CHAPTER - VI

THE INDIAN INTERVENTION BEGINS
[1983 - 1987]
J.R. Jayawardene's Period:

Armed with the dictatorial powers of the Prevention of Terrorism Act of 1979, Sri Lankan police and army began to arrest Tamils, young and old, torture, and even kill and dispose bodies without inquest.¹ One of the early arrests was of Rev. Fr. Singarayar. In a letter to Rt. Rev. Dr. Frank Marcus Fernando, President of the Bishops Conference Fr. Singarayar says,

"The C.I.D. Officers ..... started torturing me. They went to the extent of making me naked and assaulted me. They extracted statements from me against my freedom ..... I have become a "separatist" by accident. Our cause of separation is only part of a process of human liberation."²

¹ V.P. VAIDIK, Ethnic Crisis in Sri Lanka: India's Options, (New Delhi, 1986), p.58; The Minister of Justice, under whom the Act was passed, was Devanayagam a Tamil. Amnesty International has condemned the Prevention of Terrorism Act. And other Human Rights Organizations have expressed their concern at the violation of Human Rights.

² Quoted in SATCHI PONNAMPALAM, op.cit., p.222.
University Professors, Doctors, Journalists, Professionals and Social Workers were arrested, detained, without trial, tortured by the Sri Lankan police. The Security Forces attacked the Gandhian Settlement at Pankulam in Trincomalee.\(^3\) In April 1983 Sri Lankan police arrested S.A. David, President and Rajasundaram, General Secretary of Gandiyam Society, detained them, tortured them in Panagoda army camp and Welikade jail.\(^4\) S. Rajasundaram was murdered in Welikade jail on 27.7.1983, together with 52 other Tamil detainees.\(^5\) The Gandhian Organization was the single charitable organization dedicated to the rehabilitation of the plantation Tamil refugees.

In May 1983 there was a shoot out between Sri Lankan police and Tamil Freedom Fighters in Jaffna and the Sinhala police and army went on the rampage setting ablaze houses, shops and vehicles and assaulting all and sundry. Six hundred soldiers landed at Kantharmadam and Tirunelveli\(^6\) in Jaffna from helicopters and reduced the suburb to rubble and ashes.

The Universities in Sri Lanka once performed excellently. They ceased to be learning centres (especially Peradeniya and

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4 Personal Interview with S.A. David. He narrated the whole horror which happened in the jail at Madras on 20.8.1996.

5 Ibid.

6 Name of the Places in Jaffna.
They become the seed-beds of reactionary ideas. The Government and its propaganda had created the climate for the ethnic violence that had flared up at the Peradeniya University in May 1983, when Sinhala students assaulted and chased Tamil students out of the campus. After few weeks Tamil students from the Colombo Medical College Hostel were harassed and beaten up.

In June 1983, in reprisal for the killing of Sri Lankan Air Force Personnel in Vavunia Town, Sri Lankan Army set fire to the town. Houses were searched by the army and police for knives and guns.

In the East Coast Port City of Trincomalee the Sri Lankan Army went on the rampage killing 19 Tamils, burning two hundred houses, 24 shops, hotels and Hindu temples, and one church. Residents of the houses were taken away to unknown destinations. These were only the prelude to atrocities and the ugly situations of July 23.

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10 NANCY MURRAY, 'The State Against the Tamils' in Race and Class, op.cit., p.104.
Tamilnadu was much concerned about these developments. The Chief Minister, expressed his concern over the problems of Tamils in Sri Lanka, and appealed to the Sri Lankan President, to ensure the rights of the Tamils to be respected and protected as much as those of the Sinhalese. ¹¹

When Ian Ward a British Journalist met Jayawardene he shouted out:

"I am not worried about the opinion of the Jaffna people ..... now we cannot think of them. Not about their lives or of their opinion about us." ¹²

These words from the Head of State underlies, and emphasis the holocaust let loose on the Tamils in July 1983. To prevent news of the atrocities reaching the outside world, Sri Lanka Government banned the 'Saturday Review' an English Weekly and 'Suthanthiran' (Liberation) a Tamil Weekly from publication. ¹³

"On 22nd July 1983, the Army in Jaffna abducted three Tamil girls, took them to their camp and news spread that they had been raped and one of the girls had committed suicide. The following day
the Tamil Militant youths retaliated by toppling the army truck by planting land mine and killing 13 soldiers."\textsuperscript{14}

When the news of the death of 13 Sinhala soldiers reached Colombo an island wide racial riot was let loose on the Tamils. The spread of these riots from Colombo in waves across the island indicates thorough planning and execution.\textsuperscript{15} The Government ordered the office goers to go back to their homes. The Indian Deputy High Commissioner's house in Colombo was ransacked by miscreants.

The main event in the 1983 riots was the murder of 53 Tamil detainees in Welikade jail. This ferocious attack is a capsule version of the terror unleashed on the Tamils by the Sinhalese.\textsuperscript{16}

On 25.7.1983, the Waders and Sinhala convicts in Welikade jail opened the doors of cells where Tamils were locked especially the cells of Kuttirmani, Jegan and Thangathurai.\textsuperscript{17}


\textsuperscript{17} H.P. CHATTOPADHYAYA, op.cit.
They were dragged into the central hall of the prison clubbed and hacked to death. The eyes of Kuttimani were gouged out because he had earlier agreed to donate his eyes to a Tamil, 'so that his eyes may look at Tamil Eelam when he will be dead and gone'. In all 35 Tamils were brutally murdered, in Welikade jail, on 25th July 1983. There was uneasy calm in the Welikade jail on 26th July 1983. Again on 27th July 1983 at around 2.30 p.m. the Sinhala hoodlums descended on another section of Welikade prison where the Tamil detainers were locked up. They clubbed and hacked to death another 18 Tamils on 27th July 1983. S. Rajasundaram, Secretary of Gandhian Movement was killed on the evening of 27th July 1983. The dead bodies of 35 Tamils were heaped in front of the statue of Buddha and blood was offered to him to the entrance courtyard of Welikade prison. There is not the slightest doubt that these ghastly murdered were planned and executed by Sinhala prisoners, warders, and prison authorities in collusion.

The Welikade jail massacre is a watershed in the Sinhala Tamil racial hatred and a turning point in the Freedom Struggle of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Lalith Athulath Mudali, minister said, 'now the Sinhala psyche is appeased' and Sinhalese felt

that revenge has been taken on the Tamils.\textsuperscript{19}

When the gory details of Welikade jail and other inhuman tortures, attacks, and massacres reached Tamilnadu the Tamils were in turmoil. They put pressure on the Government of India to intervene and save the Tamils in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{20} This marked the beginning of a new phase in the Tamil liberation struggle, not only from the standpoint of the Sri Lankan Tamils but also from the standpoint of India.\textsuperscript{21} Tamilnadu and Indian Centre are deeply involved and even the pace of events is quickened. India not only became a party to the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka, but also won over a large section of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Therefore each episode will be discussed in totality.

Welikade jail massacre took place on 25th and 27th July 1983. The D.M.K. organised the partial city bandh (work stoppage) on 27th July 1983 and supported the cause of Eelam Tamils and sought the Centre's intervention.\textsuperscript{22} On 28th July 1983 M.G. Ramachandran convened an All Party meeting in Madras and condemned the events in Sri Lanka.\textsuperscript{23} In this light, it

\textsuperscript{19} NANCY MURRAY, 'The State against the Tamils' in Race and Class, Vol. XXVI, 1984, p.104.

\textsuperscript{20} On the collective violence directed against the Tamils by the State in July 1983, see VALLI KANAPATHY PILLAI & SUNIL BASTIAN in VEENA DAS (Ed.), Mirror of Violence; Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia, (New Delhi, 1990).

