesser suspect alerted Milan Lukic that tribunal prosecutors were on to him. In his book "Blood and Vengeance," Sudetic has detailed Lukic's alleged role in the slaughter of Muslims in the Visegrad area.

For many Bosnians, Lukic's name is synonymous with the bloodiest acts of terror committed as part of the Serb campaign to create an ethnically pure state in Bosnia.

Lukic's unit also is alleged to be responsible for the 1993 abduction of 19 civilians mostly Muslims from a Montenegro-bound train as it passed through a sliver of Bosnia. All are missing after being robbed and several were found shot dead.

Authorities in Serb-led Yugoslavia have never issued a formal finding on the incident, despite repeated calls by relatives of the victims. They have also failed to respond to repeated requests by prosecutors in the Yugoslav republic of Montenegro, who want to question Lukic in connection with the trial of another suspect accused of participating in the massacre.

Although the new Yugoslav leader has promised to cooperate with the tribunal, the chief prosecutor's spokeswoman said he has still not responded to her requests for access to witnesses and documents in Yugoslavia.

(js)

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Fighter planes destroyed seven Tamil rebel camps near a strategic northeastern port, killing at least 40 guerrillas, the defense ministry said Wednesday.

The attack on Tuesday came as President Chandrika Kumaratunga blamed the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and right-wing parties of fomenting new ethnic tensions in the embattled island nation where a 17-year-old ethnic conflict has killed more than 63,000 people.

Military spokesman Brig. Sanath Karunaratne said the rebels had trained at the camps to prepare for an assault on the Trincomalee port on Oct. 23, which left at least 20 combatants dead.

Tuesday's attacks, in an area about 230 kilometers (140 miles) northeast of Sri Lanka's capital, were aimed at neutralizing the rebel gun positions, Karunaratne said.

There was no comment from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.

"We appeal to the Tamil and Muslim communities not to be deceived by the acts of violence that are committed by groups who are acting in collaboration with the LTTE," Kumaratunga said in her televised speech on Tuesday.

Last week, a Sinhalese mob killed 25 Tamil inmates at a government-run rehabilitation camp.

Rebels have accused the army and police of instigating the mob attack because the inmates took a Sinhalese officer hostage. The former child soldiers wanted to be released.

The officer was released unharmed hours before the villagers attacked.

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On the Net:

Rebel site: www.eelamweb.com

Government site: www.priu.gov.lk

Load-Date: November 1, 2000

LETTERS

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

May 5, 1993 Wednesday

Late Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Letters; Pg. 18

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Body

THE MISSIONARY MARTYRS

In his article, "The Martyrs of Gona" (Herald, April 26), Alan Gill said that Mavis Parkinson and May Hayman were bayoneted to death near Gona Mission. Other reports state that they were at Dobodura (10 miles south of Buna) when they were betrayed by natives. They were taken to Popondetta where they were brutally murdered by the Japanese. The grave of these "Missionary Martyrs" is at Popondetta, so it seems that this story is correct.

I went to New Guinea last month with six companions; we visited the grave of these young women. A sign states that the bodies of Mavis Parkinson and May Hayman lie together beneath an adjacent tree. Their grave is in a disgraceful, neglected state; it and its surroundings are overgrown by kunai grass.

This is the 50th anniversary of the bitter, costly battles for Buna and Sanananda, which concluded the First New Guinea Campaign. They were fought and won by the 18th Australian Infantry Brigade (2/9th, 2/10th and 2/12th Battalions). This brigade suffered more casualties than all the units on the Kokoda Track and the conditions were no less traumatic. One historian has likened these battles to those of the Somme in World War 1, yet there has been no official recognition. So we went to Buna "to remember them".

I have found that most Australians have never heard of Buna, Sanananda or Gona, and don't want to know what happened there. It seems today's Australians prefer to kowtow to the Japanese rather than honour the men who saved our people from brutalities such as were suffered by the "Missionary Martyrs".

Fred Allen,

Wamberal.

April 27

COMFORTING CONCERN

Peter O'Brien (Letters, April 30) may have escaped having two waiters say "There you go", but I'll bet at least one of them inquired, "You right?". The correct reply to which is, of course, "always".

Max Shean,

Beecroft.

LETTERS

April 30

NOT MATURE ENOUGH

Are we yet mature enough to look after ourselves? Maybe it's still a bit too early to cut the ties to the monarchy.

Looking at the way the Government calls for tenders on the big-ticket TV system and seeing not a whit of a deposit (even an impoverished grazier's fire sale insists on 10 per cent deposit), the most naive of us can doubt our masters' ability to run that proverbial chook raffle.

The games they play, notably in the parliamentary chamber, suggest an errant child loose in the playground. Not what you'd call a very grown-up mob.

J. M. Webber,

Angourie.

May 4

ASSASSINATION GUILT

Your special correspondent in Colombo has chosen to play judge and jury by implicating the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in the bomb blast which killed the Sri Lankan President, Ransainghe Premadasa, on Saturday (Herald, May 3).

The killing of the President and his entourage has been attributed by most informed political observers to be an act of revenge for the murder of the Sinhalese Opposition Leader and President of the DUNF, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, a few days ago. Mr Gamini Dissanayake, the Vice President of the DUNF, has gone on record accusing Premadasa of the murder and so has Mrs Bandaranayake of the Sri Lankan Freedom Party. (Both leaders are Sinhalese politicians who have little sympathy for the Tamil cause.)

The LTTE has little to gain by killing off Premadasa as the successor (be he/she from the Opposition or the Government) would simply pursue the policy of genocide against the Tamils to which all Sinhalese politicians seem equally committed.

Ana Pararajasingham,

Kings Park.

May 2

JOB-SHARING

To the list of those being considered as the next Governor-General, may I suggest we include the name of Barry Humphries?

The political skills and experience of Sir Les Patterson would be invaluable in the event of another constitutional crisis, whilst the elegance, dress-sense and charm of Dame Edna Everage would add that touch of class to official openings, garden parties, etc. The concept of job-sharing would be promoted in the community and no charge of sexual preference could be entertained.

J. G. O'Connor,

Glenhaven.

April 28

ESCALATING WASTE

LETTERS

The escalator at the northern end of the overseas terminal at Circular Quay rumbles away, progressively wearing all of its moving parts, eating up electricity, while for most of the time it is without riders.

I just wonder why those responsible for its operation have not fitted a seeing eye on/off switch.

Each time I'm in this area my thoughts go back to Germany where I visited the trade fair, Messa Frankfurt. At this centre there are dozens of escalators serving the many multi-level pavilions, not one moving without people on board.

I venture to say that throughout our city and suburbs there are many similar situations in respect to escalators as that which is occurring at Circular Quay. What a great advertisement for waste.

Donald Wait,

Sylvania.

April 30

I AM AFFRONTED

Thanks and praise to the champion of moral standards and ethics. At last, due to the wisdom and understanding of that great and just upholder of free speech and access to art and knowledge, the Censorship Board, I am allowed to look at a film that was made 17 years ago (Herald, April 27).

Surely (sarcasm aside), as an adult member of this community, I am able to decide what I wish to watch, read or listen to. I take it as an affront to my intelligence and dignity that a group of moral crusaders see it as their duty to suppress information.

Perhaps the board should concentrate on classifying material, rather than suppressing it, so that adult members of the community have absolutely no doubt what is contained in any material and can then make an informed decision whether they wish to

view it or if it be suitable for children, adolescents or young adults.

Simon Wheatley,

Orange.

April 27

GRAEME FOR PRES

I'm the first to admit that I'm an unlikely convert to republicanism. I might, however, consider it if Graeme Campbell could be our first President.

Prue Wyndham,

Exeter.

April 29

FIRST THINGS FIRST

Come off it, Paul. First get us back on our feet before republicising us. Otherwise there will be no Australia Fair in which to rejoice.

V. Rudner,

LETTERS

Bellevue Hill.

May 1

ROOT CAUSE

Your correspondent Dr Alistair Hay (Letters, April 19) certainly copped a lot of flak for his republican views, despite their being unremarkable for an Australian citizen nowadays. The virulence of some of the responses must surely stem not from what he says now, but from his antecedents and early circumstances. How fascinating that Eton, Oxford and an old aristocratic lineage retain their power to enrage |

Brian Parkinson,

Darlinghurst.

April 30

I'M NOT KIDDING

It seems surnames must begin with "K" these days if you want to get elected to high office. We've had Kirner, Kennett, Keating, Kelty and now Kernot. Perhaps that puts me in the running.

Deirdre Kidd,

Frenchs Forest.

April 30

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WORLD REPORT

Windsor Star (Ontario)

December 6, 2002 Friday Final Edition

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Body

Sri Lanka moves a step

closer to end of conflict

Copenhagen

Sri Lankan government and rebel negotiators agreed to a blueprint Thursday for a Canadian-style federal Sri Lanka at the end of the third round of face-to-face peace talks in Oslo.

"The model will be within a federal Sri Lanka," said Anton Balasingham, chief negotiator for the Tamil Tigers.

Both parties had made an "unprecedented and historic decision," he added.

Although the announcement leaves much to be negotiated between the majority Sinhalese and minority Tamils in the north of the country, it is the first time that a definite agreement has been reached between the two sides for a plan to stop the bitter conflict that has cost about 60,000 lives.

It also underscores a 10-month ceasefire currently in effect between Colombo's military and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, whose leaders only recently indicated that they would be prepared to accept full autonomy within Sri Lanka, rather than secession.

Windsor Star News Services

U.K. survey finds women

drinking until they drop

London

One in 10 women in Britain has drunk herself unconscious, says a survey by Company magazine.

A third of the so-called Bridget Jones generation admits to having unprotected sex while drunk.

Among those 16 to 34, 40 per cent said they had become so inebriated they had no memory of the night before. That figure rose to 57 per cent among those younger than 24.

WORLD REPORT

One in seven of the 1,000 women surveyed had had a fight while drinking and a fifth had lost keys or valuables during a binge. Half had walked home alone while drunk.

The findings suggest that binge drinking is common among young women who are more likely to be single, solvent and have more spare time than their older counterparts.

They become so drunk, often at least once a week, they are unable to make responsible decisions about matters such as sex or ensure that they are not vulnerable to attack.

Shortage of electricity

shocking to Norwegians

Oslo, Norway

Norwegians, long used to cheap electricity, are cringing over their next power bills as prices have soared so high that some industrial users are selling off their electricity contracts -- for a profit -- and shutting down.

Even though this Scandinavian country is the world's third-biggest oil exporter, virtually all of its own electricity comes from clean hydroelectric power produced in the mountains that blanket much of the Nordic country.

And while much of the country of 4.5 million enjoyed a spectacularly warm and sunny summer and early autumn, the lack of rain left reservoirs at their lowest levels in six years.

Security conference to

improve terrorism efforts

Porto, Portugal

Senior officials from 55 governments plan to expand their crackdown on international terrorist activities by strengthening cross-border security measures during a two-day meeting that starts Friday.

The annual Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe meeting aims to shape new anti-terrorism strategies and improve co-ordination between countries including the United States and Russia.

"The strategy will allow us not only to identify a list of threats, but also to conceive a new operational approach to be taken in addressing these threats," Portuguese Foreign Minister Antonio Martins da Cruz said.

Delegates, including 30 foreign ministers and other senior officials, are expected to endorse a Charter on Preventing and Combating Terrorism.

Synagogue vandalized

in southwestern France

Paris

Vandals broke into a synagogue in southwestern France, ransacking the sanctuary and destroying holy books, police and Jewish leaders said Thursday.

The attack on the synagogue of Perigueux, in the Dordogne region, occurred before dawn Wednesday after worshippers and officials already had left. It came during the eight-day Jewish celebration of Hanukkah, which ends at sundown Saturday.

It was the first reported attack on a Jewish target in France in several months, after a wave of violence against Jewish schools, temples and cemeteries that coincided with new fighting in the Middle East. In the most serious of more than 400 incidents, a synagogue in southern Marseille was burned down in March.

WORLD REPORT

Germany slashes defence

spending in economy bid

Berlin

The German government announced sweeping cuts in its defence spending Thursday in a move that will infuriate NATO and hamper plans to reshape the army for modern warfare.

The defence minister, Peter Struck, said the German army, air force and navy had to make drastic cuts in equipment and slim down their organizational structures to save resources.

The news emerged a day after Struck said Germany would reduce its order for A400M airbuses being developed with its European partners from 73 to 60, leaving Britain and other countries to shoulder the surplus costs.

But Struck resisted calls from within the government to scrap conscription, saying it was "indispensable even under the new security circumstances."

The government has been under pressure from NATO to increase its military budget, which is 1.5 per cent of GDP compared to the NATO average of 2.3 per cent.

Brit army short of boots;

trainees wearing sneakers

London

Some British troops training for a possible war in Iraq have been forced to wear sneakers because the military is short of boots, a legislator said Thursday.

James Gray, a Conservative party legislator, said soldiers told him of the problem when he visited a regiment recently.

"They said to me, 'This is ridiculous. Why can't we get proper boots?'" he said. "If you are (size) 8, 9 or 10, as most people are, then there is a real problem."

He said the soldiers told him they'd been informed they would be sent to Iraq if there was a war there.

"We are not talking about jet fighters or tanks. This is the most basic equipment," Gray said.

Chinese companies hope

to nullify Viagra patents

Beijing

Chinese companies eager to cash in on the lucrative market for Viagra have asked their government to nullify the U.S. patent so they can copy the anti-impotence drug legally.

Twelve companies are challenging Pfizer Inc.'s exclusive rights to the little blue pill in China, a potentially huge market where men have for centuries sought drugs to boost sexual performance.

Lawyers for Pfizer say the outcome of the decision by China's patent examiners will be "very significant" for drug manufacturers everywhere.

Pfizer, the world's fifth-largest maker of prescription drugs, said foreign investors are watching such cases to see how China honours its World Trade Organization commitments.

WORLD REPORT

Dictator Ne Win dies in
house arrest in Burma
Bangkok

Ne Win, the dictator who took Burma from being the wealthy rice-basket of Southeast Asia to impoverishment, killing thousands of political opponents along the way, died under house arrest Thursday. He was 91.

Members of the military government that he created shunned his hurried cremation and refused to comment on the passing of the man who during nearly three decades in power combined brutal suppression, crude socialism and superstition.

Ne Win lost his elder statesman status earlier this year when his son-in-law and three grandsons were given death sentences for plotting to overthrow the government with the aid of renegade officers and black magic.

Although not implicated, Ne Win was put under de facto house arrest in March.

Ne Win stepped down in July 1988, as a nationwide uprising demanded democracy and political reform.

Thousands died as demonstrations were brutally suppressed by the puppet regime he installed to succeed him.

Gang member jailed for

life in death of girl, 4

St. Paul, Minn.

A St. Paul, Minn., gang member convicted of murder in the shooting death of a four-year-old girl has been sentenced to life in prison.

Keith Crenshaw, 28, was convicted in June of committing the 1996 murder to gain entrance into the Rolling 60s Crips gang.

Shalla Gillum, the mother of Davisha Brantley-Gillum, also was wounded in the shooting. She told Crenshaw in court, "What you get, you deserve. ... You still have life in you. She (Davisha) doesn't."

Crenshaw continues to deny that he participated in the shooting

Latter-day horse thieves

caught in Tennessee

Knoxville, Tenn.

Two men and a woman have been charged with felony theft after the Tennessee Agricultural Crime Unit -- with help from a victim turned sleuth -- tied them to a string of horse thefts.

Warren Wilson, Thomas Stanley and Kacie Ann Muncey were detained in Cumberland County while they were transporting three horses, said Max Thomas, supervisor of the Crime Unit.

They were released when authorities were unable to verify that the horses they were transporting were indeed stolen, but soon after, one of the horses the trio had in their gooseneck trailer was matched to a horse stolen a few days before Thanksgiving.

All three were again arrested and formal charges will be pressed.

Stolen bright blue spruce

WORLD REPORT

unlikely Christmas trees

Knoxville, Tenn.

Employees at a landscaping store arrived to find they had been robbed by someone with a pair of bolt cutters and a chainsaw, but not much in the way of horticultural expertise.

The roots were all that were left of 27 blue spruce variety trees, cut live from their roots and stolen in an apparent attempt to turn a quick buck in the Christmas-tree market.

But nursery manager Mike Griffith said the thieves might not get far trying to hock the high-dollar, vibrant-coloured evergreens.

"It's a landscaping tree," Griffith said. "They're probably going to pop up somewhere at a tree lot. But they're going to stick out wherever they put them. They're almost glow-in-the-dark blue."

The trees, normally priced at about \$200 US apiece, are intended to brighten a yard, not a living room.

U.S. government sues NYC

over buried storage tanks

New York

The U.S. government has sued New York City, claiming the city puts residents at risk with inadequate maintenance of underground storage tanks filled with petroleum and other toxic substances.

New York City owns at least 1,600 underground tanks in 400 locations throughout the metropolitan area. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1988 mandated safety upgrades and set performance standards for storage systems, concerned that contents of underground tanks may seep into the soil and contaminate groundwater.

The city has ignored many of these provisions, the EPA says in its lawsuit.

"A leak of just one gallon from an underground storage tank can contaminate one million gallons of ground water," Regional EPA administrator Jane Kenney said in a statement.

Alta. pilot walks to farm

for help after plane crash

Spokane, Wash.

A pilot from Canada whose light plane crashed near the Idaho border managed to walk to a farm and reach aid -- carrying his puppy.

Sheriff's deputies in Spokane and Whitman counties had been searching for the man after he called 911 on his cell phone to report the crash, but said he didn't know exactly where he was. Then his phone went dead.

John Kite, of Sherwood Park, Alta, suffered minor facial injuries and was taken to Sacred Heart Medical Center in Spokane, said Dave Reagan of the Spokane County sheriff's office.

Kite, 73, was listed in satisfactory condition late Wednesday, according to a nursing supervisor.

Graphic

WORLD REPORT

Getting a soaker in Venice: Pedestrians navigate temporary walkways put up Thursday in central Venice, northern Italy, after the water level at high tide reached more than three metres. In the background is the Rialto Bridge. Associated Press photo: Francesco Proietti

Load-Date: December 6, 2002

End of Document

What U.S. newspapers are saying

United Press International

July 13, 2002, Saturday

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Section: GENERAL NEWS

Length: 1884 words

Body

New York Times

Meticulously typed notes on millions of index cards are confirming Mexicans' worst suspicions about their nation's recent past. The cards, part of secret archives opened this year by President Vicente Fox, reveal that during the 1960s and '70s Mexico's ostensibly democratic government waged a "dirty war" against leftist student activists, peasant organizers and other dissenters, one as ruthless as those prosecuted by South America's military dictatorships.

Seeking the truth about crimes committed by the government against its own people, and holding those responsible accountable, are crucial steps in Mexico's transition to real democracy. Before Mr. Fox's election two years ago, the country had been ruled for more than seven decades by a single dominant party -- the Institutional Revolutionary Party. Throughout that period Mexican courts lacked the independence to investigate and prosecute high government officials, even after they left office.

In a welcome portent of change, a federal human rights office acknowledged last November that at least 275 people who were detained illegally in the late 1960s and '70s had died, and handed Mr. Fox a sealed envelope with the names of 74 former officials possibly implicated in the torturing and murdering of dissidents.

Mr. Fox named a special prosecutor, Ignacio Carrillo, and has opened millions of secret-police documents for examination by government investigators and families of missing dissidents. A new freedom of information law, signed last month, bars the withholding of any documents that describe "grave violations" of human rights.

Mr. Fox must go further now and fulfill his earlier pledge to establish an independent truth commission to explore important events in the nation's history that are still overlooked in official school textbooks. ...

President Fox has rightly said that "the rule of law is not negotiable." He has now taken bold steps to back up this declaration, wisely disregarding the advice of close allies that he tread lightly in uncovering the crimes of past administrations.

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Boston Herald

In South Africa, the "Sesame Street" TV program for preschoolers will introduce an HIV-positive **female** character this fall, and a similar character for the U.S. program is under discussion.

What U.S. newspapers are saying

Whatever sense this makes in South Africa, where one person in nine carries the HIV virus, it would be an abomination in the United States, where not even one person in 300 is HIV-positive.

Sesame Street vice president Joel Schneider said at the AIDS conference in Barcelona, Spain, that the South African character would "have high-self esteem. Women are often stigmatized about HIV and we are providing a good role model." HIV discussion would be "appropriate to the age group," such as "What do I do when I cut my finger?"

This is political correctness run riot.

Children who watch Sesame Street are usually 5 years old or younger. In the United States the risk of a 5-year-old getting HIV from a cut finger is vanishingly small. It is way too young to worry about what HIV is or how to avoid getting it. Sesame Street should stick to teaching kids numbers and letters.

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Washington Times

Pakistani leader Pervez Musharraf is a wanted man. Defending his pro-U.S. policies nearly cost an American-born Pakistani his life, and the Pakistani leader's own well-being has been threatened by the Islamic extremism that he has sought to defeat. The question is: How long the reformist leader will be able to survive in an environment where his policies against terrorism and partnership with the United States can be fatal?

On Tuesday, a paramilitary ranger assigned to protect the security of Gen. Musharraf was accused of trying to assassinate the general. He faces charges of attempted murder in connection with an April 26 attempted assassination attempt. He and accomplices used a remote-controlled bomb, which failed to detonate as Gen. Musharraf's car passed. The two accomplices, who also have been charged with the failed assassination, have been charged with another bombing. That one, which occurred outside the U.S. Consulate in Karachi, killed at least 12 Pakistanis and injured 50 others. The two accomplices used the same car that they had used to try to kill Gen. Musharraf. They are part of the outlawed Islamic militant group, Harkat-ul-Mujah, which has ties to al Qaida.

Such extremists have made it dangerous for those who are tired of the incendiary rhetoric against the United States and Gen. Musharraf. The other day, for example, a U.S.-born engineer named Faray Jawed was at prayers when a cleric made a speech that was critical of the United States and Gen. Musharraf's support of America's war on terrorism, United Press International reported. Mr. Jawed asked that the cleric stick to Islamic teachings as the general had urged Muslims to do. Instead, the cleric called the worshippers to kill Mr. Jawed, who escaped the mosque with a relative. Later, four dozen men with iron rods and sticks stoned the house where he was staying after the cleric requested that Mr. Jawed be punished. The police managed to eventually disband the violent group, but only after giving assurances that Mr. Jawed would be prosecuted for blasphemy.

Gen. Musharraf has recognized that a change in Pakistan will have to come from within, through a policy of zero tolerance for militancy in mosques and in schools. His speeches against extremism and arrests of terrorists have focused the minds of militants even more intensely on being successful in their war against the United States and the freedom for which it stands. It is now left up to the "blasphemers" in Pakistan to keep this militancy in check, and to ensure that Gen. Musharraf's policies gain momentum. May the Jaweds multiply.

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Washington Post

Bulent Ecevit, Turkey's sickly 77-year-old prime minister, is getting politically weaker by the day, and so is his country. This week seven cabinet ministers resigned from the government; Finance Minister Kemal Dervis, considered crucial to sustaining Turkey's precarious financial health, remained in office only after a special appeal by the Turkish president. Coming as it does in a nation that hosts U.S. warplanes, borders on Iraq and is one the few secular democracies in the Islamic world, the crisis could pose serious problems for the Bush administration.

What U.S. newspapers are saying

But it also may offer the United States and Europe an opportunity to nudge a key ally toward crucial political and economic reforms.

Mr. Ecevit's government is crumbling just as Turkey and its region face a daunting series of tests. In addition to the financial crunch, which has had Turkey teetering on the edge of default, the country faces a moment of truth with the European Union. After repeated disappointments in seeking full EU membership, Brussels has delivered a list of reforms that Turkey must complete; these include abolishing the death penalty, liberalizing freedom of speech and easing controls on the long-persecuted Kurdish minority. If they are done by the next EU summit at the end of the year, Turkey may finally be invited to begin formal negotiations on membership. At that same meeting, the EU will decide on membership for Cyprus, creating enormous pressure for the settlement of a 28-year conflict between the Turkish-controlled rump state on the northern end of that island and the majority Greek community.

To all that must be added the looming possibility of confrontation between the United States and Iraq. Pentagon planning for a war counts on Turkey's cooperation in serving as a base for U.S. forces; Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz is due in Ankara for consultations this weekend.

Mr. Ecevit, whose health has been failing along with his political support, manifestly lacks the strength to deal with these multiple challenges. Hardly anyone believes his government can endure until the next scheduled election in April 2004; the question is how and by whom it will be replaced. Some of the possibilities are unnerving -- these include right-wing nationalists who oppose EU membership or political liberalization, and Islamicists whose success in any new elections would raise the risk of another political intervention by the Turkish military.

Yet one of the strongest possibilities is also the most encouraging one. Yesterday in Ankara an alliance of pro-Western liberals, including just-resigned foreign minister Ismail Cem, announced the formation of a new political party dedicated to carrying out political and economic reform and leading Turkey into the EU. If Mr. Ecevit can be removed from office, the reformers have a chance to assemble a majority in the current parliament and push through reforms before holding elections. The result could be a decisive shift by Turkey toward the West, at a crucial moment in the region. The Bush administration should do its best to encourage this outcome; it can do so both by pressing Turkey's pro-Western forces to unite and by urging European governments to respond quickly and favorably if they do.

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Los Angeles Times

The suicide bombings we hear most about these days are in the Middle East, but the nation in which such atrocities have occurred most often in the last two decades is Sri Lanka. Over that time, a Tamil terrorist group in the island nation off the southern tip of India has sent out more than 200 teenagers with explosives-filled suitcases or belts, slaughtering perceived enemies and innocents alike. The victims include a president of the nation, Cabinet ministers and a former prime minister of India.

Since March, the killings have mostly stopped, thanks to a Norwegian-brokered cease-fire. Peace talks may begin in a few weeks, offering hope to a country exhausted by more than 64,000 deaths since the separatist violence first surged in the nation of 20 million. The cease-fire is the most promising sign in years. However, past agreements to stop the violence collapsed, and this opening will need careful tending. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe won election last December on a platform promising to negotiate with the guerrillas commonly known as the **Tamil Tigers**. The group has sought autonomy or independence for areas in the north and east of Sri Lanka that are home to most of the country's Tamils, who make up nearly 20 percent of the population. Nationalist elements of the Sinhalese, the majority ethnic group, oppose talks with the Tigers. But the stalemate that has developed between the warring forces demonstrates that negotiations are needed to forestall many more years of bloodshed.

Sri Lanka's president, Chandrika Kumaratunga, was unsuccessful in trying to make peace with the Tigers eight years ago but has carped at Wickremesinghe's attempts. Her objections have the aura of political posturing aimed at gaining advantage over the prime minister, who is from a different party. Kumaratunga should support Wickremesinghe in the peace process. There would be ample credit due both politicians if the violence ended. ...

What U.S. newspapers are saying

To help peace talks succeed, the government should rescind its order making the Tigers an illegal organization. Then, as talks begin, it will be important to reach agreement on what kind of interim government will be put in place in Tamil areas.

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WHITAKER'S WORLD;
JAMES WHITAKER'S COLUMN

The Mirror

February 7, 1998, Saturday

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Section: FEATURES; Pg. 27

Length: 1656 words

Byline: James Whitaker

Body

Oh yes, we

had a ball

.. and Pearl was the jewel in our clown

THE sight of Pearl Read getting her wotsits out, and now giving us another "flash" on behalf of Age Concern this week, brought back many happy memories of what was regularly one of the best parties of the year during the Seventies and Eighties.

I am, of course, referring to the Berkeley Square Ball which took place at the height of the summer and was an occasion I never missed - until the North London hairdressing brigade latched on to it which inevitably ensured it went downmarket.

What fun I had including that evening 10 years ago when Pearl, the former wife of gangland boss Joe Wilkins and now the lady launching a campaign against age discrimination, decided to lower her top.

There was always a royal guest at each ball, or at least one of their staff.

I remember the night Princess Margaret attended and deeply upset one young woman by running her hands absently-mindedly through the hair of the woman's handsome husband who was sitting at HRH's feet. There was nothing the poor woman could do but weep. And she did.

I also remember another ball when Prince Charles' then bodyguard, John MacLean fortified by champagne (or was it whisky) took up the challenge to "escape" from steel chains wrapped around his half-naked body as he was hauled upside down from a gantry on a stage while the crowd cheered and whistled.

WHITAKER'S WORLD; JAMES WHITAKER'S COLUMN

Pearl who is now a very-good looking 56-year-old memorably contributed to the whole occasion.

Why isn't this ball being revived?

Pass the Scotch..

THE Five Nations' rugby tournament begins today with the most important match - France v England - being played first instead of last.

It's not often I pray for frost to postpone any sporting event (unbelievably, the French have not installed under-turf heating for their new national stadium in Paris), but I do in this instance.

At the risk of alienating my Celtic readers, the truth is these northern hemisphere annual meetings have a distinct first and second division air about them. England and France are hugely better than teams put out by Scotland, Ireland and Wales. When Italy join, they will be on a par with them, not us.

As a debenture holder, I will be at Twickenham for the Wales and Ireland games, which, sadly, are a foregone conclusion. Who do I think will win today? England - and fairly convincingly.

The car's in good nick ..

DREARILY, our car was burgled while I was away recently.

It was sitting in my drive at the time and, on my return from abroad, it took me a day and half to realise what had happened. It was the expertise of the villains that prevented any real trauma for me.

They broke into my wife's BMW convertible without causing a single scratch to the paintwork.

They then removed the radio so skilfully that just a number of wires were left neatly sticking out of the gaping orifice. Again there was no damage done.

When I made a claim from my insurance company, Norwich Union, everything went like clockwork. Astonishing. I am not saying I want to be robbed again but if I am, please let it be by experts.

A lion faces down Tigers

WHAT do I think of Prince Charles's determination to start his tour of Sri Lanka despite the death of 300 Tamil Tigers in the two or three days just prior to him attending this wonderful country's 50th anniversary of independence?

Typical. I wouldn't expect anything less brave from a man whose determined he will one day be my King.

Charles is not a toughie but he is fit and anything but a coward. I remember being alongside him on stage in Sydney. Charles was about to make a speech. when a protester ran out of the crowd, gun in hand.

HRH didn't flinch. It turned out the chap was wielding no more than a starting pistol - but for all Charles knew it could have been a real gun. I was proud of him that day.

Always an Issue for Diana

I'VE ALWAYS approved of the Big Issue, a magazine sold by the homeless for pounds 1 out of which the vendor keeps 60p. Princess Diana felt the same way.

I remember her stopping her car to buy copies, usually handing over a fiver and, of course, not taking any change.

The current magazine is strangely comforting. The cover story concerns an interview with Charlotte Cooper, who sings in a punk band, has two lovers - one male, one female (how convenient) - and packs porn magazines for cash.

WHITAKER'S WORLD; JAMES WHITAKER'S COLUMN

She has a badge saying "chubby" and when photographed insists on posing with a flexidisc called Fight The Flab With Terry Wogan.

In the same issue there's an article on how, if poor, you'd be better off voting Tory.

Writer Iain MacWhiter says the Labour government demonstrates little evidence of being interested in those who are skint. He adds: "At least the Tories felt guilty about them."

Shorthand in hand

MY WIFE and I, as Prince Philip might say, have just celebrated 33 years of marriage.

That's not bad for a couple who were born not understanding a single word of the other's language.

I met Polish-born Iwona in 1962 when learning shorthand at Pitman's in Ealing. There were around 28 of us in the class. I was the only fellow.

I remember I was always top or thereabouts when it came to tests; my wife to be in close pursuit. We have made a good team ever since.

To what do I attribute our continuing togetherness. Fidelity ...

MAD cow disease? The whole of Europe has it, says my Swiss hotel manager: "That's why I buy my beef in the US." So why are the Brits largely perceived to be the only people with the problem? Says Herr Hans-Jurg Walther: "You're too honest. We Swiss say nothing."

ER WORTHY OF ROYAL ACCLAIM

FORGET Richard Gere. A **female** friend of mine spent a weekend with him in North Russia recently and found him painfully boring.

And what was the surname of that creep James, the Captain who pretended he was a full-blown Major?

Princess Diana fancied one bloke above all others. His name is George Clooney and now we learn he is to quit the hospital drama ER after "dying" in a bloodbath.

The Princess actually toured the hospital, where the TV show is set in Chicago, when she visited in 1996. And she was frequently heard talking about "this fantastically handsome actor".

Clooney's departure from the series (this is one ER of which Diana really approved) would have made her very unhappy...

Why scary Anne

is such a sweetie

WHO said I couldn't keep a secret? Although, of course, journos are meant to reveal them, not keep them quiet.

I was meant to play a small part of This is Your Life. The programme, introduced by Michael Aspel, featured one of my oldest Fleet Street friends, the formidable Anne Robinson.

The two of us joined the Daily Mail in the late Sixties within a few months of each other. So what would I have told you about Annie on this cringe-making but mesmeric "opening-up of the famous"?

She has been nicknamed "Mrs Terrifying" by some.

But I would have told of Annie's extraordinary generosity, her extreme resilience to adversity and her remarkable bravery to keep going while viewing life at times from a place close to Hades.

WHITAKER'S WORLD; JAMES WHITAKER'S COLUMN

Beneath that tungsten- tough exterior, she's a softie and a true friend who looks after not only her own but her friends, too.

I HAVE been suffering for most of this week with a twisted ankle and a sore shoulder (ah poor thing, I hear you cry)

On the final day of my excellent ski-ing holiday, organised beautifully by the Swiss Travel Service, I fell. And when I fall, the mountains are alive to the sound of much crashing and potential avalanches.

Its all very well being an Action Man (I scuba dive, shoot, play backgammon and tennis) but, believe me, its not that easy when you're 57 and ever so slightly overweight! Still, its ever onwards and upwards as I strive to entertain you.

Dear James

MY MODEST attempts to entertain you on this page continue to attract interesting letters from admirers and detractors alike.

I am pleased to print as many as I can, and thank you for taking the trouble to write.

I AM writing to ask why you are employed by a paper like The Mirror.

I find your page deeply offensive and an insult to the vast majority of working-class people.

While half of the world's population is starving, your main concern at the moment seems to be where to spend vast sums of money indulging yourself.

I feel that you have rubbed shoulders with the over-privileged for so long that you have lost touch with the real world.

Yes, Mr Whitaker, there are many of us out here in this real world, if we're lucky enough to have a job, earning far less than pounds 4 an hour.

So on behalf of all little squirrels and foxes everywhere, and also many of your readers, please do us all a favour, the next time you go off skiing. Don't bother coming back!

Margaret Hallam Shepshed, Leics

I FOLLOWED your royal comments with great interest in the past and was worried when you ceased that kind of reporting.

However, your new column is great and I look forward to each Saturday, when I can once more enjoy your comments on life in general.

But may I suggest that your name sounds too up-market for some of your readers, who would prefer it if you wrote under the name of Jimmy W(h)ity!

Please carry on with your column - it cheers me up no end.

G Gaunt, Sutton on Sea, Lincs

IS WHITAKER'S World for real? I never know whether to take it seriously or not.

We honestly don't need to know about which drinks you have on Concorde or BA. We are Mirror readers, not readers of The Times.

Most Mirror readers are Tony Blair and Labour supporters. We hate all the Tories did and stood for and hope and pray we never have to put up with them again in our lifetime.

WHITAKER'S WORLD; JAMES WHITAKER'S COLUMN

It will take a while to put right all their wrongs, starting from Thatcher, who wrecked our country.

We loved Diana, though, and agree that no one should pay to see her island grave, so you got that right.

I like you, James, but please don't be so patronising to your readers. Come down to our level and see the real world.

Marian Donovan Basingstoke, Hants

Graphic

REVEALING REVELLER: Pearl's flash was chest a bit of fun

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Jail Uprising Leaves Many Sad and Bitter

The New York Times

June 25, 1995, Sunday, Late Edition - Final

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Length: 1691 words

Byline: By DAVID GONZALEZ

By DAVID GONZALEZ

Body

The incessant clang of metal smashing into walls and windows roused Balaranjini Ratnam from her brief sleep shortly after midnight last Sunday. Then she heard the shouts of men -- in too many languages to understand -- growing louder as they approached the women's dormitory of the immigration jail in Elizabeth, N.J., where Mrs. Ratnam had lived since trying to enter this country illegally nine months ago.

With fear in their faces, the women asked the lone security guard what was happening, but all they could hear above the din was an alarm's painful shriek. The guard grabbed a fire extinguisher and headed to an emergency exit, only to return moments later and clamber atop a chair in a desperate attempt to find a hiding place in the ceiling. Unable to do so, she traded her uniform for light blue prisoner's garb and slid under the covers of a bed.

"We were scared and started to cry," said Mrs. Ratnam, a Tamil from Sri Lanka who said she had fled political persecution in her country. "We didn't know what was going to happen."

For five hours, a ragtag band of rebels took over the Esmor detention center, the privately run jail set among a village of food warehouses on a dead-end street in Elizabeth. The uprising turned a spotlight on the fallout from the move in 1993 to crack down on abuses of the political asylum system.

The year-old for-profit jail in Elizabeth, which was under Government review after allegations of mismanagement, had been a quick and inexpensive way to create space for people who arrive at New York-area airports with improper documents and then, often legitimately, seek asylum.

The detainees ransacked the yellow-brick building, barricading themselves behind a mountain of desks and chairs until SWAT teams roused them at dawn with concussion grenades and a swift sweep through the building.

Dispersed among county lockups in several states since then, several detainees said they doubted that those who took part in the uprising had some master escape plan. More likely, they said, they wanted to draw attention to conditions that had been ignored for too long.

They said they were frustrated by interminable waits to have their asylum cases heard, by the lack of food, exercise and medical care, and by the abuse from several guards who taunted, insulted and, at times, beat them.

Jail Uprising Leaves Many Sad and Bitter

"It's something that just happened all of a sudden," insisted Kweku Awogwe, an immigrant from Ghana who said he had not taken part in the riot. "We were in a depression. Every corner of Esmor was in a depression. It's like if you have a dog and you keep him in starvation, one day the dog will rise up on you and do something to you."

Officials of Esmor Correctional Services, a privately run company based in Melville, L.I., blamed the outbreak on mounting frustration over delays detainees encountered in getting hearings from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. They said they were aware of inmates' complaints and had met with them in recent weeks. They also said all contract requirements with the Federal Government were being met or exceeded.

Company officials also said they had found a note detailing plans to take over the center.

Some detainees said the revolt was not spontaneous. Mariampillai Soosaipillai, a former seminarian who had been jailed in Sri Lanka on suspicion of being a member of the ***Tamil Tigers*** rebel group, said through an interpreter that he and several other Sri Lankans had heard of plans to ransack the center several times before, including Saturday afternoon, when he was approached in his dorm by an African.

"They didn't want to escape, but they wanted to break up things to demonstrate and bring attention to their plight," Mr. Soosaipillai said. "We considered it a joke and did not take it seriously."

But something had changed from previous weeks: an I.N.S. review of Esmor, prompted by allegations of inadequate food and medical care, mistreatment and other complaints, had been completed. A lawyer for some of the detainees, Gloria Alfonso, said that several of her clients told her that word had flashed through the dorms on Saturday that the report would absolve Esmor of any wrongdoing.

"They heard the rumor that the investigation was favorable to Esmor, which of course was later denied by the I.N.S.," said Ms. Alfonso. "I imagine if they were frustrated with everything, a situation like this would only become worse."

A wave of whistling heralded the chaos. It was a little after 1 A.M. when Mr. Soosaipillai heard the shrill noise emanating from several dormitories. He and another detainee, Sivasambo Sothiratnam, who was with him in Dorm E, said that the guards ran off at the first sound, not to be seen again for the rest of the night.

"They all ran," said Mr. Sothiratnam. "I think they were aware this was going to happen."

A group of mostly African detainees soon gathered outside their room, he said, smashing through the reinforced window with a fire extinguisher. They asked everybody to come out and join them, but when many of the men refused, the Africans doused them with a blast from the extinguisher.

"We said we're from Sri Lanka and we believe we will be granted asylum," said Mr. Soosaipillai. "We did not want to do it."

He said they stayed behind, along with several Cuban and Chinese detainees, until a stream of water from leaking pipes forced them to another room, where they tried to wait out the situation.

"Televisions were broken, phones were broken, they were pulling files and papers and tearing them up," said Mr. Sothiratnam. "There was glass and water on the floor of the corridors."

Another group of 10 men bashed their way into the ***women's*** dormitory where the security guard had tried to blend into the room.

"We didn't know if we were going to be raped or killed," said Angela Chaviano, a Cuban detainee who said she had once been slightly roughed up by the very guard they were now hiding. "They said we should not be scared because they were not going to hurt us. They only were looking for the guard."

The guard, she said, emerged crying and shaking as the men took her aside.

Jail Uprising Leaves Many Sad and Bitter

" 'Come with us,; we're going to protect you,' " Ms. Chaviano said they told the guard. "They told her if she stayed it would get worse."

In a scene that was repeated in the other rooms, Ms. Chaviano decided not to join the uprising. She waited, along with another Cuban woman, for her boyfriend. For much of the night, she said, they kept to their corner while the noise echoed through the building.

Police SWAT teams clad in black and other officers in riot gear massed outside the building. One official said they could see a group of detainees barricaded just inside a secure area off the lobby.

"They had written on ceiling tiles, but their English was so poor," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "They were shouting constantly, but it was hard to hear. We had these phones and threw one into an area so they could talk. At first everybody was grabbing it to talk. Then somebody grabbed it and smashed it."

While early reports had the detainees taking hostages, officials later said no jail employees had been held. At one point, a police officer slipped into the building and plucked a guard out.

Although the scene was initially frightening, several detainees later said they were not mistreated by those who led the uprising. Some detainees filled pillowcases with candy bars from the commissary and took them to those who sat out the chaos. Some huddled in prayer, while others tried to call their lawyers, who advised them to stay as far away from the melee as possible.

The uprising, the official said, appeared to have been led by a core group of 15 to 20 men. It was those people, he said, who worried them the most.

"There was a discussion before we entered forcibly if we should wait it out until they got too tired," he said. "But there was a concern they would hurt the people who were not involved and would end up holding each other hostage."

The sound of concussion grenades came with the dawn.

"We saw police outside walking on the roof," said Ms. Chaviano. "In the hallway you could feel the gas in your throat."

She and her fellow detainees went to an exercise room, where they awaited the police.

"Everyone on the floor!" she said the police shouted. "Put your hands on your head!"

Mrs. Ratnam, who said she had been packed in a small room with 60 other people, climbed through the broken window into the corridor. Down the hallway she could hear, then see, the police.

"I raised my hands and sat on the floor," she said.

Mr. Soosaipillai said he scrambled from room to room with several others as smoke wafted through the building.

"I covered my eyes, and just sat there," he said. "The police came in with batons and hit people to sit down." He added that one by one they were handcuffed with plastic strips, then quickly hustled down the water-slicked hallway, where some of them slipped and cut themselves on broken glass.

A law enforcement official said it took 20 minutes to clear the building. As the detainees were taken outside, he said, the Esmor guards were there to greet them, "handling the detainees so roughly, they were chased by the other police officers who were there."

The detainees have spent the last week in various jails. Some will eventually face criminal charges, officials said.

McDonell Kwesi Walker, a Ghanaian who staved off deportation last week only to be returned to Esmor the day of the riot, still chafes at being treated like a criminal.

Jail Uprising Leaves Many Sad and Bitter

"I wasn't expecting something like this in this country," he said. "I was escaping from torture to torture."

Sampson Brown, a Liberian detainee, said he was beyond caring.

"This is the same thing we run from in Liberia," he said. "These are the first people I saw in the U.S.; Esmor was the first contact I had. It was horrible. If they deport me, I don't care."

But Mrs. Ratnam said she still cared. A few days after the riot, she cried at the thought that her asylum case would meet delays, or defeat.

"I had problems in Sri Lanka because I was a Tamil," she said. "I come here and I'm detained for nine months. Why was I born a Tamil?"

The next day, she was granted asylum.

Graphic

Photo: Balaranjini Ratnam of Sri Lanka was on the sidelines of the Esmor uprising in New Jersey. She has been moved to Hudson County Jail. (Edward Keating/The New York Times)

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**ASSASSINATION IN INDIA;
Gandhi's Widow Named Head of Party**

The New York Times

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Byline: By BARBARA CROSSETTE,

By BARBARA CROSSETTE, Special to The New York Times

Dateline: NEW DELHI, May 22

Body

Seeking a large sympathy vote, officials of the Congress Party stunned India today by choosing the Italian-born widow of their slain leader, Rajiv Gandhi, to succeed him as party president.

Less than a day after Mr. Gandhi was assassinated by a bomb while campaigning in the south, party leaders voted unanimously to put Sonia Gandhi, the 43-year-old widow from Turin, at the head of the party, which has dominated Indian political life since independence in 1947.

The effort to sustain the Gandhi dynasty came before many regional party officials had even arrived in the capital to mourn Mr. Gandhi, the slain son of India's fabled political family. There was no indication that Mrs. Gandhi had any hand in the decision, and she has yet to comment. She spent the day grieving for her husband among well-wishers at the Peen Murti House, an early prime minister's residence that is now a museum.

Premiership Not Definite

But a Congress Party spokesman, Pranab Mukherjee, said the move by the party's 18-member decision-making arm was binding. "The question of acceptance does not arise," he said.

In announcing the choice, the party leadership made it clear that Mrs. Gandhi, who became an Indian citizen only eight years ago, would not necessarily be named Prime Minister if the party won the elections.

There is ample precedent for women assuming the political mantle of men in southern Asia. Indira Gandhi, the mother of Rajiv, herself eventually inherited the legacy of her father, Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister. But the notion that a European woman and a non-Hindu could have a sustained role as the leader of 850 million Indians still verged on the inconceivable.

Leading Contestants

ASSASSINATION IN INDIA ; Gandhi's Widow Named Head of Party

Mr. Gandhi and the Congress Party had been battling the Hindu fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party, led by Lal Kishan Advani, and the National Front alliance of former Prime Minister V. P. Singh, who succeeded Mr. Gandhi in 1989. Those three parties are the leading contestants in the Indian election.

