

Subject



PRIME MINISTER  
INDIA

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T58/184

cc Master  
OPS

New Delhi  
April 4, 1984

My dear Prime Minister,

In Goa we spoke of the situation in Sri Lanka. You had commended our efforts to promote a political settlement and communal harmony. Since then we have also had talks with Lady Young, your Minister of State for Foreign Affairs during her visit to New Delhi last month.

As you know my Special Envoy has had discussions over several months with President Jayewardene, and separately with leaders of the Tamil United Liberation Front. On the basis of these discussions a paper was prepared setting out the common ground between the position of the Sri Lankan President and that of the Tamil Party. This paper contained specific proposals, and was finalised when President Jayewardene was in New Delhi for the CHOGM Conference last November. The proposals envisaged the setting up of Regional Councils through direct elections. Substantial powers were to devolve upon these Councils so that the Tamils could be responsible for the government in their own area. At the same time the unitary framework of Sri Lanka and the powers of the Central Government

would be preserved. This would have satisfied the concerns of both the Sinhala and Tamil communities. These proposals were to be discussed at a conference of all political parties.

President Jayewardene convened an All Parties Conference in January this year. We welcomed this step in the hope that it would lead to a viable political settlement. However, we find that no serious effort has been made by the Sri Lankan Government to use this conference to try for a lasting solution of the Tamil problem. On the contrary, after months of desultory discussions, the ruling party has put forward a proposal which, in some respects, offers even less than the District Development Council scheme which was in existence prior to the ethnic violence in July last year. The District Development Councils have functioned in actual practice as local advisory committees since they have neither legislative, executive or financial powers, nor is the unit of administration large enough to be viable. The TULF has repeatedly stressed the inadequacy of this scheme for fulfilling the aspirations of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Failure to make progress in the political dialogue has led to mounting ethnic tensions, particularly

in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. At the same time a series of measures have been undertaken by the Government and a major security offensive is being launched in these two Provinces. Innocent people have been killed and bitterness and hatred between the two communities are growing. This is bound to lead to an ever-escalating spiral of violence, and counter-violence on the part of Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan armed forces, and may well trigger another communal holocaust.

There are allegations in Sri Lanka that Tamil militants are being trained in India. These are totally false. We have conducted investigations and there is absolutely no evidence of caches of arms or any training camps. It is, unfortunately, true that over 30,000 persons have sought refuge in India since July 1983 and more continue to come. The very presence of such a large number of displaced persons in India can create conditions of instability and turmoil, specially as the failure to reach a viable political settlement is adding to their frustration. We have no desire to keep these people in India and we would be relieved if some political settlement could be worked out so that they return to Sri Lanka to live in security and honour.

We have affirmed again and again that we are for a united Sri Lanka, that we are against secessionism and all forms of violence. However, developments in Sri Lanka do affect us because of the close ties of history and kinship between the Tamil peoples of India and Sri Lanka. We are also seriously concerned at the prospect of a large scale influx of refugees which will certainly result from continued disturbances there. Thus, we have a special interest in the restoration of stability and national harmony and you can appreciate our concern over recent developments.

The escalating situation in Sri Lanka calls for immediate action and it would be good if you could use your great influence to persuade President Jayewardene to make a serious effort to go beyond the District Development Council scheme and to reach an agreement which would be acceptable to all communities. We believe that the proposals worked out in New Delhi between President Jayewardene and the Tamil United Liberation Front through our good offices provide a basis for such an agreement.

I should like to mention to you that it was with considerable difficulty that we could persuade the Tamil United Liberation Front to give up its demand for separation if a viable political alternative could be worked out.

The situation in Sri Lanka is very tense and unless early steps are taken to pursue negotiations with seriousness it may well get out of control. If this happens it would be very difficult to contain reactions in India.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely

Indira Gandhi.

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher,  
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom,  
London.

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# Memorandum submitted to the Commonwealth Heads of Governments

Respected delegates of CHOGM, *H. E. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,*

The Eelam people's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) would like to draw the attention of the Commonwealth leaders the plight of 3.7 million Tamil speaking people in the Island of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in the hands of the Sinhala Chauvinists, and the Tamil people's desire and aspirations for self determination, an inalienable right. Since the Tamil speaking people were put into this situation at or soon after independence, the Commonwealth and especially Britain has a special responsibility to restore to the Tamil people their due right.

Before the advent of colonial rule in the Island, as observed by the European rulers and the Sinhalese leaders, Tamils constituted a separate and identifiable nation. Even as late as 1920, they observed the existence of two major communities viz. Sinhalese and Tamils inhabiting clearly defined territories. Nearly one third of the land-mass, mainly in the Northern and Eastern parts of the Island is the traditional homeland of the Tamil people, called the Eelam nation. Administration of the Island was separate until 1833 when the British colonial rulers brought the two communities together for administrative purposes.