\textsuperscript{21} IMTIAZ AHMED, State and Foreign Policy; India's Role in South Asia, (New Delhi, 1993), p.278.

\textsuperscript{22} INDIAN EXPRESS - 28 July 1983 - p.1.

\textsuperscript{23} THE STATESMAN - 29 July 1983 - p.5.
was decided to send a delegation to New Delhi to seek intervention. It condemned the indiscriminate killings of the Tamils and showed solidarity with the Tamils struggle. M.G. Ramachandran sent a telegram to Indira Gandhi and requested her to take up the Sri Lankan issue at the United Nations. On 31 July 1983, M.G. Ramachandran led an All Party Delegation to New Delhi and submitted a memorandum. It said:

"The grim inhuman killings in Sri Lanka cannot be dismissed as the internal affairs of the country . We definitely feel that the time has come for the Indian Government to intervene effectively, actively and urgently to save the Tamils in Sri Lanka."24

The Memorandum further called for:

"The immediate appointment of a team of international observers from the United Nations to catalyse restoration to normalcy in the civil administration and to ensure the safety of Tamils in Sri Lanka, raising of the issue in the United Nations and Security Council for putting an end to the massacre, of sending U.N. Troops to Sri

24 MEMORANDUM presented to the Prime Minister of India on the genocide and violation of Basic Human Rights of Tamils in Sri Lanka, pp.3-5.
Lanka, convening of the NAM meeting and sending of a high level delegation including the Indian External Affairs Minister, Minister for Defence and a few representatives from Tamilnadu to Sri Lanka immediately."  

The Prime Minister responded to them and said, that as a symbol of the Centres sympathy and solidarity with Tamilnadu, all Central Government offices also will be closed on August 2, during the one-day bandh in the State. This was the first time ever that the Central Government of India was officially participating in a bandh called by a State Government since it is aimed at focussing national attention on a sad event that transcends party politics and parochial considerations.  

The speaker of the Tamilnadu Legislative Assembly moved a resolution of condolence on 24th October 1983 for innocent Tamils who died in Sri Lanka. There was special discussion on the Sri Lankan ethnic crisis. It is apt to mention here that, the 'Washington Post' had expressed the idea that "a Separate Tamil State" (Eelam) would be the only alternative to the situation which had emerged in Sri Lanka. Many raised their voices

25 Ibid., pp.5-6.  
in India, for the 'strong action' by the Government of India to save the Tamils in Sri Lanka from 'genocide'.

The D.M.K. with Tamilnadu Kamaraj Congress Party respectively, under the dynamic leadership of M. Karunanidhi and P. Nedumaran urged the Central Government for intervention of the 'Bangladesh Type'. The D.M.K. also collected signatures of ten million people of Tamilnadu to be sent to the U.N. Secretary General, requesting to grant self-determination to the Tamils in Sri Lanka.

The D.M.K. President M. Karunanidhi and the Deputy Leader K. Anbazhagan resigned from the Tamilnadu Assembly in protest against Indian Government's inactivity over what was happening against the Tamils in Sri Lanka. V. Gopalaswamy the Member of Parliament of D.M.K. appealed to the Government with "Bleeding Heart" to protect the four million Tamils in Sri Lanka. The A.I.A.D.M.K. called for a State-wide bandh on 2nd August 1983. All Parties from Tamilnadu have supported

the bandh. The Indian Central Government also participated in the bandh. The D.M.K. started the Tamil Eelam Supporters Organisation (T.E.S.O.) to back the Tamils of Sri Lanka.

All the political parties in Tamilnadu stood together and spoke against the genocide in Sri Lanka. The D.M.K. considered the Tamils' issue as one that belongs to the entire Tamil society and it is a task for the entire community as a whole. And the D.M.K. as fraternal leaders pointed out, is not claiming that it alone has the right to take up this issue. This issue is open to all. Tamils demand for Eelam is not separation. They are just asking for the restoration of what was rightfully theirs.

The D.M.K. said:

"..... this Council feels that a separate Tamil Eelam, shall be the only remedy and permanent solution to the problem and extend its whole-hearted support for all such efforts that shall be aimed at creating new Tamil Eelam."\(^{33}\)

On 29th July 1983, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi sent


External Affairs Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to Sri Lanka to gather first hand information on the crisis.

P.V. Narasimha Rao said:

"This is a human problem we in India cannot remain impervious to the suffering of large numbers of people in our immediate neighbourhood, though separate by boundaries of nationality and citizenship ..... it is evident that anxiety on this score can only be heightened by the news report that Sri Lankan Government has sought the assistance of some foreign powers to deal with their situation." 34

Indira Gandhi had telephoned J.R. Jayawardene and expressed her disapproval of Sri Lanka move to seek foreign assistance to meet a non-existent Indian intervention. The Government of India was greatly concerned on the presence of Israel commandos Mossad or Shinbeth Intelligence Agency in Sri Lanka operating from 'interest section' of American Embassy in Sri Lanka. Indira Gandhi also made aware Sri Lanka, that "any external involvement will complicate matters for both the countries." 35

The Hindu of Madras edition of 21st October 1983 has reported that there was evidence of moral and material help to Sri Lanka from China, Pakistan, United States, Great Britain, South Africa, Singapore and South Korea.  

The Sri Lankan Government had moved to check India, which had shown open sympathy to the cause of Sri Lankan and Indian Tamils.

Following the July events, India in true assertion of its regional preeminence, pronounced an "Indira Doctrine" - the Indian equivalent of the Monroe Doctrine. It said:

"India will neither intervene in the domestic affairs of any States in the region, unless requested to do so, nor tolerate such intervention by an outside power, if external assistance is needed to meet an external crisis, states should first look within the region for help."  

Indira Gandhi time and again expressed her opposition to Sri Lanka seeking any foreign help. New Delhi, in fact, did not hesitate to impress upon foreign countries from whom Sri Lanka sought military help that responding to the latters request, would be viewed seriously by India.  

hardly had any options in dealing with its ethnic conflict without Indian involvement.

"India Today" of 15th September 1983 reported:

"India Today has learnt that Jayawardene's request for contingency military aid from the United States and Britain was met with the message that Sri Lanka fell within India's 'sphere of influence', and this message was driven home by U.S. Ambassador John Reed, who returned unexpected from a six-month vacation on August 8th and met Jayawardene four times on a single day, advising him to turn to his neighbours for help. Jayawardene then spoke to Pakistan President, Zia-Ul-Haq on the hot line to ask for help, but Zia stalled and later informed Indira Gandhi about Sri Lanka's extraordinary request."

It was learnt that, just before the disturbances, when the Sri Lankan Government and its press mounted an anti-Indian hue and cry (India was concerned about Sri Lanka's recent emergency regulations authorising armed forces to bury dead bodies without an inquest). The Indian Foreign Office acted swiftly. It was reported to have called a meeting of all Western

diplomats and told them of the possibility that Sri Lanka might accuse India of intervention and therefore seek military and other help from those countries; and that India would consider any such assistance, without the participation of India, as anti-Indian. Therefore when the Sri Lankan Government approached foreign powers for military assistance, it was turned down. Indian diplomacy had forestalled Sri Lankan moves.

On 5th August 1983, Indira Gandhi said in the Indian Parliament:

"We have made it clear in every forum and in every possible way that India does not pose any threat to Sri Lanka, nor, do we want to interfere in their internal affair. We want the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka to be preserved."

She went on:

"Any extraneous involvement (in Sri Lanka) will complicate matters, for both the countries. We live in a region where many forces are at work not all of whom wish India or our neighbour well.