Violence broke out in several Indian cities today as news spread of Mr. Gandhi's death, in a bomb attack in the town of Sriperumbudur, about 25 miles from Madras in the state of Tamil Nadu. Amid grief and anger, train service was canceled and airline schedules were curtailed.

Nine people died, property was destroyed and cars and buses burned by mobs seeking revenge in Calcutta and Madras and other cities in the south, and the Indian Army was called out in half a dozen states. New Delhi was peaceful, but offices and shops were closed to avert violence of the kind seen after Indira Gandhi was killed in 1984.

With Mr. Gandhi's funeral planned for Friday, there were few critical opinions voiced today about the naming of Mr. Gandhi's widow. But a spokesman for Mr. Advani's party was quoted by Reuters as saying that the move reflected "the utter bankruptcy of the party."

The nationwide voting, which began on Monday, was to have ended on Sunday. Because of the killing, the last phases of the election have been postponed until mid-June. The results of the first part will stand, but are to be kept secret until all the voting is complete.

Identity Still Unknown

Mr. Gandhi's torn body was flown to this solemn, shaken capital today and borne to the sprawling compound where Nehru lived and where Mr. Gandhi and his younger brother, Sanjay, grew up. The authorities said the identity of the assailant or assailants was still unknown.

The body, swathed in a white sheet, was placed on a wooden platform bedecked with marigolds and aromatic with incense, the scent of which wafted through a crush of weeping mourners. Mrs. Gandhi, wearing a white sari symbolic of mourning and sunglasses to cover her tear-swollen eyes, sat silently with a few friends.

Among the mourners were India's President, Ramaswamy Venkataraman, and its caretaker Prime Minister, Chandra Shekhar. "He was no ordinary man and this is no ordinary death," Mr. Shekhar said.

A large color portrait of a smiling Mr. Gandhi was placed at the head of the platform on which he lay. Rajesh Khanna, a movie star and popular politician who is contesting the New Delhi seat for the Congress Party, tried to usher visitors past the body, but surges of people often flooded the room, exhausting the patience of harried security officers.

The explosion that killed Mr. Gandhi was specifically aimed at him -- whether in a bouquet of flowers, a garland of marigolds or the folds of a sari worn by an unidentified woman who was seen approaching him seconds before the blast. She was one of the 15 people killed in the blast, which occurred as Mr. Gandhi waded into a crowd at a campaign stop.

Suicide Assassin Theory

The Press Trust of India today quoted investigators as saying that the nature of Mr. Gandhi's injuries supported the theory that the bomb was strapped to the body of a suicide assassin. The investigators said they had discovered wires, a spring and a battery at the scene.

Initial reports suggested that Mr. Gandhi's body was destroyed in the explosion. But photographs from the scene showed a torso that was mutilated but apparently identifiable as that of the slain candidate.

No group has asserted responsibility for Mr. Gandhi's death, although investigators in Tamil Nadu suspect that a Tamil nationalist suicide squad, possibly guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, a Sri Lankan group,

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could have been involved. This separatist group -- reportedly trained by Indian intelligence agencies under Indira Gandhi -- is fighting the Sri Lankan Government from a steadily weakening position. Sri Lankan officials say the guerrillas were recently trying to re-establish ties with the Congress Party and the Indian Government.

No public accusations have been leveled, and the Liberation Tigers issued a statement today denying responsibility for the attack.

Mr. Gandhi's killing is the third time since independence that the nation's most conspicuous political figure has been assassinated. His death, along with that of his mother and of Mohandas K. Gandhi, the spiritual leader of Indian independence, who was cut down in 1948, have left Indian political leaders poignantly aware of their vulnerability.

Coalitions in Parliament

Political parties are convening emergency meetings to discuss the assassination and to consider ways to limit its effect on the political process. The current Indian Parliament is dominated by the Congress Party and includes coalitions of Socialists, Communists and others.

The choice of Mrs. Gandhi as head of the party will not be accepted universally by Congress Party members, some of whom say there are many more experienced politicians serving the party. It also highlights the degree to which decisions affecting the party nationwide are made by a clique in New Delhi. The Congress Party has not had an often-promised leadership election among its ranks for more than two decades.

"It is a crucial moment in the history of the Congress," said a senior party leader, P. V. Narasimha Rao, a close friend of the Gandhi family. "We have taken a decision and we will abide by it," he said.

The decision could not immediately be conveyed to Mrs. Gandhi "because she is in grief," said Janardhan Reddy, the Chief Minister of the state of Andhra Pradesh and a senior Congress Party leader.

A Cautious Reaction <EH>

Indian officials are reacting cautiously in apportioning blame for the killing out of fear that naming a scapegoat would lead to a sharp increase in violence. The elections have so far been India's most violent, with hundreds of deaths reported during the polling.

The mention of the **Tamil Tigers** stems from Mr. Gandhi's decision to send troops to Sri Lanka in 1987 to keep the Tamils and the island's Sinhalese ethnic majority apart. Indian troops and Tamil rebels quickly became adversaries. The Indians ultimately withdrew after 30 months.

In January, Mr. Gandhi engineered the constitutionally questionable ouster of Tamil Nadu's elected state government under Chief Minister Muthivel Karunanidhi, a political rival. Mr. Karunanidhi was accused of supporting the Tigers and offering them safe haven in Tamil Nadu state.

Sonia Gandhi, who was born in Italy but is now an Indian citizen, will lead the party through the postponed final phases of the national election on June 12 and 15. But the party left open the question of who would head its Parliament group or become Prime Minister if it wins a majority. Mrs. Gandhi is not a candidate for Parliament.

Ballots to Be Stored

The original schedule for elections to the lower house of the Indian Parliament called for three days of voting, May 20, 23 and 26. The voting on May 20 was completed before Mr. Gandhi's death, and those ballots will be stored to await counting on June 16. In any case, new polling will have to take place in a number of those constituencies because of violence and intimidation on election day.

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While the Congress Party is aiming for a large sympathy vote in June, political analysts point out that many of the constituencies in which the leading rival of Congress, the right-wing Bharatiya Janata, hoped to score its biggest gains, have already voted.

Mrs. Gandhi is fluent in Hindi, the main language of northern India, and traveled extensively in India and abroad with her husband.

If she accepts the leadership, Mrs. Gandhi would follow the example of a growing list of women in southern Asia -- Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan, Prime Minister Khaleda Zia of Bangladesh and Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka, among them -- who have at some point carried on the political legacy of a slain relative.

Graphic

Photos: A shroud covered the body of Rajiv Gandhi as it lay in state in the family's residence in New Delhi. (Associated Press) (pg. A1); Mourners outside the compound where Rajiv Gandhi's body lies in New Delhi. Offices and shops were closed to avoid further violence. (Reuters) (pg. A14)

Map: Map of India showing location of Tamil Nadu. (pg.A14)

Chart: "India's Parliament: Who Holds the Power"

Congress: Has dominated Indian politics since independence in 1947, governing all but six years.

Bharatiya Janata: Hindu fundamentalist, conservative party. Has seen resurgence in recent years with middle-class support.

Janata: Led by former Prime Minister V.P. Singh, who has sought to empower millions of lower-caste Indians.

Socialist Janata: Breakaway faction led by Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar, who leads a caretaker Government.

Communist Party of India (Marxist): Country's dominant Communist party, espousing hard-line Marxism.

Communist Party of India: Smaller faction.

Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam: Party representing Tamils, one of southern India's dominant ethnic groups. (pg. A14)

Graph: "India's Parliament: Who Holds the Power" shows how total of 543 seats in India's parliament are divided. (Source: Indian Embassy) (pg. A14)

Load-Date: May 23, 1991

Ten killed in Sri Lanka mine blasts

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Body

Nine civilians - five of them women - and a soldier were killed Wednesday when two mines planted by Tamil separatists blew up in northern Sri Lanka, military officials said.

Another 11 people were wounded in the blasts along the Ponnalai Causeway, the officials said. They blamed Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas for planting the mines.

On Tuesday six civilians, all of them of the majority Sinhala community, were killed in a pressure mine explosion in the eastern part of the country. dpa da

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End of Document

UN
*Children under 18 years should not be recruited into armed forces nor
participate in conflict*

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Body

Speakers Urge Optional Protocol to Child Rights Convention; Impact of Poverty, Malnutrition on Children's Rights Also Highlighted

Children under eighteen years of age should not be recruited into armed forces, nor participate in armed conflict, and an optional protocol to that effect should be added to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, many speakers told the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) this morning, as it continued its consideration of issues related to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child.

The representative of the Czech Republic said approximately 250,000 children below eighteen years of age were participating in more than 30 armed conflicts worldwide and 40 per cent of the victims of armed conflict were children. Unfortunately, the Convention on the Rights of the Child contained the apparently nonsensical clause that the age limit for the protection of a child was lowered from 18 to 15 years in the event the child took part in armed conflict.

The representative of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies said the Federation was fully committed to the principle of non-recruitment and non-participation of children below the age of 18 in armed conflicts. One important mechanism in that regard would be the drafting of an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which would include an age limit of eighteen years for participation in armed conflict.

The representative of Chile said the Convention had proved to have gaps in at least two areas of particular importance: the sale of children and their use in pornography; and the participation of children in armed conflict. He was concerned by the slow pace of the work in the two working groups established to address those gaps, which was not compatible with the importance of the issues.

Several speakers also highlighted the problem of poverty, in particular malnutrition, saying it could erode the gains that had been made so far in children's rights. The representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) said more than 30,000 young children still died each day from the effects of disease and inadequate nutrition, or more than 11 million children each year. In some countries, more than one in five children died before they reached their fifth birthday and seven out of ten deaths of children under five years of age were from just five causes - pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, measles and malnutrition.

Statements were also made by the representatives of Kazakhstan, San Marino, Yemen, Barbados, Australia, Liechtenstein, Philippines, United States, Colombia, Ghana, Cyprus, Norway, Mali, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Saudi

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Arabia and Bahrain. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, also made a statement.

The Third Committee will meet again at 3 p.m. today to conclude consideration of the issues related to promotion and protection of the rights of the child.

Committee Work Programme The Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) met this morning to continue consideration of issues relating to the promotion and protection of the rights of children. It had before it reports of the Secretary-General on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (document A/53/281) and on the Committee on the Rights of the Child (document A/53/41). Also before it was the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (document A/53/311) and the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (document A/53/482).

(For detailed background see Press Releases GA/SHC/3479 and GA/SHC/3480 issued 20 and 21 October respectively.)

Statements AKMARAL ARYSTANBEKOVA (Kazakhstan) said her Government was conducting a targeted policy to promote and protect the rights of children in her country, reflected in a memorandum entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Central Asia and Kazakhstan". In addition, her Government and UNICEF had another initiative - "Bobek". Both of those efforts were aimed at full implementation of the Convention in Central Asia and Kazakhstan, in the context of socially oriented economic reforms. Also, legislative instruments had been adopted that provided for the protection of the rights of children, including a new act on marriage and the family, which also reflected the provisions of the Convention.

Unfortunately, the Aral Sea was not Kazakhstan's only tragedy. The Government had been called upon to solve the serious problems it had inherited from the cold-war era, especially the consequences of some 500 nuclear tests conducted at the former Soviet nuclear-testing ground, which continued to have an extremely harmful impact on people's health. More than 1.6 million people had been subjected to radiation. Beginning in 1950, infant mortality in the region had increased five to ten fold, and the average life expectancy of the population had decreased.

She said her Government was intensifying its measures to rehabilitate the population of those regions, especially children, through the adoption of relevant legislative instruments and the development of medical rehabilitation programmes. But, it needed additional resources. Also, her Government favoured the speedy conclusion of drafting the optional protocol to the Convention relating to the involvement of children in armed conflict, including a provision that persons under the age of 18 should not be involved in military conflicts.

MARINA FAETANINI (San Marino) said the question of children in armed conflict was crucially important and should be a part of the work of the Security Council. When children were involved, it was an emergency situation in need of the highest political attention. Even though a basic legislative protection already existed - which had yet to be fully implemented - the number of children in armed conflict was dramatically rising. Raising the minimum age of involvement in hostilities would not change the situation overnight, but it would certainly be a good and necessary step in the right direction.

The massacres, tortures, sexual abuse, forced prostitution, trafficking of children, child labour and mutilation of children were not coming to an end just because they were being discussed, but the words of the international community were essential in raising awareness, she said. They should be transmitted through the widest possible channels of communication. The remarkable work achieved by countless non-governmental organizations was also an irreplaceable source of information. Situations could only change when the work of non-governmental organizations and the media was included. The international ban on landmines was a good example of how fast things could change when a network to raise awareness was created and widely expanded.

WALID AL-ETHARY (Yemen) said he hoped there would be a continued focus on poverty, since children were suffering from disease and were weighed down by greedy employers. Affirming that the international community could do much to protect the rights of children, his Government was working to establish nurseries, schools,

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orphanages and vocational schools, as well as providing them with food, health care and education, all with the aim of reducing their suffering. His Government realized that it had much to do to reach the point already achieved by certain other countries.

Islam prohibited the sale of children, human beings and organs, he continued. Vaccinations against poliomyelitis had been thorough and were near full completion. There were also determined efforts being made to address issues relating to children in line with international instruments, which his Government had endorsed without any reservations. The fight against the prime enemy of children - poverty and disease - must continue, so that they might live in a happy world.

BETTY ANN RUSSELL (Barbados), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said one of the most disturbing factors facing children was the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Over 500,000 babies had been born with AIDS in 1997, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa. Six million young people were diagnosed with AIDS each year and there was a new and undesirable trend - that of households headed by children, as their parents died of the disease. CARICOM States were particularly vulnerable to the disease. She was grateful to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for its programme to expand support for reproductive health, particularly the prevention of sexually-transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS.

Another concern of CARICOM was the encroaching problem of world poverty, which would hamper the implementation of the World Summit for Children, she said. Malnutrition threatened to erode all the gains being made in the struggle for children's and women's rights. Poverty eradication, along with the advancement of women, were vital prerequisites for the removal of the threat of malnutrition. However, the prospects for poverty eradication seemed bleak in the face of the spread of the global economic crisis. Progress was also hampered by all-encompassing globalization, which had brought little prosperity to many countries of the developing world already hampered by the decline in official development assistance.

ERIC JUSTUS VAN DER-WAL (Australia) said the adoption and ratification of treaties was only a first step in eliminating the exploitation, suffering and abuse of children. His Government had undertaken a legislative initiative in relation to the protection of children from sex slavery and trafficking for the purpose for their sexual exploitation. His Government had also recently supported a workshop for Pacific governments and non-governmental organizations, which focused on the prevention of child sex tourism in the region, and was developing two bilateral instruments to formalize cooperation with regional partners in combating the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

One of the most deplorable developments in recent years was the increasing use of children as soldiers, he said. In 1998 alone, child soldiers numbered as many as 200,000. His Government was participating actively in the working group developing a draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child concerning the involvement of children in armed conflict - but was disappointed by the slow progress. On the issue of landmines, he said they killed or maimed hundreds of thousands of children, often as they went about simple tasks. His Government placed a high priority on supporting demining and rehabilitation programmes, as well as reducing the humanitarian and economic impact of landmines.

CHRISTIAN WENAWESER (Liechtenstein) said the situation of children in armed conflicts was complex. His Government welcomed the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to increase public awareness of the plight of children affected by armed conflicts. His field visits had a beneficial impact on children, provided there was an appropriate follow-up to his recommendations. The public debate by the Security Council, resulting in a Presidential Statement, was also an important political signal.

He said the continued use of anti-personnel landmines posed a particular threat to children and their well-being. In that regard, he was encouraged by the early entry into force of the Ottawa Convention. His Government expected to deposit its own instrument of ratification soon. That positive step had been overshadowed, however, by the enormous number of landmines that had to be cleared worldwide and reports of continued or resumed use of landmines in certain parts of the world. On another issue, he said it was disappointing that the optional protocol on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict had not yet been adopted. His Government supported the so-called

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"Straight 18" position. As for the Statute of the International Criminal Court, he particularly welcomed the provision that made recruitment and use of children under the age of 15 a war crime.

IVANA SCHELLONGOVA (Czech Republic) said the Convention on the Rights of the Child also contained an apparently nonsensical clause. According to it, the age limit for protection for children was lowered from 18 to 15 years, in the event a child took part in armed conflict. Regrettably, the fact that the international community had not yet been able to agree on a higher standard of protection reflected the current state of affairs. For example, about 250,000 children below the age of 18 took part in more than 30 armed conflicts underway worldwide. Children represented 40 per cent of all victims of armed conflicts. Was it possible the Third Committee would not be concerned about that situation? he asked.

The problem called for measures that offered a child more favourable alternatives for a better life, she continued. In other words, when a concrete violation was encountered or a risk situation eliminated, the international community must make sure all other rights of the child, interlocked with the rights that had just been restored, were safeguarded as well. Her Government was convinced that the proposal to set the age limit anywhere below 18 years would discredit the efforts of the United Nations to protect the rights of the child. Those few Governments that had difficulties with the text of the draft optional protocol should review and, if possible, change their attitude.

LINGLINGAY LACANLALE (Philippines) said that despite unprecedented achievements, the international community was still short of reaching the targets set at the World Summit for Children. Children at risk generally belonged to families in poverty. Such underlying factors as unemployment, disintegration of the family structure, internal and external migration patterns and environmental degradation were some of the factors that exacerbated the situation of children in her country. The financial crisis in East Asia was also affecting health and education services to children.

Children below 18 years of age made up about 30 per cent of the Philippine population, she said. A centrepiece of her Government's efforts was an action plan on human rights for children, which took a holistic development approach to safeguarding children's rights. It was also taking part in international, regional and bilateral efforts to improve conditions for children. On the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, she said the report of the Special Rapporteur had recommended action-oriented measures to address the multifaceted aspects of the problem of trafficking. Many of those recommendations had been included in the draft resolution on traffic in women and girls, which the Philippines was submitting this year.

BETTY KING (United States) said, at its core, trafficking in women and children for the purpose of sexual exploitation or forced labour was a form of modern-day slavery. That growing transnational crime had severe consequences, contributing to the worldwide spread of crime, corruption and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Her Government was strengthening efforts to combat all forms of violence against women and children around the world. Trafficking in human beings was a reprehensible human rights violation and her Government was committed to eradicating it. To that end, it had focused on programmes for prevention, victim assistance and protection, and law enforcement.

The challenges facing the international community in combating trafficking in women and children were daunting, she said. In most cases, trafficking in women and children involved forced prostitution, sweat-shop labour and exploitative domestic servitude. The problem had to be addressed with a comprehensive strategy, which began with prevention and development. Awareness had to be created among victims and potential victims had to be warned about the danger posed by traffickers. Further, because the victims lived in extreme poverty, the economic causes of trafficking had to be addressed, which included micro-credit programmes, small businesses development and job skill training.

CRISTOBAL TAPIA, a nine year-old from Chile, said he was making his speech for the boys and girls of Chile. He was here to thank the United Nations for its help in removing the suffering of children who were poor and had other problems and who were affected by wars. He hoped that the Committee would help put a smile on the faces of children, even if its meetings had to go on for a long time and his Daddy had to come home late.

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JUAN LARRAIN (Chile) said the item dealt with one of the most vulnerable sectors of society. The Convention on the Rights of the Child had proved to have gaps in at least two areas of particular importance: the sale of children and their use in pornography; and the participation of children in armed conflict. He was concerned by the slow pace of the work in the two working groups established to address those gaps, which was not compatible with the importance of the issue.

His country's concern at the international level with respect to the situation of children was also expressed in the work it had carried out domestically, especially in the area of eliminating child labour, he said. His country hoped to begin the new century with the problem of child labour eradicated from its society. Since the return of democracy in 1990, minors in Chile had been recognized as a group that deserved special consideration. A national action plan had been established that addressed the rights of children to survival, health and nutrition, education and protection - particularly the poorest children.

FABIO OCAZIONES (Colombia) said his country had a large number of children legally adopted abroad, but was concerned at the reports about illegal adoptions. Thousands of Colombian children had not been legally cleared to be adopted, but had been taken by foreign couples. Since 1996, there had been a committee against the trafficking of women and children, which was adopting special protective measures for minors.

He welcomed the work of the Special Representative for his efforts and said that, under the circumstances, the humanization of the conflict in his country was a commitment of his Government. The recruitment of minors was punishable by law. There were programmes in place for the education and training of minors who had been victimized by subversive groups. Victims of landmines, sexual attacks and displacement by violence were among the issues being addressed, with the help of the United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The world faced changing circumstances, he said. Whereas 20 years ago the concern had been over nutrition and health, today it was over sexual exploitation and domestic violence. Colombia had not escaped those issues. Moreover, children in Colombia had also been subjected to 30 years of armed conflict, the spread of drugs and poverty. His Government reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of children, despite all the difficulties, recognizing that the future of society and the nation depended upon them.

BEATRICE ROSA BROBBEY (Ghana) said her country had made revisions in its legal code to enhance the rights of children. A multi-disciplinary child law reform advisory committee had been established in 1995 to review, revise and update its laws on child rights, justice and welfare. The age of criminal responsibility had been raised from seven to fourteen years. Customary practices that involved servitude had been proscribed to protect children and the criminal code had been expanded to criminalize the exposure to harm or abandonment of a disabled child. Also, parents were duty bound by law to supply their wards with the necessities of health and life.

Children could be protected and their rights promoted only by a conscious effort on the part of governments to effectively implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, she said. She commended the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for supporting States in the implementation of the Convention. A particular area of concern was the practice of recruiting children as combatants in wars. She was happy to note that the International Criminal Court had qualified the use of child soldiers as a war crime in its Statute. Also, she hoped that the working group on the drafting of an optional protocol to the Convention on that issue would arrive at a consensus to raise the minimum age of recruitment and participation of children in hostilities from fifteen to eighteen years.

DEMETRIS HADJIARGYROU (Cyprus) said that eight years after the landmark 1990 World Summit for Children, it was important to take stock of developments. Much more needed to be done to achieve the plan of action that emerged from the Summit. For example, some of the issues needing immediate action were: the lack of progress in primary education, which had not kept up with the increase in population; rampant illiteracy in many regions; malnutrition; maternal mortality; AIDS; and the exploitation of children, whether as cheap labour, prostitution or soldiers.

Since its independence, Cyprus had adopted and consistently pursued a policy of active promotion and protection of the rights of the child. His Government has been consistent in pursuing the welfare of children. It had achieved a

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significant reduction in diseases and infant mortality and the total elimination of malnutrition and major communicable diseases, including thalassaemia, which had been endemic to the region. As far as education and child labour were concerned, the legal framework had been strengthened and enforced successfully, so that every Cypriot child, even if requiring specialized care, attended a minimum of nine years of primary and secondary education - until the age of 15.

There was, however, one category of children whose fundamental right to education was utterly violated. Those were children whose parents lived as enslaved persons in that part of Cyprus occupied by Turkish military forces since 1974. Greek Cypriot schoolboys over the age of 16 who attended school in the southern part of Cyprus were not allowed to return to their homes in the northern part, not even to visit.

OLE PETER KOLBY (Norway) said that in times of financial stringency, governments needed to make sure that children in particular received due attention and protection. The International Labour Organization (ILO) had reported indications that the global financial crisis had led to an increase in the number of children being exploited through child labour. A higher rate of school drop-outs was an indication of that trend. The girl child was particularly vulnerable and required special attention. The long-term effect of her hard work and lack of educational opportunities might also have lasting consequences in regard to the welfare of her future family.

His Government gave high priority to combating child labour, he said. It was both a human rights issue and a development issue, and so great a problem that it could only be solved by cooperation involving many partners. It was, therefore, encouraging that there had been increased support for programmes on child labour during the past year. His Government was also placing the issue of children and the media higher on its agenda. An integrated global communication market had created unprecedented access to information and children needed guidance on its opportunities and implications.

LABASSAE FOFANA (Mali) said children were the subject of special attention in his Government's focus on the family and society. His Government had always placed a high priority on the promotion and protection of children. The State had encouraged associations in income generating activities for families in need and several projects had been implemented. National legislation had been revised to keep in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other instruments. His Government punished the practice of infanticide, the withholding of food or care and other forms of violence against children.

With regard to education for all, that challenge was being addressed by the Government together with various international development organizations. His country had created a parliament for children, which allowed them to call on authorities to tell them their central concerns. Despite progress, much needed to be done to achieve the targets set by the World Summit for Children. The non-governmental organizations and development agencies were paying particular attention to those victimized by all forms of violence and discrimination, such as sexual exploitation, the use of children as cheap labour or as soldiers in armed conflicts. The principles and norms of the Convention had to be translated into reality.

MONETTE VAN LITH, Programme Officer, World Health Organization (WHO), said child and infant mortality was still unacceptably high in many areas of the world. More than 30,000 young children still died each day from the effects of disease and inadequate nutrition. That was more than 11 million children each year. In some countries, more than one in five children died before they reached their fifth birthday. Seven out of ten deaths of children under five years of age were from just five causes - pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, measles and malnutrition, and many children who did survive were unable to grow and develop their full potential.

The WHO was initiating the development of orientation, training and information sessions and materials on the health-related rights of children and adolescents for WHO staff at all levels, she said. A fundamental element of its work would be to continue strengthening WHO's input in the reporting process of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Ongoing discussions with the Committee had highlighted the need for sound technical support in the interpretation of health-related data and for advice on concrete recommendations that were relevant to WHO action in countries. The WHO would also act with countries to ensure that recommendations resulted in improvements in child health and survival.

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ADELA HACHEMI FARHADI (Afghanistan) said her country had been suffering from the effects of war since the Red Army invaded her country. Children had obviously been affected by that war. Even since the departure of the Red Army, foreign elements had stirred conflicts in her country, with children again being most affected. Recently, there had been wide-ranging armed conflicts in regions, including bloody onslaughts by the Taliban. Those actions had resulted in many more orphans.

The situation was grave and needed UNICEF's attention, she said. The military occupation by the Taliban was accompanied by the closure of schools and the prohibition of women on teaching, which had deprived girls and boys of education. The Taliban had imposed tight restrictions on non-governmental organizations, including those concerned with children, resulting in children being victimized first. She hoped the points made and those in the Special Representative's report would find a place in the human rights consideration of Afghanistan.

EIGIL PEDERSEN of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, said the Federation was fully committed to the principle of non-recruitment and non-participation of children below the age of eighteen in armed conflicts, and in promoting that principle at the international level. One important mechanism in that regard was the drafting of an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which would include an age limit of eighteen for participation in armed conflict and for recruitment into armed forces or other armed groups.

Another area of concern for the Federation was that of refugee and displaced children, he said. Collectively, they constituted one of the largest groups among refugees and displaced persons. Children were among the most vulnerable of all, whether they were in refugee camps outside of their country, displaced in their own country, or on the move. Unaccompanied children were the most vulnerable.

Although the Federation had traditionally focused its attention on children's physical vulnerability, it increasingly recognized that psychosocial emphases must also be incorporated from the beginning of all programmes, he said. It was not so much external influences, but rather the local social and cultural context that mitigated the effects of armed conflict on children and provided the environment for healing.

GUNESH RUSTAMZADE (Azerbaijan) said his country had, since its independence, been building a law-based democratic society. The Azerbaijan Republic was party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Those rights were embodied in the Constitution of his country, in all its various codes. His Government had publications and broadcasts especially for children, with the aim of providing an education on respect for human rights. The occupation by Armenian troops, however, had resulted in large numbers of displaced people from Armenia and, along with the blockade, put his country in a complex and difficult situation. As a result, hundreds of schools and libraries had been destroyed and children had been hurt.

While applauding the Convention, what was more significant was the actual implementation, he said. What was needed was the end of war, good neighbourly relations, a strong economy, well-being of mothers and children and opportunities for employment. People were now deprived of basic needs and the international community could play a significant role in bringing humanitarian assistance to his country's children. He expressed appreciation for the work of UNICEF and said such assistance from international development agencies should not be diminished.

KHALID AL-ANGARI (Saudi Arabia) said that in his country children were the focus of development and care in such areas as health, leisure and other social and development spheres, so that they could become tomorrow's responsible citizens. He appreciated the flexibility with which the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been drafted, bringing together the entire international community. His country was trying to implement the Convention in all legislative areas.

He said that despite the near universal ratification of the Convention, millions of children all over the world were still suffering - involved in armed conflict, sexually exploited, and living in unhealthy conditions. In Saudi Arabia, a national commission for the protection of children had long been in existence, which had developed a national strategy. An integrated approach also avoided a duplication of efforts and universities and research institutes were encouraged to participate. Primary health care was provided for mothers and children, and primary education was compulsory and free. Education for disabled children - with whom his Government was particularly concerned - was also free of charge.

UN Children under 18 years should not be recruited into armed forces nor participate in conflict

SALAH ALI AL-MALKI (Bahrain) said there had been progress on various dimensions of children's health. His Government had encouraged the private sector to establish centres for children, which would look at all the forms of exploitation of children, such as trafficking, the sale of children for pornography and prostitution, and the use of children in armed conflicts, among others.

Exploitation was a violation of human rights, he said. Fortunately, Islamic principles formed a bulwark against such practices that afflicted other countries. There were measures to protect children, including national legislation, laws that denounced violence of all forms and measures to protect children who had been victimized. All those measures had been adopted for children, who were the pillars of future society and were, thus, indispensable.

Responding to points that had been raised during the discussion, OLARA OTUNNU, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, said he was grateful for the interest of and the suggestions raised by delegations.

In particular, he said, the discussions had highlighted the following points: the need for integrating and coordinating his work with the other United Nations agencies; the importance of continuing the country visits and to develop a more systematic follow-up for those visits; strengthening the advocacy and communication role of his programme; and the importance of the debate in the Security Council and the Presidential Statement that had been issued by the Council on the issue of children in armed conflict.

He said he was grateful to the delegate of Sri Lanka for the comprehensive and objective critique of his report. He wished to respond to several of the points that had been raised.

He said the representative of Sri Lanka had asked if the Special Representative had put a non-State entity, such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), on a par with the Government of Sri Lanka. The answer was categorically "No." There might have been practical problems, such as a lack of space in his report, but he had not put the LTTE on an equal par with the Government.

He said he was preoccupied and deeply disturbed by the recent incident in which a number of child soldiers from the LTTE had surrendered. He would follow up on that issue, but the trend of using child soldiers was not limited to Sri Lanka. In many countries children were being recruited, such as in the conflict in Sierra Leone. He had also asked for full reports on the situation there.

Another point concerned his recommendation that the issue of protection of children be incorporated into the foreign policy of concerned governments, he said. Within their domestic jurisdiction, governments should fully implement their concern for the rights of children. Sri Lanka was an example of a Government that had the will and ability to do so and he commended the efforts by that Government to fulfil its responsibilities to children in all parts of the country, even in areas occupied by the LTTE.

However, he added, that was not possible in every theatre of conflict. There were extreme situations where the State had been weakened radically and it was difficult for the authorities to protect children. In such situations, it was important that the influence of the international community be brought to bear for the protection of children.

On his call for concerted political and diplomatic pressure to be brought to all those abusing the rights of women and children, he said that call did apply to non-State actors, as well. Concerning the observations and recommendations that he had made in his report, he said they were of a general nature, and were global in character. They were not meant to apply to any particular situation. When applied to a particular situation, they were likely to fit imperfectly.

He stressed that in many situations of extreme and complex emergency, it was not sufficient to mobilize an emergency response without political measures to bring an end to the conflict. He said he wanted to bear witness to the fact that populations in conflict expressed an incredible yearning to see the end of the conflict and addressed that yearning to the parties involved in the conflict. Those parties had the primary responsibility to bring conflict to an end. For its part, the international community must not be satisfied with a humanitarian response. It must address the political, economic and social imbalances that caused conflict.

UN Children under 18 years should not be recruited into armed forces nor participate in conflict

He underlined that his report had been presented a basis for dialogue and discussion. In that context, he welcomed the critique of the delegation of Sri Lanka and welcomed any other comments from other delegations.

Load-Date: October 27, 1998

End of Document

35 tamil women arrested in colombo

The Xinhua General Overseas News ServiceXinhua General News Service

AUGUST 18, 1993, WEDNESDAY

Length: 98 words

Dateline: colombo, august 18; ITEM NO: 0818076

Body

tamil women arrested in a security roundup by police here are being questioned to ascertain their alleged rebel links, local press reported today. the women are suspected to be activists of the liberation tigers of tamil eelam (ltte) fighting to set up a separate state for minority tamils in the north-east of the island country. police suspect their bona fides because some documents they produced to justify their presence in colombo were fakes, according to "the island" paper. some of the women were staying in expensive hotels and boardings in the capital city, report added.

Load-Date: August 19, 1993

2002 Yearend: Faith: Bad news -- good news

United Press International

December 8, 2002 Sunday

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Length: 2033 words

Byline: By UWE SIEMON-NETTO

Body

(Analysis)

(Part of UPI's Special Report reviewing 2002 and previewing 2003)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- The world's major religions are facing both promising and gloomy times in 2003, theologians and laity from many faiths agree. The challenges are of enormous magnitude.

1. Christianity. The media circus over the sex scandal in the Roman Catholic Church has almost drowned out developments of more far-ranging significance in all of Christianity. When the scandal broke, this columnist predicted that being forced to deal with it would ultimately strengthen Catholicism.

Today, astute observers, ranging from Richard John Neuhaus, president of the New York-based Institute on Religion and Public Life, to Methodist theologian Thomas C. Oden, acknowledge that this has occurred. As Neuhaus said, "The Church is in better shape than some years ago."

A separate article in this series will consider the world's largest Christian denomination in the aftermath of this emergency, and in the light of the evident frailty of Pope John Paul II. In a sense, however, a rule of the thumb that applies to the dramatic changes within Protestantism also holds true for the Church of Rome:

Anthropocentric theologies, which have contributed significantly to the crisis involving homosexual and pedophile priests, are in steep decline in all denominations. At the same time a robust new orthodoxy is emerging. Even more stunning is the rapid growth of evangelical Christianity in the developing world, about which United Press International repeatedly reported since this spring.

Nowhere is the failure of 19th and 20th-century theological liberalism more evident than in Germany, the homeland of the Reformation, where the membership in the state-affiliated Protestant churches dropped from 47 million in the 1950s to 23 million today.

A recent poll showed that the German churches ranked at the bottom of 17 public institutions enjoying public trust. The police, the military, the United Nations, the media, even the troubled Deutsche Telekom corporation were among those that fared better.

What is true for Germany applies, in varying degrees, to much of Europe and North America. Because mainline churches "have become secularized and are cowering to the zeitgeist," to cite German author Gabriele Wohmann, they have lost their relevance and are losing members.

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Corresponding to this development, the World Council of Churches in Geneva and the National Council of Churches of Christ in New York are mere shadows of their former selves, teetering on bankruptcy and incapable of formulating theological concepts of any relevance to the contemporary world.

There is, however, a flip side to this story. While these denominations and organisms are shrinking -- and their leaderships seem often more preoccupied with accommodating all kinds of sexual urges than with spreading the Gospel -- confessional movements within these same churches are growing fast and sturdily.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Presbyterian Church, USA, whose neo-orthodox grassroots movement will before long count half a million members. Perhaps equally important is what Thomas C. Oden, the father of neo-confessionalism in North America, describes as a "new ecumenism" that is emerging among these Presbyterian, Methodist, Lutheran, Episcopalian and other groups on the one hand -- and between them and Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy on the other.

While similar movements are underway in Europe, albeit on a lesser scale, Christianity is experiencing an astounding growth in South America, Asia, and especially Africa, where it is locked in an often deadly struggle with radical Islam, which is also expanding.

This burgeoning Third-World Christianity is mostly charismatic in nature, even in Roman Catholic congregations, because they consider the Charismatics' emphasis on the Holy Spirit especially efficacious in combating witchcraft, which African theologians describe as the scourge of the Southern Cone.

What will be one of the perhaps most dramatic Christian development to keep an eye on in 2003? Arguably the drive of orthodox theologians from Africa, Asia and Latin America to re-evangelize Europe and North America and guide their churches back to classical doctrine.

2. Islam: The pace of radical Islam's battle against "Jews and Crusaders" (Christians) -- in other words, much of the West and its allies anywhere -- is bound to accelerate, most observers interviewed for this article agree.

Expect more horrific incidents such as the deadly riots against the Miss World contest in Nigeria, or death sentences against unwed mothers, or terrorist suicide attacks in Israel or Kenya, bombings of nightclubs and the launching of surface-to-air missiles against civilian aircraft.

Yet this, too, is only one side of the story. Islam's problem is that it has no pope and no universally recognized magisterium. Therefore no single person or organism speaks competently for the entire faith. This is why the noisiest and the most radical agitators receive the most attention. However, in telephone conversations with Muslim scholars from many parts of the world, a parallel picture emerges that looks quite different.

Moderate Muslim thinkers in North America and Europe and, increasingly in traditionally Islamic countries as well, are beginning to network in an effort to guide their faith to a future that may in some ways resemble its glory days 1,000 years ago.

Abdulwahab Alkebsi, who heads the Washington-based Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, has just returned from a series of meetings with like-minded co-religionists in Morocco, Egypt, and Yemen. He was stunned by his interlocutors' desire to discuss topics such as freedom of religion, women's rights, and the role of Islam in democratic societies. Until now, only Muslims in the West seemed to be interested in these issues.

Not that we can expect instant changes. However, Alkebsi's report corroborates this correspondent's findings that a wide variety of Muslim theologians and jurists are busy trying to bring about a reformation -- not of the basic tenets of the faith, which would expose them to the charge of heresy, but of their application to the contemporary world.

This, then, is something the Western world must keep an eye on in 2003 -- though with utmost discretion.

3. Judaism. Carl Feit, an Orthodox rabbi and celebrated cancer researcher at Yeshiva University in New York, makes the point that Judaism cannot help but be influenced by trends in other great religions, especially Christianity and Islam. Like Christianity, Judaism experiences a revival of traditional beliefs.

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In the United States, the events of Sept. 11, 2001, have stimulated an intense search for values and roots even among secular Jews. Feit said his non-practicing colleagues in the sciences surprised him by their sudden need to speak with him about Jewish traditions.

For Jews, of course, this "reflective new trend in the world," as Feit phrased it, has one added significance -- "the wrenching situation Israel, on which the consciousness and minds of Jews of all stripes are focused. For Israel is at the heart of our religious understanding of what it means to be Jewish."

4. Hinduism. Outrages committed in the name of Islam have overshadowed an equally troubling phenomenon -- Hindu extremism. In 2003, acts of violence by Hindu mobs, especially in northwestern India, are expected to accelerate as more and more Dalits, or untouchables, convert to Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, religions whose doctrines do not allow for discrimination by race and class, although all faiths on the Indian subcontinent, including Pakistan, are steeped in the caste system. Christian bishops, too, are primarily descendants of upper crust families, for example.

During the past years these acts include massacres, rape, the murder of clergymen and nuns, and the destruction of non-Hindu sanctuaries. Now that both India and its predominantly Muslim neighbor, Pakistan, are nuclear powers, the world community has added cause for concern about this hostility, especially as Islam is its premier target.

Two right-wing organizations allied with India's ruling party, the BJP, are the principal authors of this violence. One is the Rashtria Swayamsevak Sangh, whose khaki-clad shock forces Indian newspapers frequently compare with Hitler's storm troopers. The other is the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, which is heavily financed by overseas Indians.

According to the British Broadcasting Service, the VHP's objective is to "Hinduize" this entire nation of one billion, and to purge all non-Hindus from it (there are about 200 million Muslims and 27 million Christians in India). It has of course the opposite effect. This year, 50,000 Dalits became Buddhists in one single ceremony in reaction to injustices inflicted upon them by extremist Hindus.

While the RSS and the VHP are by no means representative of all of India's 750 million Hindus, they are this religion's most energetic organizations. One theological aspect is particularly troubling in this context. Many of the extremists believe that the world has entered the aeon of Shiva, the destroyer within the Hindu trinity.

Hindus believe that the universe moves from the age of Brahma, the creator, to the age of Vishnu, the sustainer, to that of Shiva, who has to do his destructive work in order for Brahma to put the world right again by recommencing his cycle of creation.

Hindus thinking that the Shiva cycle has begun make up only a minority -- but they are a vocal and belligerent minority nonetheless. What's more, the Shiva cult has been in the ascendance for a considerable time now outside India as well.

The long guerilla war of the ***Tamil Tigers*** against the Sri Lankan government has been linked to this worldview. Their chief, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, is an ardent worshiper of Kali, the black goddess of life and death who is a manifestation of Shiva's wife. He had her image carried before him wherever he went during this conflict, this writer learned while covering this conflict, which now appears to be ending.

Shiva worship has even entered non-Hindu religions, such as the Japanese Aum Shinrikyo sect, which tried to initiate World War III by detonating chemical devices in Tokyo subway trains.

Although Aum Shinrikyo presents itself as a neo-Buddhist group, some of its leaders, all scientists, told this correspondent that they viewed the world like a computer, whose malfunctions can be put right by pressing the reset button. In this case, the "reset button" would be war.

They said they were called upon by Shiva to fight the Battle of Armageddon, which in the Christian Bible pits the forces of Christ against the forces of the mighty of this world. When asked who Christ was for them, they answered, "The incarnation of Shiva -- the God of destruction."

2002 Yearend: Faith: Bad news -- good news

In a particularly absurd way, this reply underscores the perils of syncretism, the mixing of religions, which in history has frequently led to disastrous consequences.

Buddhism. Generally, Buddhism is considered one of the world's most peaceful faiths, although this is not always true, to wit Buddhist violence against Christians and Muslims in Sri Lanka. Since the 1960s, Buddhism was still on the ascendance in parts of Europe and North America, especially because of the charismatic personality of its most prominent leader, the Dalai Lama.

This correspondent's research in Europe has shown that Buddhism in the West may be about to peak -- for one curious reason: Buddhist divines report that a thorough misunderstanding of their faith has attracted many Westerners to it.

As a prominent lama in a French monastery phrased it: "They come because there is no God in Buddhism, and they are at heart atheists. Yet they like the Buddhist concept of reincarnation because to them it promises life after death.

"But this is dead wrong. Reincarnation is part of the cycle of suffering. And this is precisely what Buddhist doctrine endeavors to end."

It also runs counter an ever-growing trend among young people the West. And this trend, Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and other clerics from around the world agree, is an enormous hunger for transcendence -- for God.

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End of Document

False documents raise suspicions: Ten people being detained for security reasons, but terrorist link is often weak

The Gazette (Montreal, Quebec)

December 15, 2001 Saturday

Final EDITION

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Section: NEWS,; Crime

Length: 1877 words

Body

Mahmoud Es-Sayy Jaballah, 39

Country of birth: Egypt.

Entered Canada: In 1996, using a fraudulent Saudi Arabia passport.

Arrested: Aug. 13, 2001.

Security concerns: Held on a Section 40 security certificate, he is a Toronto Islamic school principal. The Canadian and U.S. governments claim he has ties to the U.S. embassy bombers in Kenya and Tanzania. They claim he has links to Al-Jihad, an Egyptian extremist group with ties to Osama bin Laden's Al-Qa'ida. He faces execution in Egypt for terrorism. Jaballah has denied the charges and is claiming refugee status on the grounds of religious and political persecution in Egypt.

The Gazette

Jaballah has been the target of CSIS surveillance for years. He was held under a special ministerial certificate in 1999, when the government claimed he was a terrorist. The Federal Court rejected the charge and released him. But last Aug. 14, he was back in jail on a second certificate, with CSIS claiming it had new evidence linking him to terrorists. Hearings on this fresh evidence have been held in secret.

Current status: His refugee claim has been rejected. He is in custody in a Toronto prison awaiting deportation to Egypt.

Samir Ait Mohamed

Country of birth: Algeria.

Entered Canada: October 22, 1997.

Arrested: July 2001.

Security concerns: Mohamed is a prime U.S. terrorist target. The U.S. has indicted him on a charge he conspired to commit an act of terrorism transcending international boundaries. Maximum sentence is life in prison. Prosecutors claim he helped convicted terrorist Ahmed Ressam in a plot to place explosive devices in Los Angeles International

False documents raise suspicions: Ten people being detained for security reasons, but terrorist link is often weak

Airport during millennium celebrations. An FBI affidavit claims he sent money and fake Canadian passports to a group in Germany planning terrorist acts in the U.S. The U.S. is seeking his extradition. FBI affidavits claim Mohamed worked with Ressayre to try to corrupt a Canadian passport office employee to obtain passports. The FBI also claims the two men plotted to plant bombs in Montreal - on downtown Ste. Catherine St. for a high death toll and on Laurier Street and Park Avenue to attack a local Hasidic Jewish neighbourhood.

Current Status: In custody in Vancouver, awaiting a Dec. 17 hearing for extradition to the U.S. He's also wanted in Germany for armed robbery. He claimed refugee status in Canada in 1997 but was turned down.

Mohammad Zeki Mahjoub, 41

Country of birth: Egypt.

Entered Canada: 1995.

Arrested: June 2000

Security concerns: Held on a Section 40 security certificate, he was convicted in 1999 in absentia in Egypt for terrorist activities. He was arrested in June 2000 on evidence from CSIS. He appealed in Federal Court but lost. The evidence against him was kept secret both from him and his lawyer for security reasons.

Egyptian authorities claim Mahjoub is a member of the Vanguard of Conquest, a violent group allegedly financed by bin Laden that aims to overthrow the Egyptian government. The authorities also allege that Mahjoub is a member of the violent Islamic movement Al Jihad. But Mahjoub maintains his innocence. He told Federal Court he was once hired by bin Laden to manage one of his factory farms in the Sudan, but denied he knew of bin Laden's terrorist activities.

Current status: Granted refugee status in 1996, he is fighting deportation to Egypt or to a third country that will take him.

Mansour Ahani, 37

Country of birth: Iran.

Entered Canada: 1991.

Arrested: 1994 and detained since then.