When the British granted the Island dominion Status in 1948, Tamils in good faith accepted the unitary framework and made proposals to safeguard the rights of Tamils (these were rejected) with the understanding that there would be a true partnership for the betterment of both communities. Their fears were vindicated within a few months of independence, when over a million Tamil people were rendered stateless and disenfranchised. At the same time a sinister colonisation policy was pursued with the only objective of making the Tamil areas Sinhalese majority areas. From 1948 onwards the oppression by the Sinhala chauvinists escalated resulting in the loss of basic human rights of Tamils and culminating in military occupation of the Tamil areas and periodic racial pogroms.

To mention a few,

- ★ About 3,000 sq. miles (1/3 of the Eelam Territory) has been colonised with Sinhalese settlers, thus attempting to deprive the Tamils of their territorial integrity. These settlements have been the launching pads for several of the pogroms.
- ★ Over a million people were made Stateless and their franchise withdrawn.
- ★ Sinhala has been made the only official language.
- ★ Buddhism has been made the state religion, when all the Tamil speaking people profess the Hindu, ~~Islamic~~ or Christian faiths.

- ★ Opportunities in the fields of education, employment and development etc., were denied.
- ★ Pogroms have become an annual event and the harassment by the State armed forces is a daily experience.
- ★ Each pogrom resulted in the loss of properties belonging to the Tamils worth several billions of rupees, thus destroying the economic base of the Tamils.

In short over the last 3½ decades Tamils have been subjected to gross humiliation and made second class citizens. What was conceived as a partnership has in reality turned out to be a relationship of the oppressed and the oppressor. Tamils have been portrayed as the enemy of the Sinhalese people, and told that they have no right to be in the Island. In schools and in the media a vicious anti-Tamil and anti-Indian stance was promoted. From independence and particularly from 1956 onwards communalism has been politically institutionalised. Sinhala Chauvinist leadership found in the Tamil people a scapegoat for all political and economic ills. Thus all sections of the Sinhala body politic capitulated to go one up on the other party on the question of being pro-Sinhala.

Meanwhile the Tamil leadership, eventhough having reservations on the independent constitution put forward various demands to solve the Tamil problem, first under the concept of a unitary state and later under a federal concept and now a separate state. The recent history is strewn with pacts which were abrogated and promises that were broken. The 40's witnessed the rejection of the demand by the Tamils for equal representation, 50's and 60's saw the demand for a federal form of Government ignored. Having witnessed the failure of the preceding years Tamil people in the 70's realised that the restoration of the Eelam Nation was inevitable and resolved to attain it to protect themselves from the Sinhala chauvinist onslaught and assert their right of self determination.

#### Events of July 1983 & their implications

The shattering events of July this year does not need any explanations. But it is necessary to note that the July events were significantly different from the earlier pogroms of 1956, 1958, 1977 & 1981. Eventhough there has been an increasing level of active government and armed forces participation in the earlier pogroms, in July they rode a perfect tandem in their involvement. Contrary to the government claims that the whole event was engineered by the anti-government left forces, they have yet to prove anything concrete despite several arrests of left leaders. At the same time there is ample evidence to show that several government ministers were involved and that the whole government machinery was used to wage war on unarmed innocent Tamil people. But so far the government of Mr. J. R. Jayewardane has failed to bring any of those involved to task.

Given this back ground, important questions arise when the Tamil people are asked to negotiate. Is there a possibility of a negotiated settlement with a government which only months earlier had engineered the massacre of thousands of Tamils? Can the Tamil people be expected to trust a man like J. R. Jayewardane who throughout his political career has been anti-Tamil? How sincere is the government when it says it wants a lasting settlement, when even mere Tamil language policy itself was not properly implemented?

#### Past Pacts and their failure

To recapitulate the fate that befell the earlier agreements between the parliamentary leadership of the Tamil people and the successive governments:— Mr. S.J.V. Chelvanayakam entered into a pact with Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike (B-C Pact) in 1957 to solve the Tamil problem as they saw it at that time. The pact, amongst other things was to provide the setting up of regional councils. It was the present President Mr. J. R. Jayewardane who was in the

forefront of the opposition to this pact, and led the infamous Kandy march. Consequent to this opposition, the pact was abrogated without seeing daylight.

In 1965 Chelvanayagam entered into a pact with Mr. Dudley Senanayake (D-C Pact) which also provided for the formation of district councils. This time it was the turn of the SLFP to launch a campaign in opposition to this pact which also resulted in the unilateral abrogation of it by the UNP.