42 LOK SABHA PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES, Vol. XXVII, No. 6, 5 August 1983, Col. 518.
Forces of destabilization are at work. Hence we must make every effort to minimize any opportunity for foreign elements to weaken us."\textsuperscript{43}

J.R. Jayawardene sent his brother H.W. Jayawardene as his personal emissary to India on 10th to 12th August 1983. H.W. Jayawardene said:

(1) India should stop Tamil Militants groups based in Tamilnadu;

(2) That Sri Lanka will talk to Tamil leaders; and

(3) That Sri Lanka will accept good offices of India.\textsuperscript{44}

There was a different idea put forward by the Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. She met Ceylon Tamil expatriates in New York in 1983, and in turn made contemptuous references to President Jayawardene. She said that she would have ordered the Indian army to invade Ceylon, but had reservations because of the defencelessness of the Indian plantation workers.\textsuperscript{45} This

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{44} SRI LANKA NEWS REVIEW (Colombo), Vol. 5, No. 3, 18 August 1983, p.7.

\textsuperscript{45} Interview with V. GOPALSAMY, Former M.P. in D.M.K., Madras on 22 March 1997. He was Member of Parliament for many years. He was a leading Member of D.M.K. He took great interest on Eelam Tamils freedom struggle. He was very close to the L.T.T.E. and paid a personal visit to Prabhakaran in the Venni jungles.
statement was soothing for the Tamils who were expatriates. V. Gopalsamy went on to say that, when Bangladesh was formed, with the help of Indira Gandhi, she was hailed as Goddess Durga and if she helps the Tamils of Sri Lanka, she would be hailed as Goddess arasakthy. Amirthalingam who was in self-exile in India was provided V.I.P. treatment and it was criticized by the Sri Lankan President.

Even on pressure from Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Amirthalingam refused to renounce the demand for Eelam, a separate homeland for Tamils. Amirthalingam, the leader of the T.U.L.F., though initially had agreed to start talks with the Sri Lankan Government. Jayawardene had also agreed to talk without any preconditions to consider any other reasonable alternative to Eelam problem within the framework of Sri Lanka's unity and territorial integrity.

Having obtained the agreement of both sides to talk to each other on 25th of August 1983, Indira Gandhi sent Gopalsamy Parthasarathy, Chairman of India's Policy Planning Committee, as her special envoy to settle the Sri Lankan Tamil problem.

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46 Ibid.
48 P. VENKATESWARA RAO, op.cit., p.421.
in Sri Lanka. He had a Cabinet status in her Government. But Jayawardene was bargaining that the regional autonomy can be guaranteed to Tamils, if they give up the separatist demand for Eelam. After a number of rounds of discussions with Indira Gandhi during the Commonwealth Conference in New Delhi in November 1983, Jayawardene had agreed to talk to the T.U.L.F. and G. Parthasarathy. The T.U.L.F's contention from the beginning that any formula to be acceptable must meet even half way the legitimate aspiration of the Tamils for parity with the Sinhalese. The T.U.L.F. was hesitating to accept the proposals as it was lacking autonomy and self-Government. Ultimately 'ANNEXURE-C' "Parthasarathy Formula" was prepared as the basic proposals for the talks.

J.R. Jayawardene was not very enthusiastic about the talks, but he had to go on as, (1) Economy of Sri Lanka was in crisis, (2) International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Sri Lanka donors insisted on political solution to the Tamil problem, and (3) The Western powers refused to intervene. India, being aware of the predicament of Sri Lanka and the slippery techniques of Jayawardene, Parthasarathy did not not totally depend on the talks with Jayawardene, and he divised a two track policy.

52 See Appendix-IV.
Overt political move, and (2) Covert military move. The military move was under R.N. Kao, and Research and Analysis Wing (R.A.W).

The political move was under G. Parthasarathy. He was generous with his time. He was able to meet innumerable delegations of expatriate groups and he met personally with leaders of the different militant organizations. He advised them, and made them recognize the limits of their political options. The job of R.A.W. was mainly to deal with external intelligence, and deal with the militant groups, shut their external linkage and to bring them under the Indian sphere of influence. After assigning this kind of task the R.A.W. was granted permission to provide even military training, money and arms to the Tamil militants and it was brought to the limelight on several occasions. Later the activities of R.A.W. was increased and brought the issue into complicated situation.

Subsequently G. Parthasarathy proposed the Regional Councils as unit of devolution. The Sri Lankan Government did not go

53 NEELAN TIRUCHELVAM, G. Parthasarathy; The Role of the Intermediary and the National Question, (Article), (n.p., n.y.).


55 INDIA TODAY was the first to give account on the R.A.W’s dealings with the Tamil Militants and the training camps and military assistance provided to them in India. See, SHEKHAR GUPTA, 'Sri Lanka Rebels: An Omnious Presence in Tamilnadu' India Today, 31 March 1984.
beyond the District Councils. To overcome the difficulty, the final draft allowed the District Councils to join together as Regional Council.

The proposal 'ANNEXURE C' was neither fish nor fowl. It was a clever camouflage. The Tamils will be under the Sinhalese rule with some fringe benefits to make them swallow the bitter pill.

The All Party Conference was held from November to December in 1984. J.R. Jayawardene, did not give importance to the 'ANNEXURE C' which was prepared with the help of Indira Gandhi, G. Parthasarathy and A. Amirthalingam when it was opposed by groups of Buddhist Monks and Sri Lankan Prime Minister in the All Party Conference. New Delhi could not do anything against such a depressing scenario. Athulath Mudali told that their Government did not need "foreign guidance or assistance" in settling the Tamil issue. This showed their unwillingness to accept good offices of India through G. Parthasarathy. They no more welcomed it. It was an eye-


wash and an attempt by both parties to buy time to perfect the military solution to the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka. Thus the Parthasarathy formula became a dead letter.

According to V. Suryanarayan,

"The All Party Conference of all political parties, with a number of them walking in and out at their convenience and numerous other groups being brought in as and when it suited the Government. Finally 'ANNEXURE C' itself was jettisoned by the Sri Lankan Government. The Government's later proposals vindicated that Colombo, was not prepared to budge an inch from its earlier stand that the unit of devolution should be the District Councils and no more. It's subsequent offer for creating a second chamber also proved a non-starter."59

Once the political move met with failure, India had to go on with the military move. India gave training and arms to Sri Lankan Tamil Militants. As K. Manoharan said:

Indira Gandhi's strategy was to use the militants to harass Colombo only to the extent of forcing

it to reach an agreement acceptable to New Delhi. 60

As some Tamil Militants said, "they were trained to carry boxes for the Indian army."

Within a year Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in Tamilnadu reached 150,000. Out of this 50,000 were kept in camps and were supported by the Indian Government, while 100,000 lived on their own resources outside the camps. This inflow of thousands of refugees into India and their tale of atrocities by the Sri Lankan army against the islands population aroused the fervour of the Indian Tamils. 61

The policy makers in South Block in New Delhi were considerably influenced by the political powerfulness in Tamilnadu in dealing with the Sri Lankan ethnic problems. Much pressure was applied on the Central Government to deal more firmly with Sri Lanka, if necessary, to use direct military action against it. 62

On 26th September 1983, 42 Tamil detainees in Batticaloa broke jail and within a month all of them reached Tamilnadu safely. Some prominent militant activists from major Tamil

61 P. VENKATESWAR RAO, op.cit., p.423.
62 Ibid., p.424.
militant groups were part of the batch that broke jail in Batticaloa.

Within few days of the arrival of these Tamil militants, R.A.W. Personnel descended on them. Prominent among the R.A.W. Officers was Chandrasekaran who was close to the L.T.T.E. and was responsible for leading intelligence work of the Government of India in respect of Tamil militants.63


Uma Maheswaran of P.L.O.T. was a dark horse in Sri Lankan Tamil militancy. Quite early in his leadership of P.L.O.T. he had robbed Rs. 2.5 crores in Killinochy Bank

and Rs. 6 crores in Nikawaratiya Bank, and invested all the money on International Drug Trade and stacked away millions in Swiss Banks. It is interesting to note Muhundan (Uma Maheswaran) served an apprenticeship with the legendary Varadharajah Mudaliar of Bombay. Muhundan kept himself away from R.A.W. and other Tamil militant groups, and followed a lone trail with personal ambitions.