Security concerns: Held on a Section 40 security certificate, he was a confessed assassin with the Iranian secret service. Ahani has become a cause celebre for civil-rights lawyers attempting to overturn part of the anti-terrorist section of the Immigration Act. They claim Ottawa has no right to deport a person who faces torture in his native country, no matter what threat that person poses to Canadians. Ahani claims he has the constitutional right to remain in Canada despite being classified as a security threat by the federal government.

Ahani argues that he will be tortured or killed if he is returned to Iran. He says he was jailed after refusing to carry out a mission to blow up safe houses with women and children. He fled and came to Canada claiming refugee status, which was granted in 1992. Authorities won't say whether he has refugee status.

Current status: In a Toronto jail, fighting deportation.

Nandakumar Amirthalingham

(alias Suresh El Mailan)

Country of birth: Sri Lanka.

False documents raise suspicions: Ten people being detained for security reasons, but terrorist link is often weak

Entered Canada: Sept. 27, 2001, on a Malaysian passport with a phony name.

Arrested: Oct. 5, 2001.

Security concerns: Canada Customs initially claimed he admitted that he once belonged to the ***Tamil Tigers***. Now he has retracted that statement. The government alleges that his father was also a Tamil Tiger. When he was arrested, he had a map of the United States where the cities of Dallas and Houston are circled. He claimed he found the map in London and didn't know the areas were marked. Before arriving in Canada, he had been in London, Singapore, Australia, Thailand and India.

Current status: He claims refugee status and is in custody in Toronto awaiting his hearings.

Ali Aden Ahmed

Country of birth: Has claimed both Ethiopia and Djibouti.

Entered Canada: Sept. 8, 2001, illegally.

Arrested: Sept. 28, 2001.

Security concerns: According to an Oct. 1 hearing of the Immigration Refugee Board, he was arrested at his former wife's home in Ottawa because the RCMP and FBI wanted him for questioning about the attack on the World Trade Centre.

Ahmed had come to Canada 10 years earlier, arriving at the border town of Lacolle, Que., on Sept. 18, 1991, where he claimed refugee status. He did not show up for his hearings and left the country.

Before returning to Canada this year, he flew to the U.S. on Air Yemen with a U.S. visa issued in Djibouti, according to transcripts of an Oct. 9 IRB hearing. He claimed to be in the U.S. to buy radar equipment from a Baltimore company for the Djibouti army to which he is linked. He was refused a Canadian visa by the embassy in Washington on Aug. 30, 2001. But on Sept. 8, he paid four Somalians, who are U.S. citizens, \$500 to smuggle him into Canada.

Current status: In jail in Ottawa awaiting his immigration hearing. The FBI no longer wants to talk to him about the Sept. 11 attack.

Gurbax Singh (aliases Mutu Singh Padah, Gary G. Austin).

Country of birth: India.

Entered Canada: First in 1995, then again on Nov. 18, 2001.

Arrested: Nov. 18, 2001.

Security concerns: Singh was arrested trying to enter Canada at Lacolle as a visitor. He claimed to be visiting a friend in LaSalle. When immigration checked his fingerprints, they found he had claimed refugee status in Canada on Dec. 27, 2000, under the alias of Mutu Singh Padah. On July 19, 2001, Canada recognized him as a refugee under that false name. This has since been withdrawn. A check with Interpol revealed that Singh is a suspected Sikh terrorist and is wanted in India for attempted murder. The government is seeking confirmation from India of an arrest warrant.

Singh has also claimed to be a refugee in the U.S. He applied in 1992 and was granted refugee status on April 14, 1999. He has also used the name of Gary G. Austin in the U.S.

When he was arrested in Canada, immigration agents found a tape of the World Trade Centre attack in his car. He told officials he hadn't seen the attack despite the fact that he lives in New York. The car he was driving was

False documents raise suspicions: Ten people being detained for security reasons, but terrorist link is often weak

registered to Sukjinder Singh, who lives in Pennsylvania. He also had 10 credit cards in the name of Gurbax Singh, four of which are Visa cards.

Current status: Incarcerated in Laval and awaiting deportation to the U.S., where authorities want to question him about the Sept. 11 attack.

Mohamadkhair Salah, 42

(He has used up to 15 aliases)

Country of birth: Jordan.

Entered Canada: Vancouver, January 2001 on a Swedish passport under the name of Salem Adbul Raman.

Arrested: Oct. 12 in Fort McMurray, Alta., after he was discovered working illegally.

Security concerns: Salah was initially a terrorist suspect but the government now appears to believe he is just a common crook. Police found him in an apartment containing many documents including drivers licences, cheques, credit cards, passports, school transcripts and resumes.

At an immigration review hearing in October, the government claimed Salah was "of interest" in ongoing terrorist investigations. It later retracted this statement but did not say why.

At a refugee hearing in Edmonton Nov. 28, the government disclosed that a courier package from an address in Ramallah on the West Bank had arrived at an Edmonton address where Salah stayed for a few days. It was addressed to Khaled Mustafa, which the government claims is one of Salah's aliases. The government claimed the package, which contained a birth certificate and a letter of employment, is possibly "implicated in Sept. 11 events" but would not say more.

Current status: In custody at the Edmonton Remand Centre, awaiting completion of deportation hearings on the basis that he is ineligible to remain in Canada because of suspected criminal activity in the United States. He is wanted in California for skipping out on charges of forging baby formula labels and selling a substandard baby formula. He made a refugee claim in January 2001.

Emad Jamal Shawkat Hassan, 33

Country of birth: Jordan.

Entered Canada: Aug. 12, 2001.

Arrested: Oct. 12 in a mall in Fort McMurray, Alta. He lived in the same apartment as Salah.

Security concerns: Hassan has so many aliases, investigators say they are not sure of his real name. He possessed papers claiming he was an airline pilot and member of a pilot association. He claimed to have studied aviation in Chicago and Texas. No longer considered a security threat. The U.S. wants him extradited because he was convicted in 1998 of food-stamp fraud and violated his probation.

Current status: An IRB arbitrator yesterday ordered him deported to Jordan. He's in custody at the Edmonton Remand Centre, officials say he will be deported before Christmas. Hassan served three years in a U.S. prison for submitting \$1.2 million in fraudulent claims under the U.S. Agriculture Department's food stamp program through the Chicago store he ran with an associate, Yousef al-Amleh.

Yousef al-Amleh, 34

Country of birth: claims to be a Palestinian born in Iraq.

False documents raise suspicions: Ten people being detained for security reasons, but terrorist link is often weak

Entered Canada: July 29, 2001, using an Australian passport with a substituted photo.

Arrested: Oct. 12 in Fort McMurray.

Security concerns: Found in the same apartment as Salah. Ran a Chicago food store with Hassan. The government originally claimed he was under investigation for terrorism but later withdrew that statement.

Current status: In custody at the Edmonton Remand Centre and awaiting completion of his deportation hearings on the basis that he is ineligible to remain in Canada because of criminal activity in the United States. He is wanted in the U.S. for fleeing the country before being sentenced on a \$63,000 bank fraud where he forged cashiers cheques issued through the Chicago store he ran with Hassan. He claims refugee status.

Graphic

Photo: EDMONTON JOURNAL ; Mohamadkhair Salah at an, immigration hearing in Edmonton on Oct 24. Police found him in an, apartment with many documents.; Photo: CP ; Samir Ait Mohamed was, caught on a bank security camera. He is considered a prime terrorist, target by the U.S.; Photo: CP ; Emad Jamal Hassan at immigration, hearing in Edmonton Nov. 28.

Load-Date: December 15, 2001

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FOR ALL OUR SADNESS WE FEEL AT HOME HERE'

The Evening Standard (London)

December 24, 1998

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Section: Pg. 25

Length: 1850 words

Byline: Angela Neustatter

Body

SHANTI tells her story in a soft voice, eyes down, and from time to time her voice falters. Being reminded of home is painful. She grew up in the north of Sri Lanka and as she reached her teens the civil war between the northern **Tamil Tigers** and the Sri Lankan forces escalated.

"The Sri Lankan military took control of our town and set up camps where they took children and kept them." Shanti's legs had been badly injured in a shell explosion which also killed her brother, and the Sri Lankan soldiers assumed the wounds meant she was involved with the Tiger "terrorists". She goes on: "I was detained and beaten because the soldiers wanted me to confess to being a fighter. They released me but then they picked me up again, and kept me for days.

"This kept happening and I was very, very frightened. My mother became very, very scared for me because more and more of the children picked up by the army were disappearing. She asked a relative to take me out of the country to save my life, even though it broke her heart and mine."

Shanti was brought here on a plane by a relative and left with a Tamil family who agreed to help her. She is one of 2,000 unaccompanied child refugees sent to Britain in the past year and, like the others, she hopes to get asylum. She says: "If I am sent back I do not know what the Sri Lankan army will do to me." Her story is typical. Most of the unaccompanied refugee children here have come from war-torn countries, or places where there is famine or persecution.

Terry Smith at the Refugee Council, where they work to help these children in many ways including with their asylum applications, explains: "Parents put their children on planes or on to trucks or lorries because it is the only way they can think of to save them, and isn't that something we would all want to do if our children were in extreme danger? Isn't it what people here did during the last war?"

He asks the questions rhetorically but angrily, at this time when hostility towards asylum seekers coming into Britain has reached a chilling level exemplified in the columns of the Dover Express with its talk of how "scum of the earth ... have targeted our beloved coastline... we are left with the back-draft of a nation's human sewage".

Smith contemplates Shanti, who has been willing to talk but is too frightened to risk being photographed, as are many of the children, who tell their tales anonymously "in case the soldiers see it and torture my mother".

FOR ALL OUR SADNESS WE FEEL AT HOME HERE'

Smith goes on: "The Press has focused entirely on what it may cost us if too many refugees come into the country, and when that happens nobody stops to think about the particular vulnerability of child refugees who badly need help."

IT IS easy in such a climate to dismiss the atrocities carried out in Kosovo, the neo-Nazi persecution of Romanies in Eastern Europe, the torture of political dissenters across the world, and simply to see asylum seekers universally as scroungers. It has got bad enough that charities are saying that they fear lasting damage to race relations, and Smith adds: "Children, who almost never make the decision to come over to Britain, may suffer the most." The hostility towards refugees may not be directed specifically towards children, but it certainly affects them. What happens to them cannot be separated from how their parents are viewed and treated.

In the case of unaccompanied children there is a particularly nasty myth, explains Smith, which has it that these children are sent over by parents as "anchors" and when they get refugee status whole families follow claiming the right to be reunited. "I'm not saying that never happens," he adds, "but in eight years of working with refugee children I have seen it just once and in that case the mother of the child who came over was terminally ill." Adults who may be here with their children

but who have suffered barbaric treatment in their own countries may be in no position to parent their children, explains Sheila Melzak, child psychologist at the Medical Foundation for Victims of Torture. They see refugees from 90 countries, many children whose parents, Melzak says, have been tortured, subjected to sexual violence and so badly hurt that they will never be all right.

"Often this has been carried out in front of their children. Or it has happened to the children themselves. Either way the whole family is traumatised."

She points to an Iraqi family whom she sees to illustrate the point. The father, a doctor, was asked by Saddam Hussein to cut off the ears of soldiers. When he refused, Melzak explains, he was tortured by the security forces. He escaped to Britain, but his wife and child were caught and tortured before they too managed to escape and gain refugee status here.

"Perhaps in present circumstances there would be sympathy for them," Melzak says, "but so many families, and this includes their children, are scapegoated in their own countries, then scapegoated here by suspicious authorities and people who do not see asylum seekers as people with individual stories but as a criminal group out to scrounge off us."

In fact, by signing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Britain has taken on a duty of care to child refugees - an acknowledgement that children need a special level of protection and are an international responsibility, according to Unicef, where they are all too aware of the fate of children who so often lose family, home and all sense of identity and stability in countries where there is war or persecution. Yet children arriving unaccompanied and without proper papers, often desperate at having to leave their families, and utterly confused, may be put into detention centres, although Smith adds: "In fairness it is rare that Immigration removes an unaccompanied child without ensuring that they can be returned home safely and there is someone who will care for them."

Finding someone to care for children here, no matter how clear it is that they are at risk in their own country, and should clearly not be returned, can be difficult.

As things are now the local authority where a child asylum seeker ends up is expected to take them on, find a home for them and fund their care but without any extra government money to do so. This means local authorities are reluctant to take them on because of the financial burden, and so children are all too often told to leave or sent to another borough, to ask them for help. Or if they do take them on they may end up in the kind of accommodation Melzac describes, where three young boys are in a damp, filthy room with rats.

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THERE are, however, some authorities, such as Hillingdon, West Sussex and Edmonton, which has taken on Shanti, giving money to her carer in the Tamil family where she lives and working with the Tamil Refugee Centre, which have been particularly willing to help these children.

Schools such as Hampstead Comprehensive, where the refugee project Children of the Storm is based, help these children cope with language difficulties and offer both counselling and support.

Children who arrive unaccompanied are usually given exceptional leave to remain, but not full refugee status, explains Melzak: "It means their case is reviewed every year, but they know that once they become an adult at 18 they may then have asylum refused and be returned home.

"Many live in terror of this and so they can't settle here, to get an education, or the sense of security children so badly need to thrive. And isn't it ironic that people will go around the world looking for children to adopt, but when children who are desperate for caring and support come over here 'illegally' they are not wanted?"

Persecuted by neo-Nazis MARTA'S STORY Marta, 17, comes from a Czech Roma family. Her family came to Britain four months ago after being persecuted by neo-Nazis in their home town and fearing for their lives.

"There was no discrimination during the Communist times and we never felt frightened, but after 1989 things changed. When I began secondary school none of the Czech children would talk to me, the teachers wouldn't help me with my studies and when I started college I was attacked on the bus one day because I am a Roma. But it was my father who really suffered.

"Neo-Nazis were beating up Romany people in our town and my father was trying to help them and he wrote articles for the papers and went on television speaking out about what was happening. Then he was attacked by skinheads and he began to receive hate mail, and he was beaten up again on the street. My father asked for protection from the chief of police but he wasn't interested. We saw other Roma families suffering the same and there were murders.

"My brothers and sisters and I were not allowed out after 5pm and even in daytime we were frightened on the streets. Then my father received a death threat and was advised by a person from the European Human Rights Organisation that he should leave. I could see how frightened my father was.

He told us we must sell everything and just leave."

New start for boy whose father was shot by Serbs ZEKIJA AND SANEL'S STORY Zekija, 26, and her seven-year-old son Sanel are Muslims. They came to Britain five years ago as refugees after Zekija's husband was taken by Serbian soldiers and shot. Sanel, who does not speak much, sits close to her on the sofa listening as she explains how the kindness she has experienced has made it possible for her son to have a good life here.

"My husband, when the soldiers took him, just kissed his son then walked outside saying 'They can only kill me once'.

"It was terrible and Sanel was so upset. I was very frightened they would go on to kill the boy children because the soldiers were killing all the males in our village and so I felt had to get Sanel out. He was sick and in a very bad state.

"My father had been rescued from the camp where he was imprisoned by the Red Cross, because he was so ill, and they brought him to Britain and allowed them to remain as a refugee, so we came and joined him and my mother.

"For two years we stayed indoors almost all the time because I was frightened what would happen on the streets, and Sanel was very upset and nervous.

"Then a teacher came to visit us.

FOR ALL OUR SADNESS WE FEEL AT HOME HERE'

She was very kind and she persuaded me to learn English and she introduced me to other women who had lost their husbands so there was support for me and friends for Sanel.

"I put Sanel into school but he has a lot of problems learning; I think he is still upset about his father and the way we have to live with my parents, who have never got over the horror of what happened in Bosnia. He doesn't smile much.

"Sanel doesn't concentrate well, and we have discovered that he cannot hear properly. I think this is from being exposed to so many loud explosions when he was a baby in Bosnia.

But he has learnt English so he is able to mix well with other children, and they accept him, their parents invite him to birthday parties and for all our sadness we feel at home here.

"People have been so kind and I do believe Sanel can grow up to know happiness in this country."

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End of Document

Diary from a war zone

South China Morning Post (Hong Kong)

November 11, 1995

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Section: Travel; Pg. 10

Length: 1909 words

Byline: Despite the escalating war, Sri Lanka is still drawing tourists. Adrian George travelled extensively around the island, keeping notes of some of the more memorable aspects of his journey

Body

TO read that war has begun where your plane is about to land can concentrate the mind. The previous day the **Tamil Tigers** had broken a truce and attacked a naval base at Trincomalee, killing 12 and wounding 60 Sinhalese.

I looked round the plane but no one seemed particularly concerned: Sri Lankans were chatting and eating, tourists drinking, an English cricket team playing the phlegmatic card games of "rain stopped play."

Perhaps they didn't know; perhaps they were used to it. The war has been off and on for the past 12 years . . . 50,000 dead.

Colombo. Bright sunlight, black shadows. The trees are astonishing: all shapes, all varieties; palms and blossoms are splattered with crows. Japanese cars, bullock carts, luridly decorated trucks, stray cows.

A drunken buffet of architecture: colonial, modern, seedy, ludicrous and sad - image houses with great painted Buddhas, red-striped mosques, a neoclassical parliament, a Roman church like a miniature St Peter's, and Hindu temples.

I stepped into the darkness of one temple. Inside the great smoke-blackened hall were more, smaller temples, individual to the divinities.

In one were two prostrate worshippers and a near-naked, wild-haired priest performing a service with flowers, bells and water, swaying and chanting in clouds of incense - the rites of the oldest religion in the world.

Outside in the street, a snake charmer, more reptilian than his charge, was waiting for me.

Giggling, he performed his magic trick: making an egg disappear, he then lunged forward to my crotch . . . abracadabra, the egg reappeared out of the bottom of my trouser leg. The crowd was hysterical with glee.

And then the rain came.

The world went out of focus, under sea. Trees became swaying seaweed, Buddhist priests golden carp, buildings rocks and coral and cars electric eels. People sheltered in the roots of banyan trees like prisoners in jails.

In the evening I went for a walk along the seafront, where a thin man wearing a baseball cap and sarong sat with his back against the wall, grinning cheerfully.

Diary from a war zone

A creature of darkness sidled up: "Excuse me, sir, what you want?" he whispered. "Girls? Nice, small, young girls?" I carried on walking. "Boys? Young boys?"

I turned into the Galle Face Hotel, "the oldest hotel in Asia," where guests have included the Aga Khan, Nixon, Prince Philip et al. I sat in the bar - a lovely Somerset Maugham affair, open to the sea and with ceiling fans and rattan furniture - and drank too much arrack before walking back to my hotel. The man in the baseball cap was still grinning. Actually, he was dead.

Saturday: The early morning drive northeast to Polonnaruwa was delectable: the countryside luscious with rivers and paddy fields. We stopped at a rest house for breakfast - hoppers, a delicious form of pancake, and fish curry - and watched the water buffalo as we drank from a decapitated coconut.

Polonnaruwa is one of the great ancient sites of Sri Lanka, its capital from the 11th to the 13th century.

It is a holy site and one feels it - the air heavy with incense from cinnamon trees. In the extensive park, temples and dagobas are being cleared and restored after eons of neglect in the jungle.

Among these mysterious glories, a 10-metre Buddha, carved from the rock, lies on his side: his final sleep.

I was back at the main road when I heard the sirens - a long cortege of ambulances was bringing back the dead and wounded from a Tiger ambush just 20 kilometres up the road.

The shopkeeper who stoically explained this grim passage then invited me into his shop.

Among the many carvings were old devil-dancing masks for exorcising afflictions. I bought one for preventing cobra bites and another for stopping unkind gossip; he didn't have one to stop bullets.

Trouble in paradise; I asked my driver if he knew about the war. He did. His soldier brother had been killed by Tamils last year. It was dusk as we drove towards Habarane, a small village centrally placed for the main ancient city sites and thus endowed with hotels.

"Where is the war zone?" I asked the driver. "Here," he answered. "Are you scared?" I asked. "Yes."

In the distance there was groaning thunder; lightning flashed. At least, I hoped that was what it was.

Our hotel consisted of luxurious cabins in a forest setting. No war here. There was a pool and a large restaurant where gargantuan northern Europeans towered over their delicate hosts and lumbered around the buffet tables, piling their plates indiscriminately with food from both East and West.

It was said of Ceylon, in the 19th century by the Bishop Hever: "Every prospect pleases, only man is vile."

Late at night from my verandah I listened to the sounds of the forest: croaks and squeaks, sucking, gnawing, struggling.

Sunday: North to Anuradhapura. We were waved through Tiger-trap road-blocks: "Tourists are not a target." A mongoose snaked across the road, a monkey bumbled by the car.

Gold-pinnacled shrines the size of great pyramids, reservoirs and a spider's web of irrigation canals remain from one of the most remarkable of civilisations.

It was abandoned in the 10th century and swallowed by the omniverous jungle, until its rediscovery in 1820. Within these holy sites stands a bo tree tended by an uninterrupted succession of guardians for 2,300 years.

The oldest tree known to the world, it was brought here from Bodh Gaya in India and is said to be a cutting from the tree beneath which the Buddha himself reached enlightenment. Monks in saffron robes moved like flames, leading the faithful from site to site.

Diary from a war zone

We had lunch in a roadside restaurant - rice and wild pig "caught in the jungle" - before moving on to Sigiriya.

Sigiriya is a most glorious folly, an immense red monolith 200 metres high, like a giant tent peg hammered into the wilderness. In the 5th century it was turned into an impenetrable fortress by King Kasyapa, the deranged son of the King of Anuradhapura.

He killed his father and, to escape the vengeance of his brother, retreated to this mountain top, where he lived in splendour for 11 years before unwisely coming down to fight. Only a fool would climb those 1,200 spiralling steps in the midday heat.

At the second terrace I saw the two monumental lion's paws - all that was left of a gigantic sculpted lion, its mouth open, through which only a fool would ascend to the very top of the rock.

There I saw the remains of the gardens, the swimming pools, the dancers' terraces, the stone throne and the outlines of Kasyapa's palace. I stood on this plateau and turned to view a panorama of jungled wilderness hazing away to blue mountains, and peered down at a golden hawk as it peered down on its prey.

Monday: Nature is unnaturally lovely in "the garden of Buddha." Trees already glorious are garlanded with pink bougainvillea as though decorated for the poya festival of the full moon. Emerald, viridian - infinite hues and tints of green stippled with blossoms: oleander, hibiscus, magnolia.

Vines dangle orchids in a stained-glass forest; there are waterfalls and rivers where flower-printed fabrics dry on flowering bushes; and lily ponds where girls bathe in clinging saris, in a moist, sensual vision of Asia.

We drove up the winding road to the old mountain kingdom of Kandy and stopped at a shop selling spices, herbal remedies, Ayurvedic medicine.

"If you like my shop, you must see my backside." I hesitated, but she led me around the side to the back garden, where I was given samples to sniff and taste of tamarind, betel and cardamom. "We have very good number-one top spices," she looked at me smiling. "Cure baldness, sir, increase virility."

In the cosmology of Buddhists, the world is supported on the backs of elephants; they represent life, and their likeness is to be found everywhere - in tribute and for commerce. As we continued deeper into Kandy, I was offered, and bought, a bone statuette of the Hindu elephant god Ganesh, but resisted a bracelet made from "very good elephant pubic hair."

Tuesday: "Little England" is 2,000 metres up in the mountains, in a landscape that more closely resembles Scotland or the Lake District; there are fir trees here, and cool mists drift over the hillsides and valleys, where tea plantations follow their folds like a viridescent sari dropped from the sky. At the top of the mountain is the British tea planters' town of Nuwara Eliya, with its gardens, Edwardian architecture - and the Hill Club.

The Hill Club is rather odd: a gravel drive, kempt lawns, topiary peacocks and a Tudorish, baronial mansion built in 1876. A gentleman's club (one may have temporary membership), it has an austere interior with beamed ceilings, wooden, echoing floors, walls from which hunting trophies - deer, water buffalo and a leopard - stare glassily down.

There are photographs of the royal family and Winston Churchill; an elephant's foot umbrella stand; and a chamber pot in a glass case. One may eat real toast and marmalade.

At supper the Hill Club waiters, wearing white gloves, served "English" food: cauliflower soup, goulash and butter-scotch pudding. Guests must be "properly" dressed. I had coffee and brandy before a roaring fire in a soft, chintzy, Home Counties lounge; and then I discovered the billiards room.

A night servant appeared at the door: "Would Sir like a game?" and with practised tact and delicacy just beat me, over and over again, and politely pocketed the bet as his forefathers must have done for the past 100 years.

Diary from a war zone

I went up to my bedroom, and a servant leaped from the shadows to thrust a hot -water bottle into my hands. I wouldn't have been surprised to have found a teddy bear on my pillow.

Wednesday: The Tamil tea ladies were going to work on the plantations. Their baskets hung down their backs supported by a strap worn around the forehead. The nimble fingers that plucked all day at the small leaves at the top of a type of camelia bush were cold. They wrapped their brilliant shawls and saris tight. I drank some toddy at a liquor stall. Made from fermented coconut sap, it tastes disgustingly of its origins; the tea workers drink it to blur their existence.

We drove past spectacular waterfalls towards Adam's Peak, the holy mountain, on whose summit is a footprint of either Buddha, or the Hindu god Shiva, or (for the Muslims) Adam when he was expelled from paradise, or (for the Christians) St Thomas. All faiths are accommodated and respected.

Thursday: From my hotel balcony in Colombo I watched the lightning dance on the Indian Ocean.

The town was alive with rumours that the Tigers had 20 suicide bombers, lurking with intent, pregnant with explosives. During dinner that night there was a massive bang outside the restaurant and the diners looked at each other and decided that this time it was thunder, it's so difficult to tell in the tropics.

In the road outside, a Japanese car slithered sideways through deep, muddy water into a bullock cart.

Animal life; the symbol of the Sinhalese people is the lion; in legend, the race began when a female ancestor absent-mindedly copulated with a lion. The minority Tamil people call their guerilla army "Tigers".

Lions and Tigers - fighting over the beautiful teardrop of Sri Lanka. In reality, there have never been either lions or tigers in Sri Lanka, only leopards.

Graphic

(Photo: Bob Davis/The Stock House); Glorious folly . . . the fortress of Sigiriya was built in the fifth century by a deranged prince.

Load-Date: November 13, 1995

Tamils kill 36 villagers

THE AUSTRALIAN

October 27, 1995 Friday 0 Edition

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Length: 135 words

Byline: -SOURCE- Reuters

Body

COLOMBO: Sri Lanka's Tamil Tiger guerillas hacked to death or shot at least 36 villagers yesterday and the death toll could rise to 100, the military said. Western diplomatic sources confirmed military reports that the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam advanced 2km through the sparsely populated area in and around the villages of Thamannagama and Kebithigollewa, 220km north-east of Colombo, hacking and shooting as they went.

The death toll so far is 36, but we expect it to go higher," military spokesman Brigadier Sarath Munasinghe said. The dawn attack was the fifth of its kind since Saturday, with the combined death toll of mainly Sinhalese men, women and children well over 130. Police in the nearby ancient capital of Anuradhapuram said the LTTE had used guns, knives and "katties", longhandled machetes.

Load-Date: October 1, 2003

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INTERNATIONAL POLITICS QUIZ; WIN A FASHION WATCH, OR EVEN A TRIP TO TAHITI

The Sun Herald (Sydney, Australia)

October 25, 1987 Sunday

Late Edition

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Section: HOME AND GARDEN; Pg. 96

Length: 1928 words

Body

YOU could win one of hundreds of Lorus watches, or a trip for two to Tahiti. All you have to do is enter The Sun-Herald's giant quiz. The first 10 correct or nearest correct entries drawn each week will win a Lorus watch -either women's or men's - valued at approximately \$50.

At the end of the competition in February, all entries (including those which have not won watches) will go into a major draw. The prize is a trip for two to Tahiti, including airfares, and accommodation for seven days.

Weekly entries must be received no later than the Friday following publication.

The Lorus brand of watch was introduced to Australia only four years ago, and has had a dramatic growth in the jewellery industry and with mass merchants, such as K-Mart.

Lorus Australia is a division of Hattori, the world's largest manufacturer of quartz watches.

Reliability is exceptional. All Lorus watches are backed by a nation-wide service division, and spare parts, such as bands, are readily available.

JUDGE'S NOTE: Write your answers clearly on a sheet of paper. Minor spelling mistakes are accepted as correct answers, and readers are free to send in as many official coupons and sets of answers as they wish. But EACH entry MUST be attached to its own official entry coupon. Multiple entries which are not each accompanied by an official coupon will NOT be accepted. Photocopies of the official entry coupon will NOT be accepted.

* Answers, and winners, from last week's International Sport quiz will be published next Sunday. Next week's quiz: Entertainment

- 1: Which world leader was once filmed sharing a bed with a chimpanzee named Bonzo?
- 2: Which principality had a Hollywood movie star as Princess?
- 3: Which US President did the Watergate scandal bring down?
- 4: Name the Colonel in Libya who has been accused of being the organiser of world terrorism.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS QUIZ WIN A FASHION WATCH, OR EVEN A TRIP TO TAHITI

- 5: Name the American Colonel who secretly sent US weapons to Iran and diverted the profits to Swiss bank accounts.
- 6: Khomeini is the leader of Iran. What is his religious title?
- 7: Which country's government ordered the sinking of the Greenpeace ship Rainbow Warrior in Auckland Harbour?
- 8: America is symbolised by an eagle. Which animal is used to symbolise Russia?
- 9: Which two Middle East countries have been at war since 1980?
- 10: In what divided city would you find Checkpoint Charlie?
- 11: Uncle Sam is the nickname for which country?
- 12: What was Zimbabwe called before it changed its name in 1980?
- 13: To whom did President Ronald Reagan say "Honey, I forgot to duck" after he was shot?
- 14: In what country are the **Tamil Tigers**?
- 15: Fretilin fought for independence against which country's troops?
- 16: What country did Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge rule?
- 17: What country occupies the West Bank and Gaza Strip?
- 18: What country has its troops fighting in Afghanistan?
- 19: Which country has its troops in Mongolia?
- 20: Which country has its troops in Tibet?
- 21: Who was the British author and politician who paid a prostitute, even though he claimed he did not sleep with her?
- 22: Name the Canadian Prime Minister's wife who had scandalous affairs with Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards and others.
- 23: Who is the "Iron Lady"?
- 24: Imelda Marcos left 300 pairs of what in her bedroom after she fled The Philippines?
- 25: In what country has the black leader Nelson Mandela been imprisoned since 1964?
- 26: What organisation killed Lord Mountbatten?
- 27: ETA is a guerilla organisation fighting for a seperate Basque state in the north of what country?
- 28: Yasser Arafat is head of what organisation?
- 29: In what country are the Mujaheddin fighting Soviet troops?
- 30: Of what organisation is Lord Carrington secretary?
- 31: The Baader-Meinhof group was a terrorist organisation operating in what country?
- 32: Who won the Six Day War?

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS QUIZ WIN A FASHION WATCH, OR EVEN A TRIP TO TAHITI

- 33: Which country is carrying out nuclear tests at Mururoa Atol in the Pacific?
- 34: What was the name of the Soviet nuclear power plant that blew up last year?
- 35: What was the name of the American nuclear power plant that almost blew up in 1979?
- 36: Which country calls its parliament the Diet?
- 37: Name the black leader who is running for Democratic nomination for President of the US.
- 38: Name the US Vice President who is favourite to win the Republican nomination for President.
- 39: In 1984 Geraldine ... was the first woman ever to win the Democratic Party's nomination to run for deputy president of the US.
- 40: Name President Jimmy Carter's brother who gave him so much trouble.
- 41: Of what organisation is Oliver Tambo head?
- 42: Of what organisation is Perez de Cuellar general secretary?
- 43: The wife of the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has made an impression for her fashionable clothes. Name her.
- 44: In what country would you find glasnost?
- 45: What has the present Vietnamese government renamed the city of Saigon?
- 46: In which country was a porn star, famed for baring her breasts in public, recently elected to parliament?
- 47: With what colour is President Cory Aquino associated?
- 48: Nobel peace prize winner Olaf Palme was assassinated in what city last year?
- 49: Who won the war of Yom Kippur?
- 50: Which country wanted to test its intercontinental missiles and drop them into the sea near Tasmania?
- 51: Which country has the 'SS' series of nuclear missiles?
- 52: What missile did President Reagan nickname "the peacekeeper"?
- 53: Name the President of Austria and former UN Secretary General who has been accused of being a Nazi during World War II.
- 54: Convicted Nazi war criminal Klaus Barbie was nicknamed the 'Butcher of...'?
- 55: In 1983 US Marines stormed the beaches of which Caribbean island to fight Cubans building an air strip?
- 56: Name the Chilean President who was murdered during the military coup in 1973 which put General Pinochet in power.
- 57: In what country are the Sandinistas?
- 58: The president of which country won this year's Nobel peace prize?
- 59: 'Papa Doc' and 'Baby Doc' were both dictators of which small nation?
- 60: The Contras are being backed by the US to take over which country?

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS QUIZ WIN A FASHION WATCH, OR EVEN A TRIP TO TAHITI

- 61: How many people ended up being jailed for the attack on the Rainbow Warrior protest ship?
- 62: Which country's atomic bombs were exploded at Maralinga?
- 63: Which Asian country is divided into north and south along the 38th parallel?
- 64: Prime Minister Hawke frequently plays what type of sport with George Shultz, US Secretary of State?
- 65: The recent Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting was held in which city?
- 66: President Raoul Alfonsin took over from a military junta in which South American country after it lost a war?
- 67: A Prince of Holland, a past Prime Minister of Japan and others were linked in a bribery scandal involving which aircraft manufacturer in the 1970s?
- 68: Name the woman whose dalliance with Gary Hart ruined his chance to run for the White House. (Hint - rhymes with nice.)
- 69: Name the woman, secretary of Colonel Oliver North, who shredded documents in the name of duty.
- 70: In which country did a son succeed his assassinated mother as Prime Minister?
- 71: Which country manufactures the Exocet missile which has hit both British and American ships in recent times?
- 72: In which of these countries does the United States not have a military base - West Germany, Britain, France, The Philippines, or South Korea?
- 73: In which of these countries does the Soviet Union not have a military base- East Germany, Vietnam, Mongolia, or Burma?
- 74: The Sultan of which country wanted to donate \$14 million to the Contras but sent it to the wrong account at a Swiss bank.
- 75: To what country does Hong Kong go in 1997?
- 76: What was the flight number of the Korean airliner shot down by Soviet fighters?
- 77: Chad is defending itself against an invasion from which country?
- 78: In which country would you find Palestinians, Hezbollah, Syrians, Maronite Christians, Israelis, Druze, Amal and Shi'ites all fighting each other?
- 79: In which country is Solidarity illegal?
- 80: The book Spycatcher is about the secret service in which country?
- 81: What country did President Ronald Reagan call an "evil empire"?
- 82: The Dalai Lama is the exiled leader of what country?
- 83: How many people died in the bombing of the Rainbow Warrior by the underwater frogmen?
- 84: What does Argentina call the Falkland Islands?
- 85: Timoci Bavadra was Prime Minister of what country before a military coup this year?
- 86: The Bay of Pigs was the site of a botched CIA attempt to overthrow the leaders of which country in 1961?
- 87: Chiang Kai Shek escaped communist China in 1949 to set up a nationalist government on which island?

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS QUIZ WIN A FASHION WATCH, OR EVEN A TRIP TO TAHITI

- 88: Name the woman who took over from her husband after he was murdered and went on to become President of The Philippines.
- 89: Which current Prime Minister had his intestines tied to lose weight?
- 90: Name the Colonel who overthrew the government of Fiji?
- 91: Sweden keeps on finding which country's submarines in its harbours?
- 92: Hiroshima was the first city in the world to be hit by an atomic bomb. Which was the second?
- 93: Yuri ..., a former head of the KGB, was Soviet leader for only 15 months before he died in 1984. Name him.
- 94: Which country's troops are involved in fighting in Sri Lanka?
- 95: Where are the Kanaks rebelling against France?
- 96: Which Middle Eastern leader was assassinated by the soldiers he was saluting in 1981?
- 97: Which British political leader ended his career in disgrace after an affair with a male model and a charge of conspiracy to murder?
- 98: What Irish pop singer organised worldwide concerts to raise money for famine?
- 99: The actress Melina Mercouri is minister for culture in which country?
- 100: Name the Prime Minister of the early 1970s who used to start the day by drinking a cup of his own urine.

ANSWERS AND WINNERS

Answers to the Australian **Women** Quiz: 1: Hazel. 2: Colleen McCullough. 3: Judy Davis. 4: Dame Nellie Melba. 5: May Gibbs. 6: Sonia McMahon. 7: Swimming. 8: Dame Joan Sutherland. 9: Rowena Wallace. 10: Julie Anthony. 11: Caroline Chisholm. 12: Abigail. 13: Madge. 14: Judy Johnson. 15: Jana. 16: Morosi. 17: Governor Macquarie. 18: Byrne. 19: Marjorie Jackson. 20: Reddy.

21: Dame Edna Everage. 22: Olivia Newton John. 23: Mother. 24: Justic Elizabeth Evatt. 25: South Australia. 26: Clancy. 27: Walker. 28: Australian **Women's** Weekly. 29: Ita Buttrose. 30: 7.30 Report. 31: Stoner. 32: Evonne Cawley. 33: Senator Susan Ryan. 34: Heather McKay. 35: Nevin. 36: Jan Stephenson. 37: Perth. 38: Grace. 39: Shane Gould. 40: Pumpkin scones.

41: MacPherson. 42: Andrew Peacock. 43: Greer. 44: Janine Haines. 45: Ruth Cracknell. 46: Hickson. 47: Bung. 48: Margaret. 49: Anne Deveson. 50: Picnic At Hanging Rock. 51: Paula Duncan. 52: Dame Zara Bates. 53: Lisa Curry. 54: Orange. 55: Cilento. 56: Morse. 57: Never. 58: Plumb. 59: Maggie Tabberer. 60: Thornton.

61: Kylie Minogue. 62: Jackson. 63: Police. 64: Margaret Smith. 65: Mitchell. 66: Rubenstein. 67: MacDonald. 68: Kramer. 69: The Pyjama Girl. 70: Blue Hills. 71: Belinda Green. 72: First **female** national airline pilot. 73: Australia. 74: Glynis Nunn. 75: Toppino. 76: Kerrie. 77: Jackie Weaver. 78: Sally Boyden. 79: Carla Zampatti. 80: Blanche d'Alpuget.

81: Truganini. 82: Joan Lindsay. 83: Anderson. 84: June Salter. 85: Lyons. 86: Castles. 87: Cooking. 88: Crosio. 89: Pattie. 90: MacKellar. 91: Poetry. 92: Elizabeth Jolley. 93: Pamela Stephenson. 94: North. 95: Ballet. 96: Lady Cilento. 97: Atkinson. 98: Broken Hill. 99: Mum Shirl. 100: Wake.

Winners are: Stephen Gorham, Port Macquarie; Ann Stuart, Cronulla; M. Nolan, Randwick; Elizabeth Hall, Newtown; Elizabeth Easton, Haberfield; Bernard Quilty, Brungle via Gundagai; J. Grattan, Earlwood; Mavis Rowe, Mumbil; Judy Freney, Cronulla; S. & W. Ermert, Turramurra.

Graphic

Illus: Coupon

Load-Date: July 20, 2007

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REPEAT

The Canadian Press (CP)

August 12, 1990 Sunday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 686 words

Body

--- REPEAT --- ERAVUR, Sri Lanka (AP) _ Suspected Tamil gunmen rampaged through five fishing villages, killing Muslims in the street with machine-gun fire and machetes, military officials said Sunday. They reported at least 119 people were slain. A spokesman for the **Tamil Tigers** guerrilla group denied responsibility for the killings. The killings were the latest in a round of intensifying violence that pits Tamil separatists against the Sinhalese-dominated government and Sinhalese and Muslims. Although Muslims claim neutrality in the war, the government said Tamils suspect them of siding with the army. A Tamil politician said Saturday night's attacks were in retaliation for the killing of 33 Tamil villagers by Muslims earlier Saturday. At least 450 villagers have been killed on the island country's eastern coast in a wave of reprisal violence in the last nine days. The victims include 305 Muslims, 85 Tamils and 60 Sinhalese, military officials and politicians said. In Eravur, one of the villages hit in Saturday night's attack, puddles of blood were on the sidewalk. **Women** implored visitors to help keep them safe, and young men surrounded army officers demanding weapons. "They have killed everybody," one weeping woman told a delegation of Muslim politicians and soldiers. "There is no one to look after us. Please don't leave." Led by Muslim religious leaders, villagers gathered up corpses in trucks for a mass-burial. Residents and military officials said Sunday at least 119 people were killed in the five villages and an additional 40 were injured. Brig. Upali Seneviratne, top army officer in the province, said at least 40 Tamil gunmen attacked the villages. "They broke into three groups and shot at everybody in sight," he said. The dead included 29 **women** and 31 children, one of them a nine-day-old girl, he said. Residents said the attackers broke down doors and dragged villagers into the streets. After a 90-minute raid on Eravur, the gunmen moved to adjacent villages, military officials said. One of the villages is called Saddam Hussein, named after the Iraqi leader who sent construction aid several years ago. The villages are clustered north of Batticaloa on the east coast, about 200 kilometres east of Colombo. On Aug. 3, gunmen raided another eastern village and massacred 140 Muslims in two mosques. The incident set off a chain of killings. "The two communities are on an annihilation spree. Nobody knows how many more will die before it all ends," said Mahalingam Savajilingam, a leader of the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization, a former guerrilla group which gave up arms for politics. He said Saturday night's killings were carried out by the Tigers after 33 Tamils at a refugee camp, including eight patients in a hospital, were killed by Muslims using government-supplied weapons. "This led to the **Tamil Tigers** attacking the villages. . . and killing innocent Muslims," he said. The **Tamil Tigers**, fighting for an independent Tamil homeland in the north and east, denied the charges and said the killings are being carried out by government agents to discredit their organization. "Why should we attack Muslims?" said Lawrence Thilakar, a Tiger leader, in a telephone call Sunday. "We need the fullest co-operation of the Muslim people, who are also suppressed at the hands of the government." Thilakar spoke from London, where the Tigers maintain an office. "This dangerous game being played by the government will not last long," he said. "Very soon, the truth will come out." Tamil separatists resumed a seven-year-old war with the Sinhalese-dominated government June 11 after a 13-month ceasefire. At least 3,200 combatants have been killed in the latest phase of fighting. Hundreds of civilians have also been killed, but there is no precise figure. Tamils, mainly Hindu, make up 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million people. Sinhalese, overwhelmingly Buddhist, represent 75 per cent and Muslims seven per cent. An

REPEAT

estimated 14,000 people have been killed since 1983 when Tamil rebels took up arms, claiming they were discriminated against by the Sinhalese.

Load-Date: October 16, 2002

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Sri-Lanka, Bgt

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Sri-Lanka, Bgt

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Load-Date: October 16, 2002

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Sri Lankan navy kills four rebels outside harbour

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

September 11, 1995, Monday, BC Cycle 10:49 Central European Time

Copyright 1995 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 155 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

The Sri Lankan navy killed four Tamil rebels believed to have been planning a suicide bomb attack on naval ships at a northern harbour, a military spokesman said Monday.

The rebels, including two women, were detected outside the main Kankesanthurai harbour Sunday. The port is the main base of the Lankan navy which patrols the northeastern coastal areas.

The military spokesman said the rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) had underwater equipment and powerful bombs.

Two month ago rebels sank a naval vessel at the same harbour, and two weeks ago sank two ships off the northeastern coast of Mullaitivu.

Military officials said the rebels' main objective seemed to be to weaken naval power before the government launches any major offensive against them in the north.

Rebels are fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and eastern parts of the country.
dpa bw ks

Load-Date: September 11, 1995

Rebel deserter and family members killed in eastern Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

July 15, 1996, Monday, BC Cycle 09:23 Central European Time

Copyright 1996 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 146 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Tamil separatist have killed a deserter and three other family members in a grenade attack in eastern Sri Lanka, military sources said Monday.

A group of rebels stormed the house of one of their former male fighters in the Sttandy area of eastern Batticaloa district, 310 kilometres from the capital Colombo around midnight Saturday and flung a hand grenade, the sources said.

Three women were killed in the attack.

Rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who fight in the north and eastern parts of the island for their independent homeland have issued strict warnings against any of their members deserting the group as they fear that information could leak to security forces.

Rebels in the past have executed some members who attempted to decamp or for acting against the movement which has been known to maintain strict discipline. dpa dv mb

Load-Date: July 15, 1996

Seven women rebels killed in an ambush in northern Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

October 26, 1999, Tuesday, BC Cycle 09:22 Central European Time

Copyright 1999 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 143 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Government troops ambushed a group of women rebels in northern Sri Lanka, killing at least seven of them and recovering their weapons, military officials said Tuesday.

Troops ambushed the rebels, armed with machine guns and small arms, when they apparently were heading for an attack in the Ampakamam area, 320 kilometres north east of the capital on Monday.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have a large number of women cadres and have carried out several major attacks with the assistance of the females.

In a separate incident, one soldier was killed and eight others were injured at Uyilankulam, 290 kilometers northeast of the capital, when rebels set off a claymore mine under a bus carrying military personnel.

Tamil are fighting in the north and eastern parts of Sri Lanka for an independent homeland for minority Tamils. dpa
ad jh

Load-Date: October 26, 1999

Six civilians killed in crossfire in eastern Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

June 13, 1995, Tuesday, BC Cycle 12:15 Central European Time

Copyright 1995 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 136 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

At least six civilians including four women were killed Tuesday when they were caught in crossfire between government troops and separatist Tamil rebels in eastern Sri Lanka.

According to civilian sources the incident occurred on the Mahd Chenkaladi road in the eastern Batticaloa district. Rebel and military casualties were not known.

A military spokesman confirmed an incident involving civilians in the area but could not give casualty figures.

Tamil rebels from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have waged a war against the government with the aim of carving out an independent homeland for the minority Tamils living in the north and east of the country.