In 1977 the UNP government said in its election manifesto that it would call an all-party conference to solve the grievances of the Tamils. Seven years lapsed and nothing was done. But in the meanwhile the TULF held several rounds of talks with the government. But at each talks there was nothing positive arrived at, except the humiliation of the TULF. The District Development Councils which were seen as an instrument which would go part of the way towards settling some of the issues was never given the powers but made a mockery of. They remained glorified village councils. This even led Mr. Amirthalingam to comment in parliament that talks with the UNP had achieved nothing but unpopularity to the TULF for going into such talks.

#### Present Talks

In the aftermath of the July pogrom the government has agreed to talks with the Indian initiative. The history of talks shows that it has been used as a delaying tactic. But even if the Tamils are asked to take this seriously, the sincerity of the Sri Lanka government is still in question. One example of this insincerity is the post July illegal colonisation of the Vadamunai area in the Batticaloa district where 45,000 Sinhalese people have been settled with the active connivance of the government, using government resources. At the same time Tamil people who have settled following periodic pogroms in the Northern and Eastern provinces have been evicted while only lip service is given to the question of eviction of the recent illegal Sinhalese colonists.

While President Jayewardane has been preparing for talks to settle the Tamil problem he has been giving assurances to Sinhala Buddhist leaders that colonisation everywhere will be on the basis of the ethnic ratios of communities. Surely, this is only to make the Sinhalese the majority in the Tamil homeland.

We submit this memorandum with the objective of clarifying to the international community, particularly to the Commonwealth heads of governments the issues which provide the background to the talks. On behalf of the Tamil community we urge you to raise these matters in the fora available to you.

We urge a just and peaceful solution to the problem of the Tamil speaking people in the Island of Ceylon, a solution nothing less than the exercise of the right of self determination.

**Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front**

November, 1983

cc Ops  
Mastered

CONFIDENTIAL  
BY HAND

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SUBJECT



सत्यमेव जयते

Pushkar Johari  
Deputy High Commissioner

भारत का हार्ड कमीशन  
लन्दन

THE HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA,

DEPARTMENT,

INDIA HOUSE,  
ALDWYCH,

LONDON WC2B 4NA

TELEPHONE: 01-836 8484 EXT.....

TELEGRAMS: HICOMIND, LONDON, W.C.2.

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T.58/84

No.267 /DHC/S/84

April 11, 1984

see also the  
attached.

Dear Mr. Coles,

I shall be grateful if the following message from Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India to The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P., Prime Minister, First Lord of the Treasury and the Minister for the Civil Service, of the United Kingdom is transmitted to its high destination:-

BEGINS.

My dear Prime Minister,

In Goa we spoke of the situation in Sri Lanka. You had commended our efforts to promote a political settlement and communal harmony. Since then we have also had talks with Lady Young, your Minister of State for Foreign Affairs during her visit to New Delhi last month.

As you know my special envoy has had discussions over several months with President Jayewardene, and separately with leaders of the Tamil United Liberation Front. On the basis of these discussions a paper was prepared setting out the common ground between the position of the Sri Lankan President and that of the Tamil Party. This paper contained specific proposals, and was finalised when President Jayewardene was in New Delhi for the CHOGM conference last November. The proposals envisaged the setting up of regional councils through direct elections.

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Substantial powers were to devolve upon these councils so that the Tamils could be responsible for the government in their own area. At the same time the unitary framework of Sri Lanka and the powers of the central government would be preserved. This would have satisfied the concerns of both the Sinhala and Tamil communities. These proposals were to be discussed at a conference of all political parties.

President Jayewardene convened an all parties conference in January this year. We welcomed this step in the hope that it would lead to a viable political settlement. However, we find that no serious effort has been made by the Sri Lankan government to use this conference to try for a lasting solution of the Tamil problem. On the contrary, after months of desultory discussions, the ruling party has put forward a proposal which, in some respects, offers even less than the district development council scheme which was in existence prior to the ethnic violence in July last year. The district development councils have functioned in actual practice as local advisory committees since they have neither legislative, executive or financial powers, nor is the unit of administration large enough to be viable. The TULF has repeatedly stressed the inadequacy of this scheme for fulfilling the aspirations of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Failure to make progress in the political dialogue has led to mounting ethnic tensions, particularly in the Northern and Eastern provinces. At the same time a series of measures have been undertaken by the government and a major security offensive is being launched in these two provinces. Innocent people have been killed and bitterness and hatred between the two communities are growing.

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This is bound to lead to an ever-escalating spiral of violence, and counter-violence on the part of Tamil militants and the Sri Lankan armed forces, and may well trigger another communal holocaust.

There are allegations in Sri Lanka that Tamil militants are being trained in India. These are totally false. We have conducted investigations and there is absolutely no evidence of caches of arms or any training camps. It is, unfortunately, true that over 30,000 persons have sought refuge in India since July 1983 and more continue to come. The very presence of such a large number of displaced persons in India can create conditions of instability and turmoil, specially as the failure to reach a viable political settlement is adding to their frustration. We have no desire to keep these people in India and we would be relieved if some political settlement could be worked out so that they return to Sri Lanka to live in security and honour.