Muhundan had established camps in Thanjavur and Theni areas. When his associates, especially Vasanthanan, challenged him, he summarily executed them. The Indian Government never investigated any of his numerous murders in Tamilnadu. When Tamilnadu became too hot for him Muhundan moved to Colombo and took shelter under Athulath Mudali.

With P.L.O.T. and T.E.L.O. out of the way, L.T.T.E. led the field in Tamil militancy. When M.G. Ramachandran was ill and ailing, his confidant, former D.G.P. Mohandas under cover of security arrangement for S.A.A.R.C. Conference in Bangalore in 1986, disarmed the Tamil militants in Tamilnadu including the L.T.T.E. Mohandas specially insulted Prabakaran during the security activities. Prabakaran went on a fast and crossed over to Sri Lanka. Any amount of writing of Mohandas will never wipe away his treachery to M.G. Ramachandran. This is a clear instance of private motives.
overtaking public interests. 64

It is estimated that by early 1987 India had given training to 2,000 L.T.T.E. Cadres, 8,000 P.L.O.T. Cadres, 1,500 E.P.R.L.F. Cadres, 1,200 E.R.O.S. Cadres and 1,500 T.E.L.O. Cadres, in different camps in North and South India. 65

With all these massive hectic activities Indira Gandhi stoutly maintained that India was not training Tamil militants. This has been a puzzle for the public.

G. Parthasarathy, Indira Gandhi's special envoy to Sri Lanka had sized up the 'Old Fox', Jayawardene and discovered his predilection for sadistic genocide of Sri Lanka Tamils.

R.N. Rao, the Security Advisor to India reported that, Israel, Britain and Pakistan were doing dirty work for U.S.A. in Sri Lanka.

Jayawardene buying time for military build up, was wriggling out of 'ANNEXURE C' trap and All Party Conference. Jayawardene did not even attempt to hide his dislike of Parthasarathy just because he was a Tamil.


65 ROHAN GUNARATNA, op.cit., p.48.
Indira Gandhi was all out to tighten the noose around Jayawardene's neck and pay him back in his own coin which is murder and May-hem.

Before we close Indira Gandhi's period, we will look into her policy towards Sri Lanka's deteriorating ethnic crisis. It was three fold:

(1) India remained steadfastly opposed to Eelam to some extent guided by its own principles of nation building (as also as continuing problem in Punjab and North-East);

(2) It projected complete identity with the legitimate aspirations, for autonomy within the framework of a genuinely representative Government in the existing unitary set up in the island state;

(3) It made it clear that, Sri Lanka's aggressively anti-Indian posture coupled with its deliberate bid for external involvement would be seen as going much beyond the acceptable framework of Sri Lanka's search for a counter vailing regional balance against Indian pre-eminence. 66

Adding to all above mentioned things the geo-strategic location would make it almost impossible for the domination of the external power, since India was constantly opposed to it.

But on 31st October 1984, the international intrigue bent on destabilisation of India, let loose Sikh assassins to take away the life of Indira Gandhi. If Indira Gandhi was alive she would have found an honest and dignified solution to Sri Lankan Tamils problem. But it was not to be!

Rajiv Gandhi succeeded Indira Gandhi as Prime Minister of India. He was not like Pandit Nehru or Mother Indira Gandhi, and he was politically and philosophically much at ease with the world. But neighbours in South Asia, were rattled by India's hegemonic personality.

India's peace policing role in Sri Lanka showed its undisputable emergence as a major world power. He adopted a three pronged policy to solve the Indo-Sri Lanka crisis. First was to employ the Indian influence to pressure the Tamils of Northern Sri Lanka to abandon their demand for independent 'Tamil Homeland' and come for the substantial autonomy. The second prong was to put pressure on the Sri Lankan Government to offer attractive autonomy proposals to the Tamils. It involved negotiations indirectly, between the Tamils and the Colombo

67 BABANI SENGUPTA, 'At Ease with India' in VERINDER GROVER (Ed.), Introduction to International Relations and India's Foreign Policy, (New Delhi, 1992), p.523.
Government, and the other between Tamils, and Delhi. The third, according to Indian critic Pran Chopra, was the Indian toleration of flow of arms and operational assistance from Tamilnadu to Northern Sri Lanka. 68

Immediately after Rajiv Gandhi came to power, he replaced Parthasarathy with Romesh Bhandari, as Indian Foreign Secretary. Jayawardene was mighty pleased with this because, a Tamil was removed from Sri Lankan affairs. 69 Rajiv Gandhi also took steps to curb Tamil militant activities in Tamilnadu and dismantled some of their camps. It was described that, Indira Gandhi period was one of the most fretful tenure in the Indo-Sri Lanka relations, because the Indian Government was reluctant to deprive the Tamil militants and its failure to curb the militants activities in Tamilnadu. 70 Jayawardene welcomed this move also. Rajiv Gandhi believed that the Government of Sri Lanka was serious about devolution of power to the Provinces. But it was not so.

Bhandari who was new to Sri Lankan affairs visited Sri Lanka in April 1985, and met Jayawardene several times and obtained agreement to a four point peace package, in a

68 Ibid., p.532.
69 INDIA TODAY - 31 March 1986 - p.95.
businesslike way:

(1) General Amnesty to the Tamil Militants;

(2) Release of Tamil detainees;

(3) Sri Lankan soldiers to return to barracks; and

(4) Resumption of talks to solve ethnic conflict.

Bhandari also had arranged a Summit meeting between Rajiv Gandhi and J.R. Jayawardene in New Delhi on 1st to 3rd June 1985. 71

At the Summit meeting a decision was taken to curb the activities of Tamil militants in India and flow of arms from India to Sri Lanka. It was a significant move on the part of Rajiv Gandhi to safeguard the Sri Lankan Government. 72

Sri Lanka Government and five major Tamil militant groups agreed to a three months ceasefire from 6th June 1985. 73 It gave rise to doubts about the true intentions of the Sri Lankan Government. The National Security Minister Athulath Mudali accused the L.T.T.E. for its agreeing to the ceasefire because


of the military setbacks suffered by it.\textsuperscript{74} This again provoked the militants to ponder whether the Government will grant political status to the militants as equal partners in the negotiation.

At the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (S.A.A.R.C.) Summit in May 1985 in Bhutan President Zia of Pakistan, King Zigma Singhye Wangchuk of Bhutan and Rajiv Gandhi persuaded Jayawardene to talk to the Tamil militants.\textsuperscript{75} It was agreed that India will not support the claim for separate State for the Tamils in Sri Lanka and Government of Sri Lanka will grant greater provincial autonomy to the Tamils. But the T.U.L.F. had taken up the position even before the Thimpu talks that "if a satisfactory alternative which could meet the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil people and redress their grievances, which gave rise to the demand for a separate State, was offered we could place it before the party which would take a decision in Conference with the wishes of the Tamil people."\textsuperscript{76} Thus was born the Thimpu talks.

\textsuperscript{74} M.S.S. PANDIAN, 'Fragile Ceasefire' in \textit{Economic and Political Weekly}, Vol. XX, Nos. 25 & 26, 22-29 June 1985, p.1063.

\textsuperscript{75} \textit{TIME OF INDIA} - 10 May 1985.