An estimated 33,000 people mainly civilians have died and thousands more displaced in the ongoing 12 year old conflict. dpa da kr

Load-Date: June 13, 1995

38 Tamil civilians reported killed in rebel attacks in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

November 21, 1999, Sunday, BC Cycle 08:15 Central European Time

Copyright 1999 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 156 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

At least 38 minority Tamil civilians have been killed in rebel artillery and mortar attacks in north-west Sri Lanka during heavy fighting between government troops and rebels, the defence ministry said Sunday.

The civilians were caught in the attacks by the rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in the Madhu area, some 300 kilometres north of Colombo, the ministry said.

Fifty-six civilians, including 16 Tamil **women** and 25 children injured in the fighting in recent days, have been evacuated to a hospital in Vavuniya, about 60 kilometres east of Madhu.

The ministry said rebels had launched on Saturday night a heavy artillery and mortar attack on the church in Madhu where civilians had taken refuge.

The government is enforcing a strict censorship on military related news.

Rebels are fighting in the north and eastern parts of Sri Lanka for an independent homeland for the minority Tamils. dpa da pt

Load-Date: November 29, 1999

Letters to the Editor

The Daily Telegraph (Sydney, Australia)

October 22, 2002, Tuesday

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Section: FEATURES-TYPE- LETTER-COLUMN- LETTERSPHOTO; Pg. 18

Length: 2158 words

Body

Why Indonesia's vulnerable

As tragic as the bombing in Bali is, the message was very clear. Inflict as much damage as possible to let the leaders of Indonesia know that terrorists are alive and well, and well entrenched in South-East Asia.

This is the largest Muslim population in the world, and an ideal base of operations for these fools.

The area is ripe for a group like this to influence a group of people of poor economic status.

The initial response of the Indonesian Government says it all. President Megawati Sukarnoputri is terrified of backlash from the Muslim population. These groups do not care if their Islamic state is in Palestine, Afghanistan or Indonesia. The Western world needs to unite and put this nonsense to bed.

MATP

Australia, we are not isolated any more.

Kevin McCrohan,

Eastwood

The Prime Minister was correct when he labelled arguments that blame our support for the US-led war on terrorism for the atrocity in Bali as morally bankrupt.

Regrettably though, we do bear some culpability in this matter. In spite of the events of September 11, too many in the West have continued to understate the threat that Islamic terrorism poses.

The tragedy is that to date we have failed to act pre-emptively and decisively against those terrorist organisations that so clearly represent a deadly threat to us.

In particular, it is those in the West who persist in appeasing and justifying terrorism, while mindlessly denouncing any US initiatives designed to deal with the problem, who bear the most guilt.

The tragic events in Bali, should not lead us to doubt our cause, but rather should prompt us to redouble our efforts to prosecute and win the war on terror.

Jason Monaghan,

Letters to the Editor

Woy Woy

Ehsan Haidary (Letters, October 21) tries to convince us that we are to blame for the Bali bombing due to the foreign policies of Western countries.

Instead, he should research how Saudi children are educated. Lessons in mathematics, for instance, contain hate and vitriol. For example: if there are three Jews and you kill two, how many are left?

The general text and education programs in Saudi Arabia are filled with hatred towards Jews and the West.

Maybe the writer can inform us on the failure of Iraqi foreign policy, the Kuwait invasion, gas attacks and chemical weapons programs.

Does Mr Haidary know how much it costs to feed 10,000 Iraqi children as opposed to the cost of a nuclear weapon? Possibly he thinks Osama bin Laden is a poor boy made good.

As for his assumption that the US is responsible for trade sanctions on Iraq, I would like to make him aware of an organisation called the United Nations, but why let facts get in the road of rhetoric.

David Sargent,

Kambah ACT

I was in Chatswood shopping centre on Sunday when the call came to observe a minute's silence for the tragic Bali bomb victims.

I sat with my head bowed, but nobody else did. The chatter went on and workmen even kept drilling and staff kept serving.

The Australian spirit that we have always prided ourselves on is all but dead due to the influx of migrants. They do not care about us, nor our culture.

I also have noticed that we do not pull together in a community-minded way. As the drought wreaks havoc in the country, people continue to wash their cars on their front lawns, wasting thousands of litres of water on stupid lawns, or even hosing down concrete driveways.

Bali bombings and droughts ... it does not affect them personally so they simply do not care.

Glenn Robertson,

Oatley

In the aftermath of the shocking terrorist attack in Bali I must say it similarly shocked me to hear that the Australian Government has resumed its training of the Indonesian military.

Indonesia's military has a terrible record of human rights abuses and terrorist acts. Not only has it been involved in mass murder during the Suharto coup and genocide in East Timor, but is today committing atrocities in Aceh and West Papua.

The Australian Government's decision to have the SAS train the Kopassus special forces -- which has been supporting fundamentalist extremists in Ambon and has been implicated in many terror bombings across Indonesia -- is an unthinkable one.

Why, with the memories of the Bali bombings fresh in our minds is the Australian government training terrorists?

This policy is an abomination; it will not end terrorism and does no service to its recent victims.

Leigh Hughes,

Letters to the Editor

Chippendale

As many young Australians do, I went with two of my mates to Bali for a good time 13 years ago. Apart from holidays I have had since with my wife and young son, the Bali trip was the best holiday I ever had.

Three 22-year-old blokes in a part of the world that was laidback and relaxed. The Balinese people, even though they had few possessions or money, were so welcoming and happy. Bali was a place that seemed so far from the turmoil of the world.

That feeling has been taken away with the cowardly act that has taken the lives and injured so many young mates that went there for the same reasons we went there 13 years ago.

My deepest sympathies go to all who are affected.

Bill MacLean,

Bensville

I have just returned to my desk after responding to an urgent appeal for B+ blood that is in short supply to treat the Bali victims.

I feel their pain as my own, just like how I felt after my 26-year-old cousin and her baby child were burned to death when the **Tamil Tigers** blew up the Central Bank Building in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

In that attack, terrorists killed more than 100 innocent civilians and injured 1400.

I condemn such deeds whether in Bali, Colombo or elsewhere -- without any qualifications or reservations -- as barbaric, and inhuman, no matter what reasons the perpetrators furnish.

However, in the wake of the Colombo bombing, I vividly remember some Australian politicians (especially in the ALP) and some sections of the Australian media (especially the SBS) making suggestions that it was the result of not addressing the grievances of the perpetrators of that horrific crime and advocated negotiations with them.

I wonder whether those parties would now advocate addressing the grievances of Jemaar Islamiyah or al-Qaeda or whomever were behind the barbarous terrorist attack in Bali.

Asoka Subhawickrama,

Merrylands

Not alone in your grief

To the thousands of people who have lost a loved one in the Bali atrocity, never, ever think you are alone.

When your grief seems untenable, when you feel so alone without them by your side, remember that the love of all Australians is with you and your family.

Every day we see the images on our televisions, and every day we are moved to tears by the heartache felt by you.

The heart of Australia is immeasurable and will surround you always.

Ali Curtis, Five Dock

This very sad but proud Australian wishes to thank the first-class effort in Bali by the Royal Australian Air Force, police, paramedics, doctors, hospitals and our political leaders both federal and state.

As the nation grieves we will never forget those who were murdered by evil terrorists.

Letters to the Editor

God bless all the victims and their loved ones. Rest in peace our Australian brothers and sisters.

A. Przibilla,

Seaford Rise, SA

ALP spinning out of control

The party faithful can only hope the Cunningham election disaster provides both the NSW and national ALP with a timely wake-up call.

NSW secretary Eric Roozendaal needs to stop taking voters and members for granted. Electorates should be regarded as communities with specific local needs instead of squares on a factional chessboard.

Opposition Leader Simon Crean needs to put all those polished advisers with their polling, economics degrees and "spin" out of a job. He should worry less about being a small target and more about connecting with the Australian people with decisive politics.

Rohen Conners,

Cheltenham

Labor's loss in Cunningham has much to do with local disenchantment with the way the party has treated its faithful.

I would also suggest that many people are becoming alienated within Labor because of the undue influence of certain groups such as the women's lobby.

As Labor has committed itself to 40 per cent of winnable seats going to women by 2012, this must mean more bureaucratic interference in local pre-selection processes to enforce the 40 per cent rule.

If Labor continues on with such Noddyland policies, it will soon discover that such policies only disenfranchise rank and file members who are showing a propensity to support non-Labor alternatives.

Unless this slide is corrected, Labor faces a long time in the political wilderness.

Alan Barron,

Grovedale, Vic

Why is it Simon Crean's nightmare (Daily Telegraph, October 21)? If the people of Wollongong want no mining in their electorate, their forests to become jungles of wattle and woody weeds and greater fire hazards, their food supplies to be in jeopardy and to play footsies with Saddam Hussein -- good for them.

Ellis Cluff,

Coonabarabran

Proxy solution

About 220,000 proxy votes had been received by the NRMA returning officer prior to the close of voting on October 14.

Is it not expected that the 2000 or so votes denied to members who attended the meeting would have affected the result. To save further expense, an application should be made to the court to declare the poll on the known proxies.

The meeting chairman announced that, if elected chairman, Sir Lawrence Street intended to vote undirected proxies 50/50 for/against the resolutions. This would be fair and should be done.

Letters to the Editor

Only if the result would have been affected by the 2000 votes lost at the meeting should another meeting be held.

If the remaining pro-Whitlam directors are dismissed by the poll, their recent appointee directors should immediately resign.

Bill Snodgrass,

Peakhurst

Crusade controversy

I take point of issue with Moustafa Kattar on the crusades (Letters, October 18). Prior to the European invasion by Islam, the crusades never existed.

The Christian crusades of the middle ages arose to defend Christian nations and cities from attack by Islam. History has recorded that Islam was the one destroying Christian cities and nations.

Christian civilisation was preserved only through the efforts of Christian kings who lead the crusades. Islam is not focused on peace but domination through fear and violence.

Andrew Devlin,

Corrimal

Timely advice on work hours

Is Kathryn Gleeson ("Quality time doing nothing," Letters, October 16) confusing overtime with shift work? The two concepts are very different.

Overtime is exactly as it sounds, work done over and above normal working hours.

This is done by masochistic people who have nothing better to do with their time and is a concept that should not be encouraged. Nothing is as important as your family and the time you get to spend together.

The weekend and after normal business hours work that people do is called shift work.

This type of job suits some people who do not want the 9-5 grind. These people can also do overtime if they wish, but they are not forced to do so.

Therefore, it is erroneous for Ms Gleeson to comments that she would never be able to do her shopping, go on a family picnic or see a movie because people are not doing overtime. People work at nights and weekends because there is a demand.

Malcolm Brothers, Sutherland

To the point

So the ALP will not sell Hunters Hill or Erskinville schools and now have dumped the deal to sell off Callan Park. After all these years the Labor hierarchy is starting to listen to the people. An election must be near.

Terry Malm, Blacktown

To all of those people who said that Steve Waugh was too old and needed to be replaced I say thank you. 103 not out -- enough said.

Greg Cumberland, North Parramatta

Letters to the Editor

Without wanting to be too harsh, the comments of most of the HSC students in your feature (Daily Telegraph, October 21) showed an incapacity to properly understand major issues. I trust they do better in their exams.

Ross Johnston Rockdale

Kind words

A very big thank you to the man who found my pram at the domestic airport carpark.

I had picked up my elderly mum and had my two children (4 1/2 and six months) with me and was feeling the effects of the flu. I thought I had packed everyone and everything back in the car, but was wrong.

A man called me later that night to say he had found my pram left in the carpark, with a blue baby book inside containing my contact details. He then took the pram back to Qantas, who kindly kept it for me.

It was a great relief to get it back and I cannot thank him enough. I hope someone pays you a similar kindness soon.

Toni Stoddart, Panania

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Letters should be no more than 250 words, clearly typed or neatly hand written. Name and address and phone number must be supplied for verification.

Letters may be edited.

Load-Date: October 21, 2002

Politics of the desperate

The New Zealand Herald
September 22, 2001 Saturday

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Section: NEWS; World

Length: 2273 words

Body

Beneath the mountains of words and the torrent of pictures about the United States' war on terrorism and the posturing of the Taleban this week, it is easy to lose the scale of the human toll.

Think about it. At least 6566 people are dead because of the terrorist act of a small cell of hijackers. That includes the 6333 people presumed dead at the World Trade Center in New York alone. And that is just the update from yesterday, not the final death toll.

The description "unprecedented" fails to convey the gut-wrenching scale. It is a figure without parallel in the history of terrorism.

It has drawn a response that is also without parallel. Within hours, President George W. Bush swore the United States would use the imposing might of its military power in retribution. Now he is marshalling an international posse to strike back.

But the attack is not a random lashing out at the hated Western foe. This calculated use of terrorism as a political weapon draws on a long inheritance, and a violent response by the United States is part of the calculation. If the United States causes high civilian losses and creates more martyrs, Osama bin Laden and his heirs will reap a political reward.

While bin Laden's methods have caused public expressions of revulsion throughout Arab and Muslim states, the grievances that motivate him are shared by hundreds of millions.

The issues with which bin Laden justifies his actions - US support for the Israeli occupation, the continuing military presence of the US military in the Middle East, economic sanctions by the West - are widely supported. The solution may ultimately have to be political rather than military.

Stephen Zunes, an associate professor of politics at the University of San Francisco and a Middle East analyst, says the West cannot ignore the fact that these feelings resonate widely, even if only a minority support terrorist actions.

"A tiny minority," said Zunes, "but a tiny minority among 300 million Arabs can be enough to recruit a few hundred people who are willing to kill themselves and a lot of people with them."

Zunes says terrorists usually have a dangerous mix of psychopathic tendencies and political frustrations.

Politics of the desperate

"It's an act of the powerless who are frustrated and cannot advance their cause by more traditional means. I think it's no accident that so many terrorists come out of the Middle East where there are very few democratic institutions [through which they can] express their grievances."

Terrorism's very roots can be traced to the Middle East. Acts of terror for political means began to emerge during the Roman rule of Palestine, when a Jewish order called the Zealots committed random murders in busy crowds to stir an uprising. At the beginning of the second millennium, a Shi'ite Muslim sect called the Assassins would kill their Sunni rivals to purify Islam.

The use of the word terrorism comes from the French Revolution, when gangs executed people deemed enemies of the revolution.

As a tactic it has evolved and changed, according to the cause, throughout the ages. But it emerged as a global phenomenon in the 20th century, particularly the second half. And it was by no means the exclusive tool of Middle Easterners.

Independence movements such as that of the Basque separatists in Spain, indigenous people in places such as Africa, shaking off the clutches of their colonial rulers, and fanatics with a warped view of the world, such as Timothy McVeigh, all used terrorism.

Some of them will forever have a place in the annals of evil, but not all of them are so regarded by history. One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. And it is not always easy to distinguish which is which.

The Irish leader Michael Collins led a band of guerrillas called the Irish Volunteers, which later took the name the Irish Republican Army during the 1920s. When a movie about his life emphasised the statesman-like aspect of his character, supporters of Britain's continued role in Northern Ireland criticised the film as glorifying the IRA, the notorious group whose bombings caused widespread panic throughout the 1970s and 1980s.

Others whose organisations have carried out terrorist attacks have gone on to stride the world stage. Leaders of the FLN in Algeria formed the first post-colonial government after a bloody campaign against their French rulers. Some of Israel's first prime ministers headed the Zionist terrorist groups in the 1940s. Even Nelson Mandela's ANC used some terrorist tactics during its fight against apartheid in South Africa, though such tactics were denounced by many within the party.

A marked change that did occur in the second half of the 20th century was the increasing toll of civilian casualties. .

Algeria's FLN provided an early example of widespread and deliberate targeting of civilians when in 1955 it changed its policy of only attacking military and government targets and turned on ordinary men, women and children. It marked a turning point in the country's war of independence and inspired other rebel groups.

In the late 1960s terrorism changed shape again. People's social and political awareness grew while technology, communications, and media advances made terror a weapon that could attract attention out of proportion with its actual effects.

In 1968, Palestinian militants hijacked an Israeli El Al plane and forced it to divert to Algiers. The hostages were held for 40 days. In 1970, Palestinian gunmen forced three planes with a total of 400 people on board to fly to the desert in Jordan. They blew up the planes after releasing most of the hostages. In 1974, the US-based Symbionese Liberation Army kidnapped American publishing heiress Patty Hearst - then promptly converted her to their cause.

The Basque group ETA began its independence campaign of bombings and assassinations by killing a Spanish secret police chief in San Sebastian in 1968. Elsewhere in Europe, the IRA began fighting more ferociously. Though the IRA has since embarked on a peace process, republican breakaway groups remain a threat.

In Sri Lanka, the Tamil Tigers have become a feared force since the early 1980s and have been more prolific at using suicide attacks than even the Palestinians.

Politics of the desperate

In Africa, Uganda continues to be brutalised by the Lord's Resistance Army, a Christian group that has become one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world.

By most common definitions, terrorism is an act carried out by a small politically motivated group that does not have the resources or the numbers to mount a regular war.

But accusations of state-sponsored terrorism are not uncommon. Iran - itself accused of supporting terrorists such as Hizbollah - has claimed to be a victim. When a US ship opened fire on a civilian Iran Air plane over the Gulf in 1988, Iran denounced it as a terrorist act.

Israel, an undoubted victim of terrorism, stands accused itself because of its strikes on Palestinians. Telephone bombs, booby-trapped cars, helicopter gunships and killing squads have wiped out militants in the West Bank and Gaza during the latest push.

There have been suggestions that bin Laden's handiwork has been carried out in cahoots with Iraq. Former Central Intelligence Agency director James Woolsey has warned against blaming bin Laden alone for last week's attacks.

Soon after the attacks he suggested there was some evidence that Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was linked to the four hijackings, as well as to the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993.

Woolsey's theory was given more credence this week when it emerged that one of the suspected hijackers, Mohammed Atta, had met Iraqi intelligence officials in Europe early this year.

Whoever was involved in the attacks, bin Laden has created a reputation as a terrorist without equal, if for no other reason than the sheer scale and audacity of the plans he has pulled off. His brand of terrorism involves masterminding attacks against the world's sole superpower - something he is forced to carry out from an adopted homeland, given that his own country has disowned him.

How can he possibly achieve anything?

An Australian Government expert on terrorism, who asked not to be named, said history revealed many organisations who had succeeded through terrorism.

"In some cases, groups have done deals with the government. The more moderate elements of Eta have done a deal with the Government. The Palestinians, through terrorism, managed to get the Oslo peace accord."

Bin Laden regards the withdrawal of the Americans from Beirut after attacks on US installations there in the 1980s a success too.

But in President Bush's own words, his new global coalition will hunt down Osama bin Laden and take him dead or alive. It will punish those who harbour terrorists. It has declared war on terrorism.

This is no ordinary battle. Bin Laden is the declared target but his network, al Qaeda (the base), is no ordinary terrorist group. Unlike the anti-colonialist campaigners who had a narrowly defined aim, bin Laden is working across national boundaries and with a diffuse organisation.

David Long, a former official in the US State Department and an expert on terrorism, says bin Laden is a facilitator.

"Is Osama bin Laden the exclusive font of terrorist evil? No," Long told the New Yorker. "This is an informal brotherhood we are seeing now, whose members can draw on each other. Bin Laden's organisation is not a terrorist organisation in the traditional sense. It's more a clearing house from which other groups elicit funds, training, and logistical support. It's a chameleon, an amoeba, which constantly changes shape according to the whims of its leadership, and that leadership is Osama bin Laden."

Politics of the desperate

So can terrorism ever be thwarted? German and Italian authorities stamped out the leftist Baader-Meinhof and the Red Brigades during the 1970s with an aggressive effort to arrest their leaders. But Stephen Zunes says these two organisations probably wilted more because they did not have a wide support base.

The Australian source agrees that terrorist organisations usually implode rather than get blown up. "To some extent, what's happened in the past is that groups have lost impetus because people have grown older and less interested in exposing themselves to that kind of lifestyle.

"The Baader-Meinhof (group), for example, wasn't attracting young recruits any more and they all retired. But if you have got an organisation that is attracting young recruits, then you have a continuing existence."

It is accepted that bin Laden has plenty of followers to draw upon. So can he be beaten in this war on terror?

The Australian source is unsure. "It's more a containable situation. You can disrupt and take out some people, but you can't stop it. You can lift the threshold, make it more difficult, but you can't eliminate it."

He believes that in tandem with any military response, the US will have to adapt its Middle Eastern policy, as unpalatable as this may seem to Washington. "I think it is an issue they are going to have to think about," he said.

Taking out bin Laden would have an impact because of his charisma as a leader, but it would not end the problem.

"I can't think of anyone else who has his stature," said the source. "I think it would be a very significant thing if he was taken out. I don't think it would eliminate the problem, but it would certainly set it back a long way - a bit like when Abdullah Ocalan was taken out of the PKK." (Ocalan, the leader of the Kurdish organisation, was arrested by Turkish special forces in 1999 after months on the run.)

Rather than die out, bin Laden's network would probably splinter. "That's what happened with the Palestinians back in the 1980s," said the source. "You get elements break off because they have dominant leaders."

Zunes believes the US cannot win if it perceives the fight as a war. He advocates commando-style raids by special forces on specific targets. But he thinks the most important thing Washington can do is shift its foreign policy.

"The issues bin Laden talks about, the vast majority of Arabs agree with. I don't think bin Laden himself would be happy [if American addressed the issues], but I think the number of recruits and collaborators would drop and the ability to maintain a network and do some damage would be substantially weakened.

"If we end up alienating people by overreacting and bombing the bejesus out of some Muslim country, it's going to be harder to curb the problem," said Zunes. "If there's any logic to bin Laden's madness it is to provoke an overreaction by the US. This will end up killing a lot of innocent people and the survivors will become the fresh recruits."

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?reportID=61063> Full coverage: Terror in America

Pictures:

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?storyID=216552&thesection=Story&thesubsection=&reportID=61063>

Day 1

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?storyID=216637&thesection=Story&thesubsection=&reportID=61063>

Video

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?storyID=216537&thesection=news&thesubsection=world> The fatal flights

Emergency telephone numbers:

<http://www.ual.com> United Airlines

Politics of the desperate

<http://www.aa.com> American Airlines

www.mfat.govt.nz NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade

US Embassy in Wellington (recorded info): 04 472 2068

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?storyID=216785&thesection=Story&thesubsection=&reportID=61063>
Victims and survivors

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?storyID=216931&thesection=Story&thesubsection=&reportID=61063>
How to donate to firefighters' fund

See also:

<http://www.nzherald.co.nz/storydisplay.cfm?reportID=61564> Full coverage: America responds

Load-Date: December 18, 2002

End of Document

Fifty die in Tamil raid

Sunday Mail (Queensland, Australia)

September 19, 1999, Sunday

Copyright 1999 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Section: WORLD; Pg. 69

Length: 166 words

Body

SUSPECTED Tamil Tiger guerrillas went on a pre-dawn rampage in eastern Sri Lanka yesterday, massacring about 50 civilians and a paramilitary home guard.

Members of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam raided Punchisigiriya village, in Ampara district, attacking civilians with knives and swords, authorities said.

Officials said victims were asleep when the attack began.

The massacre was just 350km from the capital Colombo, where the Australian cricket team is playing in a tour match against a Sri Lankan Cricket Board XI.

Military reinforcements, sent to the village after the attack, found the bodies of seven children, 17 women and 23 men, officials said.

They said the attackers were believed to be mainly women cadres of the LTTE.

The massacre came after 21 Tamil civilians were killed in an air force bombing raid in the north-eastern district of Mullaitivu on Wednesday. Officials in Ampara said they believed the village massacre could be a revenge attack by the Tamil Tiger rebels.

Load-Date: March 1, 2002

Woman bomber carried out assassination in Sri Lanka, police claim

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

October 28, 1994, Friday, BC Cycle 15:33 Central European Time

Copyright 1994 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 178 words

Dateline: Colombo, Oct 28

Body

Investigators probing the bomb attack which killed Sri Lanka's main opposition leader and presidential candidate Lionel Gamini Dissanayake confirmed Friday that the assassination was carried out by a **female** suicide bomber.

Senior Superintendent of Police A. Samarasekera said according to evidence available so far the bomber was about 25 years of age, of medium height and dark brown in complexion. The explosive device had been strapped to the body of the bomber, he said.

Dissanayake was killed with 57 others including three frontline parliamentarians of his United National Party while addressing an election rally eight kilometres north of the capital Colombo on Monday.

Local investigators say Tamil rebels from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) are suspected to have carried out the attack. The rebels have firmly denied any involvement.

Security in and around Colombo has been doubled a day ahead of Dissanayake's funeral which will take place with full state and military honours, senior security officials reported Friday. dpa vc

Load-Date: October 28, 1994

LETTERS

The Tampa Tribune (Florida)

February 4, 1995, Saturday,

FINAL EDITION

Copyright 1995 The Tribune Co. Publishes The Tampa Tribune

Section: NATION/WORLD,

Length: 1421 words

Body

My thanks to your columnist Daniel Ruth (Hillsborough County editions) for staying on top of the Hillsborough County Commissioner Sandra Wilson fiasco. I am surprised there is not more public outcry and disgust over Sandra "Double-Dip" Wilson's disgraceful greedy, insolent and "in-your-face" insistence in perpetrating a double-swindle of each and every taxpayer of this county.

Wake up, people. Wilson is a sycophant, totally reliant on what amounts to the public dole. Her ability to bilk the taxpayers of this county out of two public incomes should be neither condoned nor permitted. R.A. PARMELEE
Tampa

This is an especially trying time, one during which our legislators and leaders debate vital issues that will have a major impact on the future welfare of this nation - of the world. It is a time when tens of thousands of innocent humans die daily; one in which famine, crime and warfare spread across our troubled globe; and one in which we watch, seemingly helpless, as misguided "politically correct" zealots destroy the centuries-old social fabric that made it possible for this nation to become the world's greatest. And it is a vantage point from which we can see a not-too-distant day when this decaying nation will be run by an overweight, lethargic, amoral and barely literate generation.

With so much real news to cover, one must wonder why The Tampa Tribune uses its substantial capability to publish trivia and/or stories otherwise adequately reported in supermarket tabloids?

For example, a recent front page (Jan. 25) featured two reports about mercenary athletes who are, as measured by their potential or past contributions to mankind, relatively insignificant individuals. One might wish that such editorial misdirection was rare. Sadly, such is hardly the case.

It appears, increasingly, that yesterday's "crusading" editors who once published primarily to inform and influence - rather than to pander and profit - are an endangered species. Even Joseph Pulitzer must be turning in his grave.
JOHN G. NASH Homosassa

Journalism. Ethics. Two words that have become vinegar and water, leaving a sour taste for Americans who have no choice but to accept its current taste. I am one citizen who is crying out - stop!

On Jan. 18, a helicopter crashed into Tampa Bay. The surviving pilot emerged from the water shaken, bruised, bloody and wearing nothing except for a pair of men's briefs. The television camera focused on his bloody face and his shaken and exposed body.

LETTERS

In June 1994, a car chase between the Los Angeles Police Department and a white Bronco was seen on national television for more than two hours. O.J. Simpson was accused of a violent crime that has shocked the nation. Is he guilty or innocent? One will never know. His chances of a fair trial have been obliterated by the media.

Where do we draw the line? When a television camera violates a citizen's right to privacy, the line has been crossed. When the media jeopardize a citizen's right to a fair trial, the line has been crossed. Who is accountable for presenting responsible journalism? It is our job as citizens to draw the line. We must stand up and refuse to accept the substandard journalism that has infected both newspapers and television in today's society.

Americans have an innate phobia of losing their First Amendment right to the freedom of speech. What has been lost in this manic protection of free speech has been the protection of human rights. It is our right as citizens to protect the laws in the Constitution. When one law is used to eradicate another, we have deviated from the original intention of the law.

Demand sensible, intellectual and moral reporting. Refuse to continue viewing/reading the current media establishment. We must stop the spread of tabloid journalism or it will become malignant to our society. KERRY SZYMANSKI Tampa

I am most certain that the small minority of Sri Lankans in and around Tampa would be thankful to our own Tampa Tribune for publishing "Lifting The Siege" on Jan. 23. It was so informative and timely that it gave the reader a fair idea of what's going on in that little island in the Indian Ocean at this most opportune moment.

From the little I hear, I understand that the peace process seems to be nearing success. Untiring efforts of the lady president, Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, and the willingness of the elusive leader Velupillai Prabhakaran of the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) to adopt a cease-fire prior to peace talks, enhanced by the pope's visit, which opened the sea route to the peninsula, point to a successful end.

Being not only an ex-Army officer but also a Sinhalese Buddhist (the majority), I must confess that this war was not brought about by the majority Sinhalese Buddhists or by the majority Tamils but by the politicians from both sides past and present. Both Sinhalese and Tamils originate from India. Sri Lankans were never divided on religion. The pope's visit was a source of spiritual encouragement not only to Catholics but also to Buddhists who came in large numbers to see him. TILAK RATNASEKERA Tampa

My wife Irene and I would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the Tampa residents who were so supportive of my attempt to bring before them the issues that the next mayor of Tampa should be addressing. This enthusiastic support for my candidacy for mayor proves that Tampa residents are ready for a new model of leadership.

We would also like to thank everyone for their support and prayers as our family deals with the sudden medical emergency that necessitated my withdrawal from the race. Our campaign was positioned exactly where we had hoped it to be and momentum was building daily. However, the terminal nature of the emergency to a family member led to my decision to place my family's needs above my political desires.

It is my hope that as the voters approach the March 7, 1995, election, they will actively challenge all the candidates to deal with the issue of ensuring that our city will operate on a truly open and participatory basis. Additionally, our new mayor should pledge to introduce the benefits of competition and free market principles to the operation of the city. Finally, our next mayor must commit to specifics on how the city will continue to utilize effectively the strengths of our neighborhood-based organizations. CHARLIE GUY III Tampa

Malcolm Glazer has said not one dime from his fortune will go toward building a new football stadium in Tampa. I feel the same way. So just send any increase in my taxes for the stadium to the following: police department and school system.

This will make both of us happy. HENRY PIERCE Tampa

LETTERS

This is in response to Isabel Cusack's Jan. 22 letter to the editor. Cusack falls victim to the pied piper of the pro-choice movement. The movement's proponents would have the public remain ignorant of the facts concerning who the women are and for what reasons women choose abortion.

As a student majoring in sociology, I have read studies on abortion. Two independent studies by Luker in 1975 and Dash in 1990, conducted in California and Washington, D.C., respectively, have debunked the myths the abortion industry has used to maintain its image as the savior of desperate women. Luker and Dash found that most unmarried women who became pregnant did know to use contraceptives but chose to avoid them.

Most recipients of abortion "services" are not 12-year-old rape or incest victims. They are not women who fear bringing their AIDS-infected or drug-addicted babies into the world. Nor are they preponderantly poor women with no other option. Overwhelmingly, they tend to be women who are unmarried, engage often in unprotected sex and then at the urging of the "enlightened" among us, abdicate themselves of the responsibility those choices can mitigate.

As a Missouri-Synod Lutheran, I take issue with Cusack's statement that those of us who respect life are "assuming an enormous responsibility with no intention of seeing it through." My church has had to close down facilities for babies given up for adoption simply because there are not enough babies available to extend care to. Many organizations have put much effort into securing help for women who are in difficult circumstances.

Cusack's assumptions and accusations are, sadly, prevalent in the pro-choice movement. Those who champion the choice issue should be honest and treat the public as intelligent. Perhaps then, many might rethink their current position. CHERI A. ROBBINS Valrico

Notes

OPINION; LETTERS

Load-Date: February 6, 1995

End of Document

No Headline In Original

Hobart Mercury

October 11, 1988 Tuesday

Copyright 1988 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Length: 258 words

Byline: AAP

Body

Cut-throat terror: 45 villagers butchered in their sleep Colombo, Monday SUSPECTED Tamil separatists butchered 45 Sinhalese villagers in their sleep in north-central Sri Lanka today in the worst attack against civilians in 18 months.

The massacre in Ullukulama village, about 3 kilometres from a Sri Lankan Army post, came as Sinhalese militants forced a one-day general strike protesting autonomy elections in the north and east.

The attackers cut the throats of the Sinhalese villagers and shot them while they were asleep, killing 44 people instantly, a military official in the area said. He said a wounded man died in hospital.

The victims included 14 men, 13 women, nine girls and nine boys.

"A search for the killers is now on. Our men are also looking for wounded survivors in the nearby jungles. We think the toll could go up," the official added.

A military spokesman in Colombo said the killings appeared to be the work of the most powerful rebel group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which has carried out similar attacks in the area.

The attack coincided with the first anniversary of an Indian Army offensive against the group, the honouring of Sri Lankan troops involved in an anti-LTTE drive in April 1987 and the closing of nominations for autonomy elections. Today is also "Army Day." "Probably the LTTE picked on a soft target to mark all these anniversaries in one go," the military spokesman said.

The attack came four weeks after LTTE men butchered 11 Sinhalese farmers in eastern Ampara district.

Load-Date: September 20, 2003

Sri Lanka election rally suicide bomber kills six, injures 50

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

October 5, 2000, Thursday, BC Cycle 13:39 Central European Time

Copyright 2000 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 169 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

A suspected Tamil rebel **female** suicide bomber set off a powerful explosion at an election rally in Sri Lanka, killing at least six persons and injuring more than 50, police said Thursday.

The explosion took place as the police checked a suspicious looking woman who was trying to get closer to the stage during the rally at Medawachchiya, 230 kilometres northeast of the capital on Thursday evening.

A former cabinet minister, Berty Premalal, who is currently the chief minister for the North Central Province was due to attend the rally along with other candidates.

Police had earlier warned the candidates that rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) had sent in suicide bombers into the North Central Province.

Tamil rebels have killed two candidates in the eastern Ampara and Trincomalee districts.

Rebels claiming to be fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils in the north and east are opposing elections being held throughout the country on October 10. dpa ad eg

Load-Date: October 5, 2000

Mine explodes in Govt. office north eastern Sri Lanka, four injured

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

May 21, 2001, Monday, BC Cycle 12:20 Central European Time

Copyright 2001 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 166 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

A powerful Anti-personnel mine went off inside a government office situated in North Eastern Sri Lanka injuring four persons and causing extensive damage to the building when the man who picked up the mine attempted to open it, Police said Monday.

The mine went off inside Department of Rehabilitation at the Government Agents office in the port city of Trincomalee, 257 kilometers north east of the capital around 3.00 p.m. (0900 GMT), Police said.

A vehicle driver attached to the government office had picked up the mine and apparently not knowing that it was a mine attempted to open it, Police said.

The office is situated inside an ancient Fort which also currently houses a major Army camp in the area.

The driver lost his leg in the blast while among the injured were two **female** employees.

Police said the mine had either been left behind by the Tamil separatist of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) or by the Army who operate in the area. dpa da jp

Load-Date: May 22, 2001

45 more Tamil rebel bodies found in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

September 19, 2000, Tuesday, BC Cycle 12:33 Central European Time

Copyright 2000 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 189 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Government troops on Tuesday handed over to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) the bodies of 45 Tamil rebels killed in fighting in northern Sri Lanka during the past two days, a military spokesman.

The handover took place in Jaffna, nearly 400 kilometres north of Colombo.

Sixteen of the dead were women.

Fighting between government troops and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) on Sunday and Monday at Chavakachcheri has left more than 80 rebels and 22 soldiers dead, according to official figures.

The number of injured on both sides was put at 200.

The government is enforcing censorship on military-related news, preventing journalists from independently reporting about the ongoing fighting in the north and east of the country.

Government troops launched an offensive on Sunday and reported the capture of Chavakachcheri town. The troops held off rebel counter attacks Sunday night and were consolidating their positions, the military said.

The rebels, who are fighting for an independent homeland for minority Tamils, regularly challenge the casualty figures given by the government. dpa da pt

Load-Date: September 19, 2000

Two bomb blasts injure 23 in Sri Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

September 22, 1999, Wednesday, BC Cycle 12:13 Central European Time

Copyright 1999 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 173 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

At least 23 persons including women were injured Wednesday in two separate bus bomb explosions in the north-western part of Sri Lanka, triggering fears that Tamil rebels may step up attacks on civilian targets, police said.

The first bomb went off on a bus travelling in the Chillaw area, 70 kilometres north of the capital Colombo, injuring 20 persons at midday, police said.

About two hours later a small bomb was detected in a bus parked at the bus terminal at Negambo, 30 kilometres north of the capital, but it exploded before all people got off. Three people were injured.

Police said they suspected rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) set off the explosion, but further investigations were in progress.

Rebels last week massacred 56 civilians of the majority Sinhala community in the eastern Ampara district, 344 kilometres from the capital, in an apparent retaliatory attack after 22 minority Tamil civilians were killed in an air raid by the Air Force in the north-eastern Mullativu district. dpa ad vc

Load-Date: September 22, 1999

11 rebels killed in confrontation with troops in northern Lanka

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

April 1, 1996, Monday, BC Cycle 13:56 Central European Time

Copyright 1996 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 179 words

Dateline: Colombo

Body

Government troops confronted a group of Tamil rebels who had infiltrated into a military controlled area in northern Sri Lanka, killing at least 11 of the rebels and capturing their weapons, a military spokesman said Monday.

The rebels were attacked on Monday in the Kantharodai area, of the northern Jaffna district and a part of the group had fled the area in the wake of the attack leaving behind some of their casualties. Twelve automatic weapons of the rebels were recovered from the scene of the attack.

The attack came a day after another four suspected rebels including two **female** cadres were killed when they tried to infiltrate the forward defence lines of the area captured by troops.

The Lankan military is presently conducting an offensive to clear the areas captured in a major military offensive in the Jaffna peninsula following reports that rebels of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) have infiltrated the area.

Rebels are fighting in the north and eastern parts of the country for an independent homeland for minority Tamils.
dpa da

Load-Date: April 1, 1996

No Headline In Original

Hobart Mercury

March 28, 1990 Wednesday

Copyright 1990 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Length: 459 words

Byline: AAP

Body

Tamil Tigresses emerge from jungle

Colombo WITH cyanide capsules around their necks and with assault rifles ready to fire, the **female** guerillas of Sri Lanka's **Tamil Tigers** have moved out of the jungles and into the towns.

Following the withdrawal of Indian peacekeeping troops, the emergence of the Tiger **women**, long talked about but seldom seen, is jolting Tamil society in the Jaffna Peninsula at the island's northern tip.

Violence has been rampant since the ethnic minority's separatist revolt began in 1983, but warfare was generally regarded as men's work.

Lieutenant Imelda, a 26-year-old commander of the **Female** Tigers of Tamil Eelam, said she and her cadres could handle not only their Chinese assault rifles and machine pistols but also rocket launchers and anti-aircraft guns. Her two-storey headquarters was guarded by about 25 camouflage-clad Tiger **women**. They are allied with the male Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which fielded the biggest guerilla force against the Sri Lankan Army and later the Indian peacekeeping force.

Imelda, who like many of the male Tigers uses a code name, said 26 **female** Tigers had died in combat with Indian male soldiers in the past two years. She denied rumours that the **female** Tigers had been created to fight the Indian paramilitary policewomen who served in Sri Lanka with the all-male Indian Army. "No Indian woman can fight me," she said with eyes blazing. "They are powder puffs. I challenge them." Neither the male nor the **female** Tigers will give the total strength of the guerilla forces fighting for a Tamil homeland in north-eastern Sri Lanka. More than 11,000 people have died since 1983 when the campaign was begun by militants who said they needed an independent nation for Tamils (18 per cent of the island's population) to counter domination by the island's Sinhalese majority (75 per cent). Sri Lanka has 16 million people.

Last year the **Tamil Tigers** started negotiations with the Sri Lankan Government to enter the political mainstream. As the Indian troops withdrew, there was no serious opposition by Sri Lankan Government forces when the Tigers took over positions and while towns once patrolled by Indians.

Many residents speak with awe of the **female** Tigers who are now periodically seen in the town and in outlying villages. One of Imelda's band, 20-year-old Valarmathy, said: "**Women** have been in the forefront of the liberation struggle all over the world. We are no exception." At Jaffna the district leader of the male Tigers, Stanley Dominic, said of the **female** Tigers: "They do everything we do. They man checkpoints, they drive heavy trucks captured from the Indian Army, they take part in active combat, and they are willing to bite their cyanide capsules."

No Headline In Original

AP

Graphic

A member of the **Female** Tigers of Tamil Eelam stands guard.915.48AP

Load-Date: September 24, 2003

End of Document

Suicide blast kills 13 people

Times Colonist (Victoria, British Columbia)

January 6, 2000 Thursday Final Edition

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Section: News; Pg. A4; News

Length: 199 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (Reuter) -- A suicide bomber killed at least 13 people and wounded 27 near the Sri Lankan prime minister's office in the capital Colombo Wednesday in the second brazen attack on the country's political elite in three weeks.

Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike was not in her office at the time of the explosion, officials said.
Reuters

Police suspect the blast was carried out by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), rebels fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east.

Officials at the National Hospital in Colombo said 15 of those wounded in Wednesday's attack, three of them seriously hurt, were still in hospital.

Hospital officials said five people died en route to hospital and two others died after their arrival.

"Two **women** constables and two policemen of the prime minister's office, a passerby and the suicide bomber were killed in the explosion," Jagath Jayawardena, deputy inspector general of police, told reporters at the scene.

In a separate incident, a prominent Tamil politician and lawyer, Kumar Ponnambalam, was shot dead in a Colombo suburb by a lone gunman who escaped, police and witnesses said.

Load-Date: March 29, 2002

38 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees arrive in Indian coastal towns

Deutsche Presse-Agentur

August 11, 1996, Sunday, BC Cycle 11:36 Central European Time

Copyright 1996 Deutsche Presse-Agentur

Section: International News

Length: 195 words

Dateline: New Delhi

Body

Fresh groups of Sri Lankan Tamil civilian refugees have arrived in southern Indian coastal towns after fleeing from Sri Lanka's war-torn north by boats, Indian news agencies reported Sunday.

Police said 21 refugees, which included seven women, have arrived at Dhanushkodi while 17 others reached nearby Rameshwaram town in Tamil Nadu state.

They came from Pesalai town and nearby areas on Sri Lanka's northwestern Mannar island. Rameshwaram is about 400 kilometers south of Madras.

The refugees said there had been food scarcity for the last two months in their area of Sri Lanka owing to the ongoing military offensive.

The refugees have been sent to special refugee camps in nearby Mandapam and Chengalpattu. Police said the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) was helping the refugees to cross by handing them over to Indian fishermen at mid-sea.

The latest arrivals bring the number of refugees who have disembarked in Indian coastal towns to 70.

There are fears that the current fighting in the island nation could lead to a mass exodus of refugees as in 1983 when over 200,000 Sri Lankan Tamils sought shelter in India. dpa mgs vc

Load-Date: August 11, 1996

**ARE WE REALLY DOING RIGHT THING?;
AS BOMBS CONTINUE TO FALL ON AFGHANISTAN THE MERCURY'S TOP
COLUMNISTS ASK THE QUESTION...**

Sunday Mercury

October 14, 2001, Sunday

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Byline: Richard Williamson

Body

IT would be so much easier if this was a Hollywood movie in which a smiling Tom Cruise climbs out of the cockpit of his F-14 after shooting down the baddies and saving the world.

The real thing is messy and difficult and full of tough questions that cannot be drowned out by the thunder of Tomahawk missiles and the chatter of machine guns.

But while Blair shuttles round the world on his diplomatic mission and Bush demands the support of the international community, both men ought to be concerned about the cracks emerging on the home front.

For some, the whole business is already becoming boring.

Someone actually said to me last week: 'The trouble with the Allied offensive is that it's not dramatic enough. There's nothing to see.'

He meant that a few tracer shells stitched across night sky over Kabul and some blurry aerial pictures of bomb damage are tediously unimpressive.

Have we become so de-sensitised that we think of the violence of war as just another bit of television entertainment?

Not everyone is that shallow but those who think more deeply may be even more of a problem to the politicians as they begin to ask difficult moral questions.

When this began, people would shrug and say: 'I know innocent lives will be lost but we have to accept it.'

Now we are beginning to realise that accepting the deaths of strangers is easy when you are sitting in the safety of your Sutton Coldfield semi.

But what if the innocent life in question was your own? What if it was the life of YOUR child? How 'acceptable' would it be then?

Are we really so arrogant that we believe our grief for a dead baby would be far greater than that of an Afghan mother?

ARE WE REALLY DOING RIGHT THING?; AS BOMBS CONTINUE TO FALL ON AFGHANISTAN THE
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Caring

It is not unpatriotic or treasonable to ask these questions. It is the normal reaction of caring human beings.

I loathe and despise terrorists and I support the efforts to take down Osama bin Laden and destroy his evil al-Qua'eda network.

The cowardly attacks on New York and Washington were pure wickedness and cannot go unpunished.

I grieve for the victims and for the widows and orphans whose tears will last a lifetime.

I also believe that removing the repressive Taliban is in the best interests of the Afghan people.

But it is precisely because we deplore the cruelty and inhumanity of our enemies that we have to be certain of doing the right thing ourselves.

There are already reports of hundreds of civilian casualties from the Allied bombing.

If we are indifferent to this, then does it mean that we believe the life of an Afghan child is worth less than the life of a New York stockbroker?

Last week, four UN employees engaged in the humanitarian task of clearing landmines were killed by a stray allied bomb.

Was the fact that we didn't make much of a fuss simply because the victims were 'only Afghans'?

Had they been two Brits, an American and a Frenchman, all hell would have broken loose.

Just think of the hullabaloo over Yvonne Ridley, a journalist who blundered into a problem of her own making.

This 'war' which seemed so straightforward at first, is now getting hopelessly confused in our minds.

How do we get our brains round the apparent paradox of bombing the living daylight out of Afghanistan while simultaneously trying to feed its starving people?

UN High Commissioner for Refugees Mary Robinson has called for a suspension of the air raids while the convoys get moving.

Birmingham's own Clare Short has warned that we need to double the amount of aid if we are to avert a catastrophe.

I, for one, value the opinions of these two thoughtful and compassionate women.

But for how much longer will the bombastic 'with us, or against us' rhetoric of the politicians galvanise public opinion as the doubts and questions mount up?

Are we really prepared for a long war that may well last all through the winter and into next spring?