We have affirmed again and again that we are for a united Sri Lanka, that we are against secessionism and all forms of violence. However, developments in Sri Lanka do affect us because of the close ties of history and kinship between the Tamil peoples of India and Sri Lanka. We are also seriously concerned at the prospect of a large scale influx of refugees which will certainly result from continued disturbances there. Thus, we have a special interest in the restoration of stability and national harmony and you can appreciate our concern over recent developments.

The escalating situation in Sri Lanka calls for immediate action and it would be good if you could

use your great influence to persuade President Jayewardene to make a serious effort to go beyond the district development council scheme and to reach an agreement which would be acceptable to all communities. We believe that the proposals worked out in New Delhi between President Jayewardene and the Tamil United Liberation Front through our good offices provide a basis for such an agreement.

I should like to mention to you that it was with considerable difficulty that we could persuade the Tamil United Liberation Front to give up its demand for separation if a viable political alternative could be worked out.

The situation in Sri Lanka is very tense and unless early steps are taken to pursue negotiations with seriousness it may well get out of control. If this happens it would be very difficult to contain reactions in India.

With warm regards,

Yours sincerely,

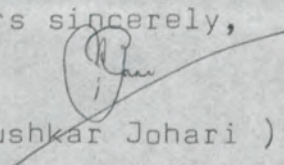
Sd/-  
(Indira Gandhi)

ENDS.

The signed letter from my Prime Minister is being despatched from India and I shall forward it to you as soon as I receive it.

*with regards,*

Yours sincerely,

  
( Pushkar Johari )

Mr. A.J. Coles,  
Private Secretary to P.M.  
Prime Minister's Office  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

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use your great influence to persuade President  
Carter to make a personal effort to go forward  
with the development of a council scheme and to  
reach an agreement which would be acceptable to all  
communities. The belief that the proposals worked  
out in the United States, President Carter and  
the Israeli leadership find support and  
good offices have a basis for such an agreement.

I should like to mention to you that it was  
with considerable difficulty that we could persuade  
the Israeli leadership to give us the  
basis for reaching a viable political  
alternative which we worked out.

The situation in the area is very tense  
and unless early steps are taken to pursue  
negotiations with seriousness it may well get out  
of control. In this regard it would be very  
difficult to contain tensions in Israel.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

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(100 to 1000)

Encs.

The signed letter from my Prime Minister is  
being despatched from Israel and I shall forward it to  
you as soon as I receive it.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. A. A. Golda

Mr. A. A. Golda  
Private Secretary to P.M.  
Prime Minister's Office  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1A



OSL

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

18 April 1984

Thank you for your letter of 18 April to my colleague, Mr. Coles, with which you enclosed a signed letter to the Prime Minister from the Prime Minister of India.

Mrs. Thatcher is presently in Portugal, but I will place your Prime Minister's letter before her immediately upon her return.

David Barclay

Shri Pushkar Johari.

ds



Pushkar Johari  
Deputy High Commissioner

सत्यमेव जयते

TELEPHONE: 01-836 8484 EXT.....

TELEGRAMS: HICOMIND, LONDON, W.C.2.

CONFIDENTIAL  
BY HAND

भारत का हाई कमीशन  
लन्दन

THE HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA,

.....DEPARTMENT,

INDIA HOUSE,

ALDWYCH,

LONDON WC2B 4NA

No.283 /DHC/S/84

April 18, 1984

Dear Mr. Coles,

Please refer to my letter No. 267/DHC/S/84 dated April 11, 1984 regarding a message from Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India to The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

I am enclosing the signed letter in a sealed cover with the request that this may kindly be forwarded immediately to its high destination.

*with regards,*

Yours sincerely,

( Pushkar Johari )

Mr. A.J. Coles,  
Private Secretary to P.M.  
Prime Minister's Office  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

Encl: as above

RESTRICTED

MJ

cc Sir P Gradock

*file*

11 April 1984

Sri Lanka

*BF*  
I enclose a copy of a letter which I have received from the Deputy High Commissioner of India. This contains the text of a message from Mrs. Gandhi to the Prime Minister about the situation in Sri Lanka. I should be grateful if you could let me have a draft reply for the Prime Minister's signature.

AJC

Peter Ricketts Esq.,  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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MJ

cc Sir P Cradock

*File*

11 April 1984

Thank you for your letter of 11 April enclosing the text of a message to the Prime Minister from the Prime Minister of India. I shall convey this to Mrs. Thatcher.

A. J. COLES

Shri Pushkar Johari