\textsuperscript{76} Letter of T.U.L.F. to Rajiv Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, \textit{TEXT IN PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES, SRI LANKA (HANSARD)}, Vol. 40, 1986, Cols. 32-34.
The guns of the Tamil militants were forced to go silent, while the Sri Lanka Government expanded its armed forces in the Tamil areas; the Indian Government put pressure on the Tamil militants first to participate in the Thimpu talks, then, despite the Sri Lankan Government's violation of the ceasefire agreement to continue with the negotiation. 77

The Thimpu talks were held in two phases, first was from 8th to 13th July and the second was from 12th to 17th August 1985. A ten member delegation was led by H.W. Jayawardene, brother of President Jayawardene represented Sri Lanka. This leadership was regretted by New Delhi as he was not competent to discuss the political aspects of the Tamil problem. 78 The Tamil participants were also not satisfied with the status of Sri Lanka Government representatives. The Tamils sent second rung leaders and a thirteen member Tamil delegation met the Sri Lankan team. It was the first time, that the different fighting groups of Sri Lanka (L.T.T.E., P.L.O.T., T.E.L.O., E.P.R.L.F. and E.R.O.S.) have joined together and took part at the Thimpu talks. 79 They unanimously

77 M.S.S. PANDIAN, 'Putting Pressure on Tamils' in Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XX, No. 34, 24 August 1985, p.1411.
said, "Our maximum and minimum aim remains Eelam". The T.U.L.F. had also participated with an 'open mind'. The Tamils had no choice. But they were forced by India.

There was a deadlock at the very beginning itself. Sri Lanka was prepared only to grant District Councils. But the Tamils demanded the following four points which included:

1. Recognition of the Tamils as a distinct nationality;
2. The recognition of right to self-determination of the Tamils;
3. Territorial integrity of the identified Tamil Homeland in North and East;
4. Recognition of the rights of citizenship and other fundamental rights to all Tamils who look upon the island as their home.

The above four demands went much beyond the Sri Lankan delegation's expectations. They could not act further, without consultation with Colombo. It was understood that Sri Lanka

80 Ibid.
will remain a Unitary State. But one of the above points on self-determination shows the viable acceptance of secession as an alternative. 83

During the second phase, Colombo rejected all the demands of the Tamils. The Sri Lankan Government presented a second scheme with District and Provincial Councils with weak executive powers and with the President of Sri Lanka vested with all powers. 84 Tamil groups, both militant and moderates, were angry. Meeting was adjourned to August 18th. Even as the talks were going on Sri Lanka Government was buying arms. 85 Sri Lankan army attacked and killed 200 innocent Tamils in Vavunia and Trincomalee. 86

The Tamil delegates walked out from the Thimpu ignoring Rajiv Gandhi in New Delhi and headed for home. 87 Bhandari was furious. Deportation orders were served on Anton Balasingam, representing the L.T.T.E., Nadesan Satyendra representing the T.E.L.O. and S. Chandrahasan, son of S.J.V. Chelvanayagam. 88

83 Ibid.
86 FRONTLINE - 7-20 September 1985 - pp.4-10.
87 Ibid.
88 Ibid.
A. Balasingam and N. Satyendra had left India before the deportation orders were served. Chandrasan undertook a fast and all was settled because the Government did not proceed with the case.

In September 1985, J.R. Jayawardene told to India Today:

"We were buying time with the ceasefire. Now we are acquiring arms and getting our soldiers trained. We are getting ready for a decisive military action."  

The Eastern and Northern Provinces in Sri Lanka was attacked by the Sri Lankan armed forces.

To solve the ethnic problem the T.U.L.F. had submitted in December 1985, the following alternative proposals to the Government of Sri Lanka.

(1) Single linguistic state for North and East.

(2) Quasi Federal powers.

(3) United Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lankan Government refused the T.U.L.F. proposals too. The Indian Government was disappointed. Meanwhile

89 Ibid.

90 INDIA TODAY - 15 September 1985 - p.63.
A. Amirthalingam the leader of the T.U.L.F. came out with his disappointment that, now, India appeared reluctant to condemn the Sri Lankan Government when there were grave violations of human rights by the Sri Lankan armed forces. Though India was willing to help the Tamils, it did not want to pressure the Sri Lankan Government beyond certain limit.

P. Chidamparam Mission

Earlier in September 1985 discussions were held between Sri Lankan and Indian officials in New Delhi, the chief topic being the establishment of elected Provincial Councils and the powers to be given to the Tamils. These issues contained, legislative, public revenue and executive powers to be given the Councils; the role of the Centre and the Provinces in controlling the police; the control of land grants in irrigation schemes on an ethnic basis in major projects as opposed to minor schemes left entirely to the Provinces; and the terms on which Parliament could amend the legislation relating to Provincial Councils. But the T.U.L.F. politicians as well as the Tamil militants rejected these provisions and demanded the merger of the North and Eastern Provinces to form a Tamil Homeland. The gap was very large between the Tamil

91 FRONTLINE - 30 November to 13 December 1985 - p.38.
92 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
aspirations and the draft proposal. Jayawardene was not keen on political solution.

The T.U.L.F. continued to negotiate with the Sri Lankan Government, but only minor concessions were given. There was no genuine desire on Sri Lanka's part for a negotiated settlement. India tried to pacify Tamil militants with their offer obtaining their consent to the final proposals. The L.T.T.E. supported the efforts of the Government of India.95

The Buddhist Monks threatened the Sri Lankan Government not to give into the Tamils.96 Sirimavo Bandaranaike said, "It will be a tragedy if Provincial Council Bill is passed." Sinhalese feared that such autonomy, would either lead to division or Pan-Dravidian-link-up with Tamilnadu.

The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka R. Premadasa wanted Rajiv Gandhi to issue "an ultimatum to the terrorists to stop violence, observe a ceasefire and accept the present package of proposals." And also Jayawardene was complaining that India was not extending the "desired assistance." But Rajiv Gandhi felt that Sri Lanka was "vacillating" in its efforts and Jayawardene lacked 'guts' to take a brave steps to solve the ethnic problem.97

95 FRONTLINE (Interview with V. Prabakaran) - 30 November to 13 December 1985 - p.42.
96 STANLY JAYARAJ THAMBIAH, op.cit., p.76.
97 V. LONGER, The Defence and Foreign Policy of India, (New Delhi, 1988), p.316.
When J.R. Jayawardene came for the S.A.A.R.C. Conference to Bangalore on 15th and 16th November 1986, arrangements were made for Rajiv Gandhi to discuss Sri Lankan problem with Jayawardene. M.G. Ramachandran undertook to bring L.T.T.E. to participate in the talks. At the same time, the secret operation to "disarm" the different militant organizations in Tamilnadu took place, according to the wishes of the Centre. 98

The Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayawardene brought his proposal to trifucate the Eastern Province to represent the Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims. 99 This was a ruse to bring division between Tamils and Muslims. Jayawardene had proposed to make Batticaloa a Tamil unit, Trincomalee a Sinhalese unit and Amparai, a Muslim unit. Jayawardene also offered to make Prabakaran the Chief Minister. Jayawardene's proposals give a clue to his complicated psyche. Needless to say Tamil militants and T.U.L.F. rejected the offer.

India was making desperate attempts to find a solution to the Sri Lankan problem. Rajiv Gandhi sent the Minister of Internal Security, P. Chidambaram and Natwar Singh to Sri Lanka in November 1986 to take a middle position between

demand for the merger of the North and East and the Sri Lanka's offer of District Councils. This was achieved when Sri Lanka agreed to detach Amparai from the Eastern Province and allowed institutional linkages in the rest of North and East. This new package of proposal is usually called as "December 19 Proposal." This was a remarkable achievement of Indian mediation and offered a workable political solution through the creation of two Tamil Provincial Councils in the Northern and Eastern Provinces from which the Sinhalese majority areas were to be exercised. But the S.L.F.P. the Buddhist Monks and Tamil militants opposed the December 19 Proposals. 100

A notable feature of the L.T.T.E's response, after studying the proposal carefully, and found the framework "inadequate, failing to meet the basic political aspirations of our people." Its core response was to define its concept of the Tamil homeland. "This homeland is a clearly identifiable, contiguous, single region, composed of the Northern and the Eastern Provinces."101 They were firm that the North and East should be one. But the most important statement was revealed by them soon after. It said, "We therefore insist that for any meaningful political settlement, the acceptance

100 'Concern over Sri Lanka happenings', LANKA GUARDIAN, Vol. 9, No. 20, 15 February 1987, p.11.
by the Sri Lankan Government of an indivisible single region as the homeland of the Tamils is basic."  