There is already a great deal of scepticism surrounding the sales talk about the accuracy of modern weaponry.

We have seen these 'surgical' strikes flatten homes and hospitals in Iraq and the Chinese Embassy in Belgrade, while American pilots attacked British armoured vehicles in the Gulf.

Remembering the unsuccessful attempts on the lives of Colonel Gaddafi in Libya and Saddam Hussein in Baghdad, is it any surprise that some of us are dubious about winking out Osama bin Laden with bombs?

Hostile

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And how will public opinion stand up to a major reverse in battle?

We have to be prepared for that because not even the SAS is invincible, especially in a hostile, snowbound environment like Afghanistan.

The boys from Hereford are damned good - the best in the world at what they do.

But it's worth remembering that the most celebrated account of modern SAS heroics - Andy McNab's Bravo Two Zero - is actually the story of a mission that went badly wrong.

Only one man escaped and the other members of the patrol either died or were captured.

Many people are also beginning to question exactly what is meant by the promised 10-year global war on terrorism.

Does this 'war' mean that the USS Enterprise will turn up in the Bay of Biscay to launch air strikes against Bilbao, or to shell the French side of the Pyrenees to 'smoke out' ETA terrorists? Will they be launching cruise missiles against suspected IRA training bases in Ireland?

If the attacks on Birmingham pubs and the murder of children in Warrington were not terrorist atrocities, then what were they?

Are we going to attack the Islamic Front in Kashmir, the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka or the Maoist rebels in any of half a dozen South American countries?

Or is it significant that George Bush's 22 'most wanted' world terrorists revealed last week were all Middle Eastern?

Perhaps we should also be questioning just how far we can meddle in the affairs of other countries.

Backing 'my enemy's enemy' has not been a successful doctrine in the past, not least because it was the Americans who armed the Taliban against the Russians.

And who is going to decide how we differentiate between a terrorist and a freedom fighter?

There are yet more questions about new security measures at home.

For instance, will David Blunkett's proposed new law against incitement of religious hatred do something about Protestants who call the Pope the anti-christ and his followers the spawn of the devil?

Or is it just a sop to British Muslims to convince them that we are doing something for their protection?

There are already mutterings from Washington about not catching bin Laden too quickly on the grounds that the allies need to sustain public anger and support for their longer-term aims.

Most of us are still firmly behind the drive against the terrorists - but we need to be reassured that what we are doing is just and fair.

TONY BLAIR... man in the middle

DOES anybody know what happens next? We've blitzed 'em. That is to say we've blasted a large number of badly-built and deserted buildings in Afghanistan.

We have established air superiority. Which means that we have wiped out a Taliban air-to-air capability roughly equivalent to that of Tamworth.

Surely our Prime Minister isn't going to let the rabble known as the Northern Alliance to take charge of the country?

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He must know that the bloodthirsty warlords who lead this sinister mob fund their operations by trafficking heroin.

But let's not get ahead of ourselves. We have to win the war first.

Obviously Mr Blair cannot believe that he is going to send in a few hundred SAS men and snatch Osama Bin Laden from the reading room of his local library.

So is he going to attempt to overrun a country which sent the massive Russian army home carrying its dead?

Will he support the Americans if they move their attacks on into Iraq, Iran, Syria and even the Philippines?

Could anything have more exemplified the muddle than the decision by the Americans to drop food aid as well bombs?

Not only was there no way at all of knowing who was going to receive it, but there was also no way of knowing how they were going to get it.

In the first two days the US planes dropped just 50 tonnes of aid. The starving people in Afghanistan need around 2,000 tonnes a day.

The double-thinking and hypocrisy may be distasteful, but it is strangely familiar.

In Kosovo, Mr Blair and his American chums bombed for 70 days and achieved nothing except for the killing of hundreds of innocent civilians.

When they did manage to overthrow the Serb government, they gave a free hand to the Kosovan Liberation Army - who turned out to be led by gangsters.

The Kosovo adventure, which caused the biggest refugee crisis since World War II, did absolutely nothing to resolve the age-old hatreds among the people.

But at least the war in Kosovo did not have the potential to produce global unrest, economic collapse and terrorist outrages on an unprecedented scale.

With the Muslim world on the brink of rising up in protest, the possibilities for disaster are endless.

Of course plans for military action have to be kept secret. Perhaps that is why we have no idea at all of what the aims of the current action are.

Let's hope that security is the reason for the confusion.

Because what is really frightening is the reason Blair's war is taking place in a fog of uncertainty is that nobody actually has the vaguest idea as to what the outcome might be.

THE Blair government's cynical use of the September 11 atrocities for its own political purposes has suddenly caused shock and horror all round.

How odd.

The outrage has been kicked off by the revelation that within an hour of the attacks on New York, Jo Moore - an adviser to Transport Secretary Stephen Byers - sent an e-mail advising colleagues to begin releasing all the bad news stories they were sitting on because they would be lost in the media frenzy over the terrorist attacks.

Well certainly her chirpy message - 'This is now a very good day to get out anything we want to bury' - demonstrated appalling callousness, unbelievable bad taste and cynicism of the deepest and darkest variety.

But why should it cause the slightest surprise?

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This column has for weeks been recording the ways in which the Prime Minister has personally manipulated the events in the US to his own ends.

Let us take the simple facts about the British losses.

From the first days of the crisis, Mr Blair embraced the notion of 'hundreds' of victims from the UK and his government later put the figure at 500.

Constant references to the sheer numbers have fuelled speeches justifying his enthusiasm for global retaliation.

Yet in one of those hardly-noticed releases, the true facts were set out on Tuesday afternoon.

The list of Britons officially declared as missing now stands at 100 - but the Foreign Office is convinced that many of these are safe. It's just that relatives have not bothered to ring officials and tell them.

Of course, the losses are still appalling.

But the true facts demonstrate not only the New Labour appetite for the massaging of information, however sensitive it might be, but also that the abuse can be traced right to the top.

No wonder Jo Moore has not been sacked. In private, she has probably received a hearty slap on the back for her initiative and quick-thinking.

WHAT do YOU think? Write to Richard Williamson, Sunday Mercury, 28 Colmore Circus, Birmingham B4 6AZ. e-mail richard_williamson@mrn.co.uk

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Rebellion, anarchy, scandal... and the hoax of Hitler's 'diaries' hoax

Western Morning News (Plymouth)

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Devon

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Body

THESE are turbulent times on the international scene. This year thousands die in the intercommunal violence sweeping the Indian state of Assam; unrest and terrorism continue in Nicaragua; Sri Lanka is torn apart by race riots as **Tamil Tigers** fight for their own state; in strife-torn El Salvador, rebels continue their campaign against the government; and anarchy reigns unabated in Beirut, where hundreds are killed in suicide bomb attacks against peacekeeping forces.

An assassin strikes in the Philippines as opposition leader Benigno Aquino arrives from exile in the US to take on his rival, President Marcos, in the forthcoming elections - he dies of a single shot to the head at Manila airport. In the USSR, a South Korean airliner is shot out of the sky over Siberia, killing all 269 passengers and crew - the Soviets assert the plane was violating air space and failed to respond to warnings.

And in the autumn, US soldiers will be marching into the small Caribbean island of Grenada to avert "a threat to the security of the United States" by a "brutal group of leftist thugs", President Reagan claiming that a new airport being built there with Cuban assistance is for military use. Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and his cabinet have been murdered, but the invasion causes a political storm and angers even the President's ally Mrs Thatcher.

No wonder fantasy is an inviting alternative to the realities of life... escapist offerings currently at the cinema include Steven Spielberg's delightful ET, the tale of the whimsical extra-terrestrial visitor; something daringly different is provided by Tootsie, in which Dustin Hoffman dons drag to woo Jessica Lange; and Julie Andrews mixes male and **female** to make an effervescent cocktail in Victor Victoria. More seriously, the epic Gandhi, directed by Sir Richard Attenborough and starring Ben Kingsley, scoops eight Oscars - the most ever for a British film. The latest Andrew Lloyd Webber musical Cats, based on poems by T S Eliot, is raising the theatrical rafters in London and New York and could be a long runner.

Recently, TV has offered few more sumptuous shows than Brideshead Revisited, the tale of snobbish English life featuring wall-to-wall talent headed by Laurence Olivier and John Gielgud; and the spy thriller Smiley's People, benefiting from the chameleon skills of Alec Guinness.

But fantasy takes fewer fantastic turns than those oozed by Michael Jackson - sales of his album Thriller may well make music history. Adding fuel to the fire is pop's raunchiest new product, Madonna. Shooting from the hip, lip and every other part of her anatomy, the US performer's voice has been compared to Minnie Mouse on helium - but that won't stop her. Gender-bender Boy George gets in on the act in a selection of pretty frocks, long plaits and heavy make-up, fronting Culture Club and topping the charts.

Rebellion, anarchy, scandal... and the hoax of Hitler's 'diaries' hoax

TV icons falling or departing their accustomed haunts this year include Peter Adamson. Coronation Street's layabout Len Fairclough is sacked from the soap after being accused of assaulting young girls, though found innocent of the charge. Also departing the Street is Pat Phoenix, aka Elsie Tanner, who packs her bags for pastures new. Noele Gordon, doyenne of the Crossroads motel, controversially axed from the soap two years ago, returns for two guest appearances.

Now that the micro-chip has taken over technology, home computers are becoming commonplace, and lasers are used in the operating theatre. Medicine has also advanced to the artificial heart and the discovery of the HIV virus as the cause of AIDS - awakening hope that the dreaded "plague" can be cured. Less importantly, many may think, is the use of liposuction as the latest aid to reducing bulging thighs and other areas by fat cells being sucked out of the body with a special instrument... others would rather stay overweight.

So, another New Year - and this one brings a bonanza for Westcountry "wreckers" when a ship is stranded, badly holed by rocks at Hartland Point in North Devon. Reviving a centuries-old tradition, some 200 men, boys and women clamber aboard the Panamanian -registered coaster Johanna using ropes and grappling irons. Snatching anything that can be moved - including expensive radio equipment, furniture and fittings, clothing, food and beer, even the fated vessel's Christmas tree - they make their way up a narrow cliff path with their booty. The captain, one of seven crew lifted to safety, is appalled. The wreckers say they didn't cause the ship to founder, as in days gone by, but "the tradition as far as getting what you can still lives on". The Customs and Excise receiver says that as long as the items taken are reported to him, no offence has been committed.

Fishing wars continue with Danish vessels contravening Britain's newly set 12-mile fishing limit in the North Sea. The "enterprise" of one Captain Kirk, who gives reporters a field day with his accommodating name, sees him summonsed but unrepentant after catching a lone sprat somewhere off Newcastle. He says he will take his case to the European Court.

Cornwall, meanwhile, is hit by a severe water shortage during a water workers' strike in late January. A crisis looks like developing when 30,000 people are warned they could be without water after vital pumping equipment begins to break down and parish after parish is declared "dry". While the strike continues for the next month, people can be seen filling all available containers as pressures dwindle to a trickle. A few standpipes are available but otherwise, while rain ironically lashes the West, the thirsty are trawling streams and rivers, setting off an urgent appeal to boil all water. The lucky ones are within reach of Poldark Mine at Wendron, where staff pump thousands of gallons of spring water into the River Cober and a standpipe has been set up for people to help themselves.

On the international scene in March, US President Reagan proposes a revolutionary defence system to destroy incoming enemy missiles, a means, he says, "of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete". This ballistic missile defence, with Soviet attack particularly in mind, would involve many weapon systems in space, including a network of satellites and space battle stations, controlled by a system of supercomputers.

Not surprisingly, the Strategic Defense Initiative, or SDI, is soon dubbed Star Wars, evoking space battle scenes from the famous film. It is the most expensive military project in history, and despite warnings from many eminent scientists and technologists that it is technologically impossible, about \$40 billion will be spent on research and development.

By May, the President is embroiling himself in deep waters by backing the aims of Contra rebels who are trying to overthrow the Marxist Sandinista government in Nicaragua. The US government has previously maintained that its covert backing was to halt the flow of weapons to a regime which operates "out of the barrel of a gun". Charges that Reagan's administration has secretly sold arms to Iran and used profits from the sale to aid the right-wing insurgency in Nicaragua will eventually engulf him in the worst US political scandal since Watergate.

May brings some amusement and not a few red faces when a major hoax is perpetrated by a West German who claims to have found the diaries of Adolf Hitler. Their "discovery" by a reporter on the German magazine Stern causes a sensation. A leading British historian, Lord Dacre, backs their authenticity, and the Sunday Times reportedly pays GBP 1 million for serialisation rights. But other experts soon find the "diaries of the century" are an

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elaborate charade. They are declared forgeries, and Konrad Kujau, their alleged author, surrenders to the police. Gerd Heidemann, the Stern reporter, is also arrested.

Britain's General Election in June leaves Margaret Thatcher's government firmly in power, with Labour suffering some crushing defeats, though the Liberal SDP Alliance does better than expected. In the Westcountry, Dr David Owen sweeps home again in Devonport, Paddy Ashdown captures Yeovil from the Conservatives, and David Penhaligon stays in Truro. But Alliance leader Roy Jenkins intends to resign, recommending David Owen as his successor. Labour leader Michael Foot is also to step down and Neil Kinnock is favourite to succeed him.

The Tories are buoyant, but there will be some boat rocking later in the year when Trade and Industry Secretary Cecil Parkinson resigns over his affair with his secretary Sara Keays. Mrs Thatcher initially will see no reason for her colleague to resign, but he will be left with no alternative after his ex-mistress publishes a statement in The Times, "to put the record straight" that he had twice asked her to marry him then changed his mind.

July brings tragedy to the West with the crash of a BA helicopter off the Scillies. The tight-knit islands community is left in mourning for the 20 who perish when the Sikorski S61 plunges into the sea one mile from landing. Among them are two entire families and seven young children. Of the six plucked to safety from the sea by St Mary's lifeboat, a boy and a girl of 12 and 15 have been orphaned. One Penzance family thank their lucky stars that they decided to miss the disaster flight - Mrs and Mrs Brian Gooding planned a day trip to the islands but changed their mind because of the foggy weather. As telegrams of condolence are sent by Prince Charles and Mrs Thatcher, the cause of the crash as yet remains a mystery.

At an Old Bailey trial in October, one of the century's most notorious serial killers, Dennis Nilsen, is jailed for the 15 or 16 murders of down-and-out young men. Back in February, some grisly discoveries had been made at his home in north London and in nearby sewers. Police were astonished when the 37-year-old Scottish civil servant - previously a soldier and trainee policeman - openly admitted killing young drifters he picked up in bars, lured to his place and strangled. Dismembered human remains were also found in plastic bags under the floorboards and in the wardrobe of the house where he lived in Muswell Hill. Other gruesome body parts were hidden in boxes and some lay on the bathroom floor.

Of the victims who strayed across Nilsen's path a few amazingly escaped his murderous intentions. He says that if he had been arrested at age 65 "there might have been thousands of bodies" discovered. At the trial the defence suggests Nilsen has a personality disorder and cannot help himself. The prosecution says he simply enjoys killing people.

Nilsen chillingly admits that he has no tears for his victims. Neither does he weep for himself or the bereaved. The only feeling he has demonstrated is for his mongrel dog his constant companion who pined to death after his master's arrest. The accused is by his own admission totally sane but is not sure of his motivation to kill. "Am I weak - or maybe I was just born an evil man?" he asked while awaiting trial. "At the root lies a sense of total social isolation and a desperate search for sexual identity." Nilsen is given eight life sentences with a recommendation that he serves at least 25 years.

Anti-nuclear protests have reached another high this year with Greenham Common in Berkshire - the site of American cruise missiles - a scene of constant turmoil between police and "peace women". In November more than 300 demonstrators are arrested as they lay siege to the House of Commons to protest against the arrival of a consignment of missiles at the airbase while in the House itself there are furious clashes between the Prime Minister and Labour leader Neil Kinnock who questions her about the circumstances in which cruise missiles would be used. Mrs Thatcher snaps: "It would obviously be of the greatest possible use to the Soviet Union to know the precise details."

Earlier in the month a rumpus blew up in the Commons with Truro MP David Penhaligon in the thick of the action. Uproar followed when the House was told that peace protesters could be shot if they penetrated too deeply towards the missile bunkers at Greenham. Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine who on a trip to Manchester is sprayed with red paint by jeering students asserts that firing on intruders would only take place in extreme circumstances. Mr

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Penhaligon says he is staggered to hear Mr Heseltine's remarks. "This is one of those few occasions since I have sat in the House that I was rocked on my heels he comments.

In December, there's nothing speculative about the violence perpetrated by the IRA when Christmas shoppers again become the target of their cowardly actions. Five die and 91 are injured when a bomb planted in a car outside Harrods in London explodes, but though the IRA admits its men were responsible, they did not have a go-ahead. In what comes close to a public apology, the terror group announces: We regret the civilian casualties..."

Mrs Thatcher spends the day before Christmas Eve with the front-line police and troops in Northern Ireland fiercely denouncing the IRA's activities and asserting: "Christmas is a time of peace and reconciliation."

Peace does reign in some hearts this Christmas. Mother Teresa of Calcutta the "Saint of the Gutters" has been awarded the Order of Merit by the Queen for her lifelong work among India's poor. And the Pope on a visit to Rome's Rebibbia prison has an emotion-filled meeting with his would-be assassin Mehmet Ali Agca who falls on his knees and kisses the hand of the Pontif. During their encounter the Turkish terrorist begs forgiveness for his crime. The Pope willingly grants it later calling the occasion "a historic day in my life..."

- NEXT YEAR: 1984: IRA bomb at the Tory conference; the miners' strike turns violent; death at the Libyan Embassy

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RELUCTANT ICON

Scotland on Sunday

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Body

FOR many Indians she is the closest thing they have to royalty. Like the Kennedys, her surname conjures immense tragedy and extraordinary adoration. And like Princess Diana, she seems to embody an ineluctable quality which humbles her people. Were it not for the family she married into, it's doubtful that Sonia Gandhi would carry any influence in the world today. But the Italian-born widow of the former Indian prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, carries a priceless commodity: the most charismatic and coveted family tag in India.

For 35 years - since she married into the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty - she was rarely seen or heard in public. Instead she deliberately limited her role to looking after the households and bringing up her two children - the epitome of humility and Indian womanhood. An occasional state banquet and the odd electoral meeting in support of her husband were among the very rare engagements she allowed herself.

Essentially a private person, Sonia has a well-known distaste for Indian politics. Her fervent pleas to her late husband Rajiv not to join politics after the death of his younger brother in an air crash is part of the family legend, but her smooth transition from housewife to reluctant first lady to her pivotal role in Indian politics was stunning. She is now the key figure in the Congress Party's bid for power in this month's elections. Her role, for the moment, is purely one of campaigning. She won't be standing for parliament, she insists, but then she hardly needs to. Indian sentimentality has turned her into an icon whether she wanted it or not.

Barely a month ago Sonia Gandhi's interest in politics appeared negligible. Today she is the undisputed popular leader of the 112-year-old Congress Party whose fortunes had taken a nose-dive after Rajiv's killing in 1991. Until Sonia stepped forward, the party was struggling to maintain its lustre without the appeal of the famous Gandhi name. No longer. The widow who refused the presidency of the party - not once, but twice - now finds herself at the centre of Indian politics, heralded wherever she goes, rekindling the romance which Indians have with their sainted family in visits and public meetings that are the envy of her political enemies.

How Sonia Maino, the daughter of a small-town Italian builder, became Sonia Gandhi, one of India's most powerful women, is a tale which begs to be told.

But Sonia Gandhi's elegant silence following her husband's assassination has yet to be broken. A few nebulous interviews have barely brushed the surface of her life.

Sonia has been no overnight enigma - her sphinx-like image was cultivated over years, fuelling a national hunger which has yet to be assuaged. What does she read, what does she eat, what does she think: media speculation is intense. How did a woman with no previous experience of politics become the key figure in the world's largest

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democracy? How did an Italian working-class woman, Christian by birth, who can barely manage a few sentences of Hindi, win the hearts and minds of her adopted people? Only Sonia, it is said, stands between the right-wing revivalist Hindu nationalist party, the BJP, and the seat of government. She is, they say, the last hope of the secular politicians against the aggressive nationalist campaign of the BJP - a party which has chalked a remarkable growth rate in the last decade with its return-to-roots polity and slogans of restoring the old glory of India.

Not surprisingly, Sonia's opponents have tried desperately to undermine her credibility.

According to Lal Krishna Advani, president of the BJP: "No further proof is needed of the complete bankruptcy of leadership in the Congress. The party has so degenerated that it has now fallen upon a foreigner ... Sonia ...

to help reverse its fortunes."

What their opponents always hated in the Kennedys in the US (and what is still true for the Gandhis in India) is that politics becomes a game between unequals. The overwhelming affection in which the families are held can serve to disguise their faults. And in both cases, violent death has only served to intensify the idolatry they inspire.

For many Indians the death of Indira and Rajiv was a sacrifice for the nation, although to their critics the assassinations were the legacy of bad politics. Indira was killed by her Sikh bodyguards as revenge for her decision to order the storming of the holiest of Sikh shrines in Amritsar by Indian troops. Rajiv was allegedly killed by terrorists for having sent the Indian troops to fight alongside the Sri Lankan army against the Tamil tigers.

Advani and other BJP leaders express confidence that the Sonia card will boomerang on the Congress and claim the large crowds she attracts gather merely from "curiosity and the novelty factor." But their concern is palpable. After their rapid rise in Indian politics, they now face defeat thanks to a woman whose previous political contribution has been less than zero.

According to Yubhraj Ghimere, political editor of the mass-circulation Outlook magazine, the BJP tactics may actually work to Sonia's advantage. After all, there is little the public hates more than a group of bully boys attacking a woman - particularly one as resonant in the Indian consciousness as Sonia Gandhi. Few can forget her visage at the funeral of her husband: a picture of quiet stoicism, wearing a plain white sari, fighting back tears behind dark glasses and holding her two children.

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Byline: Sanjeev Srivastava

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FOR many Indians she is the closest thing they have to royalty. Like the Kennedys, her surname conjures immense tragedy and extraordinary adoration. And like Princess Diana, she seems to embody an ineluctable quality which humbles her people. Were it not for the family she married into, it's doubtful that Sonia Gandhi would carry any influence in the world today. But the Italian-born widow of the former Indian prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, carries a priceless commodity: the most charismatic and coveted family tag in India.

For 35 years - since she married into the Nehru-Gandhi dynasty - she was rarely seen or heard in public. Instead she deliberately limited her role to looking after the households and bringing up her two children - the epitome of humility and Indian womanhood. An occasional state banquet and the odd electoral meeting in support of her husband were among the very rare engagements she allowed herself.

Essentially a private person, Sonia has a well-known distaste for Indian politics. Her fervent pleas to her late husband Rajiv not to join politics after the death of his younger brother in an air crash is part of the family legend, but her smooth transition from housewife to reluctant first lady to her pivotal role in Indian politics was stunning. She is now the key figure in the Congress Party's bid for power in this month's elections. Her role, for the moment, is purely one of campaigning. She won't be standing for parliament, she insists, but then she hardly needs to. Indian sentimentality has turned her into an icon whether she wanted it or not.

Barely a month ago Sonia Gandhi's interest in politics appeared negligible. Today she is the undisputed popular leader of the 112-year-old Congress Party whose fortunes had taken a nose-dive after Rajiv's killing in 1991. Until Sonia stepped forward, the party was struggling to maintain its lustre without the appeal of the famous Gandhi name. No longer. The widow who refused the presidency of the party - not once, but twice - now finds herself at the centre of Indian politics, heralded wherever she goes, rekindling the romance which Indians have with their sainted family in visits and public meetings that are the envy of her political enemies.

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Not surprisingly, Sonia's opponents have tried desperately to undermine her credibility.

According to Lal Krishna Advani, president of the BJP: "No further proof is needed of the complete bankruptcy of leadership in the Congress. The party has so degenerated that it has now fallen upon a foreigner ... Sonia ...

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What their opponents always hated in the Kennedys in the US (and what is still true for the Gandhis in India) is that politics becomes a game between unequals. The overwhelming affection in which the families are held can serve to disguise their faults. And in both cases, violent death has only served to intensify the idolatry they inspire.

For many Indians the death of Indira and Rajiv was a sacrifice for the nation, although to their critics the assassinations were the legacy of bad politics. Indira was killed by her Sikh bodyguards as revenge for her decision to order the storming of the holiest of Sikh shrines in Amritsar by Indian troops. Rajiv was allegedly killed by terrorists for having sent the Indian troops to fight alongside the Sri Lankan army against the Tamil tigers.

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A special train brought the friends and members of the Nehru-Gandhi clan and the bride wore a pearl-studded sari and ornaments made of gold, diamonds, pearls, emeralds and rubies. They were all a gift from the bridegroom's family and it had taken months for the artisans specially summoned to Allahabad from Bombay and Delhi to design and prepare these ornaments ... for Motilal had refused to buy anything off the shelf, everything had to be an exclusive creation.

But the couple had little in common in their background and intellect and the marriage failed.

In the many biographies of Jawaharlal Nehru there is a suggestion that he had special relationships with some women -the most famous among them being Edwina Mountbatten -with whom he could share his thoughts.

Another Eurasian marriage in the family seemed inevitable when a German in Shantiniketan, Frank Oberdoff, sought the hand of Jawaharlal's daughter Indira, who was also studying there. Indications are that Indira had a crush on him but she declined the politically incorrect suggestion, claiming she did not love him. In 1942, after a courtship of more than five years, Indira married Feroze Gandhi, a Parsee. There was stiff opposition from Jawaharlal who was stunned that Indira was discarding a precious family "tradition of great ability, great courage, great perseverance, great sacrifice, all directed to the service of India".

Feroze converted to Hinduism to please the orthodox opinion.

But the seeds of discord in the family were sown soon after Jawaharlal became interim prime minister and, appalled at the thought of her father "leading a lonesome life", Indira shifted to her father's house. A lone Feroze - derisively referred to as the son-in-law of the nation - often spoke of himself as a widower whose wife and sons

Reluctant icon

lived in regal style at the prime ministerial mansion. The chasm grew and a disillusioned Feroze smoked incessantly, took to drinking heavily and overworked himself. At 47, he died of a heart attack.

COMING from the West, Sonia is perhaps the last of the mysteries of the East. Almost nothing is known of the private persona of Sonia Gandhi. In the years after the death of Rajiv, her reticence and aloofness imparted a sheen to her enigma and enabled her to wear a halo that Congressmen grew to revere.

Sonia also emulated her mother-in-law Indira in learning the virtue of patience and timing in politics.

Vrinda Gopinath, reputed political commentator, says Sonia's political skills have surprised even her opponents: "Glamour and power is heady but you have to be able to sustain it. Sonia has tremendous patience and is also the master of the art of timing. Her announcement of joining politics came just five weeks prior to the elections ... catching her opponents by surprise and giving them little reaction time to launch a well thought-out offensive against her."

Another Gandhi trait which Sonia picked up from her mother-in-law is her imperious style.

But the haughty, almost contemptuous ways are reserved only for lesser mortals in the Congress Party who should never even dream of being on the same exalted level as any of the Gandhis.

In public the stiff upper lip effortlessly melts into an infectious, winning smile and the hand almost never stops waving.

In meeting after meeting, Sonia will jump the security cordon to mingle with the crowds, throw garlands, exchange a few pleasantries and shake the outstretched hands of women.

She always speaks from a written text and to hardened journalists her speeches are boring and repetitive. But the audiences are almost always in raptures when she talks of the sacrifices made by the Nehru-Gandhi family and how she was steeped in the Indian traditions by her loving mother-in-law and husband.

Nor does she leave her audience in any doubt that India is her home for life, or that Congress is the only national party which could give the country a strong, stable government. She also talks about the need to protect the rights of the minority communities, women and the poor.

The theme seldom changes. Day after day. Meeting after meeting.

Sonia's election blitzkrieg includes criss-crossing the country in a private six-seater jet addressing five to six meetings every day. By the time she is through with campaigning at the end of this month, Sonia will have addressed more than 125 public meetings.

Politically, she is trying to open the old Congress umbrella - all manner of things to all manner of people - but she may have started just a little too late; for many in India the party umbrella seems too tattered to be repaired, and it may take more than a widow of a favoured son to make the difference. In northern India in particular, the Congress cup of woe is particularly overflowing with electoral politics polarised along caste and communal lines. And in this new scenario the once all-powerful Indian National Congress finds itself completely marginalised.

But in the south, large parts of the east and some parts of western India - which account for about as many parliamentary seats as the north - the Congress is still not a spent force. It is here that the party hopes to cash in on Sonia's charisma.

The impact of the 'Sonia factor' on the Indian elections will be known only next month when the votes are counted. Whether the Sonia-led Congress wins or emerges as the principal opposition party, one thing is now certain: in India, the Gandhis have returned to their family business of power politics.

Reluctant icon

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THE TIGERS' TRAIL OF DEATH

Sydney Morning Herald (Australia)

May 4, 1993 Tuesday

Late Edition

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Section: NEWS AND FEATURES; Pg. 13

Length: 2513 words

Byline: Lindsay Murdoch

Body

PRESIDENT Ranasinghe Premadasa provoked a backlash from the Tamil Tigers, one of Asia's most ruthless guerilla groups, when he told the Sri Lankan Parliament just over a week ago: "We must prevent the division of our motherland."

Government MPs cheered, but the Tigers knew then that any hope of autonomy for their so-called homeland in the north and east of the island was lost.

Mr Premadasa had pre-empted a parliament committee report on ways to end Sri Lanka's largely forgotten 10-year war which has cost 28,000 lives.

The Tigers' leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran, had talked last month of a "reasonable" compromise which gave the Tamils some sort of independence. But few people believed he was serious about genuinely negotiating a peaceful settlement.

The assassination of Mr Premadasa on Saturday by a suicide bomber, who brazenly rode his pushbike into a May Day rally in central Colombo, shows the Tigers have decided to stick with what they do best - terrorism - to push their claim to one third

of Sri Lanka, the tear-drop shaped tropical island south of India.

In a rare interview with journalists, the swarthy Prabhakaran left no doubt that, if his group's demands were not met, the recurring violence that had crippled Sri Lanka for decades would not end.

"Victory in a war does not depend on manpower or weapons," he was quoted as saying at a hide-out on northern Jaffna Peninsula. "Firm determination, valour and a love of freedom are the factors that decide victory over war. Our fighters and our people are full of these."

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are not just freedom fighters; they are fanatics, their cause considered greater than life itself. Few organisations this century have shown such callous disregard for human life. As both Indian and Sri Lankan security forces have recently intensified efforts to thwart the Tigers' operations, they have turned more violent. The callousness of their actions is hard to believe.

THE TIGERS' TRAIL OF DEATH

Last October guerillas went to a dirt-poor area in the east and announced over a loud speaker that the military had arrived. All was safe, they said, the people could come out of their huts. But when they gathered at the village's mosque, the guerillas went to work hacking and stabbing men, women and children to death. By the time they had finished their grisly work, 140 people were dead and scores injured.

Five thousand heavily armed Tamil guerillas are holding about 600,000 people virtual hostage on the Jaffna Peninsula. Sri Lanka's 80,000-strong army has been reluctant to storm the area because it fears many of the civilians would be killed.

But the death of Mr Premadasa, who was a force of restraint on the army, has strengthened the hand of factions within the ruling party that want the military to launch a full-scale assault to crush the rebels once and for all.

Each rebel wears a cyanide capsule around his neck and is bound by an oath to commit suicide if faced with capture. Part of a capsule was found embedded in the neck of Saturday's bomber, police said.

Prabhakaran, 38, became a cult hero in 1983 when radicals stepped-up their violent campaign to win independence for almost three million Tamils. Prabhakaran dropped out of school at 16 to join the fight and quickly built a reputation as a remorseless killer. His nickname is "Thambi", which means young brother in Tamil.

The Tigers are strictly disciplined. Smoking and drinking are banned. Those who want to marry must first get permission from Prabhakaran. The group is highly organised, with an international support network. Defectors are harshly treated. The guerillas have safe houses across the island and in southern India. They often carry false identity papers and have elaborate cover stories.

Indian investigators say that not only did Prabhakaran order the 1991 assassination of Rajiv Gandhi, he also oversaw the tutoring of a woman suicide bomber who triggered explosives strapped to her waist as she greeted the Indian leader at an election rally in southern India.

The killing shocked the world and intensified pressure on Sri Lanka to allow an all-out assault on the Tamil strongholds. Mr Premadasa resisted, hoping instead for a negotiated settlement that could bring total peace.

Indian investigators claim that Prabhakaran never forgave Mr Gandhi for ordering Indian troops to disarm the Tigers in the late 1980s because the group had reneged on a peace plan with the Colombo Government. This was despite strong support earlier given to the Tigers by Mr Gandhi's mother, Indira. Prabhakaran left his jungle hideout to meet Mr Gandhi in New Delhi. The meeting broke up in bitter disagreement, according to Indian officials.

The Tigers are expert at using bombs with devastating impact. The bomb that killed Mr Gandhi - RDX plastic explosives with two wires and a battery - was simple but meticulously designed. A similar bomb blew-up a Sri Lankan navy commander last year.

A blast that killed Sri Lanka's Defence Minister, Ranjan Wijeratne, in 1991 was so powerful that his body was never found. The bomb had been left in a van which exploded when Mr Wijeratne's bullet-proof car went past.

Terrorist acts carried out by the Tigers are notorious. A rebel drove a truck full of explosives into an Indian garrison killing himself and more than 100 troops. A woman strapped a bomb to her waist and jumped in front of a convoy of trucks.

As 11 Tigers were being taken by security forces from Jaffna for interrogation, all of them swallowed their cyanide capsules and died instantly. When Indian police in September 1991 moved in to arrest the rebels who organised Mr Gandhi's assassination, seven shot themselves dead. Many of the rebels are teenagers who quickly become veteran killers. Saturday's assassin, who had plastic explosives strapped to his body and detonated it within two metres of Mr Premadasa, died a martyr.

While photographs of the bomber's severed head were published today on the front page of Sri Lanka's newspapers, upsetting international tourists who were greeted with the sight at breakfast, Tamils in northern strongholds were paying tribute to him.

THE TIGERS' TRAIL OF DEATH

There is not much else to do on Jaffna Peninsula, which has been devastated by years of fighting. Children are taught about the injustices inflicted on Tamils by the Sinhalese majority. They are told to be proud, to be strong, to be brave. There is no electricity and little food. People have to pay the Tigers a hefty departure tax if they want to leave; most cannot afford it.

Getting past Sri Lankan checkpoints into areas controlled by the Tigers is dangerous and difficult. When several thousand people are ready to go, the Tigers start shooting at Sri Lankan soldiers bunkered nearby.

With the soldiers distracted, people jump into boats and make a dash across the water after dark, hoping they will escape being shot by soldiers in helicopter gunships. The same is done when people are ready to leave. The guerrillas have fast boats which bring supplies from ships off the coast.

Prabhakaran went into deep mourning in January when his deputy, Sathasivam Krishnakumar, was killed when the Indian Navy intercepted a ship carrying explosives off the peninsula. The death of his closest friend came on top of a lot of bad news. Indian security forces have been ruthlessly crushing the group's network in southern India.

More than 30 of the group's supporters are awaiting trial for alleged involvement in the Gandhi assassination. On the island, a better co-ordinated Sri Lankan army has become more effective and sophisticated in its fight. Mr Premadasa's administration has spent a fortune building an army that could confront the Tigers if it became necessary for all-out confrontation. In 1989, \$US174 million (\$A249 million) was being spent on defence. By last year, the figure had increased to \$US500 million (\$A714 million).

Mr Premadasa's Government had been considering the idea of a federal State, with Tamils having a high degree of autonomy over law and order, land and education. But the plan was opposed by the majority Sinhalese, who have dominated the army and Government since independence from Britain in 1948.

Mr Premadasa's assassination is likely to make it difficult, if not impossible, for the establishment of a federal system in the foreseeable future. It will fuel already deeply ingrained ethnic tensions.

In 1983, the slaughter of 13 Sri Lankan soldiers sparked rioting in Colombo, during which mobs attacked Tamils in their homes and shops, killing thousands.

The Tigers probably see some benefit in creating political chaos in Colombo and a climate of fear around the country. The group has denied the assassination, probably hoping suspicion would fall on Mr Premadasa's enemies within the political establishment.

They probably believed the President's assassination would destabilise the Government, thereby weakening its resolve to take a hard line against them. Some analysts believe they have badly miscalculated, with Government-sanctioned army reprisals against them now almost certain.

Some of the most influential politicians in the ruling United National Party (UNP) tried two years ago to impeach Mr Premadasa over alleged wrongdoings, including allowing arms to be smuggled to the Tigers.

But Mr Premadasa proved wily. The biggest challenge came from Mr Lalith Athulathmudali, an Oxford-educated former National Security Minister, who early last year was expelled from the UNP and formed a breakaway Democratic United National Front party.

"People in this country want to be led by an uncommon man, not a common man," Mr Athulathmudali said earlier this month in a below-the-belt dig at the President's lowly caste.

On April 23, Mr Athulathmudali was shot dead at an election rally in Colombo. Many people blamed Mr Premadasa's supporters. Mr Premadasa condemned the attack and asked British police to help investigate the case. But some of his political opponents even tried to blame the President for personally ordering the killing, which infuriated him.

THE TIGERS' TRAIL OF DEATH

"Assassinate me by whatever means, but please do not assassinate my character - an asset I have treasured since my childhood," Mr Premadasa said in his last speech the day before his death.

Sri Lankan police say they have no doubt the Tigers killed Mr Athulathmudali, who had insisted the Government should not give in to the demands of the guerillas. Mobs rioted at Mr Athulathmudali's funeral last Wednesday as tensions deepened within the Government.

Asian diplomats in Colombo yesterday quoted an army intelligence chief as saying: "The Tigers killed Mr Athulathmudali just as they killed the President. Anybody who believes otherwise is being fooled by the group's propaganda."

A Tigers spokesman in Paris, Lawence Thilagar, said last night that Mr Athulathmudali's backers may have assassinated Mr Premadasa to "avenge their leader's death". The comments appear a crude attempt to attribute blame for the Tiger's own gruesome handiwork.

The Government is extremely nervous about a slide into anarchy from this point. A Western diplomat said: "The country is a powderkeg, but the security forces are doing a good job keeping a lid on everything."

With the island choked with bitterness, fear and uncertainty, a political settlement now seems as far away as ever. In Colombo, small groups of people gather in the streets, some holding posters of the assassinated president.

Ranasinghe Premadasa was an unashamed popularist, Sri Lanka's first president who did not belong to the professional or land owning elite. The people most upset by his death are the poor and landless.

While Mr Premadasa presided over the ruthless crushing of a Marxist uprising in the south in the late 1980s, he was proud of the changes taking place across the island that long ago was called Serendib, a word coined from serendipity.

Western diplomats have praised him for economic and social changes introduced in the past two years. They said the President's record on human rights had improved dramatically, with international agencies like Amnesty International getting access for the first time to the island's trouble spots

Mr Premadasa said in his last speech: "The people of this country are aware of the unprecedented pace of progress during the last four years. A great transformation is taking place in the country. We do not believe in violence or hatred. We believe in passion and kindness."

Opposition parties deplored Mr Premadasa's death but, with the nation in shock, still attempted to win political advantage.

The parties said in a joint statement: "Political killings dominated democracy and we of the Opposition continuously brought this situation to the notice of the Government. The killing of President Premadasa is but another step in this continuous process of terror and killing."

HISTORY OF A REBELLION

ETHNIC rivalries between Sri Lanka's dominant Sinhalese population and its Tamil minority have coloured the country's politics and led to bloodshed for nearly four decades.

The Sinhalese, who are mostly Buddhists, make up about 75 per cent of the population of roughly 17 million; the Tamils, who are mostly Hindus, form about 18 per cent. The remaining 7 per cent are predominantly Tamil-speaking Arab Muslims.

From the mid-1950s, when fervent Sinhalese nationalists demanded that the Sinhalese language be the sole national tongue, Sri Lanka has seen mounting antagonism between Tamils and Sinhalese, animosities that finally erupted into civil war a decade

THE TIGERS' TRAIL OF DEATH

ago.

More than 28,000 people have been killed since 1983, when the rebels stepped up their campaign, alleging discrimination by the Sinhalese who control State power.

The Tamil rebellion has not been the only violent conflict in recent years. In the late 1980s, a militant Sinhalese movement, called the People's Liberation Front, began a campaign of terror and assassinations intended to topple the Government and bring hard-line Sinhalese nationalists to power.

KEY DATES

February 1948: Independence from Britain.

May 1976: Tamil political parties decide to campaign for the creation of a separate Tamil State.

July 1983: Guerillas ambush military convoy in Jaffna, killing 13 Sinhalese soldiers. Anti-Tamil riots break out in Colombo and spread to other cities. August 1983: The Sri Lankan Parliament adopts laws effectively banning Tamil politicians who call for separation.

June 1985: Talks between President Junius Jayewardene and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in New Delhi.

May 1987: 3,000 Government troops launch offensive to wrest the northern Jaffna peninsula from Tamil guerillas.

July 1987: Indian troops begin landing in the island's north-east to disarm Tamil militants and to act as peacekeepers.

June 1989: Premadasa asks India to withdraw.

March 1990: Indian troops quit Sri Lanka. Indian Army casualties stand at 1,155 dead and 2,987 wounded. May 1991: Tigers accused of assassinating Rajiv Gandhi in suicide bombing.

March 1991: Defence Minister Ranjan Wijeratne assassinated.

November 1992: Ruling and main opposition parties agree on introduction of federal system.

May 1, 1993: President Ranasinghe Premadasa assassinated.

Graphic

Three illus: Above, the late President Ranasinghe Premadasa; left; Tamil rebels; and below, the Tigers' leader V. Prabhakaran Map: Sri Lanka

Load-Date: July 21, 2007

No Headline In Original

United Press International
February 28, 1989, Tuesday, BC cycle

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Section: International

Length: 516 words

Byline: By IQBAL ATHAS

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Minority Tamil rebels shot and hacked to death 37 Sinhalese villagers in the fourth such massacre this month and at least 18 other people were killed in political violence, police said Tuesday.

All of the slayings occurred during the 24-hour period ending 6 a.m. Tuesday and raised to 451 the number killed since Feb. 16, the day after President Ranasinghe Premadasa's United National Party won parliamentary elections.

In the worst incident, about 25 rebels belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (***LTTE***) stormed the remote Sinhalese village of Berawewa, about 120 miles northeast of Colombo, senior police officials said.

The attackers hacked to death with knives and swords at least 32 villagers, including three ***women*** who were first raped. Five members of one family were shot dead, the officials said. Twelve children were among the dead.

At least six people were injured in the attack, during which the rebels set fire to five houses, the officials said.

An army patrol heard the gunfire and rushed to the village, but the rebels detonated a landmine on the approach road, injuring one soldier and delaying the unit long enough to allow the attackers to escape, the officials said.

Troops and police searching the area for the guerrillas discovered 19 bodies in the village and another 18 in the surrounding forest, the officials said.

The deaths brought to at least 89 the number of Sinhalese civilians killed this month in four massacres blamed on the ***LTTE*** -- the only Tamil rebel group to reject a July 1987 accord aimed at ending a war for independence for Northeastern Province, home to most of the island's 3 million Hindu Tamils.

The accord granted limited self-rule to the province in a bid to end Tamil charges that the community has suffered discrimination by the Colombo government, which is controlled by the 11 million-strong Buddhist Sinhalese majority. The ***LTTE*** says the degree of autonomy conferred by the accord is insufficient.

India deployed an estimated 60,000 troops to crush the group, driving it from its strongholds, but failing to eliminate it as a guerrilla force. India has lost almost 700 soldiers, while the ***LTTE***'s fatalities are unknown.

In other violence, police said at least 18 people were killed in attacks by the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP), or People's Liberation Front, a Marxist-style rebel group composed mostly of Sinhalese students and unemployed youths.

No Headline In Original

Police said the victims included a member of a counter-insurgency police unit who died when JVP members ambushed his patrol in Amparai, 110 miles northeast of Colombo, on Tuesday.

The JVP has been blamed for killing hundreds of ruling party and opposition politicians and supporters, security personnel and government officials and minor employees in a campaign aimed at creating chaotic conditions that would allow it to seize power.

The group first emerged in the late 1960s and was brutally crushed attempting an insurrection in 1971.

It rebuilt its ranks by exploiting widespread anger among Sinhalese over the granting of limited autonomy to Tamil areas and the deployment of Indian troops.

End of Document

No Headline In Original

Hobart Mercury

August 1, 1995 Tuesday

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Length: 237 words

Byline: PARSONS G

Body

Betrayed women slaughtered SRI Lanka's Tamil Tiger rebels said yesterday 128 women, including two suicide bombers, were killed in an abortive attack on four army bases on Friday after a traitor had tipped off the military. The armed forces scored their biggest victory over the Tamil Tigers in 12 years of war on Friday and accused the guerrillas of sacrificing young girls and boys in the front line.

Sacrificial temples revealed ARCHAEOLOGISTS have unearthed the remains of 2200-year-old sacrificial temples inside the tomb of China's first emperor. Chinese researchers said the find was as significant as the discovery of the army of life-size terracotta warriors found inside the tomb of Qin Shi Huang.

Dogs are in a stew CHINESE pet lovers could find their beloved pooches destined for dinner today if they fail to show official registration papers to the roaming dog squad charged with ridding the Communist capital of man's best friend. According to the Public Security Bureau, dogs and their owners caught in the capital without official registration papers after August 1 will be "dealt with according to the law".

Laurindo Almeida dies LAURINDO Almeida, whose classical compositions won him five Grammys and who was hailed as one of Brazil's greatest guitarists, has died of cancer at age 77. Almeida, who moved to the United States nearly 40 years ago, helped popularise music's bossa nova style.

Load-Date: October 1, 2003

No Headline In Original

United Press International
February 6, 1998, Friday, BC cycle

Copyright 1998 U.P.I.