It explained the legitimate fear of loosing the unique character and nationality of the Tamils.

Frustrated by repeated failures of India to find a reasonable solution to Sri Lankan Tamil problem, the L.T.T.E. leader Prabakaran decided to leave India and return to Jaffna for good. The L.T.T.E. started to set up a Civil Administration in the Northern Province from 1st January 1987. But earlier it was reported that the Indian Government had persuaded the L.T.T.E. not to declare the Peninsula an independent district. The Sri Lanka Government retaliated by ban on fuel and essential commodities to Jaffna and started stepping up military operations in the North and East. Nearly 200 civilians were killed in Batticaloa district and more in Mannar and Northern Province.

Rajiv Gandhi had sent Dinesh Singh as his personal emissary to Sri Lanka on 13th March 1987 to pressurize the Tamil militants to accept the December 19 Proposals.

102 Ibid.
103 DAGMAR HELMAN RAJANAYAGAM, op.cit., p.608.
105 ASIAN RECORDER - 12-18 March 1987 - Col. 19365.
Singh met Jayawardene and expressed India’s concern at the deteriorating conditions and resume India’s mediatory efforts. Jayawardene had ordered unilateral ceasefire for ten days. But the violence escalated by mid-April 1987. Around 200 people were brutally massacred on April 17th. The Colombo bomb outrage took place on April 21st. The Sri Lankan army retaliated by indiscriminate bombing and attacks on Tamils.

Premadasa told in the Sri Lankan Parliament on 24th April 1987 that "when the lives of our people are in danger, we are not prepared to go in for a political solution." He added, "any friends who tells us to find a political solution will be considered as the biggest enemy."

After these serious 'extraordinary' developments in Sri Lanka the following points were insisted upon Sri Lanka by the Indian Government for further negotiations: (1) The Sri Lankan Government should stop pursuing the military operation and stop the violence it was unleasing against the Tamils in the North and East, (2) It should immediately lift the economic blockade of the Jaffna Peninsula, (3) It should affirm its commitment to the 19th December 1986 proposals as a basis and a beginning point for negotiations with the representatives of the Sri Lankan Tamils, and (4) If these
steps were not taken and the military option pursued by Colombo, the fighting "will be prolonged" and the situation "will escalate."\textsuperscript{109}

The Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had expressed, that the India's solidarity with the victims of the ethnic conflict remained and that no attempt would be made to persuade the Sri Lankan Tamils to accept any kind of political package under the present grave circumstances.\textsuperscript{110}

In contrast to this, the Sri Lankan Government published an "overseas information series" in an attempt to set right that tarnished image and they were despatched to other countries.\textsuperscript{111} In these pamphlets, the Sri Lankan Government charged that the extremist Tamil elements were operating from Tamilnadu to destroy the unity of the island.\textsuperscript{112}

But Tamilnadu was in turmoil. Tamilnadu Chief Minister M.G. Ramachandran told in the Tamilnadu Assembly that he was allocating funds, food, clothing and medicine worth Rs.4 crores to families in Sri Lanka.

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\textsuperscript{109} ASIAN RECORDER - 14-20 May 1987 - Col. 19465. \\
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{111} MINISTRY OF STATE, A Tigers Tale for the Birds (Sri Lanka: Overseas Information Series), No. 23, n.y., pp.1-4. \\
\textsuperscript{112} THE ISLAND - 1 May 1987 - p.2.
\end{flushleft}
India warned Jayawardene, but he said, "his Government had decided to fight the militants until either they win or we win." The Sri Lankan Government declared 72 hours of curfew on 25th May 1987, and Sri Lankan army marched to Valvettiturai and Vadamarachi, in North Jaffna. The operation liberation with 8,000 Sri Lankan soldiers was started. J.R. Jayawardene said:

"I told the generals to raze Jaffna to the ground to burn the town and then to rebuilt it."  

The object of the operation liberation was crystal clear and it was the cult of J.R. Jayawardene!

Rajiv Gandhi in a press release on 28th May 1987, said:

"While India has patiently and painstakingly working towards a political solution, it is apparent now that the Sri Lanka Government was buying time for pursuing the military option. The present offensive is part of this plan. India has done everything to find solutions compatible with the unity of Sri Lanka. But by merciless bombing and spreading misery, on the basis of only ethnic


\[114\] Ibid.
difference. Sri Lanka is itself putting its unity and integrity in jeopardy. From the rubble and ashes there can only arise the total alienation of an entire people, a more determined militancy, more extreme options. The time to desist from military occupation of Jaffna is now. Later may be too late."

The R.A.W. stepped up arms supply to the L.T.T.E. A.P. Venkateswaran took over from Romesh Bhandari as Foreign Secretary in April 1987. A.P. Venkateswaran was sympathetic to the Tamils.

The Tamilnadu Government urged the Indian Centre to take action to protect the Sri Lankan Tamils. The D.M.K. and the Tamilnadu Kamaraj Congress staged a rail roko on 1st June 1987. The C.P.I.(M), called Indian Centre to mobilise world opinion against the Sri Lankan Government. V.R. Krishna Iyer retired Supreme Court Judge, called the Indian Centre to declare solidarity with the Sri Lankan Tamils. He also asked Indian Centre to send food and medicine to Sri Lankan Tamils, whether the Sri Lankan Government agreed or not.

On 1st June 1987 the Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, J.N. Dixit, called on Foreign Minister Shahul Hameed

and said, "The Government and the people of India proposed
to send urgently needed relief supplies by sea to Jaffna,
starting 3rd June 1987." Sri Lanka Government decided to stop
relief from India.

Even against Sri Lankan opposition, India sent 19 fishing
boats led by a foreign service officials and Red Cross Personnel
carrying food and medicine from Tamilnadu Port of Rameswaram
towards Sri Lankan territorial waters. The Sri Lankan boat
'Edithara' stopped the Indian boats and advised them to
return. 116 After 4 hours of Radio exchanges between the
leader of India and the Commander of the Sri Lanka Naval
Patrol, the Captain of Indian 'Vikram' went back to India. 117
A hurried meeting of the political affairs committee of the
Indian Cabinet was held on June 3rd. The next day June 4th,
India sent 25 tons of food and medicine to Jaffna by air and
dropped them over the island code named 'Operation Poomalai'
and returned to India. Colombo, sharply criticised Indian
Government of violating Sri Lankan sovereignty. 118

Sri Lankan Government called it a "naked violation
of our independence and an unwarranted assault on our
integrity." 119 P.M. Premadasa said, 'dogs that shit on the

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117 Ibid.
Jaffna Peninsula.' He called the Indian Act cowardice and condemned India. On June 5th, Sri Lanka lodged protest with the United Nation Secretary General.

At the regional level Sri Lanka could (1) boycott S.A.A.R.C. Foreign Secretaries, and Foreign Ministers' Conference in New Delhi, (2) raise the issue at the Conference, and (3) seek co-operation of Pakistan to step up defence.\(^ {120}\)

Internationally the response was muted. Many countries have regretted the incident, but felt India had a role to play in the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka.

Pakistan was vehement in opposition. Shahul Hameed said, Pakistan had offered material help. Other S.A.A.R.C. countries were restrained.\(^ {121}\)

The United States 'regretted' India's action, but asked both countries to reestablish dialogue to end the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka.

Soviet reply was evasive. N.D. Tiwari had met Gorbachev and explained the situation and Russia took a sympathetic view of the incident. Many nations were aware of the United Nations declaration of human rights and notions

\(^ {121}\) Ibid.
of sovereignty and integrity of political boundaries took second place to relief of human suffering. In her ethnic tangle Sri Lanka was impervious to notions of human rights. The U.S.A. and U.K. did not interfere in the affair of food drop in Jaffna. Many Western newspapers, 'New York Times', 'London Times' and 'Daily Telegraph' made it clear that India had done the necessary thing and nothing to worry.\textsuperscript{122}

In India, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said the air dropping was a sign of the support of Indian people to the Tamils in Sri Lanka at a time of their great suffering. India will not sit back and just watch such patent discard of human rights.

The Indian effort to solve ethnic problem was not successful - (1) India lost its influence with the Sri Lankan Government, (2) The leader of the L.T.T.E. was now the sole leader of the Sri Lankan Tamils, and (3) The people of Tamilnadu were greatly worried about the sufferings of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

India's message to Sri Lanka had immediate effect. Sri Lanka had announced the lifting of six months old ban

On fuel and cease military operations in Jaffna. On 5th June 1987, Sri Lanka agreed to negotiate a political settlement on the basis of 'December 19 Proposals.'

Around this time, Gamini Dissanayake acquainted President Jayawardene regarding an outline of a novel proposal to bring the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka to an end. It was borne in the cricket fields of India and Sri Lanka. C.T.A. Schafter was a famous cricketer in Sri Lanka. He was a successful business man and also a Tamil. He was on the Cricket Board of Sri Lanka along with the Minister Gamini Dissanayake. C.T.A. Schafter introduced Gamini Dissanayake to N. Ram, who was the Associate Editor of 'The Hindu'. N.K.P. Salve, the Chairman of the Indian Cricket Board had agreed to speak to Rajiv Gandhi. Two letters exchanged between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka. Salve had arranged telephone calls, and meetings between Rajiv Gandhi and Jayawardene and the famous Indo-Sri Lanka Accord was born.

The preliminary drafts were made by J.N. Dixit and Gamini Dissanayake. When Jayawardene brought the Accord before his Cabinet. Ranil Wickramasinghe proposed it be

124 RAJESH KADIAN, India's Sri Lanka Fiasco; Peace Keepers at War, (New Delhi, 1990), p.11.
125 See Appendix - V.
placed before Cabinet on 15th July 1987. Later J.N. Dixit was asked to speak to the Ministers. Later in 1989, he said one of the reasons for the intervention of India in Sri Lanka was the sentiments of Tamilnadu:

"We had to respect the sentiments of the 50 million Tamil citizens of India. They felt that if we did not rise in support of the Tamil cause in Sri Lanka, we are not standing by our own Tamils; and if that is so, then in the Tamil psyche, the Tamil sub-conscious the question arose is there any relevance or validity of our being part of a larger Indian political identity, if our very deeply felt sentiments are not respected? so it was a compulsion. It was not a rationalised motivation, but it was a compulsion which could not be avoided by any elected Government in this country. So that was a third reason." 127

The Prime Minister Premadasa was vehemently opposed to the Accord. He and his supporters said that Jayawardene "has sold the country to the Indians." Discussions on the Accord were timed when Premadasa was away in London and

Tokyo. By July 21st, the Accord was brought to the notice of M.G. Ramachandran and Sri Lankan Tamil Organizations. On July 23rd, Jayawardene obtained the approval of the U.N.P. Parliamentary Organization. Jayawardene told "all decisions are collective. If any one disagree he can go. I am not prepared to step down."

A week before the Secret Accord was to be signed. Hardip Puri, the First Secretary of the Indian High Commission in Colombo, on instructions from J.N. Dixit met the L.T.T.E. through the R.A.W. On 19th July 1987, Puri had met Prabakaran and suggested that he met Rajiv Gandhi in Delhi for the discussions. Prabakaran wanted two conditions to be fulfilled before the talks, (1) The Sri Lankan troops should be withdrawn to the 26th May 1987 position, (2) All the Tamil refugees be resettled in their areas. Puri had reported this to Dixit, and Rajiv and Jayawardene were informed. The two leaders have agreed to the two conditions and they were added to the Accord. Puri flew to Jaffna and told Prabakaran regarding the agreement between India and Sri Lanka. Prabakaran refused 'to tag along' and abandoned the demand for Tamil Eelam and described it as an act of Betrayal. After much persuasion Prabakaran had agreed to go to New Delhi. Prabakaran, Yogi

and Thileepan of the L.T.T.E. flew to Madras via Trichy on 24th July 1987. In India, Prabakaran's security was taken over by Indian Black Cats. In Madras, Anand Balasingam joined Prabakaran and all flew to New Delhi.


L.T.T.E. team was locked up in Ashoka Hotel. 130 Dixit met them. Dixit told Prabakaran, "you have deceived us four times," and Prabakaran said, "that means we have saved our people four times." 131

The P.L.O.T.E., E.P.R.L.F., E.N.D.L.F., T.E.L.O., T.U.L.F., E.R.O.S. were also taken to New Delhi, and lodged in Samrat Hotel. There was no alternative to these groups. Whatever Delhi may assert, no militant leader, nor the moderate T.U.L.F. had an effective voice. The agreement about the future of the Tamils was thus reached by Delhi and Colombo.

129 Interview with the Tamil Militant Leaders in Colombo, on 23 June 1997.
131 ROHAN GUNARATNA, op.cit., p.189.
the parties actually affected being merely informed of the fait accompli and directed to say amen.132

The next day, the groups were met by J.N. Dixit, "The Accord will stand as it is, but you can register your views." The militants all gave one memorandum and T.U.L.F. gave another on its own.133

On 28th July 1987, Rajiv Gandhi met all the militant groups together and the T.U.L.F. separately. Rajiv Gandhi went through the objections and said "I will take care of them." When the question of merger was raised, Rajiv said, "it (Referendum) is included to sell the Accord. It will be postponed indefinitely. President Jayawardene personally gave me this assurance." But Jayawardene later said, "I never gave this assurance, No, never."134

Rajiv Gandhi met Prabakaran at Ashoka Hotel along with M.K. Narayanan and Panrutti Ramachandran. It is reported that Prabakaran gave a signed document, that he will support the Accord provided it does not go against the interest of the Tamils. This is said to be a secret document. Two

133 ROHAN GUNARATNA, op.cit., p.190.
134 Ibid., p.191.
points were raised by Prabakaran (1) Personal safety of the L.T.T.E. cadre, (2) Financial assistance to rehabilitate L.T.T.E. cadre. Rajiv Gandhi asked the L.T.T.E. to lead the interim Government with the participation of T.U.L.F. and E.R.O.S. Rajiv left the Ashoka Hotel in the early hours of the morning of 29th July 1987. 135

Rajiv Gandhi arrived at Katunaike Airport, at 10.00 a.m. on 29th July 1987, at 3.37 p.m. that day the historic Accord between Rajiv Gandhi and Jayawardene was signed in the Sri Lankan President's House. At a reception of the visitors Jayawardene said:

"I will forgive what India has done, but not forget it."

It was officially called "Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement to establish peace and normalcy in Sri Lanka," 136 but it was not so. As Rajiv Gandhi was about to depart, the Commander of the Sri Lankan Navy, Ananda Silva had requested Rajiv to inspect a guard of honour. Rajiv consented. As Rajiv passed by a Sri Lankan Navel rating Rohana-de-Silva attempted to hit Rajiv on the head with the butt end of a rifle. Rajiv deftly dodged and escaped from death. It was revealed at

135 Ibid., p.192.
136 BHABANI SENGUPTA, South Asian Perspective - Seven Nations in Conflict and Co-operations, (Delhi, 1988), p.245.
the investigation that "the plan was to hit Rajiv Gandhi on the head and make him fall, and then the two men on either side of the attacker were to strike him with their boyonet." Sham trials were held and the accused was released. The episode is indeed a sad commentary on the spirit and value of the Accord.