Section: International

Length: 208 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Feb. 6

Body

A **female** suicide bomber detonated a bomb strapped to her body at a military checkpoint in Sri Lanka capital Colombo, killing at least eight people. The explosion took place just a few hours after Britain's Prince Charles left the island nation after a four-day visit during the country's 50th independence day festivities.

Officials say that the **female** suicide bomber, believed to be a member of the separatists Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, set off the bomb as she stepped out of a van to be frisked at a military check point near the air force headquarters. She grabbed a woman soldier and detonated the explosive, killing at least four soldiers and two of her accomplices. Two civilians were also killed in the attack. Charred and mangled limbs were strewn around the blast site. Security in Colombo had been tightened and authorities had set up hundreds of military check points across the capital. Officials blamed the blast on **LTTE**, which is known for its suicide squad. Separatist **LTTE** rebels have waged a 15-year war for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east. More than 65,000 people have died since the violence began. ---

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Load-Date: February 7, 1998

Sri-Lanka

The Canadian Press (CP)

December 24, 1990 Monday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 244 words

Body

--- Sri-Lanka --- COLOMBO (AP) _ A landmine exploded under an army ambulance convoy Monday, killing 18 soldiers and three civilians in northern Sri Lanka, where the army is fighting Tamil secessionists, the military and police said. Officials said the mine detonated in a marshy jungle near Horowapatana village, where sick and wounded soldiers were being taken for treatment. Village police said the blast blew up an army bus carrying 10 soldiers, two Sinhalese women and a male civilian, killing all of them. Eight soldiers in a jeep behind the bus were killed and six others badly hurt, police said. A police officer, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the civilians had hitched a ride in the army vehicle. Horowopatana lies 200 kilometres northeast of Colombo in the Polonnaruwa district, a predominantly Sinhalese region. It borders the multi-ethnic Trincomalee district, where the Tamil separatist war has been especially intense. Forty-two soldiers have been killed since Wednesday, when the army renewed offensive operations against the Tamil Tigers, who are fighting for independence for the Tamil minority in the northern and eastern parts of the island state. The military says 131 rebels have been killed and 22 captured in the offensive. More than 14,000 people have died in the Tamil war since 1983. Tamils, who make up 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million population, say they are discriminated against by the Sinhalese, who make up 75 per cent.

Load-Date: October 16, 2002

Sri-Lanka, NL

The Canadian Press (CP)

June 23, 1990 Saturday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 270 words

Body

--- Sri-Lanka, NL --- COLOMBO (AP) _ President Ranasinghe Premadasa said Saturday he has not given up hope for a negotiated settlement with Tamil Tiger rebels despite almost two weeks of fighting that has left at least 1,400 dead. Government forces reported gains Saturday as troops fanned out from military camps in the north and east, destroying Tamil rebel hideouts and bunkers. About 30 rebels and 11 soldiers have been killed in fighting since Friday. Also Saturday, the military acknowledged it erroneously reported a day earlier that separatist guerrillas massacred 62 Muslim men, women and children. Military officials said troops discovered only three Muslim men were killed when rebels looted a village in eastern Sri Lanka. The officials reported that residents earlier said 100 rebels looted and "hacked to death" 62 Muslims in Nintavur, 40 kilometres south of Batticaloa. "Having reached the village late Friday, troops found only three Muslims killed," one official said. "The villagers panicked and in the confusion exaggerated the killings." Premadasa, the architect of last year's peace overtures to the rebels that led to a 13-month ceasefire, said he has not given up hope for peace. "I must say I have not given up my policy of conference, consultation and consensus to resolve all problems," he said at a public meeting in the central city of Kandy. The Tamil Tigers, claiming discrimination by the predominantly Buddhist Sinhalese who dominate government, have been waging a seven-year-old insurgency to set up a separate state in the north and east where the mainly Hindu Tamils are in the majority.

Load-Date: October 16, 2002

Selfish Selflessness?

The Chronicle of Higher Education

April 19, 2002, Friday

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Section: THE CHRONICLE REVIEW; Pg. 4

Length: 1731 words

Body

What motivates suicide bombers? Anger? Religious fervor? Nationalism? Desperation? We asked several experts to explain the suicide-bombing phenomenon, and why it has attracted so many volunteers.

Dipak Gupta, a professor of public administration and urban studies at San Diego State University and author of *Path to Collective Madness: A Study in Social Order and Political Pathology* (Praeger, 2001):

The term "suicide" by itself implies an extreme act of emotion. Therefore, it is easy to view suicide bombing as irrational acts carried out by a handful of fanatics. Yet data from the period 1991 to 2001 show that, up to the attacks on September 11 and the almost daily occurrence of suicide bombing in Israel, 554 people from eight countries in the world were killed and nearly 2,500 were injured by acts of suicide bombing. Of them, 40 percent were killed in Israel, 37 percent in Sri Lanka, with Russia and India with 9 percent and 7 percent each. The rest of the killings took place in Turkey, Pakistan, Lebanon, and Yemen (the U.S.S. Cole bombing).

Most of us have a fairly well-defined profile of a typical suicidal terrorist. He is a young man between 18 and 24, born in poverty, with little or no education, a victim of some personal tragedy, a despairing, stern, moralistic zealot with nothing to lose. He is ignorant of the outside world. The attainment of martyrdom solves all his earthly problems, from having a harem of 72 virgins in paradise to someone giving money to his family on earth.

However, empirical evidence provides a much more complex picture. While most suicide bombers are men, the Sri Lankan guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, has used women for a long time. Recently, even in the Islamic Middle East, women are turning up as suicide bombers. Although 83 percent of the bombers are single, many of them had steady relationships at the time of their self-immolation; 47 percent are educated. As for extreme religiosity, the LTTE does not stress religion as a motivating force. Even Hamas (the Islamic Resistance Movement) has become somewhat more secular in recent years.

If we look at the incidents of suicide bombings over time, we clearly see a pattern where for each group, they cluster together in response to some external political event. Therefore, it is clear that suicide bombings are not spontaneous outbursts of emotion but are carefully calculated strategic moves by the leadership of the terrorist groups. In fact, the leaders can simply turn on or off suicide bombings like a spigot, as part of their strategic moves. They recruit their human weapons by using the same techniques as any other cult groups with paranoid worldviews, where threats to the community become paramount and immediate.

Ariel Merari, director of the Political Violence Research Unit at Tel Aviv University, who has profiled more than 50 suicide bombers:

Selfish Selflessness?

The point is there is no profile of the suicide bomber. There are a couple of demographic features in common for most suicide terrorists -- young age, for instance. A second feature in common is that almost all of them are single; very few are married. In socioeconomic status, they are a cross section of Palestinian society. I don't believe any one of them would be hospitalized in a mental institution on psychiatrist's orders. Not only that, there is no common personality type, as far as I can tell.

When I first studied suicide terrorists in the early '80s, I had a hypothesis that these were guys who just wanted to commit suicide for personal reasons. In Islamic society as well as in Christian and Jewish societies, suicide is forbidden. I thought that they had found a socially acceptable excuse for carrying out what they wished to do anyway for personal reasons, but now they were heroes instead of being pitied or condemned.

However, looking closer at the suicides, through psychological autopsies and interviews with some would-be suicides in jail, I found that most of them were not suicidal. Actually the population as a whole does not fit the risk factors for suicide: They don't suffer from any discernible depression, they don't use alcohol or drugs, there is no history of previous suicide attempts.

I came to understand that the phenomenon of suicide terrorism is not a personal or individual phenomenon; it is a group phenomenon. In certain societies -- societies at war, let's say -- there are many people who volunteer to carry out high-risk missions. But of those who express this kind of willingness to sacrifice and a hatred toward the enemy, only a few end up doing it. The difference is in the organizational process in preparing a suicide bomber and in making sure he or she doesn't change his or her mind.

The organizational process has three important elements. One is pep talk to strengthen the ideology. The candidate is ideologically motivated anyway; otherwise he wouldn't volunteer. Another element is group pressure. The most important thing is getting a personal commitment from the candidate, before carrying out the mission. These candidates are filmed on camera, stating that they are going to carry out an act of martyrdom, saying farewell to their family and friends and so on. Once they do it, they are called a "living martyr," a person who is dead but still alive. This is a commitment that is practically impossible to break. There has not been a single case of suicide bombing done by a person on his or her own whim, in which a person just got himself a hand grenade and blew himself up together with the enemy. In all cases, the organizational process is the key.

One misunderstanding about suicide terrorism is that it is generally attributed to religion in general and to Islam in particular. This is not so. In Lebanon, two-thirds of the suicides came from secular organizations. It's neither an Islamic phenomenon nor a religious phenomenon; religion is just one more element in the persuasion, but it is neither necessary nor sufficient.

Martha Crenshaw, a professor of government at Wesleyan University and editor of *Terrorism in Context* (Penn State University Press, 1995):

This certainly is the most intense rash of suicide bombings we've ever seen. We know that there are lots of volunteers, and they have come more and more from places that you wouldn't expect -- from within Israel, from cities in the West Bank that were not known to be havens of extremism -- so it's not just people from refugee camps in Gaza. We also know, generally, from a psychological point of view, that teenagers, young people, are very impressionable, and that the problem of teenage suicide is something that even affects Western societies that are quite prosperous, including the United States. There are a number of things fitting together, and of course you add onto that a belief system that is deliberately taught to you -- that says this is a socially valued thing to do, it's not discrepant behavior -- and you can imagine the attraction to young people who have very little else to do.

One factor that has not been sufficiently studied is the experience of the earlier intifadas that began around 1987. How many of today's suicide bombers were children then? What kinds of experiences of violence did they have in that period? These were people who were probably both experiencing violence and performing acts of violence, throwing stones, at a very early age.

Selfish Selflessness?

It's usually a young person -- someone who's been indoctrinated into doing this, who now feels a sense of desperation, particularly with the use of force against the Palestinian areas. They want to do something, and there aren't many other things that they can do. Suicide is not unattractive to young people. Becoming a so-called martyr brings renown to them. Every time you walk down the street, you see posters of the martyrs; you hear everyone talking about how brave they were. From their point of view, it's framed as something extremely honorable. From our point of view, it doesn't seem that way, but you have a situation where powerful leaders and authority figures in the Palestinian movement are either praising it or not condemning it. If you want to be a hero, it's a perverse way of being a hero.

I've argued for a long time that terrorism had the potential to really embitter civil conflict or even regional conflict. It was always regarded as something trivial -- that what counts was the opposing armies, and if you didn't have an army, you didn't figure. And now we see that terrorism can have an enormous effect on the course of a conflict. It's not something that's simply expressive and minor in terms of an overall conflict.

Clark McCauley, codirector of the University of Pennsylvania's Solomon Asch Center for Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict and a professor of psychology at Bryn Mawr College:

Suicide bombing is appealing for the same reason that terrorism is the warfare of the weak. It's the only thing they've got. Now that it looks like it's producing results and really hurting the enemy, that reinforces it all the more.

For the person pushing the button, it's not anger that makes it possible. It's something much more positive than anger. It's a choice for the good, for the cause, for my people, what I understand my God wants. It has to be something positive, because I don't think many people are ready or capable of giving themselves up to death on the reward of only being able to hurt the enemy. It's just too weak. You have to have an answer to the question, What does it mean that I've lived and I died?

It's an inadequate answer to say, I hurt the enemy. The enemy is only the enemy because of who you care about. It's the cause you're making a sacrifice for; you're joining in, you hope, a glorious or at least better future. There's no immortality in making someone suffer. The immortality has got to be in your connection to the group and to something that's going on after your death.

As soon as the Palestinians have some hope of a state of their own, the bombings will go down, just as they went down after the Oslo accords. That's part of what's wrong in thinking that this is hatred, because the whole implication of hatred is that it's something continuing, that it's bad and it always will be bad. It leads you to think that there is a long-term unavoidable enmity, but that's not right. You get to see how politics is the predictor of how the violence goes.

Load-Date: May 20, 2002

Animal passions

The Sunday Times (London)

September 3, 1995, Sunday

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Section: Features

Length: 2585 words

Byline: Adrian George

Body

In Sri Lanka, where the Sinhalese lion is at war with the Tamil tiger, ADRIAN GEORGE treads warily among the ancient monuments, colonial hilltowns and viridian jungle

FRIDAY 21: to read that war has begun where your plane is about to land can concentrate the mind. The previous day the Tamil

Tigers had broken a truce and attacked a naval base at Trincomalee, killing 12 and wounding 60 Sinhalese.

I looked round the plane but nobody seemed particularly concerned: Sri Lankans were chatting and eating, tourists drinking, an English cricket team playing the phlegmatic card games of "rain stopped play". Perhaps they didn't know; perhaps they were used to it. The war has been off and on for the past 12 years... 50,000 dead.

Colombo. Bright sunlight, black shadows. The trees are astonishing: all shapes, all varieties; palms and blossoms are splattered with crows. Japanese cars, bullock carts, luridly decorated trucks, stray cows. A drunken buffet of architecture: colonial, modern, seedy, ludicrous and sad image houses with great painted Buddhas, red-striped mosques, a neo-classical parliament, a Roman church like a miniature St Peter's, and Hindu temples.

I stepped into the darkness of one temple. Inside the great smoke-blackened hall were more, smaller temples, individual to the divinities. In one were two prostrate worshippers and a near-naked, wild-haired priest performing a service with flowers, bells and water, swaying and chanting in clouds of incense the rites of the oldest religion in the world.

Outside in the street, a snake charmer, more reptilian than his charge, was waiting for me. Giggling, he performed his magic trick: making an egg disappear, he then lunged forward to my crotch... abracadabra, the egg reappeared out of the bottom of my trouser leg. The crowd was hysterical with glee. And then the rain came. The world went out of focus, under sea. Trees became swaying seaweed, Buddhist priests golden carp, buildings rocks and coral and cars electric eels. People sheltered in the roots of banyan trees like prisoners in jails.

IN THE evening I went for a walk along the seafront, where a thin man wearing a baseball cap and sarong sat with his back against the wall, grinning cheerfully. A creature of darkness sidled up: "Excuse me, sir, what you want?" he whispered. "Girls? Nice, small, young girls?" I carried on walking. "Boys? Young boys?" I turned into the Galle Face Hotel, "the oldest hotel in Asia", where guests have included the Aga Khan, Nixon, Prince Philip et al the usual names. I sat in the bar a lovely Somerset Maugham affair, open to the sea and with ceiling fans and rattan furniture and drank too much arrack before walking back to my

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hotel. The man in the baseball cap was still grinning. Actually, he was dead.

SATURDAY 22: the early morning drive northeast to Polonnaruwa was delectable: the countryside luscious with rivers and paddy fields. We stopped at a rest house for breakfast hoppers, a delicious form of pancake, and fish curry and watched the water buffalo as we drank from a decapitated coconut.

Polonnaruwa is one of the great ancient sites of Sri Lanka, its capital from the 11th to the 13th century. It is a holy site and one feels it the air heavy with incense from cinnamon trees. In the extensive park, temples and dagobas are being cleared and restored after eons of neglect in the jungle. Among these mysterious glories, a 32ft Buddha, carved from the rock, lies on his side: his final sleep. I was back at the main road when I heard the sirens a long cortege of ambulances was bringing back the dead and wounded from a Tiger ambush just 12 miles up the road. The shopkeeper who stoically explained this grim passage then invited me into his shop. Among the many carvings were old devil-dancing masks for exorcising afflictions. I bought one for preventing cobra bites and another for stopping unkind gossip; he didn't have one to stop bullets.

Trouble in paradise; I asked my driver if he knew about the war. He did. His soldier brother had been killed by Tamils last year. It was dusk as we drove towards Habarane, a small village centrally placed for the main ancient city sites and thus endowed with hotels. "Where is the war zone?" I asked the driver. "Here," he answered. "Are you scared?" I asked. "Yes." In the distance there was groaning thunder; lightning flashed. At least, I hoped that was what it was.

Our hotel consisted of luxurious cabins in a forest setting. No war here. There was a pool and a large restaurant where gargantuan northern Europeans towered over their delicate hosts and lumbered around the buffet tables, piling their plates indiscriminately with food from both East and West.

It was said of Ceylon, in the 19th century by the Bishop Hever: "Every prospect pleases, only man is vile."

Late at night from my verandah I listened to the sounds of the forest: croaks and squeaks, sucking, gnawing, struggling.

SUNDAY 23: north to Anuradhapura. We were waved through Tiger-trap roadblocks: "tourists are not a target". A mongoose snaked across the road, a monkey bumbled by the car. Across the lake, a vast white bell-shaped dagoba suggested not so much 400BC as a science-fiction future, as prognosticated by ArthurC Clarke. Gold-pinnacled shrines the size of great pyramids, reservoirs and a spider's web of irrigation canals remain from one of the most remarkable of civilisations. It was abandoned in the 10th century and swallowed by the omniverous jungle, until its rediscovery in 1820. Within these holy sites stands a bo tree tended by an uninterrupted succession of guardians for 2,300 years. The oldest tree known to the world, it was brought here from Bodh Gaya in India and is said to be a cutting from the tree beneath which the Buddha himself reached enlightenment. Monks in saffron robes moved like flames, leading the faithful from site to site.

We had lunch in a roadside restaurant rice and wild pig "caught in the jungle" before moving on to Sigiriya.

SIGIRIYA IS a most glorious folly, an immense red monolith 600ft high, like a giant tent peg hammered into the wilderness. In the 5th century it was turned into an impenetrable fortress by King Kasyapa, the deranged son of the King of Anuradhapura. He killed his father and, to escape the vengeance of his brother, retreated to this mountain top, where he lived in splendour for 11 years before unwisely coming down to fight.

Only a fool would climb those 1,200 spiralling stone steps in the midday heat.

About a third of the way up my guide pointed out a walled terrace upon which were the remnants of a painted mural depicting heavenly houris. "Look sir, topless ladies, yum, yum," he said, with the salacious leer of the truly repressed. The facing wall of the terrace had a surface of plaster and crushed termites that had been polished to a mirror so that Kasyapa could walk between the doubled images of his 500 concubines. Only a fool would have continued upwards.

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At the second terrace I saw the two monumental lion's paws all that was left of a gigantic sculpted lion, its mouth open, through which only a fool would ascend to the very top of the rock.

There I saw the remains of the gardens, the swimming pools, the dancers' terraces, the stone throne and the outlines of Kasyapa's palace. I stood on this plateau and turned to view a panorama of jungled wilderness hazing away to blue mountains, and peered down at a golden hawk as it peered down on its prey.

MONDAY 24: nature is unnaturally lovely in "the garden of Buddha". Trees already glorious are garlanded with pink bougainvillea as though decorated for the poya festival of the full moon.

Emerald, viridian infinite hues and tints of green stippled with blossoms: oleander, hibiscus, magnolia. Vines dangle orchids in a stained-glass forest; there are waterfalls and rivers where flower-printed fabrics dry on flowering bushes; and lily ponds where girls bathe in clinging saris, in a moist, sensual vision of Asia.

We drove up the winding road to the old mountain kingdom of Kandy and stopped at a shop selling spices, herbal remedies, Ayurvedic medicine. "If you like my shop, you must see my backside." I hesitated, but she led me around the side to the back garden, where I was given samples to sniff and taste of tamarind, betel and cardamom. "We have very good number-one top spices," she looked at me smiling. "Cure baldness, sir, increase virility."

IN THE cosmology of Buddhists, the world is supported on the backs of elephants; they represent life, and their likeness is to be found everywhere in tribute and for commerce. As we continued deeper into Kandy, I was offered, and bought, a bone statuette of the Hindu elephant god Ganesa, but resisted a bracelet made from "very good elephant pubic hair". "Elephant house" ice cream was for sale, as was elephant lemonade. In my hotel, I ordered a gin, and it arrived with a bottle of elephant-brand tonic. I was suffering from elephantiasis of the imagination, I went to my room to pachyderm my suitcase, I had a jumbo-sized hangover, I lay on the bed and as I closed my eyes I saw in the corner a mahogany trunk.

It was time to go to England.

TUESDAY 25: "Little England" is 6,000ft up in the mountains, in a landscape that more closely resembles Scotland or the Lake District; there are fir trees here, and cool mists drift over the hillsides and valleys, where tea plantations follow their folds like a viridescent sari dropped from the sky. At the top of the mountain is the British tea planters' town of Nuwara Eliya, with its gardens, Edwardian architecture and the Hill Club.

The Hill Club is rather odd: a gravel drive, kempt lawns,

tapiary peacocks and a Tudorish, baronial mansion built in 1876. A gentleman's club (one may have temporary membership), it has an austere interior with beamed ceilings, wooden, echoing floors, walls from which hunting trophies deer, water buffalo and a leopard stare glassily down. There are photographs of the royal family and Winston Churchill; an elephant's foot umbrella stand; and a chamber pot in a glass case. One may eat real toast and marmalade.

My driver had "headaches"; he's from Colombo and doesn't like the cold hill country. I suggested we hired some devil dancers to exorcise him, but he gave me a strange look he was, he said, a Catholic and went off to stay with his "relation".

At supper the Hill Club waiters, wearing white gloves, served "English" food: cauliflower soup, goulash and butterscotch pudding. Guests must be "properly" dressed. I had coffee and brandy before a roaring fire in a soft, chintzy, Home Counties lounge; and then I discovered the billiards room. The perfect billiards room, every item tables, lights, furniture from the time when Britain exported dull religion and amusing games over half the world.

A night servant appeared at the door of this time machine: "Would Sir like a game?" and with practised tact and delicacy just beat me, over and over again, and politely pocketed the bet as his forefathers must have done for the past 100 years. I went up to my bedroom, and a servant leaped from the shadows to thrust a hot-water bottle into my hands. I wouldn't have been surprised to have found a teddy bear on my pillow.

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WEDNESDAY 26: the Tamil tea ladies were going to work on the plantations. Their baskets hung down their backs supported by a strap worn around the forehead. The nimble fingers that plucked all day at the small leaves at the top of a type of camelia bush were cold. They wrapped their brilliant shawls and saris tight.

I drank some toddy at a liquor stall. Made from fermented coconut sap, it tastes disgustingly of its origins; the tea workers drink it to blur their existence.

We drove past spectacular waterfalls towards Adam's Peak, the holy mountain, on whose summit is a footprint of either Buddha, or the Hindu god Shiva, or (for the Muslims) Adam when he was expelled from paradise, or (for the Christians) St Thomas. All faiths are accommodated and respected.

FROM MY balcony at the Taj Sumadra Hotel in Colombo I watched the lightning dance on the Indian Ocean. The town was alive with rumours that the Tigers had 20 suicide bombers, lurking with intent, pregnant with explosives.

During dinner that night there was a massive bang outside the restaurant and the diners looked at each other and decided that this time it was thunder; it's so difficult to tell in the tropics.

FRIDAY 28: I had always imagined Arthur C Clarke, scientist, author, "guru to the Internet", in the darkest heart of the jungle, in touch with the world via a satellite hovering above his hut. In fact, he has a house in the grandest district of Colombo, neighboured by walled colonial mansions, now international embassies. But he has satellite discs plus six computers and a telescope on the roof. He came to Sri Lanka in 1964 for underwater explorations and just "sort of stayed". He is rumoured to be ill, but exudes an electric energy and, at 78, his awesome productivity continues with television series, lectures, books and films. Medals, invitations and awards arrive by what he calls "snail mail"; he has a video telephone.

Up to 20 staff assist on various projects and keeping house; one came in while I was there to tell him off for overindulging his beloved dogs. Other young men come and go bearing faxes, working videos; like the courtiers to a technological Plato.

We chatted as I drew him. "I make art" he pointed at a book of computer-generated pictures of the surface of Mars. I left this remarkable technophile flickering between his various projects, as though they were channels on a television.

IN THE road outside, a Japanese car slithered sideways through deep, muddy water into a bullock cart.

Animal life: the symbol of the Sinhalese people is the lion; in legend, the race began when a female ancestor absent-mindedly copulated with a lion. The minority Tamil people call their guerrilla army "Tigers".

Lions and Tigers fighting over the beautiful teardrop of Sri Lanka. In reality, there have never been either lions or tigers in Sri Lanka, only leopards.

Adrian George travelled to Sri Lanka as a guest of Kuoni

TRAVEL BRIEF

Getting there: Emirates (0171-808 0808) flies to Colombo, fares from Pounds 943 during September. Other carriers include Air Lanka (0171-930 4688), British Airways (0345-222111) and Caledonian (01293-567100), which runs a charter service.

Tour operators include: Kuoni (01306-740500), which has five nights' b&b in Sri Lanka from Pounds 533pp in November, with extra nights from Pounds 10.

Plus: Abercrombie & Kent (0171-730 9600), Asia Experience (0171-636 4343), Asia World (01932-820050), Bales (01306-885991), British Airways Holidays (01293-611611), Coromandel (01572-821330), Cox & Kings (0171-873 5006), Cricketer (01892-664242), Elite (0181-864 9818), Exodus (0181-675 5550), Explore Worldwide (01252-319448), Hayes & Jarvis (0181-748 0088), Silk Cut Travel (01730-265211), Thomson (0171-707 9000), Tradewinds

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(01706-219111), Tropical Places (01342-825123), Wildlife Discovery (01737-223903), Worldwide Journeys & Expeditions (0171-381 8638).

Safety: following the breakdown of peace talks in April, it has not be safe to visit the north or east. The south and centre, which includes the main tourist areas and the Cultural Triangle, are largely unaffected. For the latest information call the Foreign Office travel advice unit on 0171-270 4129.

Further information: Sri Lankan tourist board on 0171-262 5009.

Graphic

Sri Lanka; Travel

Load-Date: September 6, 1995

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Sri-Lanka, Complete

The Canadian Press (CP)

August 1, 1990 Wednesday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 592 words

Body

--- Sri-Lanka, Complete --- KATHANKUDY, Sri Lanka (Reuter) _ Suspected Tamil guerrillas burst into two mosques in eastern Sri Lanka with guns blazing and massacred up to 140 praying Muslims, witnesses said Saturday. Military officials and Muslim leaders accused rebels from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam separatist group of causing the bloodshed Friday night in the coastal village of Kathankudy. But a spokesman at the separatist group's office in Paris denied its members were involved. "We have not been able to accurately verify what happened at Kathankudy. But I am certain the LTTE was not involved," spokesman Lawrence Thilakar said by telephone. Witnesses said two groups of about 15 guerrillas, armed with machine-guns and hand grenades, raked worshippers with gunfire in simultaneous assaults on the Meera Jumma and Hussania mosques. Worshippers, who included small children and old men, were bowing in evening prayer toward Mecca when they were shot from behind. Victims had gunshot wounds in the back of the head, the witnesses said. In Ottawa, External Affairs Minister Joe Clark said he's shocked and horrified by the massacre. "There can be no justification for the spate of killings and acts of violence and destruction by the LTTE since the breakdown in negotiations with the government in mid-June," Clark said Saturday in a news release. White flags marking bereavement fluttered from rooftops in Kathankudy, a village of 50,000 rice growers and fishermen, as it mourned its dead. Journalists, taken to the scene by the army, saw pools of blood on the floor of the two mosques which are about a kilometre apart. The clothes of some of the victims were strewn around. Men, women and children, some sobbing, were gathered near the mosques as some bodies were being prepared for burial. Witnesses at Meera Jumma, the larger of the two mosques where about 200 people had been praying, said about 80 people were killed on the spot. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress leader, M.H.M. Ashroff, said 127 bodies had been found and more than 100 people were wounded. But another Congress official said some victims had later died in the hospital and the death toll had reached 140. A military official said an air force helicopter opened fire as the gunmen tried to flee by sea after the attack. Two boats were destroyed but the number of casualties was not known. Ashroff, a member of parliament, said he had asked President Ranasinghe Premadasa to arm Muslims so they could protect themselves. "The president promised to provide security. But nothing has happened so far," Ashroff told a news conference in Colombo, the capital. He blamed the government for the attacks on Muslims, who form seven per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million population. "The government must take full responsibility for the brutal rampage and violence unleashed by the heartless LTTE on the defenceless and innocent Muslims of Kathankudy," he said. He said the Tigers had killed nearly 500 Muslims since they launched a fresh offensive against the government's security forces on June 11. In all, more than 1,800 people have been killed in the seven-week war, according to unofficial figures. Muslim spokesmen say the Tigers are angry because Muslims have not supported their demand for a separate state. Tamils, who form 13 per cent of the population, want a separate homeland in the northeast where most of them live. They complain that the government, dominated by the majority Sinhalese, has discriminated against them ever since independence from Britain in 1948.

Load-Date: October 16, 2002

Sri-Lanka, Complete

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No Headline In Original

Associated Press Worldstream

July 31, 1995; Monday 06:01 Eastern Time

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Section: International news

Length: 307 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

A clandestine rebel radio station admitted Monday that 180 guerrillas, 128 of them women fighters, were killed last week in their biggest one-day loss in nearly two years.

The acknowledgment of high casualties is quite unusual for Tamil Tigers.

The military said it found 182 bodies of the rebels after repulsing attacks on five of its camps in the northeast. The insurgents came by boat and foot shortly after midnight Thursday but were pushed back.

The rebels' worst one-day loss was in 1993 when 700 guerrillas were killed in a battle.

The high women casualties were because the rebels often put women fighters to lead an assault because they won't surrender for fear of being raped after capture by Sri Lankan army soldiers.

On Saturday, the military handed over to the Red Cross the bodies of 63 guerrillas.

In continuing clashes, five Tamil rebels and a soldier were killed in northeastern Sri Lanka, a military official said Monday.

The rebels were ambushed by the soldiers near the Elephant Pass base, 290 kilometers (180 miles) north of Colombo, on Sunday night, said Captain T.R. Dunuwille, a military spokesman. One soldier was wounded.

On Monday, one soldier was killed and three wounded at Athawetunuwewa, 220 kilometers (135 miles) northeast of the capital, in a clash with rebels. Guerrilla casualties were not known.

A rebel mine killed the army's eastern commander and four soldiers when it exploded their vehicle on Sunday.

Brigadier Nalin Angammana, the highest military officer killed in three years, was on his way to inspect a military camp that rebels had attacked.

At least 35,000 people have been killed in the 12-year-old Tamil war for independence in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. The Tamils, who comprise 18 percent of the 17 million population, accuse the Sinhalese majority of discrimination in education and jobs.

(ne/aks/rr)

No Headline In Original

Load-Date: July 31, 1995

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News-Shorts

The Canadian Press (CP)

June 7, 1990 Thursday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 789 words

Body

--- News-Shorts --- MOSCOW (AFP) _ Six people were killed and several dozen seriously hurt overnight Wednesday when an avalanche struck a village in the central Asian Soviet republic of Tadzhikistan, Tass news agency said Thursday. The victims were surprised in their sleep when a mass of mud and stones slid down the mountains of Pamir onto the village of Komsomolada after heavy rains in the region over the last few days, it said. Dozens of homes and other buildings were wrecked. Special medical teams had been despatched from the capital Dushanbe. ROME (Reuter) _ More than 30 donor groups and countries pledged \$300 million US in aid Thursday to breathe new life into Nicaragua's economy exhausted by war and sanctions. Speaking at the end of a two-day conference called to set up an emergency package for by the new government of President Violeta Chamorro, Nicaraguan central bank president Francisco Mayorga told a news conference: "This is far more than we had even hoped for. Everybody who pledged money expressed their support for our democratization and economic reforms." He said nearly all the 34 donors, which included the United States, the 12 European Community countries, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, committed themselves to fund Chamorro's \$350 million recovery package. The U.S. Congress passed a bill in April allocating \$230 million to the program after President George Bush ended sanctions imposed in 1985 on the Sandinista government. The aid is needed to stabilize a country plagued by hyperinflation, to boost agricultural production and restructure the economy with a new emphasis on market forces. KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) _ A 127-pound orangutan escaped from its cage by unscrewing four large bolts. Visitors at Kansas City Zoo's ape house screamed, but no one was hurt during the animal's brief dash to freedom Wednesday, zoo officials said. "You've got all these women pushing kids in strollers trying to get out of there," said Beth Cooper, who was in the building with her husband and two toddlers. "It was kind of funny." The zoo's public relations director, Jori Glazer, said the female orangutan, named Cheyenne, was only out of her glass cage about 20 minutes. The 18-year-old ape, who's been caged since 1983, was tranquilized by a veterinarian and back in her cage Wednesday evening. Glazer such an escape had never occurred before at the 30-year-old ape house. She said Cheyenne was never out of zoo keepers' sights and no one was in danger, adding: "Of course, we moved all the people to the other side of the zoo. With any wild animal, you never know." MANILA (AP) _ Unidentified men stabbed an elderly American to death in his home in the central Philippines, U.S. officials said Thursday. Kathleen Manalo, a spokesman for the U.S. consulate office in Cebu, identified the victim as Joseph Barber, 72, a longtime resident of the Philippines. Barber was killed June 1 in his home in Palo, 580 kilometres southeast of Manila, Manalo said. Manalo said she received the report on the killing from military authorities and that there were no further details. Barber was married to a Filipino. It was unknown who may have been behind the slaying of Barber, the seventh American killed this year in the Philippines. One day after Barber's murder, a U.S. sailor was stabbed to death in an apparent robbery in his home outside the U.S.-run Subic Bay naval station, northwest of Manila. Five other American servicemen and civilians have been killed this year. Their slayings have been blamed on the communist New People's Army, which opposes the U.S. military presence in the Philippines. COLOMBO (AP) _ A year-old ceasefire between the Sri Lankan government and Tamil rebels was violated Thursday when insurgents opened fire on army trucks in the northeast, police and residents said. One corporal was

News-Shorts

killed and at least 10 soldiers were injured in the gunfight at Nedunkeri village, about 250 kilometres northeast of Colombo, said police in the area. At least six rebels were injured, according to the officials who were contacted by telephone. It was the most serious confrontation since the **Tamil Tigers** accepted a government invitation to start talks and declared a unilateral ceasefire in May 1989. The **Tamil Tigers** have been at the forefront of the Tamils' seven-year-old war for an independent country in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. At least 11,000 people have died in the war, including 1,100 Indian soldiers who were sent to the country to put down the Tamil rebellion. Tamils, who make up 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million people, claim they are discriminated against by Sinhalese, who form 75 per cent of the population and dominate the army and government.

Load-Date: October 16, 2002

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Weekend: DESTINY'S CHILDREN: Refugee children who make their way to the UK on their own have often survived appalling trauma and yet go on, given half a chance, to recover and prosper. But, Melanie MacFadyean discovers, care for them is haphazard and sometimes harsh and neglectful

The Guardian (London)

March 10, 2001

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Section: Guardian Weekend Pages, Pg. 28

Length: 5712 words

Byline: Melanie MacFadyean

Body

'If we are in politics for one thing - it is to make sure that all children are given the best chance in life.'

Tony Blair, 1999 Labour party conference

Why would any child abandon family, home, country? Why go into exile? What child would choose dispossession? Amazingly, there are 100,000 children living separated from their parents in Europe, children who have escaped from war, torture, bombs and mines. Do we do right by these children when they arrive in the UK alone - as they do in increasing numbers? What kind of a welcome do they get?

Kannan was 13 when he arrived in the UK from Sri Lanka. Dumped in a British port at dawn after a long and terrifying journey, he emerged from a container truck wondering where he was. Four other Tamils had been in the container, too, all shoved into metal boxes. One of them managed to ask a man in uniform where they were. He replied, "Japan, mate - where do you think?" Then Kannan saw a Union Jack and worked it out.

His eyes are too haunted, too dark for a 14-year-old. As he speaks, he holds a Hindu prayer leaflet tenderly in his hands - it was a present from his mother, and is the only possession he has left from his childhood. He always carries it with him, and sleeps with it under his pillow

One afternoon 18 months ago, he returned home from school in his village to find neighbours gathered around his door. They tried to stop him going into the house, warning him that the army was looking for him and would kill him. "They told me to run for my life," he says, "but I forced my way in." What he saw returns to him in flashbacks. His mother was dead - she had been shot - his elder sister had been raped and shot, and his 18-month-old sister strangled. He's not sure who murdered them, but his father, under threat of death to himself and his family, had been made to drive a truck for the Tamil Tigers. The night before the rest of his family was butchered, Kannan's father died when his truck was blown up. The family didn't know that as they sat up all night waiting for him.

"People in the community took me and my seven-year-old sister, who had also been at school that day, secretly in a boat to a faraway jungle area where we would be safe," says Kannan. He made a hut with leaves, and traders from stalls along a lonely highway gave him food. Four months later, his sister got typhoid and, with no access to medical help, he had no choice but to watch her die. The highway traders helped him cremate her. Kannan finds it

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almost unbearable to talk of his sister and tries not to weep as a panel member from the Refugee Council, the main charity assisting refugees, translates for him. He says it is thanks to her he has not gone mad.

The **Tamil Tigers** found him, threatened to kill him, tied his hands and bundled him into a truck. They shaved his head and his eyebrows, so that if he tried to run away he would be easily recognisable, then trained him and forced him into battle. Young boys were used on the front line to protect the more experienced fighters. Kannan was wounded and sent to the capital, Colombo, to distribute propaganda and do what he calls "risky jobs". In desperation, he decided to go on the run in search of some distant relatives, who he thought lived a few miles away. He ran a long way under cover of night until he reached their home. His relatives kept him hidden from the Tigers, and arranged for him to be flown to safety by one of the agents operating travel scams and supplying false papers for refugees, selling some of their land to meet the agent's fee.

Kannan's journey was terrifying. After a 15-hour flight, landing he had no idea where, he was handed over to two white men. "They locked me in a room with bread and water for three days and threatened me," he says. "I was crying, I feared the future." On the third night, they took him to a deserted car park and ordered him to get into a dark container. Playing for time, he said he was thirsty. "They gave me Coca-Cola, then I felt strange and passed out." He had been drugged and came round many hours later, crammed into a barely ventilated steel box. Hearing the murmur of voices, he struggled out to find the four other Tamils. They talked about running away, but since they had no idea where they were, this idea seemed futile. It was then that they were helpfully told they were in Japan. They spent that first night in the UK in jail; the next day some relatives came to meet the others. Kannan was taken to foster carers, who were kind but did not speak Tamil, and he wandered around their house weeping inconsolably.

Since then, Kannan has been well cared for by social services and has now been taken in by Tamils, but he doesn't want to reveal where he lives because, he says, the Tigers are everywhere. He had been here for 10 months when I met him, but he wasn't yet in school. He was frightened to go out, venturing no further than a local temple. "I am grateful to those who have taken me in, grateful to this country for accommodating me," he says. He speaks softly, as though fearing the sound of his own voice.

A phrase people working with such children often use is that they don't have a voice. In the case of Tamara, a 15-year-old from eastern Europe, this was literally true: when she arrived in the UK in November 1997, she was mute. But, because she was with her sister, who was 18, she was deemed to be accompanied by an adult. Both had been tortured, both were traumatised.

On their first night in the UK, the sisters stayed in a transit lounge. "It was very cold; they gave us a chocolate biscuit," Tamara remembers. The next day, they were taken to a hostel that was full of male drug addicts and alcoholics. Tamara couldn't leave their room alone, and when she did so with her sister, they encountered the clientele, sometimes semi-clothed, usually out of their heads, hanging about on the staircase and landings. On one occasion, a man exposed himself to her. "Sometimes they came into our room asking for tea and sugar, they were lurching, we were very frightened." The first time she went outside, a man kerb-crawled them. The hostel was in a suburban red light area. Local authority officials classified Tamara as not alone; on the other hand, she and her sister did not qualify as a family, eligible for other accommodation.

Tamara had the good fortune to be referred to principal child and adolescent psychotherapist Sheila Melzak at the Medical Foundation for the Victims of Torture. At first, she would curl up in Melzak's office and cry. She wanted to die. It was 10 months before she spoke, having previously communicated through drawings and poems expressing suicidal feelings. She has come through, learned English, flourished at school, and is now doing well at college. Had it not been for the voluntary agencies who helped her, among them the Medical Foundation, it is questionable whether she would have survived at all.

Melzak sees children from all over the world who have been tortured, bereaved, abandoned. They come from places of conflict and poverty, sent here by parents, family or friends who scrape up agents' fees to spirit them away from life-threatening situations. They come from Iraq, Sri Lanka, Angola, Nigeria, Afghanistan, Kosovo, Sierra Leone. They are children first, refugees second, but the authorities in the UK, says Melzak, do not recognise that.

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"These children's vulnerability is compounded by their experience of violence. They come from cultures in which they would not be expected to live alone, they would live at home until they get married. And yet there is an assumption, by the authorities in the UK, that because they get here alone, they are capable of independent living. That is simply not the case."

Earlier this year, the Audit Commission reported that "it is routine for some boroughs to place new arrivals in unsupported temporary accommodation - 41% of unaccompanied children in the care of London boroughs (at October 1999) were housed in bed-and-breakfast accommodation, hotels or hotel annexes, including some children aged 15 or under".

It is not only lone refugee children who are put in B&Bs indigenous children are, too, according to both the Department of Health and the Association of Local Government (ALG). ALG says, "It is all part of a very carefully worked out, detailed process. This is the same for all children, regardless of where they were born." Really?

Responsibility for the care of refugee children arriving alone - known either as unaccompanied minors or separated children - lies with social services departments. The children are covered, as are UK-born children, by the Children Act - under Section 20 or Section 17. Under Section 20, a child is deemed to be "looked after", and the local authority has a "duty to safeguard and promote the safety of the child". The child is fostered or accommodated in a children's home, and kept track of after their 18th birthday. When necessary, this can be extended into young adulthood. But the 3,350 separated children who arrived in the UK last year will mostly be dealt with under Section 17, which, for many of them, means empty days and lonely nights in B&B hotels with little or no back-up from overstretched social services departments. Social services funding for these unaccompanied children comes from the Department of Health. The Guardian put the question of whether B&B accommodation is suitable for such children to John Hutton, health minister with responsibility for social care. His reply was, "We do recognise that some councils find it difficult to find suitable placements."

Authorities in receipt of government top-up grants for refugees get pounds 500 a week for children up to 16 and pounds 300 post-16. The costs of looking after indigenous children in similar circumstances are often more than double that amount. In 1999/2000, the estimated national shortfall between expenditure and the grant was pounds 3m, leaving the local authorities with the task of topping up the top-up grants.

As a result of these limitations, once they reach 18, these young people are truly on their own. The first time I visited her at the Medical Foundation, Melzak was on the phone to a local authority asylum worker. They were talking about a distressed refugee who, having turned 18, was no longer classified a child, despite his problems. "My client has been put in a room near a railway line," Melzak said to a voice down the line. "He cannot sleep because he was tortured, he has terrible nightmares. Why did you move him from the hostel where he had settled in?" She paused, staring at the ceiling as though it might give her patience. "He was happy there - yes, I know he turned 18, yes, I know you have given him another room, but that is also right beside a railway line."

The client in question, a gentle, willowy boy, arrived here from a Middle Eastern country where, aged 16, he had been imprisoned for two months, during which time he was frequently beaten while being interrogated about his family's politics. His father was in jail and his mother in hiding. An uncle spirited him out of the country. His first months in the UK were very strange, but he liked the people running the central London hostel where he was living, and at least he was getting pounds 35 worth of vouchers per week.

Those were the good old days. When he turned 18, he was told to leave the hostel and offered first one and then another room by the railway line. Every 10 days or so, the landlord delivered a consignment of frozen food - sausage in gravy, fish cakes, chips, peas - and sliced bread. He had neither cash nor vouchers. "I feel safe for the life," he told Melzak, "but not for the peace of mind." He has now been allotted a room away from the railway, and is once more receiving vouchers.

The local authority in question just happens to have been Lambeth, but could just as easily have been one of any number in the UK, says Melzak. None of the 95 or so unaccompanied 16-17-year-olds in Lambeth's care is on Section 20, a spokesman explained.

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Melzak says that the way these children are dealt with by social services is "utterly random". Kieran Breen, assistant programme director of Save the Children Fund, agrees: "It's an idiosyncratic jigsaw of ad hoc practice; how they are treated depends who's on duty and where a child comes in. It's down to individual social workers even within boroughs, and that determines the outcome. It's not just refugees who get bad delivery of services, it's abused children generally. The choice between sections 17 and 20 of the Children Act has become a national lottery." Only one borough in the UK, West Sussex social services, automatically takes separated children under Section 20, the "cared for" category of the Children Act.

It's hard to imagine what the soulless acres of airport transit corridors and lounges look like to a terrified solitary child inching towards the immigration desk, waiting in line with a beating heart. Some wander around before being noticed by a cleaner or, perhaps, by airport surveillance. Olu arrived in the UK at 14, clutching one small bag. She had never been out of Nigeria before, she had never been on a plane and she had certainly never walked alone through the grey zones of airport transit. It was an arrival that compounded the fears she hoped she had left behind.

Haltingly, Olu tells the fragmented story of her childhood. The trouble began when her father was forced to join some kind of cult. "Before you join, you have to make a sacrifice, they take part of your body and eat it," she says. He was murdered - she remembers when her family found his body. "He was in a mortuary, his head split in two. We embalmed him and took him home to bury him, but the cult went to his grave and took part of his body." The cult - perhaps a criminal gang, perhaps a rival tribe- came back. They raped Olu, her sisters and her mother. Wherever they fled, their attackers pursued them, and so the family split up in order to survive. Olu went on the run, sleeping rough for three nights until she found a friend of her father's, who gave her an air ticket and a forged passport. He told her not to tell immigration her real age, but to try and seem older. It was a bad mistake.

She was frightened on the plane, and cold, because she had no coat. "I felt as if everybody was looking at me," she says. She had been told that an "auntie" would meet her at Heathrow, identifiable by a sign with Olu's name written on it. When she got to the end of her nervous walk through the grey zones, she stood in line until she got to the immigration desk. An officer asked her where she was going, she replied that she was going to meet her auntie. Her bag was searched, and she was taken to what she describes as an "alcove" by two **female** officials who strip searched her. She was then left in a waiting room and, at around 2am, informed that she would be searched again, and led to a room where she was told to take off her clothes. A **female** doctor was present and Olu was x-rayed for drugs they suspected she was carrying internally. Then she was given a green robe and the doctor examined her, including, she says, giving her an internal vaginal examination. "I was crying," she says. "So was one of the lady officers." Olu was told that this was routine procedure for drug suspects. She says that she was not interviewed or asked any relevant questions before the search began, and that she did not tell them she was only 14, as the man in Nigeria had told her not to. The day after her examination, she says she was interviewed, which was when she revealed her real age. An immigration officer at Gatwick told me that only she and one other at the airport had any special training for dealing with unaccompanied refugee children.

Olu was taken from the airport to Campsfield House, a detention centre for refugees near Oxford. The Refugee Council has an agreement with the immigration service that it will notify them of unaccompanied minors. In Olu's case, this contact was not made for about four weeks, and she spent six weeks in total at Campsfield, feeling suicidal, before the Refugee Council and social services managed to get her out. She then went to live with a foster family, of whom she speaks very warmly, and is now living happily in a shared flat.

A list of questions was sent by the Guardian to Barbara Roche, the minister in charge of immigration for the Home Office, and to John Hutton, at the Department of Health. A spokesperson answered unequivocally on Roche's behalf: "Unaccompanied children are never detained in prisons." But in July last year, Roche said, "Unaccompanied children should never be detained other than in the most exceptional circumstances, and then only overnight with appropriate care if they, for example, arrive alone at an airport." However, Terry Smith, head of the children's section of the Refugee Council, says that their records for the past five years show that they had 210 children referred to them, who claimed to be under 18, and who had been held in detention, some of them as young as 14. And, according to an Amnesty International report published in May 1999, between January 1997 and June 1998,

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76 unaccompanied refugee children had been detained, "some in young offenders institutions and even in adult prisons". Amnesty cited one case of a 14-year-old Nigerian girl held in Holloway.

During a very brief telephone interview with Roche, when this apparent contradiction was put to her, she indicated that she would like to see the Amnesty data. The same questions about detention were put to Hutton, who replied, "We have no evidence that children are being held in detention, and would welcome any further details so that this can be looked into."

Even more sinister than the detentions is the unknown number of child refugees disappearing in suspicious circumstances. West Sussex social services, the area that covers Gatwick Airport, is among the best in the country in relation to its treatment of separated children. Yet a total of 71 child asylum seekers - the majority of them girls from poor Nigerian families - disappeared from its care between October 1995 and December 2000.

So far, only two of the missing children have been found, and nobody knows the fate of the others. Police conclude that most have been taken by traffickers for prostitution, forced domestic labour and crime, a trade worth an estimated Dollars 7bn globally. Prosecution of traffickers is difficult, because of the absence of anti-trafficking laws in the UK and most of Europe, and because the young people - the witnesses - are too scared to pass on information, let alone testify. Many have been threatened that their families will die if anything is revealed. So far, no trafficker has been successfully prosecuted in this country.

Detective Superintendent David Gaylor has worked on the West Sussex cases. "We feel neutered and disempowered," he says. "We have struggled to influence anyone at a high enough level to make a difference and nobody is looking at the potential scale of it. Initially, when we raised some specific issues with the Home Office in 1999, they replied in so many words that it wasn't their problem, that social services shouldn't lose these people. We have since then had some response from Barbara Roche, but there's still a long way to go. I hope the Home Office will now strive for European and international liaison, because one small police force and social services department in the south of England isn't going to change the price of fish on their own. I am sorry to say it may be one of those cases where not enough notice will be taken until there is a death and then social services will get the blame. We are saying don't wait for that tragedy."

Suspicion of asylum seekers and refugees is often fuelled by xenophobic comments by politicians and public figures, and it is underpinned by a high level of ignorance. A recent Mori poll found that many respondents believed that refugees received pounds 113 a week - the truth is, they get around pounds 35 in vouchers, to be used at specific shops; they believed that 20% of the current UK population is made up of immigrants - the figure is 4%; they thought 27% of the population belonged to an ethnic minority - the figure is 7%.

The Sun made its position absolutely clear: "It's awful that any youngster feels desperate enough to leave his or her home . . . but . . . sentiment leads to detriment for British-born children."

Hopefully, the 20-year-old Afghan in Birmingham with whom I spoke didn't see that particular comment, or the headline "Ungrateful Afghans are welcome - to go home". A quietly spoken, achingly polite young man, he fled from the Taliban aged 16 and, on a long, dangerous journey, got lost in a remote region of the Commonwealth of Independent States; he is too frightened to say where. Arrested because he had no travel documents, he was thrown into jail. Jail was a narrow room with 44 other people, almost all adult men - "Criminals, Mafiosos, rapists, killers," he says. They slept in rotas because there were only bunks for 20. They were all stripped to their underpants. He witnessed the gang rape of the only other teenager. The young Afghan had never told anyone this story before, but wants people to know the depths of cruelty to which separated children are subject. Ungrateful? No, he's very grateful. Go home? He would love to, but he would be killed.

The problem for Tony, a 19-year-old Kosovan, is that the home where he might once have returned was ransacked after his family was forced to flee to a refugee camp in Macedonia. Someone else has moved into the family's flat - going "home" would involve a bitter and dangerous conflict. Tony arrived in the UK on May 5, 1998. He was just 17.

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He was smuggled out of the country by an agent to whom Tony's father had paid the higher going rate of about pounds 2,500, because the cheaper rate, about half that amount, gives no guarantees of survival. Tony has now settled, has a flat and has done well in his first year at university studying computer science. His mother and 12-year-old sister joined him recently, his father having died of a heart attack brought on by the stress of the war. When it looked as if the family would be dispersed under current UK policy, Tony went to war. In his only lapse from fluent English, he said, "I fought like a lion and bored their heads!" It didn't go down well with the local authority - asylum seekers are expected to be grateful for any crumbs they receive - but it worked. With help from Nick Hardwick, director of the Refugee Council, Tony and his family are now settled together.

Under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention, the UK is obliged to grant protection to children, as well as to adults, who are at risk of persecution in their own country due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a social group. Under the UN Convention against Torture, the UK cannot return anyone to a country where they might suffer torture or ill-treatment. However, the UK entered reservations to clauses of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, refusing to be bound, as Amnesty International put it, "to ensure that a refugee child receives appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of its rights".

Separated children are seven times less likely to receive refugee status than those in their 20s. Most of those granted it can prove they will suffer political persecution if forced to return. Even so, children are rarely, if ever deported, or "removed", to use a Home Office euphemism. But it does happen, according to a Refugee Council panel member, in cases where the asylum seeker's age is disputed. So how do officials determine whether someone is giving the right date of birth? "There's no special training given for this," explains an asylum screening unit spokesman, "so, in an age dispute, if an officer is challenged, a supervisor is called. It comes down to the view of the person interviewing with the supervisor checking." Checking, says a Refugee Council panel member, consists of staring.

One young man who has been through the removal procedure is Inka Oshodi, originally from Surinam. Oshodi, now 20, has been here for nine years. More than three years ago, he applied for asylum. When he was 11, Oshodi's parents brought him to the UK, leaving him temporarily with an aunt. His parents were killed in a car crash shortly afterwards, and his aunt threw him out. He left, aged 12, with nothing but the clothes he wore, and wandered around Brixton unnoticed, save by a man who offered him drugs. He slept on the street. Like someone from a fairytale, the next day a young man took Oshodi home to his mother who, having overcome her initial shock, took the child in. Oshodi spent the next four years with the family, who treated him like a son, working in their shop, but never attending school.

Impenetrable bureaucracies prevented Oshodi's new family from securing him any documents, however. So when, at 16, he met some older people hanging out in Trafalgar Square who said they could get him a passport, he gave them his earnings. Unknown to him, they used the passport to open a bank account that was used fraudulently. Oshodi was arrested, but the charges were dropped immediately. He was nevertheless taken to Campsfield House as an illegal immigrant. During the three months he spent there, he turned 17, and soon after two attempts were made to "remove" him. The first time he was taken to Gatwick and told he was going to Nigeria. "I said, 'I've never been to Nigeria! I'm not from Nigeria, I'm not going there!'" They escorted him to a plane. "They tried to put me in a seat," he says, "I said, 'I want to see the pilot,' I was very upset and threw the tea trolley. The pilot said, 'I'm not taking that boy.' He asked me where I was from and I said Surinam. Meanwhile, the security guys were trying to force me into the seat. I fought them and then I had an asthma attack and ended up in hospital." He spent three days in the hospital wing of another detention centre. They tried once again to "remove" him. "The immigration officers said I was going to Surinam. I said there was nobody there to receive me, the law says there has to be someone checked out by the authorities here to meet a minor being deported."

This time, when asked for his passport by an airline official before embarkation, he replied he didn't have one, whereupon she refused to allow him on the plane.

Oshodi was returned to Campsfield and eventually, with help from the Refugee Council, his lawyer and social worker, he got out. Enrolled at an FE college since 1997, he is currently doing A-levels and aims to go to university.

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This country is Oshodi's home - he has lived here almost as long as he lived in Surinam. His immigration status was finally resolved as we went to press; it took five years. It was still unresolved when he bravely spoke at a Labour party fringe meeting organised by young separated child refugees, backed by several charities. Labour MP Tom Levitt, parliamentary private secretary to Barbara Roche, sat on the panel as Oshodi and three others gave stirring accounts of their experiences.

After Oshodi spoke, Trevor Phillips, chairman of the Greater London Authority, said passionately, "We need to rock the boat . . . Our policies have gone off the rails because they are driven by political imperatives from somewhere else. We know the way we treat refugees is not decent, not fair, not right. We've got to get honest here, and I'm right off-message already. Vouchers, for example, send all the wrong messages. Nobody who aspires to Labour values could tolerate it in our society, it's wrong, it's wrong, it's wrong."

In his speech, Levitt rattled through the immigration problems that New Labour "inherited" from the Tories, before turning to the question of beggars. He complained of people begging on the tube with babies "drugged up to the eyeballs on Calpol". He praised the National Asylum Seekers Service (Nass) and landlords from whom accommodation was being rented. He added, "Vouchers protect asylum seekers against exploitation from protection rackets and the shops are training their staff so there are no unfortunate incidents, and if there are, I want to know about them."

The Home Office recently set up a working group on the question of unaccompanied asylum seeking children. In a letter - seen by the Guardian - which was sent to working group guests at the end of December last year, Kathy Casey of the Asylum Appeals Policy Directorate, wrote of new approaches to policy, costs and processes which would produce "fair outcomes for individuals".

Casey went on to say that new directives include suggestions that asylum applicants only be accepted if they can produce evidence of their age or if "their appearance clearly supports the age claimed". How does an immigration officer establish age in a young person of a culture about which he or she knows very little? These children arrive either with forged documents or no documents - how can they "provide evidence" of their ages?

Casey's list of aims continues with plans to "eliminate the incentives which attract unaccompanied children", and "reduce the potential growth in spending". In order to prevent them from settling once they are here, Casey suggests that "where there is no prospect of safe return, exceptional leave to remain may be granted to unaccompanied children for four years or until their 18th birthday". It becomes clear why these children are almost never granted refugee status - at 18 anyone can be deported, under 18 there are nigh on impossible protective measures which have to be met before a child can be returned. Casey writes that the Home Office seeks "to enforce the removal of the unaccompanied asylum seeking children who have been refused asylum and who have no other basis to stay in the UK when they reach 18".

The odds are so stacked against these young people that their determination, dignity and pride in the face of obstruction are very impressive. All whom I met were studying or, like Kannan, struggling to get into school, a vital element if a child is to feel included in any society. And yet, according to the Refugee Council, 1,400 asylum-seeking children have no school places. Many come from stable, loving families, and when the impact of trauma is mediated by good experiences before and after the trauma, says Sheila Melzak, their chances of achieving peace of mind are increased.

Arturo Correia and Joshua Salo are two who have experienced trauma and violence, but have found help since. Correia, an Angolan, was 14 in 1994 when bombs started falling as he sat in his classroom. He never went home again and knows nothing of his family's fate. He was flown to a Red Cross camp in Luanda with his brother and the other kids from their school. He and his brother were befriended by a Frenchman who worked for an aid agency. He got them passports, air tickets to the UK and gave them Dollars 600. The Dollars 600 was stolen before they reached the UK. "We asked the cabin crew where to go when the plane landed, but they couldn't help us," says Correia. "Luckily, someone took us to a Red Cross lady who spoke Portuguese." It was she who interviewed them.

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Correia and his brother were taken to a foster family, who were very kind, and whose teenage children managed to communicate with them by using a French dictionary. From there, they were taken to a hostel in southeast London. It was hard, but not as hard as school, where Correia found himself the butt of racist bullying from, to his surprise, a group of black kids. He fought them off with his belt and was suspended. He was then sent to Bishop Thomas Grant, a Catholic school where the headmaster and PE teacher encouraged him to go into professional football. It was their sympathy and confidence in him that turned his life around. He became a young hopeful with West Ham and went on to play for Wimbledon.

Correia is driven increasingly by thoughts of his family: "I think about them more and more. I want to find them and give them some life, I want to make them proud." Attempts by the Red Cross to contact his family have met with silence - he doesn't know if they are still alive. Travel restrictions due to his immigration status rule out any thought of going to look for them himself.

Salo was helped by West Sussex social services, and particularly by social worker Lynne Chitty, who is with him as he sits shyly but proudly in a new suit. Salo is studying to become a solicitor specialising in immigration. Salo left Zaire six years ago after witnessing the murder of a friend he describes as his "political mentor". He was in this man's house when two men arrived. They didn't see Salo, but he saw one of them shoot his friend in the head. Salo escaped through a window. Then letters started to arrive threatening the life of Salo and his eight siblings. His father said he would have to go into exile. Salo resisted, unable to bear being parted from his mother. He was assured that separation would be temporary, but he has had no contact with any of his family since he left.

A tortuous journey followed, culminating in his arrival in the UK. It was after hours, so Salo was taken to Tinsley House detention centre. "They took my bag and my belt, and left me in a room where the chair and bed were bolted down. My heart broke." Salo was taken from there to a children's home, where kids with knives made jibes about him going back to where he belonged.

All that is now in the past, however, and Salo feels he belongs in the UK; Worthing is his favourite place. But does the UK feel that Salo belongs? The government has granted him exceptional leave to remain, a status that puts him in limbo and hardly a recognition of belonging.

And that is the heart of this story: where do these children belong? Surely they belong wherever they fetch up, entitled to the protection that the adult world should give them as a matter of basic humanity

Some names have been changed. In Monday's G2: Trafficking and the refugee children who go missing in the UK.

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UN
Commission on Human Rights adopts resolution on situation in Sierra Leone

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The Commission on Human Rights this afternoon called on warring factions and forces in Sierra Leone to respect human rights and abide by applicable international humanitarian law. The Commission reminded all factions and forces in Sierra Leone that in any armed conflict, including an armed conflict not of an international character, the taking of hostages and wilful killing and torture or inhuman treatment of persons taking no active part in the hostilities constituted grave breaches of international humanitarian law.

In a resolution reached in private session under the Commission's "1503 procedure" and made public this afternoon, the Commission also said it would discontinue private discussion of the situation in Sierra Leone and take up the matter in public under its agenda item on "the question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world". The resolution further requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to apprise the Commission at its next session of reports of the Secretary-General concerning human rights violations in Sierra Leone.

Commission Chairman Anne Anderson said that during the 1503 meetings, the Commission also had reviewed human rights situations in Chad, Gambia, Nepal, Saudi Arabia and Yemen, and had decided to discontinue review of matters in Gambia, Nepal, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. In reference to Chad, she said, a text would be read out when the Commission took up its agenda item on "advisory services and technical cooperation in the field of human rights".

Later in the afternoon, the Commission heard presentations from its Special Rapporteurs on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and Sudan.

Kamal Hossain, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, said that the expectation of restored human rights provided by the Geneva Accords signed in 1998 had remained unfulfilled to date in the country. He concluded that the programme for building a lasting peace must give due place to the progressive realization of the human rights of all the Afghan people. He called on the international community to use its resources to support this peace-building process.

In response, the representative of Afghanistan said the right to life and security continued to be flouted by the Taliban regime and that people from other religious and ethnic minorities continued to be brutally persecuted. He called on an investigation be carried out into the cases of many Afghans held in Taliban jails who were civilians yet had been held for two years without trial or sentence.

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Leonardo Franco, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Sudan, said that regrettably the adoption of a new Constitution in the country had been overshadowed by the curtailment of a series of political freedoms and reports of abuses such as arbitrary arrests and detentions without due process targeting human rights advocates, as well as political, religious and student leaders. He recommended that the role of State security agencies be restricted since they were directly responsible for human rights violations and their pervasive presence created a climate of fear and intimidation.

In response, the representative of Sudan said that the Special Rapporteur had unfortunately not reached conclusions based on positive developments in Sudan that he himself had noted in his report. These developments included adoption of a new Constitution with a comprehensive bill of rights; release of all political detainees; and the steady implementation of the peace agreement of 1997.

Also addressing the Commission this afternoon on the question of the violation of human rights in any part of the world were representatives of Argentina, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Poland, Pakistan, Norway, Republic of Korea, Afghanistan, Cyprus and Bahrain.

Eritrea, Turkey, Iraq, Ethiopia and Greece exercised their right of reply.

The Commission held an evening meeting from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. to continue its debate on the question of the violation of human rights in any part of the world.

Violations of Human Rights in Any Part of World

Under this agenda item, the Commission has before it a Secretary-General's report (E/CN.4/1999/25) the Secretary-General which deals with the Commission's decision of 1998/109 on human rights in Cyprus. It details the United Nations activities pursuant to that decision regarding the Secretary-General's mission of good offices, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) and the Committee on Missing Persons in Cyprus.

Also before the Commission is a report (E/CN.4/1999/26) from the Secretary-General which deals with the human rights situation in southern Lebanon and the west Bekaa. It states that a note verbale was sent on 15 May 1998 to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Israel in this regard and states that no reply has been received to the date of the report.

The Commission is also considering a report (E/CN.4/1999/38) from the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Sudan, Leonardo Franco. The report states that in view of the late appointment of the Special Rapporteur, he will not be in a position to make a full report to the Commission on Human Rights at this stage. Upon satisfactory completion of his mission, a more substantive report will be forthcoming.

The Commission also has before it a note from the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/1999/40) concerning the situation in Afghanistan. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Kamal Hossain, was appointed in December 1998 and will not be presenting a written report to the Commission.

Resolution on Sierra Leone

In a resolution on the situation of human rights in Sierra Leone, the Commission appealed to all factions and forces in Sierra Leone to respect human rights and abide by applicable international humanitarian law; reminded all factions and forces there that in any armed conflict, including an armed conflict not of an international character, the taking of hostages and wilful killing and torture or inhuman treatment of persons taking no active part in the hostilities constituted grave breaches of international humanitarian law, and that all countries were under the obligation to search for persons alleged to have committed, or to have ordered to be committed, such grave breaches and to bring such persons, regardless of nationality, before their own courts; decided to discontinue consideration of the situation in Sierra Leone under the private 1503 procedure and to take up the matter under the public procedure of its agenda item on "the question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world"; requested the High Commissioner for Human Rights to apprise the Commission at its next

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session of reports of the Secretary-General concerning human-rights violations in Sierra Leone; and decided to make its decision public.

Statements

KAMAL HOSSAIN, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, said that the expectation of restored human rights provided by the Geneva Accords signed in 1998 had remained unfulfilled to date. The most fundamental of the human rights violations had been to reduce the people of Afghanistan for such a long period to becoming virtual hostages or refugees in their own land while externally armed forces sought to rule Afghanistan without the effective participation or consent of its people.

Mr. Hossain maintained that among the realities of the Afghanistan challenge to peace-building were: over 700,000 square kilometres which were contaminated with landmines and unexplored ordnance; chronic malnutrition; dubious distinction of being the world's largest producer of narcotic substances; and over 2 million internally displaced persons.

Mr. Hossain concluded that the programme for building a lasting peace must give due place to the progressive realization of the human rights of all the Afghan people. The transition process toward building peace through an inclusive participatory process, involving continuing consultations with all segments of the Afghan people, aimed at establishing a broad-based, multi-ethnic and fully representative Government. The international community, he said, must use its resources to support that process and commit itself to actions, among others, as follows: the process must be human-rights focused; the Secretary-General should ensure that all United Nations activities in Afghanistan were carried out taking into account the principle of non-discrimination against women and girls; and all parties of the Afghan conflict should be urged to reaffirm publicly that they were committed to safeguarding internationally recognized human rights and to take measures to prevent human rights abuses.

LEONARDO FRANCO, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Sudan, said that regrettably the adoption of a new Constitution had been overshadowed by the curtailment of a series of violations of political freedoms and reports of abuses such as arbitrary arrests and detentions without due process, and targeting human rights advocates, as well as political, religious and student leaders. The role of state security agencies should be restricted since they were directly responsible for human rights violations and their pervasive presence created a climate of fear and intimidation. Further, he made recommendations for the prevention and abolition of torture.

Mr. Franco said that one of the most gripping moments of his mission was to discover in the southern garrison town of Wau the existence of a population of several thousand displaced persons within the internally displaced population of 46,000 persons.

The lingering question, Mr. Franco emphasized, was what could be done to improve the situation of the continuing war and relieve the suffering of the affected population. The prevailing attitude was unfortunately that the imperatives of war relegated human rights concerns until after the conflict. Mr. Franco said that he strongly disagreed with this view and called on the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army to comply with the standards of humanitarian law. He addressed common and specific recommendations to both parties and asked the Commission to endorse them.

PABLO CHELIA (Argentina) called on the Commission to work for the restoration of human rights in Cyprus. Argentina thanked the United Nations Secretary-General for his good offices mission which had made progress towards a negotiated compromise between the two parties to reach a fair solution. Argentina was concerned about the situation of human rights in Cyprus. The international community needed to find a solution which was supported by international instruments and resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The solution also had to look into the rights of refugees and investigate disappeared persons. The Turkish authorities had made progress, but there had also been difficulties in 1998. Argentina believed that a solution which implied the establishment of two separate zones and which excluded the full union of both communities of the Cypriot population was unacceptable. The whole Cypriot population must be guaranteed the enjoyment of all their rights and liberties.

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H.M.G.S. PALIHAKKARA (Sri Lanka) said that his Government had acceded to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in 1997 despite a campaign of terrorism waged by one of the most ruthless groups in the world, the so-called Tigers. It was also in the process of finalizing its report under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and had filed its first report under the Convention against Torture. The policies and programmes on human rights and humanitarian work undertaken by the Government had to be seen in the context of the extraordinary security threat brought about by the ruthless terrorist group, the LTTE, which openly advocated ethnic cleansing and the ethnic segregation of the country against the will of its own community.

Mr. Palihakkara stated that the root cause of Sri Lanka's principal human rights concern still had remained unresolved, mainly due to the intransigence of the so-called Tigers. The Government had persisted in its efforts to promote a political process of constitutional reform and devolution of power as a means of addressing the ethnic issues in the country. Despite the terrorist activities, the Government had expressed its willingness to enter into negotiations with the LTTE if it demonstrated readiness in a verifiable way, to renounce its terrorist campaign for a mono ethnic separate state in Sri Lanka and joined with other political parties to work towards a negotiated political solution within a specific time-frame.

KHALID BIN HAMAD (Qatar) said attention had to be paid to the situation in south Lebanon and the west Bekaa where human rights circumstances continued to deteriorate after years of illegal Israeli occupation. Daily, Israel violated basic human rights standards; Israelis troops destroyed houses and crops; destroyed civilian property; and kept farmers and fishermen from carrying out their livelihoods. The troops also enforced collective punishment; for example, they imposed closures against entire villages if they suspected one occupant of some kind of resistance to the occupation. In addition, there were various forms of physical and mental torture carried out against detainees, including women and children; some detainees had died after their release.

The Commission must continue to bring pressure to bear against the Israeli authorities to halt their human rights abuses in this region and to withdraw their forces and so remove the base cause of these serious problems.

KRZYSZTOF JAKUBOWSKI (Poland) said the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights last year gave countries a chance to consider the challenges ahead, taking into account the fact that human rights movements had hardly been successful in terminating human rights abuses. Kosovo was a sad testimony of this. Poland categorically condemned such brutality and violence and associated itself with the demands of the international community to immediately halt the barbarity of ethnic cleansing.

Mr. Jakubowski said growing interdependence and globalization were affecting all elements of international relations. Today nobody questioned the universality of basic human rights and this simply meant that human rights had reached an international dimension and that the international community had the moral obligation, right and duty to intervene every time human beings were being abused. There were States which as a matter of principle disregarded essential freedoms and the freedom of expression. Such was the reality prevailing in the remnants of the Communist countries. It was not necessary to name these countries.

SYED SHARIFUDDIN PIRZADA (Pakistan) said that all citizens of Pakistan were entitled to human rights. Pakistan was a vibrant democracy and was one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child. There was no situation of gross and systematic violation of human rights in Pakistan, nor were there restrictions on human rights organizations to visit the country and to report on the situation of human rights there.

Mr. Pirzada said Pakistan had taken a number of steps to further improve the human rights situation in the country, including among others: special initiatives to protect women's rights and the rights of children; police reforms in Punjab and Sindh; and the implementation of landmark judgments declaring various sensitive enactments as void based on their repugnance to fundamental rights.

Pakistan was committed to sincere, meaningful and result-oriented talks for an early solution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. Mr. Pirzada underscored Pakistan's hope that under the Commission's focus on the protection of human rights in armed conflicts, it would recommend among others: the scrupulous regard for international humanitarian law; a standing provision to enable all human rights mechanisms to visit any occupied territory or situation of armed conflict to probe and monitor relevant matters; a special rapporteur on human rights violations in

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occupied territories and situations of armed conflict; stationing of field missions in such territories and situations; and the international community must ensure the population of the occupied territory was free to communicate with human rights organizations and United Nations human rights mechanisms.

JANIS BJORN KANAVIN (Norway) said the human rights situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was of great concern; a durable and equitable solution could only be found through political processes based on respect for democracy and human rights; the forced mass evictions, ethnic cleansing, and killing of civilians, including Kosovo-Albanian politicians and intellectuals, by Serbian forces and paramilitary elements had to be strongly condemned.

Norway also expressed concern about human rights situations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Myanmar, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Saudi Arabia and Cambodia. Progress was noted but concern expressed over situations in China, Turkey, Cuba, East Timor, Iran and Algeria.

CHANG MAN SOON (Republic of Korea) said that in order to respond to human rights abuses, there was a need to know what human rights were. Human rights problems required genuine full cooperation of individual governments. As the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action clearly stated, the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms were the responsibility of governments. There were repressive regimes in many parts of the world where the denial of basic human rights had become a state policy and where the culture of intolerance and impunity continued to prevail. Such was the situation in the former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Soon said the mutilations and killings in some parts of Africa were another horrifying example of formidable human rights abuses. In Afghanistan, the most basic rights of women and girls, such as the right to work, education and proper health care, were commonly denied, as a result of policy. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil economic, social and cultural life and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex were important priorities for the international community. Nigeria deserved the praise of others with its recent elections. Also in Iran, improvement of human rights were notable since the inauguration of President Khatami. The Korean Government would continue to strengthen the mechanisms of human rights protection and promotion of the Commission on Human Rights.

HUMAYUN TANDAR (Afghanistan) said the right to life and security continued to be flouted by the Taliban regime - several thousand people had been massacred in the last year during the Taliban campaign in the north of the country. People from other religious and ethnic minorities continued to be brutally persecuted, and it was crucial that an investigation be carried out into the cases of many Afghans held in Taliban jails, most of whom were not prisoners of war they were civilians, and many had been held for two years without trial or sentence.

Mr. Tandar said religious persecution continued; the Shi'a suffered in particular. Violence against women and children was just as brutal as in previous years

- they still had no rights to education, to health, to work. The overall discrimination against women was utterly appalling: they had virtually no rights or powers and were regarded as figures of shame useful only for satisfying men's urges. The Taliban was trying to return to the Middle Ages; its adherents were also practising domestic and international terrorism and were growing and marketing illegal drugs.

PETROS EFTYCHIOU (Cyprus) said 25 years after the Turkish invasion and occupation of 37% of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus, massive violations of human rights continued in a systematic manner well after the end of hostilities. He reminded the countries of the tragic consequences of the 1974 Turkish invasion and the human rights situation in Cyprus today.

Mr. Eftychiou said that as a result of the Turkish invasion, 20,000 people living in the area occupied by the Turkish army were forced to abandon their homes and turn into refugees within their own country. Some 25 years later, not a single displaced person had been allowed to return home. The agony and drama of the families of the missing still continued. With the occupation, a large part of Cyprus' cultural heritage, including religious and archaeological monuments, found itself under the control of the occupied regime. At the time of the invasion, there were approximately 120,000 Turkish Cypriots living in Cyprus. Today there were only 60,000 left and at the same time,

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114,000 Turkish settlers had been implanted in occupied Cyprus. With regard to the case of Cyprus, the relevant resolutions and high level agreements would offer a sound basis for achieving a just and viable solution to the problem.

AHMED AL HADAD (Bahrain) said the Government had committed itself to guaranteeing its citizens their basic rights to health, education, welfare, and housing, and such policies had brought tangible and admirable results despite a backdrop of limited resources, a rapidly growing population, and a high population density. Citizens had direct personal access to the Amir and Government officials and recently a Shura (consultative) Council had been established, which had 40 members and represented a broad cross-section of the Bahraini community.

Mr. Hadad said Bahrain continued to support an approach of cooperation rather than confrontation in the field of human rights; it cooperated extensively with the United Nations. Bahrain cautioned against the cynical abuse of international human rights machinery, such as by individuals and groups with no genuine concern for human rights and who only wanted to further extremist and discredited agendas.

AHMED ELMUFTI (Sudan) said the Special Rapporteur had unfortunately not reached conclusions based on positive developments in Sudan that he himself had noted in his report. These developments included adoption of a new Constitution with a comprehensive bill of rights; release of all political detainees; steady implementation of the peace agreement of 1997; declaration of a comprehensive ceasefire which unfortunately had not been accepted by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA); and establishment of a constitutional court for the first time in the country's history.

Mr. Elmufti said the Special Rapporteur had received the full cooperation of the Government during his visit to Sudan; but his report failed to adequately note the practical measures undertaken by the Government to bring about peace, including the comprehensive 1997 agreement. In fact he should have justifiably concluded that the SPLA was solely responsible for all violations related to the conflict, including the displacement of the population and abduction and mistreatment of women and children. The Special Rapporteur also failed to understand that peace and democracy could not be built overnight. Finally his conclusions on the issue of slavery were inaccurate and should be reconsidered.

Rights of Reply

AMARE TEKLE (Eritrea), speaking in right of reply, said the Ethiopian representative had evaded the issue in his remarks on the conflict with Eritrea. He had claimed that the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the United Nations and the rest of the world had treated Eritrea as the aggressor; would he point out one OAU or United Nations document which labelled Eritrea as the aggressor even once? And why were the European Union representatives refused permission to visit a supposed bombing site where Eritrea allegedly had violated the air moratorium? It was not only human beings but also truth that had been deported from Ethiopia.

BULENT MERCI (Turkey), speaking in right of reply, in response to the statement of the Ambassador of Greece, said his country considered it was an attempt to white wash the scene. However, the statement could not hide the fact that a bloody terrorist, the mastermind of more than 100,000 crimes in Turkey, had sojourned in the Greek Embassy. Turkey considered deplorable Greek violations of human rights against the Turkish minority residing in Greece who were denied even the most fundamental rights including, among others: repression in the fields of education and religion, full employment of their professions; and the destruction of their cultural heritage.

TAHA MAHMOOD (Iraq), speaking in right of reply, said the statements of Norway and New Zealand were not accurate but a politicization of human rights; it was also wrong to use double standards; those statements were based on allegations in the report of the Special Rapporteur, and Iraq had already refuted those allegations. Norway and New Zealand should at least have been fair and referred to the international economic embargo that had caused the most grievous human rights abuses; the embargo had killed more than a million people. There also were brutal and illegal weapons, including ammunition made of depleted uranium, that had been used against Iraq.

BIRHANEMESKAL ABEKE (Ethiopia), speaking in right of reply, said that the Eritrean delegation had once again vilified Ethiopia, with the intention of detracting attention from the plight of Ethiopian nationals in Eritrea who were

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being deliberately exposed to risk and death. The Eritrean authorities would still like the world to believe that these Ethiopian nationals were acting of their own free will. The right to live in peace in ones own country was being violated for thousands of Ethiopians still living under Eritrean occupation. This was an Eritrean attempt to change the demography of the region that it had illegally occupied. The international community must condemn this and demand that Eritrea refrain from further committing these criminal acts and hold accountable all those responsible for war crimes.

EMMANUEL MANOUSHKIS (Greece), speaking in right of reply, said Turkey once again had misled the Commission; he wished to state once and for all that Greece did not and never would support terrorism and did not support the PKK. In fact the Kurdish situation was a human rights matter and needed to be faced up to and resolved on that basis by Turkey. It also should be pointed out that fighting against terrorism could not be used as an excuse for human rights violations.

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Letters to the Editor

The Daily Telegraph (Sydney, Australia)

December 10, 2002, Tuesday

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Body

Surely we can buy Elvis

During the recent emergency, the fire services have done a wonderful job with the resources at hand.

We have, however, been told by the government that the Errikson helicopters are too expensive to buy and it is cheaper to lease them as required.

These helicopters are only just arriving back in the country now when the worst of the current crisis is over.

How many more homes could have been saved if we had owned our own Elvis or similar when the crisis began?

Gary McCleary,

Emu Plains

With Australia's constant threat of summer fires, why is it that our State Government and Federal Government still persist in the hiring of heli-tankers at what I believe would be a cost of many millions of dollars?

MATP

Surely the public would not object to the purchasing of several of these vital pieces of fire-fighting machinery that no doubt can be adapted for other purposes when not required to fight fires.

Michael Solomons,

Harrington Park

Energy Australia, Integral Energy and to a lesser extent Telstra have been the target of criticism for the lack of speed in reconnecting services in fire-ravaged areas (Daily Telegraph, December 9).

They have defended their actions by putting the safety of their staff first. Rightly so, but what they have not said is that strategic services such as power and communication should not be cut in times of natural disaster.

It is these times that residents most need power to pump water and sustain communications and telephones to remain in contact with essential services.

The bulk of NSW's electrical distribution system and a small percentage of communication cables remains aerial; a leftover from the early 1900s.

Letters to the Editor

Premier Bob Carr had the perfect opportunity to remedy this archaic situation but has not taken up the opportunity.

Greg Bleazard,

Bonnet Bay

My jaw dropped so fast it was almost unhinged when I heard Premier Bob Carr say on Sunday that private owners will have to be made to clear their properties.

About four years ago we had the local volunteer brigade out to do a cold burn on the treed 8ha of our block.

It cost us a donation to the brigade and a barbecue for the fellows who gave their time to help us make our block safe on which to live.

We were lucky to have timed it when we did because soon after, this activity was banned by the State Government.

I cannot believe Mr Carr's gall in placing the responsibility back on residents when it is State Government legislation that has caused the unsafe conditions.

We can live safely with trees and in the bush -- we just need a government that manages this in a proper fashion.

Jane McDonnell,

Moruya

Both Vanessa Chadwick and Terri Maddison (Letters, December 9) had valid points until they blatantly discriminated against smokers.

Being a smoker, I found their comments offensive, as I have been branded thoughtless, foolish and wicked.

I, for one, am very conscious of where my butts are going and resent being accused in this manner.

I agree that anyone who is so stupid as to throw a lighted cigarette butt from a car window should be punished.

However, not all smokers are that irresponsible. Non-smokers should be not so eager to brand all smokers as doers of evil.

Justine Seddon,

Seven Hills

All the volunteer firemen and women who are fighting these fires are heroes. They risk life and limb and receive no pay for their troubles.

I just hope that they are not injured while working, because if they are, they will have a hard time getting just compensation.

On January 1, 1998, at Wingello, in the Southern Highlands, eight volunteer fire fighters were called out to deal with a fire.

Their vehicle was caught in the fire. In a matter of moments, the driver David Quinlivan was dead and the other seven were severely burned. They are Mike and Andrew Neale, Gail and Frank Pritchett, Mike Young, Roger Robinson and John Luke Jr.

The seven remaining firefighters commenced legal action against the Forestry Commission and the State of NSW, among others.

Letters to the Editor

This action is being opposed by the State Government and is being defended with extreme vigour. I do not understand why and can only presume that either no one wants to take the blame, or that they are resisting payouts to the victims.

All of these people have suffered and most have either lost their jobs or been extremely limited in what they can now do.

They should not be put on the back shelf and forgotten.

Jim Maspero,

Hornsby

Who cares, Carmen?

Goodbye Carmen Lawrence, your departure from the front bench will not be a loss.

What a joke, does she think anyone believes she is doing it for the good of the ALP?

Carmen always has a hidden agenda, perhaps a shot at the leadership or just trying to create havoc.

In any case, who cares?

Marilyn Grass,

Frenchs Forest

Courteous commuters

Give it a rest. Our commuters are not discourteous, quite the contrary.

Occasionally a traveller like Bryan Doyle (Letters, December 9) writes, slamming commuters for being discourteous or rude to pregnant women or less mobile passengers by not giving up their seats.

I have travelled on trains every working day for the past 20 years (mostly on the same line as Mr Doyle) and I have witnessed countless situations where seats are given up to less mobile passengers, particularly elderly persons or pregnant women. I, myself, have done so many times and often the person in question may have several offers.

Before Mr Doyle criticises all the passengers in that carriage for being rude, he should ask himself how many of them were asleep, distracted or just plain could not see the heavily pregnant woman.

Garry Boulding,

Glen Alpine

On path to rip-off

Holroyd Council's plan to charge banks for the use of public footpaths (Daily Telegraph, December 3) is an outrageous and blatant attempt at revenue raising which shows no concern for the convenience of local ratepayers.

A similar proposal was put forward by Bathurst City Council in October and was deferred after protests from the business community and local and state chambers of commerce.

It is unbelievable that any local council would attempt to introduce measures which discourage banks from providing services in their area or passing on costs to consumers.

Unlike the council, the State Chamber of Commerce (NSW) is concerned about the flow-on effect to retailers, especially smaller retailers in the area.

Letters to the Editor

The more difficult it is for customers to withdraw money, the less inclined they will be to spend it at a business.

Like all other businesses accessed from a public footpath, banks already pay rates for the use of public space to access their services.

Margy Osmond, chief executive, State Chamber of Commerce

Heavens, it's a wonder

The heavenly event of the past week, seen spectacularly at Ceduna, is surely a sign to look up and wonder at the beauty which is for all to see.

The magnificence of those 32 seconds will live forever in the hearts of viewers from around the world.

The best part of it all will remain the new friends that were brought together. They are comrades with a common thought and appreciation of God's handiwork.

Surely we can meet again in a common cause, brought closer in understanding. We can, and we must, while time exists in which to do it.

Aury Norman, Loftus

I hate a sunburnt country

Does your paper ever get tired of all the endless Pommy-bashing?

I suppose coming from a country afflicted by drought, bushfires, deadly creatures lurking here there and everywhere, a hole in the ozone layer, a virtually worthless currency, appalling haircuts, a dubious history, a complete absence of culture, girly-sized beer glasses, atrocious television, Rove McManus' embarrassing attempts to conduct an interview, a disturbing inability to understand that football is a game played primarily with the feet, the misapprehension that swimming is a sport rather than a leisure activity, traffic light systems that ensure pedestrians are trying to cross the road at the same time that cars are turning into the supposed crossing, an obsession with what's going on in the UK (the country you're all so keen to say you're independent from), Savage Garden, a music industry based almost entirely around production-mill soap stars, the political importance of an amoeba on the global stage, a lack of the basic culinary skills required to cook decent bacon and sausages ...

Ooh, best take a breath there. All in all guys, we're pleased for you that, despite all your problems, you can still manage to beat a bunch of cripples at cricket.

Well done, Australia.

David Whitley, City

Terrorists never win

For more than 30 years, the PLO and offshoots, such as Hamas, have murdered innocent people, hijacked airliners and suicide-bombed Israelis.

Did they achieve their aim? No, there is still no state of Palestine and as long as the terror continues, there is not any likelihood of this.

The **Tamil Tigers** waged a terror war in Sri Lanka but achieved nothing until they decided to disarm and commence a dialogue for peace. Al Qaeda and Jemaah Islamiyah may commit atrocities, but the only thing they have achieved so far is to be hunted down and exterminated.

Up to now, history has shown that terrorism achieves nothing: no political power, no collapse of governments such as that of the US, no establishment of countries such as Palestine, nothing except murder of innocent people.

Letters to the Editor

In fact the opposite is true; history has shown that people are far more likely to achieve their aims by peaceful dialogue and negotiation.

The state of Palestine would have been a reality long ago if it were not for the action of Hamas. There is a lesson to be learned here.

Ziggy Malter,

Dural

The argument that it is Saddam Hussein who is totally responsible for his people's misery (Letters, December 3) and not America's trade sanctions goes against evidence.

The truth is aid groups within Iraq believe it is the sanctions imposed by America that have claimed the lives of more than a million innocent Iraqis.

Sharif Hammoud,

Kingsgrove

The author of the Islamic web site should take an honest look at the Islamic religion and some of its so-called clerics, instead of lambasting on the Australian Government and media.

The cleric Abu Bakar Bashir was quoted as saying: "The Taliban were too soft, and Osama bin Laden is true Islam".

Islamic moderates should weed these fanatical elements out of their religion.

Pat Hutchinson,

Narromine

I was interested to see the Federal Government's terrorism awareness campaign features balaclava-clad people storming various locations. Obviously Peter Reith is gone but not forgotten.

Simon Squires, Crows Nest

Two summer icons

Amazing how two established icons of this country in Santa and Steve Waugh can be held to ransom by the petulance of a few.

Commonsense appears to rest with the majority who accept these two as much a part of our Australian summer as cicadas and daylight saving.

Unfortunately, myopic visionaries want to send them both into an unnecessary and premature retirement.

Take a reality check, Santa is joy to millions within this country: ditto Steve Waugh.

P. Harris, Miranda

What is all the fuss about over Christmas, Santa Claus and Jesus?

Santa Claus is simply an adaption from the early Netherlands Protestant Church in New Amsterdam of the Dutch, Sinta Klaes.

Saint Nicholas is universally recognised Patron Saint (get this one Mr Glanville) of schoolchildren and sailors.

Letters to the Editor

Nobody can seriously suggest Jesus was actually born on December 25, and we know precious little (fact) about the other fellow, so what we are dealing with, at this time, is a total myth.

Mythology has long been the mainstay of many cultures so, long live Santa, Alleluiah (and happy birthday) Jesus but, let us get on with life, for Gods sake.

Warren McLean,

Leura

Please explain to me why it was wrong for a school principal to set the story straight for the six-year-old mentioned in your article (Daily Telegraph, December 3)?

How ridiculous is it that schools are entrusted with teaching children everything the best they can, but on this one point they are to stay quiet and even lie when asked about Santa.

This is particularly so at a Christian school such as Tyndale where there would be no doubt left in the mind of a parent enrolling their child as to the type (Bible-based) of teaching offered.

Mark Stubbs,

Seven Hills

As a teenager I am concerned about Australia's cultural identity and values in our society.

At school we are taught the basis of multiculturalism is empathy and equality between cultures. Multiculturalism should go both ways, but this is not what we are seeing.

Australia is well known for its ethnic diversity and this is why many people live here. Although these people should bring their culture here, part of being Australian is accepting everyone's culture.

Immigrants should come to live in Australia, not to create a replica of their previous home.

Surely we are not going to allow everything that has made Australia what it is today be taken from us, just to satisfy minority groups that do not share our tolerant nature.

It seems some people have forgotten that part of our culture is our history and traditions, and that these must be maintained.

J. Carter, Barraba

Case a timely lesson

The article "Gang wrongly jailed for rape" (Daily Telegraph, December 7) is an important story. Five black and Latino youths in New York, jailed for up to 13 years for the 1989 rape of a white woman jogger in Central Park, have now been shown (on DNA evidence) to be innocent.

The American media called them "animals", and the rapes were invariably reported in terms of race.

In this climate, justice was apparently dispensed with. Is there a lesson for us here?

Dr Scott Poynting,

Penrith

Let losers hold Ashes

Surely all of the controversy, argument and tension over the possession of the Ashes trophy is way off beam.

Letters to the Editor

Correct me if I am mistaken, but my understanding is that the original Ashes was presented to the losing team. That being the case then England is the rightful holder of the Ashes.

The cricketing contest which came to be known as the Ashes series is surely a contest "of" the Ashes, not a contest "for" the Ashes.

Let the losing team continue to hold the trophy and the implication of "second-rate" that goes with it.

Brian Connors, Eastwood

Will this Pommie cricket team go down in history as The Vincibles ... the only team never to win a match on tour?

Don Driscoll, Wollongong

To the point

Fred Nile will be most delighted to hear that a New York jogger has been seen running naked round a park. The man, who wore nothing but a red cloth on his head, has proved a problem for the police, who cannot catch him. The Reverend Nile will be most happy, though. After all, even if he is an al-Qaeda terrorist, at least he cannot conceal any weapons or explosives.

Amy Fallon, Darlinghurst

Midnight Oil and Peter Garrett, in particular, changed my life. No concert was ever the same (and I remember every one). Bring on the final hurrah. I'll be the one wearing a black armband.

Shane A.Bassett, Terrigal

To all Christians and to all moralists, regardless of faith: the trouble with telling children that Santa Claus exists is that it is a lie.

Bobbie K.Gledhill, Glenbrook

Kind words

As a volunteer firefighter with the NSW Rural Fire Service involved in the fires of the last week, I would like to offer my deepest sympathies to those who have lost their homes or loved ones.

I would also like to praise those residents who have stayed behind and helped protect their properties.

Of particular note has been the efforts of those residents who are members of the NSW Fire Brigades Community Fire Unit. Their assistance has been invaluable in preparing streets for the onslaught of these devastating fires and in freeing up portable resources such as Rural Fire Service and NSW Fire brigade units.

Thanks should also go to all of the support agencies and community groups who have helped throughout this and other fire emergencies.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues from all paid and volunteer fire services who have put in long hours at the front line and those behind the scenes such as the control staff who co-ordinate the activities.

Warren Kelly, Buxton

Mail

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Letters should be no more than 250 words, clearly typed or neatly hand written. Name and address and phone number must be supplied for verification.

Letters may be edited.

Load-Date: December 9, 2002

End of Document

Rape victim breaks silence to testify at war crimes tribunal

Associated Press International

April 19, 2000; Wednesday

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Section: International news

Length: 2178 words

Byline: JEROME SOCOLOVSKY

Dateline: THE HAGUE, Netherlands

Body

The rapes, beatings and death threats she underwent as a sex slave to Serb paramilitaries ended seven years ago. But the nightmare continues to torment the Muslim woman, who broke her tortured silence Wednesday at a U.N. war crimes tribunal.

"They destroyed everything in me," the victim testified from behind a screen to the three-judge court.

Identified as "A.S.," she was the fifth rape victim to testify in the Foca rape trial the first international prosecution of the sexual enslavement of women in wartime. Her testimony was one of the clearest illustrations yet of a key tribunal aim: to help victims heal by listening to their horrifying accounts and recognizing their suffering.

The Foca trial began March 20 at the U.N. tribunal, set up in The Hague in 1993 to bring those responsible for atrocities in the former Yugoslavia to justice.

The trial has produced horrifying tales recounted by women and girls some as young as 12 who were assaulted in rape camps and soldiers' apartments in the early part of the 1992-95 Bosnian war.

Prosecutors say the systematic rapes were not only for the soldiers' gratification, but were also part of the Serb strategy of "ethnic cleansing." The soldiers taunted Muslim women by threatening to impregnate them with Serb babies, and hoped to terrorize their families into fleeing, prosecutors say.

The accused in the Foca rape trial former Bosnian Serb paramilitary soldiers Dragoljub Kunarac, Radomir Kovac and Zoran Vukovic have pleaded innocent to charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity. If convicted, they face a maximum sentence of life in prison.

A.S.'s ordeal began on April 7, 1992 her 19th birthday when paramilitary bands, largely made up of local Serbs, some of whom she knew, overran her district in Foca, 30 kilometers southeast of Sarajevo. They took her to an apartment-turned-brothel where soldiers came and went, she said she was raped "perhaps 50, 60 times. I don't know."

Although she was not assaulted by any of the defendants, she identified Kovac as the man who imprisoned her at an apartment in town and forced her to serve as a sex slave for his roommate, a soldier named Jagos Kostic.

Rape victim breaks silence to testify at war crimes tribunal

Kostic forced her to have sexual intercourse and paraded her around town as his sexual conquest. He beat her and threatened to kill her.

"He took me out and put a knife against my neck and beat me with his fists and legs. With his knife he threatened to slit my throat," she said.

The audio feed to the public gallery was frequently interrupted to let the rape victim weep privately.

When asked how often Kostic raped her, she responded, "Whenever he wanted to."

She found it difficult to remember precise dates, names and facts. But such lapses were unlikely to impugn her credibility at the tribunal, where justices have given special consideration to rape victims due to the effect of trauma on memory.

When the Serbs were finished with A.S., they sold her and another girl to a pair of Montenegrins for 500 German marks (about dlr\$ 250) and a truck full of washing powder, she said. The two were raped and forced to work as barmaids for a while, then put on a passenger bus headed for a Muslim area of Bosnia.

The witness said she had never spoken about the details of her ordeal with anyone, not even her mother, until last month, when she responded to a request from tribunal investigators.

A.S. said she came to the conclusion that despite the stigma attached to rape victims in her conservative society, it was important to say what happened.

"It'll make me feel better," she said.

The rapes, beatings and death threats she underwent as a sex slave to Serb paramilitaries ended seven years ago. But the nightmare continues to torment the Muslim woman, who broke her tortured silence Wednesday at a U.N. war crimes tribunal.

"They destroyed everything in me," the victim testified from behind a screen to the three-judge court.

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Although she, pick up 9th pvs

Rape victim breaks silence to testify at war crimes tribunal

Tamil Tiger rebels Wednesday said they have launched a fresh offensive and captured new territories along a strategic northern highway in Sri Lanka.

In a statement issued from its office in London and put on its Web site, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam said the Sri Lankan army had suffered heavy casualties in the fighting that started Tuesday afternoon and was still raging.

The narrow Elephant Pass causeway which links the northern Jaffna peninsula with the rest of the country has been the scene of heavy fighting since March. The rebels made an earlier attempt in December to regain the causeway but did not succeed in penetrating military defenses.

The statement did not give details of casualties but said Tamil combatants have recovered large quantities of weapons and ammunition left behind by government troops.

"According to latest reports from the field a large number of Sri Lankan troops have been killed and a huge quantity of arms and ammunition have been captured. Heavy fighting is still raging in the area," the rebel statement said.

A spokesman for Sri Lanka's defense ministry declined to comment on the report, saying he was checking the rebel claims with army field commanders.

The rebels want to wrest control of Jaffna, 300 kilometers (185 miles) north of the capital, Colombo, which was their capital until the army took it back in 1996.

"The Sri Lankan army lost several square miles (kilometers) of territory to the Liberation Tigers and suffered heavy casualties in the fierce fighting," the rebel statement said.

"The combat formations of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam launched a major offensive thrust in the army controlled areas ... (and) the LTTE forces are advancing deep into the area."

The rebels are fighting for an independent homeland for the country's minority Tamils. The 17-year war has killed approximately 62,000 people.

A joint Russian-European communications satellite was named after Arthur C. Clarke, a science fiction writer who predicted space travel before rockets were even tested, his office said Wednesday.

The SESAT satellite, designed to beam signals to Eastern Europe, Siberia, North Africa, the Middle East and India, was launched atop a Proton booster from the Baikonur cosmodrome in Kazakstan at 21:06 GMT Tuesday.

The satellite of the European Telecommunications Satellite Organization successfully separated from the rocket six hours and 35 minutes after launch and was followed by the deployment of the solar array and antenna.

SESAT is scheduled to go into service in June and its transponders will be used for a full range of services including data and video broadcasting, Internet connections, high-speed Internet access, distance-learning, transfer of software, and mobile phones.

"We are very proud to dedicate this satellite to Sir Arthur C. Clarke," said EUTELSAT Director General Giuliano Berretta.

Paris-based EUTELSAT is Europe's leading satellite operator and ranks as one of the largest globally, reaching across Europe, large parts of Africa and the Middle East and connectivity with America.

Clarke, who was knighted last year, has made Sri Lanka, a small tropical island off India's southern tip, his home.

A German engineer who was arrested and interrogated by Sri Lanka's anti-terrorism officials for assembling a light aircraft said Wednesday he was suing the police for 20 million rupees (drls 300,000).

Rape victim breaks silence to testify at war crimes tribunal

"I have done nothing illegal and I have not broken any Sri Lankan laws, but I had to go through this horrible experience," Uwe Becker of Au-Hallertau, Germany, told The Associated Press.

"There is nothing secret in what I am doing. It is all in the open," said Becker, who has been living in Sri Lanka since 1991.

Becker heads B Two Engineering (Pvt) Ltd., which manufactures fiberglass bodies for small aircraft and sporting goods. Police arrested Becker on March 14 for commissioning the assembly of the aircraft without the approval of the Defense Ministry, and they interrogated him for four days.

Police found the small plane when they raided Becker's factory near Colombo's international airport, responding to a tip-off. Officials said they wanted to verify if there was any link with the separatist Tamil Tiger rebels, who have been fighting since 1983 for an independent homeland.

The military has been on alert against attempts by the rebels to acquire air capability.

Tamil Tiger rebels and government troops fought a fierce battle for control of a strategic northern highway, leaving 30 dead and more than 100 wounded, reports said Wednesday.

Defense Ministry spokesman Brigadier Palitha Fernando said the rebels had intensified their offensive Tuesday to capture the crucial causeway linking northern Jaffna Peninsula to the mainland.

A ministry statement said 12 soldiers were killed and 43 wounded in the fighting. But army officers reached by telephone said they had lost at least 15 soldiers.

The statement said troops repulsed the initial rebel attack.

A clandestine rebel radio station, monitored in the northern town of Vavuniya, said 15 Tamil Tiger fighters had been killed and 60 wounded since Tuesday in the battle.

Earlier, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam said in a statement faxed from its London office that the rebels had inflicted heavy casualties on government forces.

After their failure to penetrate military defenses in December, the guerrillas launched a fresh offensive last month to gain control of the narrow Elephant Pass causeway to win access to the Jaffna peninsula.

The rebels are trying to take back Jaffna, their capital until the army recaptured it in 1996. Jaffna is 185 miles (300 kilometers) north of Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital.

The rebels are fighting for an independent homeland for the country's minority Tamils. The 17-year war has killed nearly 62,000 people. The minority Tamils accuse the majority Sinhalese of widespread discrimination in education and jobs. The Sinhalese control the government and the military.

On the Net:

Rebel Web site: www.eelamweb.com

Government Web site: www.priu.gov.lk

A fierce battle raged Wednesday between Tamil Tiger rebels and government troops for control of a strategic northern highway. Rebels claimed they had killed 100 soldiers and lost 26 fighters, but the government said their casualties were far lower.

Rape victim breaks silence to testify at war crimes tribunal

Defense Ministry Spokesman Brig. Palitha Fernando told The Associated Press that the rebels had intensified their offensive to capture the Elephant Pass causeway that links Jaffna Peninsula, in the north of this small island nation, to the rest of the country.

A clandestine rebel radio station, monitored in the northern town of Vavuniya, said the guerrillas had killed 100 soldiers and lost 26 fighters since Tuesday. However, the Defense Ministry said 12 soldiers were killed and 43 wounded. The army officers said 60 guerrillas were wounded.

No independent confirmation was possible since journalists are barred from visiting the battle zones.

The rebels are trying to take back Jaffna, which served as the capital of territory they hold in the north and east of this island off India's southern tip. In 1996, the army recaptured Jaffna, 300 kilometers (185 miles) north of Colombo, the Sri Lankan capital.

The rebels are fighting for an independent homeland for the minority Tamils. The 17-year war has killed nearly 62,000 people. The minority Tamils accuse the majority Sinhalese of widespread discrimination in education and jobs.

On the Net: Rebel Web site at <http://www.eelamweb.com/>

Government Web site at <http://www.priu.gov.lk>

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'Coconut palm war' is a catalogue of bloody horrors

Guardian Weekly

April 6, 1986

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Section: LE MONDE; Pg. 13

Length: 2160 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, March 21

Highlight: Patrice Claude reports on the continuing slaughter in Sri Lanka

Body

A Methodist minister from Batticaloa (in eastern Sri Lanka) whom I met some time ago had this to say about torture: "Torture is routinely employed. It ranges from cigarette burns on the chest to drops of hot molten plastic poured on the back. Recently the tendons of 15 young Tamil detainees were cut to prevent them escaping. Genitals, even of women, receive special attention. Some of them have been raped with bottles . . ."

The minister still lives in the area with his Tamil flock, but Western reporters can no longer meet him. There is a virtual state of civil war in the north and east of the "Emerald Isle" described in tourist brochures. "Too many journalists have become agents of Tamil terrorists," complained Lalith Athulathmudali, the Sri Lankan minister of public security, to justify the ban.

In order to be able to do their job, journalists are in fact increasingly accepting invitations from Tamil separatist groups based in Madras, the capital of the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu. "You want to see Jaffna? Come with us, two of our boats are leaving tomorrow evening." The 30-kilometre sea crossing from India's Rameshwaram peninsula to Sri Lanka's Jaffna peninsula takes a couple of hours if you are lucky not to run into a Sri Lankan patrol boat. "In any case," smiled Anton Balasingham, the Tamil separatist struggle's leading theoretician, "our canoes are fitted with three 60 hp motors and they are much too fast for government craft." (The Sri Lankan government has a few Israeli-made patrol boats.) Balasingham says the guerrillas' boats are now equipped with light machine guns. "Sri Lankan sailors generally prefer to avoid contact."

Despite its burden of horrors, this bloody "coconut palm war" which has already taken around 7,000 lives in three years has failed to rouse the world's interest. The arguments of the two sides are well known. On one side, there is a Tamil Hindu minority of close to three million spread pretty well throughout the island, but concentrated largely in the north and some areas of the east. The community, which has been knocked about quite a bit in the past few decades, has gradually allowed itself to be won over by the idea of mythical Eelam, the sovereign and independent Tamil state that the guerrilla movement would like to see established in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

On the other side is an 11 million-strong Buddhist majority which oddly enough suffers from a minority complex despite the fact that its members make up 95 per cent of the civil service, police and army. (There are 50 million Tamils living to southern India, and the Buddhist hierarchy continues to point out that their religion was born on Indian soil and that it has been completely "swallowed up" by Hinduism.) Opposition parties, the government and the Buddhist clergy all agree that partition is not an option and that any idea of an autonomous north and east merged into a single entity must be resisted. "Prodded" by the 50 million Tamils living on its territory (not to mention the 125,000 Sri Lankan Tamils who have taken refuge there in the past three years) who feel a sense of kinship

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with their persecuted "cousins", India has been trying to get the two sides to the negotiating table and stop the killing. It has failed and negotiations have been stalled for the past two months.

"It's going to be a hot summer," warned a diplomat posted in Colombo, a city that is strangely calm in spite of the killings going on less than 20 kilometres away. "The Sinhalese forces want to establish strong positions before a possible return to the negotiating table," he added. However, direct army-guerrilla clashes are infrequent, consisting most often of brief skirmishes touched off when a military vehicle is blown up by a guerrilla land-mine.

An insurrectionary guerrilla movement either feeds on the people and grows stronger or disappears. Both sides have realised that, and neither shrinks from making use of civilians as shields and hostages or -- and this is especially true of the army -- as targets on a shooting range. The job of the security forces (in recent months they have become bigger, and better armed and trained) is consequently limited to occupying the maximum number of positions and, secondarily, to terrorising the Tamil communities.

Let us call her Palamani: "I'm 22 and I have a ten-month-old baby. On the morning of January 10, a group of soldiers knocked on our door. My husband went to open it. They promptly beat him up and took him away. A few minutes later three of the soldiers came back. They tore my clothes off and took turns raping me on the floor of our hut. They later did the same thing to my 15-year-old sister. Since then, I haven't had any news of my husband." Palamani, Chandralea and others . . . There of dozens of them desperate enough to sign sworn statements which for the moment are piling up on the desk of a Colombo lawyer.

"What's the point of filing plaint?" asked Neelam Tiruchelvam, the last moderate representative of the main Tamil party in Colombo. "Atrocities by the army rabble have been denounced by their victims for the past three years, but not even the smallest charge has ever been brought. Only a few soldiers have been dismissed. Generally speaking, the Tamils have quite simply stopped believing in justice in their country. The troops -- they are 99 per cent Sinhalese -- are now seen as an ethnic, not a national, army." And the victims of the army rabble often have no alternative but call for help from the guerrillas.

From time to time news is received that the body of a disappeared relative or friend has turned up with dozens of other corpses on a pile of burning tyres. "Special Task Force (STF, trained by veteran British SAS crack commandos) are spreading permanent terror," said the Methodist minister. "At the slightest incident they descend on the area at crack of dawn carrying M-16s, batter down doors and round up all Tamils between the ages of 14 and 40. Some of them come back, others don't."

It is an old method of rounding up people which has been fully tried and tested in other countries. "Today," says Minister of Security Athulathmudali, "the east has been practically cleaned up. Give me another five to six weeks, and the operations could stop." As a matter of fact, the goal, which was to make it impossible -- by force and intimidation, if necessary -- for political and ethnic links to be forged between the north and the east, appears to be on the point of success.

Thousands of terrorised Tamils who have fled and taken refuge in the Jaffna peninsula, or even India, are increasingly abandoning eastern Sri Lanka to a strong Sinhalese majority and the Muslims (Moors, as they are known here), who have been caught in the crossfire. Colombo is hinting that the new situation could permit President Junius R. Jayewardene's government to grant concessions to the northern Tamils without touching off angry reactions from the Sinhalese majority. Secret and "informal" negotiations have taken place in recent months.

But the contacts are reported to have been broken off not long ago and Athulathmudali warns his forces are "now almost capable of launching a full-scale attack on Jaffna", the separatist stronghold. A Jaffna lawyer on a visit to Colombo said there were between 1,000 and 1,500 armed guerrillas in the Jaffna urban area itself (which has a population of about 150,000 Tamils). It is the guerrillas who call the tune and more or less control the administration in this old resort town. It is they, also, who spread panic among the population with their endless feuds.

Only a month ago, two former Members of Parliament belonging to the TULF (Tamil United Liberation Front), the moderate Tamil party, were murdered by a Tamil guerrilla group, an act that was condemned by the other groups.

'Coconut palm war' is a catalogue of bloody horrors

People in the town protested, but to no effect. "A few weeks ago," admitted Anton Balasingham, the leading ideologue of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**), which is the most active of the five largest armed separatist movements, "activists of the ERPLF (Eelam Revolutionary People's Liberation Front, the most Marxist of the five groups) killed two of our supporters in Vavuniya. Our men arrested and executed the group's local leader." Ten people died in the fighting that ensued.

Such murderous clashes obviously suit the government forces and lend weight to Colombo's contention that "many of these so-called guerrillas are just common or garden bandits." The "bandits" are however sufficiently well-organised and equipped to maintain enough pressure on the local Sinhalese garrison and prevent it from venturing out of the old Dutch fort (built in 1632) in Jaffna, where 300 to 400 soldiers have been practically under siege for several months. "They are supplied from the air and come out only in armoured convoys (in particular, Panhard armoured personnel carriers built in South Africa under French licence) which are guarded by helicopters," said my Jaffna lawyer contact.

Since January 16, however, the government has set up security zones extending to 1,000 metres around the fort and every one of the 60 or so military bases dotted around in the jungle. This measure comes on top of a near-total ban on the north's 100,000 fishermen putting out to sea. On March 2, the harassment was extended to all fishermen (about 200,000 more) on the east coast. Serious malnutrition problems are already noticeable among the fishermen's children, most of whom are naturally Tamil. The aim is to curtail the movement of guerrilla vessels between India and the island.

TULF secretary-general Appapillai Amirthalingam told me in Madras: "At the first gunshot the soldiers can now bomb civilian houses nearest their camp with impunity." In the town of Jaffna, some 50,000 persons at least are held hostage by the government soldiers in the old Dutch fort. Inside the security zone are eight hospitals, nine schools, the bazaar, the post office, the fish market, the main bus station and thousands of small shops and homes. Three weeks ago, three retired people who went to collect their pensions at the post office were killed in cold blood by soldiers from the fort.

"Our troops have to protect themselves," explained Athulathmudali. "Enthusiasm or ignorance does sometimes lead the security forces to regrettable incidents. But it's not our policy to kill innocent Tamils. Don't forget we are dealing with some of the world's most brutal terrorists. Just yesterday, the body of a young Tamil woman was found hanging from a lamp-post at Kilinochchi. She had been raped and killed." (This is the method employed by Tamil separatist militants to "judge" Tamil "collaborators"; the dead persons's body is subsequently strung up prominently in public view.)

Convinced that it had allowed itself to be trapped by Sri Lankan President Jayawardene, who made use of the negotiations and two ceasefires wrung from the guerrillas to buy weapons and recruit fresh troops, India appears to have again decided to ignore the activities of guerrillas based on its territory. The guerrillas confirm they are once more enjoying "a certain freedom of movement".

In Balasingham's view, "it's the military confrontation three to six months from now which will decide the fate of the negotiations and our people." So the decks will be cleared for the showdown and it's too bad for the civilians -- Tamils as well as Sinhalese -- who bear the daily brunt of the war. "In a few months," Balasingham said, "we'll have Sam-7 missiles and we'll be able to defend ourselves against air raids."

Since the first of the air attacks took place on February 19 some six kilometres from the centre of Jaffna, the war has taken a new turn. A second air raid on the night of February 26/27 took dozens of lives. Officially, three of the Sri Lankan army's three Italian-made Marchetti fighter-bombers and Bell helicopters had destroyed "terrorist hideouts".

Indian sources say these craft -- a dozen Marchettis and a score of Bell helicopters -- are "generally piloted by British mercenaries, a Belgian, an Australian and a Rhodesian." "Nonsense," retorted the Minister of Security, "the foreign specialists we've engaged don't take part in field operations. They're here to train our pilots, and some of them have already gone back." According to reliable sources, however, the foreign "specialists" whose monthly pay

'Coconut palm war' is a catalogue of bloody horrors

of F20,000 is making local pilots jealous (they only get half this amount) and they are reported to have threatened to break their contracts should a Sam-7 hit any of their aircraft. They may be daredevils, but they are not kamikazes.

"Their" minister is optimistic however. "We have already bought the answer to the Sam missiles." Unless, as some Western embassies worried about their tourists fear, "a group more fanatical than the rest took a potshot at a big Air Lanka Boeing . . ."

Graphic

Picture 1, Tamil homes and shops in Colombo destroyed by Sinhalese mobs.; Picture 2, Tamil terrorists take their revenge on two Sinhalese children and a woman.

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No Headline In Original

Associated Press International

July 26, 1996; Friday 14:33 Eastern Time

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Section: International news

Length: 408 words

Byline: DEXTER CRUEZ

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

Sri Lanka's military, seeking to avenge its worst defeat in 13 years of civil war, sent jet fighters, field guns and tanks on a new offensive Friday against Tamil guerrilla strongholds in the northern jungles.

Fifteen soldiers were killed and 60 were wounded as the forces marched to within about 3 1/2 miles (6 kms) of Kilinochchi, the town that has become the main base of the Tamil Tiger rebels, military officials said.

Most of the rebels and many civilians appeared to have fled the town. Some international relief agencies also withdrew their workers after the army began building up its forces in the area.

The army put Kilinochchi under curfew, and civilians were told to take shelter in schools, churches or Hindu temples, a military statement said.

Also Friday, thousands of soldiers began evacuating a military base after recapturing it from rebel fighters, the military said.

The Tamil attack on the Mullaittivu camp, 170 miles (275 kms) north of Colombo on the northeast coast, was the worst military defeat yet in the war. Only 30 soldiers from the 1,200-man garrison were found to have survived, and the camp was flattened by bulldozers.

Even as warships evacuated the troops from Mullaittivu on Friday, rebel mortar fire hit a naval landing craft, killing one soldier, the army said.

Meanwhile, at a police station in Colombo, police paraded Tamil suspects in front of survivors of a commuter train bombing that killed 63 people, hoping they could identify who planted the two bombs, officials said.

At least 40 Tamils from the war-torn north, including about a dozen women, have been picked up in police sweeps of Tamil neighborhoods near Dehiwala station, where the bombing occurred Wednesday, police officials said on condition of anonymity.

The two bombs exploded within seconds of each other on separate cars of the commuter train, wounding 350 people. A third bomb was discovered and defused.

Immediately after the blasts, police detained two Tamils at the train station whom passengers claimed had acted suspiciously.

No Headline In Original

The government has blamed the bombing on the **Tamil Tigers**, who have fought since 1983 for an independent homeland for the Tamil minority. More than 43,000 people have been killed in the civil war in this predominantly Sinhalese country.

The Tigers have denied responsibility for the bombing.

More than 100 Buddhist monks in saffron robes demonstrated Friday outside Colombo's main railway terminal to protest the bombing.

Load-Date: July 26, 1996

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No Headline In Original

United Press International
October 22, 1995, Sunday, BC cycle

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Section: International

Length: 464 words

Byline: BY SCOTT NEUMAN

Dateline: COLOMBO, Oct. 22

Body

Sri Lanka called up civil defense forces to provide security for the capital of Colombo Sunday while army troops pressed their attack against the northern Tamil rebel stronghold. "Because we need to keep the army in the north, we are activating a volunteer civil defense force to provide security in the capital," Dharmasivi Seneyake, minister of tourism and aviation, told reporters. Despite guerrilla attacks in the south and east of the Asian country, government troops will continue their offensive, known as "Operation Sunshine," on the northern city of Jaffna, military spokesman Sarath Munasinghe said. After starting the offensive last week, government troops had closed in to within five miles (8 km) of Sri Lanka's second-largest city. "We are proceeding to our objective," Munasinghe said. "Operation Sunshine is progressing with great success. We're dedicated to fighting until we achieve our objective." He did not, however, release new casualty figures for the fighting in the north. The government blamed the Tigers for attacks Saturday on three eastern villages where more than 60 men, women and children were killed. "We are now on full alert against any possible attack on facilities such as seaports or airports," Seneyake said. On Sunday, journalists from the state-run Lanka Puvath news agency were allowed into three villages where suspected Tamil rebels Saturday carried on a pre-dawn raid, leaving more than 60 civilians dead. A group of men armed with guns and machetes entered the villages of Padaviya Bowatta and Mangala Oya in the island nation's northeastern Batticaloa district around 3 a.m. Saturday morning and began killing residents indiscriminately, officials alleged. In the village of Bowatta, journalists found blood-splattered and bullet-ridden huts and the bodies of 36 people, including women and children. The people apparently were hacked to death, Lanka Puvath reported. Authorities said the attacks were planned by separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam. These attacks came only one day after guerrillas blew up Sri Lanka's largest oil refinery and depot outside Colombo. Authorities appealed for calm following the back-to-back attacks by the Tamil Tigers, who have been fighting 12 years for a separate Tamil-dominated state in northern and eastern Sri Lanka. Seneyake confirmed that two Tamil civilians were lynched Saturday by ethnic Sinhalese mobs in Colombo in retaliation for the guerrilla strikes. "People went around with knives and clubs attacking innocent civilians last night," he said. "We don't want to bring back the ugly communal backlash we saw in the 1983 (Tamil-Sinhalese) riots." About 74 percent of Sri Lanka's 17 million population is Buddhist Sinhalese and 17 percent is Hindu Tamil.

Load-Date: October 23, 1995

Sri-Lanka

The Canadian Press (CP)

June 23, 1990 Saturday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 473 words

Body

--- Sri-Lanka --- COLOMBO (AP) _ Sri Lankan troops fanned out from military camps in the country's north and east, destroying Tamil rebel hideouts and bunkers, military officials said today. Also today, navy gunships destroyed a guerrilla craft at sea off the Jaffna peninsula in Sri Lanka's north, killing 15 rebels, the officials said. The rebels continued their 12-day siege of a strategic fort in Jaffna, 320 kilometres north of Colombo, the coastal capital of this Indian Ocean island country. The **Tamil Tigers**, claiming discrimination by the predominantly Buddhist Sinhalese who dominate government, have been waging a seven-year-old insurgency to set up a separate state in the north and east where the mainly Hindu Tamils are in the majority. The latest fighting flared up on June 11 when the rebels abrogated a 13-month-old ceasefire by attacking police stations after a Tamil civilian complained he was manhandled by Sinhalese police. At least 1,400 people have been killed in the recent round of fighting. By late Friday, troops had destroyed five rebel bunkers and were clearing land mines, said the military officials, speaking on condition of anonymity. The main troop advance came from the eastern coastal village of Kiran to Batticaloa, a flashpoint in the fighting. The government offensive came a day after the guerrillas hacked to death 62 Muslim men, **women** and children in eastern Sri Lanka after accusing them of being government informants. Troops found the bodies of the Muslim men, **women** and children in Nintavur, a village 45 kilometres south of Batticaloa. Survivors said the rebels raided the village early Friday because they feared villagers would disclose the site of their jungle hideout, according to Mahroof Gani, an official of the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, an opposition party. The rebels damaged a government helicopter gunship in Mankulam town in northern Jaffna peninsula late Friday while helping a besieged army camp, officials said. Also in the Jaffna peninsula, an airman was killed and six soldiers wounded when troops tried to reach another besieged military camp at Mylady, officials said. The government says more than 210,000 people have fled the bloodshed, seeking shelter in schools, temples, churches and mosques throughout the country. Residents in the east say food is running out. The rebels took control of all major towns in the Tamil-dominated northern and eastern provinces after Indian peacekeeping troops withdrew from Sri Lanka in March. The withdrawal, made at the request of President Ranasinghe Premadasa, ended India's failed 32-month bid to disarm the Tigers. At least 12,000 people have died since the ethnic conflict escalated in 1983. Tamils make up 18 per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million people. The Sinhalese comprise 75 per cent, while Muslims constitute seven per cent.

Load-Date: October 16, 2002

Sri-Lanka, Bgt

The Canadian Press (CP)

August 1, 1990 Wednesday

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Section: FOREIGN GENERAL NEWS

Length: 539 words

Body

--- Sri-Lanka, Bgt --- KATHANKUDY, Sri Lanka (Reuter) _ Suspected Tamil guerrillas burst into two mosques in eastern Sri Lanka with guns blazing and massacred up to 140 praying Muslims, witnesses said Saturday. Military officials and Muslim leaders accused rebels from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam separatist group of causing the bloodshed Friday night in the coastal village of Kathankudy. But a spokesman at the separatist group's office in Paris denied its members were involved. "We have not been able to accurately verify what happened at Kathankudy. But I am certain the LTTE was not involved," spokesman Lawrence Thilakar said by telephone. Witnesses said two groups of about 15 guerrillas, armed with machine-guns and hand grenades, raked worshippers with gunfire in simultaneous assaults on the Meera Jumma and Hussania mosques. Worshippers, who included small children and old men, were bowing in evening prayer toward Mecca when they were shot from behind. Victims had gunshot wounds in the back of the head, the witnesses said. White flags marking bereavement fluttered from rooftops in Kathankudy, a village of 50,000 rice growers and fishermen, as it mourned its dead. Journalists, taken to the scene by the army, saw pools of blood on the floor of the two mosques which are about a kilometre apart. The clothes of some of the victims were strewn around. Men, women and children, some sobbing, were gathered near the mosques as some bodies were being prepared for burial. Witnesses at Meera Jumma, the larger of the two mosques where about 200 people had been praying, said about 80 people were killed on the spot. The Sri Lanka Muslim Congress leader, M.H.M. Ashroff, said 127 bodies had been found and more than 100 people were wounded. But another Congress official said some victims had later died in the hospital and the death toll had reached 140. A military official said an air force helicopter opened fire as the gunmen tried to flee by sea after the attack. Two boats were destroyed but the number of casualties was not known. Ashroff, a member of parliament, said he had asked President Ranasinghe Premadasa to arm Muslims so they could protect themselves. "The president promised to provide security. But nothing has happened so far," Ashroff told a news conference in Colombo, the capital. He blamed the government for the attacks on Muslims, who form seven per cent of Sri Lanka's 16 million population. "The government must take full responsibility for the brutal rampage and violence unleashed by the heartless LTTE on the defenceless and innocent Muslims of Kathankudy," he said. He said the Tigers had killed nearly 500 Muslims since they launched a fresh offensive against the government's security forces on June 11. In all, more than 1,800 people have been killed in the seven-week war, according to unofficial figures. Muslim spokesmen say the Tigers are angry because Muslims have not supported their demand for a separate state. Tamils, who form 13 per cent of the population, want a separate homeland in the northeast where most of them live. They complain that the government, dominated by the majority Sinhalese, has discriminated against them ever since independence from Britain in 1948.

Load-Date: October 16, 2002

No Headline In Original

Associated Press International

February 16, 1996; Friday 05:48 Eastern Time

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Section: International news

Length: 492 words

Byline: VIJAY JOSHI

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

A Tamil lawmaker who visited the site of a civilian massacre, allegedly by Sri Lankan troops, says he saw pieces of flesh and skulls strewn across homes, and pillows caked with blood on the floors.

In a letter Thursday to President Chandrika Kumaratunga, the legislator, A. Thangathurai, said the Tamil village of Kumarapuram in eastern Trincomalee district resembles "a ghost village with wailing children" and fear-stricken women.

The Sri Lankan Defense Ministry blamed the killings Sunday on an "unknown group of armed persons."

But witnesses, lawmakers and Amnesty International, the London-based human rights group, accuse Sri Lankan troops of killing the people in retaliation for an ambush by Tamil Tiger rebels that killed two of their comrades.

In the village, pieces of flesh are stuck to the walls, roofs and floors of houses; shattered pieces of skulls are scattered in a few homes; and clothes, pillows and mattresses are caked with dried blood, Thangathurai said.

Meanwhile, Sri Lankan officials said Friday that a rebel ship that was destroyed with its consignment of arms in a sea battle with the navy and air force on Wednesday had sailed from Phuket, Thailand, five or six days earlier.

A naval official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said 12 guerrillas on board the 1,500-ton, Liberian-registered ship were killed. But the Island and Daily News, two nationalist newspapers, said 25 rebels died.

The rebels themselves claimed in a statement that only five of their fighters were killed.

The statement, faxed from the Tamil Tigers London office, also claimed that Indian warships "played an important role" in the sinking of the ship. But India's Defense Ministry categorically denied that in New Delhi on Friday.

Capt. Prasanna Rajaratne, commander of the Sri Lankan naval forces that destroyed the ship, declined to comment on India's alleged involvement. But he said the two nations' navies frequently swap information on rebel maritime activities.

Tamil separatists have been fighting for a homeland in northern and eastern Sri Lanka since 1983, accusing the Sinhalese majority, which controls the government and military, of discrimination against the Tamil minority.

No Headline In Original

More than 40,000 people have been killed, mostly guerrillas and government soldiers. But often civilians have fallen casualty to the brutality from both sides.

Thangathurai, the lawmaker who visited Kumarapuram village, said in his letter that evidence indicates "that these innocent people were killed and injured by firing at close range."

A copy of the letter was released to the press.

Thangathurai, a member of the moderate Tamil United Liberation Front party, demanded an inquiry by a Supreme Court judge, instead of a probe by an army general ordered by the government.

Repeated allegations of extra-judicial killings by Sri Lankan troops have only deepened the ethnic divide in this tiny tear-shaped island just off the coast of southern India.

(vj/ne/twx)

Load-Date: February 16, 1996

End of Document

South Asia's oldest English newspaper closing down

Associated Press International

April 28, 2000; Friday

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Section: International news

Length: 2438 words

Dateline: COLOMBO, Sri Lanka

Body

South Asia's oldest English language newspaper, The Observer, announced Friday it was suspending publication.

Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Limited, the state holding company that owns the 166-year-old newspaper, wants to restructure its newspaper production, and The Observer fell as its first victim.

The newspaper was founded as the Ceylon Observer on Feb. 4, 1834.

The Observer will cease publication from May 1.

"It (The Observer) was running on a loss. ... It was being published for the sake of prestige," said Leslie Dhanaiké, a former editor at the newspaper.

Dhanaiké, who worked at The Observer for 30 years, said that people had ceased to advertise in the newspaper in recent years.

A Bosnian Serb detention camp commander pleaded innocent Friday to 80 counts of rape, torture, murder and other war crimes more than five years after he was indicted by a U.N. tribunal.

Dragan Nikolic was the first war crimes suspect sought by the court, set up in 1993 to bring to justice those responsible for atrocities during the Balkan conflict.

Nikolic, 43, a former metal worker, stood before presiding Judge David Hunt of Australia as he entered an innocent plea to all the counts.

NATO peacekeepers arrested Nikolic in the American sector of northern Bosnia on April 21 and transferred him to the tribunal's detention facility in The Hague.

Nikolic's 1994 indictment, amended in February 1999, charges him with war crimes, crimes against humanity and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions. If found guilty of any single charge he could be sentenced to life in prison.

The allegations date to the beginning of the 1992-1995 Bosnian war when prosecutors say Nikolic set up the Susica camp, a detention facility near the eastern Bosnian town of Vlasenica where some 8,000 people were held.

South Asia's oldest English newspaper closing down

Beatings, murders and rape were commonplace at the camp, a former military facility that Nikolic commanded in the early stages of the war, according to the indictment.

It says Nikolic subjected Muslim prisoners "to prolonged and routine imprisonment and confinement, repeated torture and beatings, countless killings, repeated rapes and other kinds of sexual assault."

Nikolic is accused of raping four women, clubbing two inmates to death with wooden sticks and torturing and beating four more.

The tribunal now has in its custody 39 of the 94 suspects publicly under indictment. Key indictees at large include Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and military chief Ratko Mladic.

(ad/js)

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The United Nations Friday said it was suspending part of its operations in the northern city of Jaffna, as Tamil Tiger combatants fired artillery at Sri Lankan army positions in their latest offensive to retake their former capital.

The U.N. has 65 personnel from different agencies working in Jaffna, which rebels from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam is trying to recapture from the government.

A 10-member team from the United Nations Development Program involved in clearing mines has been called back, a UNDP spokesman told The Associated Press.

"We do not carry out mine action program in a combat zone," Spokesman Mohan Samaranayake said.

South Asia's oldest English newspaper closing down

The remaining personnel will stay on, but the U.N. will review the situation daily and decide if they should stay.

Also on Friday, the rebels fired artillery at government troop positions, military officials and rebel sources said.

"We are holding our position well and we are going to do so," said a senior military official, speaking on condition of not being named.

Government soldiers were fighting along a new defense line after the weekend retreat from the strategic Elephant Pass, which links the Jaffna peninsula to the mainland.

The rebels are fighting for a separate homeland for the minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east. They say they face discrimination from the majority Sinhalese who dominate the government and the military. The government denies the charge.

More than 62,500 people have been killed in the 17-year-old war.

Rebels said they have fortified their positions around the hamlet of Pallai, 25 kilometers (15 miles) south of Jaffna town, and said there was an exchange of artillery fire with the Sri Lankan army.

The guerillas captured the Elephant Pass base in a fierce offensive last week, driving out nearly 10,000 soldiers in one of the government's most serious defeats.

The Mine Action Program of the UNDP has cleared more than 660 land mines in Jaffna.

Nearly 550,000 people living in Jaffna are threatened by thousands of land mines planted by both government forces and the rebels on dirt roads, on farm land and wild areas of the peninsula, 300 kilometers (185 miles) north of Colombo.

The United Nations said Friday it is suspending some of its operations in Jaffna, as Tamil Tiger rebels advanced on army positions to try and retake their former capital.

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The main opposition United National Party called Friday for setting up a council to coordinate Sri Lanka's war efforts against the rebels, who want a homeland for the minority Tamils.

Soldiers were fighting along a new defense line after the weekend retreat from the strategic Elephant Pass that links Jaffna peninsula and the mainland.

The Voice of Tiger rebel radio, monitored in the northern Vavuniya town, said guerrillas were 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Jaffna on Friday. There was no independent confirmation of the rebel claim.

The Defense Ministry said soldiers killed 22 rebels in the latest fighting. It didn't mention government casualties or comment on the rebel claim.

South Asia's oldest English newspaper closing down

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As Tamil Tiger rebels advanced on army positions to try to retake Jaffna, the United Nations announced Friday that it would suspend some of its operations in former rebel stronghold.

The United Nations has 65 people working in Jaffna, where a fierce battle has been waged in recent weeks. Ten mine experts were to leave Friday.

Guerrillas were 20 kilometers (12 miles) from Jaffna on Friday, according to the Voice of Tiger rebel radio, monitored in the northern town of Vavuniya. There was no independent confirmation of the rebel claim.

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On Friday, the main opposition United National Party called for setting up a war council to coordinate Sri Lanka's war efforts against the rebels, who want a homeland for the minority Tamils.

"To ensure the future security of Jaffna we should formulate a war council" of retired generals, a UNP statement said.

The government issued an appeal asking former soldiers to rejoin the armed forces.

The rebels, saying Tamils are discriminated against by the Sinhalese majority that dominates the government and the military, are seeking a homeland for the Tamils. More than 62,500 people have been killed in the 17-year-long war.

In Jaffna, the nearly 550,000 people living are threatened by thousands of land mines planted by both government forces and the rebels on dirt roads, in farms and wild areas of the peninsula, 300 kilometers (185 miles) north of Colombo.

More than 200 people, mostly civilians, have been injured by mines over the past three years, the military said.

The Mine Action Program of the United Nations Development Program has cleared more than 660 land mines in Jaffna.

The government on Friday asked retired soldiers to join the war effort against Tamil rebels, but President Chandrika Kumaratunga held out the possibility of a peaceful end to the ethnic war.

South Asia's oldest English newspaper closing down

Kumaratunga asked the guerrillas to surrender their weapons, though. "We are willing to take appropriate measures to end the war and achieve peace if the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) are willing to lay down arms," said President Kumaratunga in her address to the nation on state-run television.

Also Friday, the United Nations said it was suspending some of its operations in northern Jaffna as the Tiger militias advanced on army positions to try and retake their former capital.

Kumaratunga accused the rebels of betraying a Norwegian peace initiative to end the 17-year-old conflict. She said the guerrillas launched a "fierce attack" on government forces last week despite contacts between the Norwegian government and the guerrillas during the past 13 months.

Norway took the initiative when both the government and Tamil Tiger rebels asked for help in resuming negotiations after a five-year deadlock.

"We admit our troops suffered a setback at Elephant Pass," said Kumaratunga who returned home earlier this week as the fighting raged. She cut short her visit to London where she had gone for treatment of her right eye blinded in a failed rebel suicide attack in December.

The Elephant Pass, a narrow land bridge, connects the northern Jaffna Peninsula with the rest of the country.

The guerrillas captured the causeway after driving out nearly 10,000 soldiers in one of the government's most humiliating defeats.

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"To ensure the future security of Jaffna we should formulate a war council (of retired generals)," a UNP statement said.

The government issued an appeal asking former soldiers to rejoin the armed forces and work in a "low intensity area."

In Sri Lanka, a soldier can opt out of the forces after five years. Military service is voluntary. The government asked the employers of retired soldiers to release them from duties. The number of reservists was not known.

The United Nations, which decided to suspend some of its operations, has 65 workers in Jaffna, the former rebel stronghold.

The first group of 10 mine experts was scheduled to leave Jaffna later Friday. The rest will stay in Jaffna, but the United Nations will review the situation on daily basis.

The Mine Action Program of the United Nations Development Program has cleared more than 660 landmines in Jaffna.

Meanwhile, the Voice of Tiger rebel radio, monitored in the northern Vavuniya town, said the guerrillas were 20 kilometers (10 miles) from Jaffna on Friday. There was no independent confirmation of the rebel claim.

The Defense Ministry said the soldiers killed 22 rebels in the latest fighting. It didn't mention the government casualties.

Soldiers were fighting along a new defense line after the weekend retreat from the Elephant Pass.

The rebels say Tamils are discriminated against by the Sinhalese majority, which dominates the government and the military. More than 62,500 people have been killed in the 17-year-old war.

South Asia's oldest English newspaper closing down

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Load-Date: April 28, 2000

End of Document

No Headline In Original

Hobart Mercury

September 7, 1992 Monday

Copyright 1992 Nationwide News Pty Limited

Length: 659 words

Body

IN BRIEF Guerillas gunned down SECURITY forces gunned down five suspected Tamil Tiger guerillas and recovered grenades and ammunition in separate clashes in eastern Sri Lanka yesterday. Troops ambushed and killed three men believed to be from the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (**LTTE**) in Vellavali jungle region, a military spokesman said. He said two more suspected guerillas were shot dead at Thoppigala, a jungle base of the **LTTE**.

Flasher meets his match A SCHOOLGIRL has ended the reign of an Auckland flasher by taking his photograph in the act. The photo was shown on Television New Zealand's Crimewatch program and resulted in a 32-year-old businessman turning himself in at a local police station. Detective Sergeant Dave Pearson said the flasher had made a practice of appearing naked in the window of a disused office building.

Immigrants fenced out INDIA yesterday decided to fence its entire border with Bangladesh by March 1996 to curb large-scale infiltration by Bangladeshis. A high-level meeting in New Delhi also decided to step up construction of a 2784-kilometre road along the same frontier. Authorities have already built 360 kilometres of the road. Bangladesh is ringed on three sides by five Indian states - West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram - as well as Burma. The Indian Government first decided to erect a fence along the border with Bangladesh following an anti-immigrant campaign in Assam in the 1980s.

Women priests get the nod IN a victory for Archbishop Desmond Tutu, South Africa's Anglican Church yesterday ordained its first **women** priests. David Russel, Bishop of Grahamstown, ordained former political science professor Nancy Charton, theology graduate Sue Groves, and local deacon Bride Dickson.

Archbishop Tutu, the first black head of the Anglican Church in South Africa and 1984 Nobel Peace Prize winner, has campaigned strongly to have **women** admitted to the priesthood.

Pope calls for Bosnia peace THE Pope yesterday repeated his call for an end to the fighting in Bosnia-Herzegovina, describing the conflict as "a tragedy for Europe".

"The Church follows the succession of warlike attacks and the multiplication of disasters and devastation caused by such an absurd conflict with great apprehension," he said in a service broadcast worldwide on Vatican Radio. The Pope called on worshippers to pray that those with the power to end the conflict should redouble their efforts.

The Vatican last month established full diplomatic relations with Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Pope has repeatedly urged an end to the violence there.

Driver saved by a burp A 24-YEAR-OLD man has belched his way out of losing his driver's licence. Vermont District Court Judge Paul Hudson ruled that Todd Fuller's untimely burping into an infra-red breath test had invalidated the

No Headline In Original

results of the test for sobriety. Deputy state's attorney Marc Brierre said Fuller had smiled and burped repeatedly while police tried to get a usable test. The judge said state regulations required police to wait at 15 minutes after a suspect burp, before administering a breath test. In Fuller's case, police had waited only 14 minutes. The May 23 test showed Fuller had a blood-alcohol content of 0.193 per cent, twice Vermont's legal limit. Fuller earlier told the court he simply "had some gas".

UK soldiers on murder count TWO British soldiers were charged with murder yesterday over the shooting of an unarmed Catholic teenager in Northern Ireland. The British soldiers, 19-year-old Mark Douglas Wright and James Fisher, 24, were remanded in military custody after an emotionally charged court hearing was disrupted by insults from the grieving father of 18-year-old Peter McBride. The soldiers from the Scots Guards regiment are accused of murdering McBride in the republican North Lodge area of Belfast on Friday. Witnesses said McBride was shot dead by troops after running away from a military patrol.

Load-Date: September 27, 2003

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