The logic is not only faulty, it also tries to invest in the army a role in decision making which is not there. "The top brass of the army" was not consulted when Indian troops were flown into the Jaffna Peninsula within 48 hours of the Rajiv-Jayawardene Accord. On 30th July 1987, the I.P.K.F. began to arrive in Sri Lanka. The first batch of contingent of the I.P.K.F. of 8,000 was brought by air to Jaffna on 30th July. The same plane ferried 6,000 Sri Lankan soldiers from the North to South to quell disturbances by dissidents. The Indians have now poured in seventy thousand troops. In Jaffna the I.P.K.F. was received warmly. It showed the silver lining in the dark cloud over Jaffna. But subsequent events belied all fun and frolic of the moment.

Reactions of Sinhalese and Tamils did not give hope


of success of the Accord. According to Gopalsamy "Prabakaran called from Ashoka Hotel and said we have been betrayed by the Government of India, by Rajiv Gandhi. I have been stabbed in the back."\(^{139}\) Since he was an important person of the parties concerned, it did not bode well for the future of the Accord. The Accord was rejected by L.T.T.E. as well as the opposition parties of Sri Lanka.

Anura Bandaranaike wrote to Rajiv Gandhi on 29th July 1987 "the people of Sri Lanka are vehemently opposed to the Accord, you are going to sign today. Hardly 24 hours ago 20 people were brutally massacred by the police and hundreds injured ..... History has shown that the will of the people triumph over arrogance of their rulers."\(^{140}\)

Chandran of the R.A.W. said, "my advice was not to sign the Accord. I told the Prime Minister that the timing is not correct."\(^{141}\)

The T.U.L.F. wrote to Rajiv Gandhi, expressing gratitude, but calling attention to serious snags in the Accord.

Premadasa was against the Accord from the start. He

\(^{139}\) Personal Interview with Y. Gopalsamy, on 20 February 1997, Madras.

\(^{140}\) ROHAN GUNARATNA, op.cit., p.195.

\(^{141}\) Ibid., p.198.
said, "Tamils have a lot of suspicion and as such, we must improve our rapport with them and win their confidence. Prabakaran is a genius. He will be given the military command of Sri Lanka, then he will have no one to fight with."\(^{142}\)

Lalith Athulath Mudali said, "there is no guarantee that India will not interfere in the future. We must have a meaningful defense programme for the whole country. Do not think our trouble is over. We will have to strengthen our troop position. Defence expenditure should not be cut-off at once."\(^{143}\) The July 1987 Accord proved to be unpopular in Sri Lanka and less than popular in India. On 29th July 1987, Anura Bandaranaike delivered a letter to Rajiv Gandhi at the Indian High Commission in Colombo. It read:

"Dear Prime Minister, thirty years ago as a young boy of eight years, I garlanded and welcomed your illustrious grand father, Jawaharlal Nehru at the Colombo Airport when he set foot in Sri Lanka. Since then both the father and mother have welcomed your grand-father and your mother several times in our country.

But today, when you make your first visit to

\(^{142}\) Ibid., p.201.
\(^{143}\) Ibid.
Sri Lanka as India's Prime Minister, I will not be present to welcome you or participate at any of the functions scheduled to be held in your honour.

The people of Sri Lanka, are vehemently opposed to the 'Accord' you are going to sign today. Hardly twenty-four hours ago twenty people were brutally massacred by the police and hundred injured. They were peacefully demonstrating against the proposed 'Accord'. The city of Colombo has been torn by serious rioting and a curfew has been imposed until you leave Sri Lanka. This is not the way our people would have normally welcomed the son of Indira Gandhi.

President Jayawardene against the will of his Cabinet and his country is preparing to sign this 'Accord'. You know from recent experience what fate awaits such agreements. History has shown those who wish to see that the will of the people will eventually triumph over the arrogance of their rulers."

(Sd/- ................
ANURA BANDARANAIKE
The above letter, apart from confirming the close friendship between Nehrus and Bandaranaike, also casts strong reflections on the nature of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord.144

The United States of America, Soviet Russia, Great Britain, E.E.C. countries hailed the Accord, as providing for a fair solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict. Canada and Australia echoed the same sentiments.

China was cautious. They took note of the Accord and hoped India and Sri Lanka would tread the path of Panchasheel and peaceful coexistence.

World press generally greeted the Accord. The Financial Times of London wrote:

"The agreement is a diplomatic coup for Rajiv Gandhi. For all its fault, fragility and contentiousness, the last best hope for bringing Sri Lanka's prolonged and bloody ethnic strife to be conclusion."145

The Pravada (Sri Lanka) wrote:

"The document would usher in a new era in the island and make mistrust and discord between

144 Ibid., pp.195-196.
Tamils and Sinhalese communities recede into the past ..... the main thing has been achieved. Confidence between the two neighbouring countries was being restored."\(^\text{146}\)

The Washington Post (U.S.A.) commented:

"The Accord will bring Sri Lanka the respite it deserved ..... (for Rajiv Gandhi) it is a risky enterprise but a timely demonstration of leadership."\(^\text{147}\)

The Hindu wrote:

"Rajiv Gandhi and the Sri Lankan President Jayawardene deserve in equal measure, congratulations on the bold breakthrough conceptually, substantively, institutionally and in a wider political sense. It is a friendship agreement between two neighbouring countries focused on the immediate challenge or resolving democratically and through bilateral statementship the island's ethnic conflict."\(^\text{148}\)

\(^{146}\) PRAVADA (Sri Lanka) - 5 August 1987.

\(^{147}\) WASHINGTON POST (U.S.A.) - 29 July 1987.

Heritage Foundation of U.S. wrote:

"The agreement is a potential threat to the U.S. interest it forces Sri Lanka to concede India's hegemony in South Asia."\textsuperscript{149}

There is a fatal flaw in the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987, the parties to the agreement are India and Sri Lanka but the parties in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka are Sri Lankan Tamils and Sinhalese. These two parties refused to accept the agreement. Hence to any impartial observer it was crystal clear that the agreement will not hold.

All the more, the 'Tigers' had refused to accept the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord. They argued, that the Accord fails to fulfill the political and national aspirations of the people of Tamil Eelam. It lacked to grasp the complex dimensions of the historical Tamil national question. The solution for the ethnic question was not suggested. They said:

"Thus the Government of India, suddenly and mercilessly, closed her doors for the Tamil freedom movement and imposed upon the Tamils, at the point of gun, a framework of proposals that fell very short of their legitimate demands."

\textsuperscript{149} INDIAN EXPRESS - 30 August 1987.
Tamil interests are the price paid by India, to Jayawardene's regime to secure its consent for the Accord. By subordinating the island to India's regional supremacy, Jayawardene has secured from India what his imperialist masters could not provide, that is the total suppression of the Tamil liberation movement and the permanent subjugation of the Tamils under Sinhala hegemony.\textsuperscript{150}

The total responsibility for the failure rests on the shoulders of Rajiv Gandhi and Jayawardene, the Prime Minister of India and the President of Sri Lanka respectively. There are several reasons for the failures of Rajiv Gandhi.

First Rajiv Gandhi was a politically immature person. In fact he was reluctant to enter into politics but vested interests behind the scene propelled him to the seat of power.

Second Rajiv Gandhi was in deep trouble because of Bofors and was in a mighty hurry to win the confidence of the Indian people by a quick fix of Sri Lankan ethnic problem.

Thirdly Rajiv Gandhi had a megalomanaic vision of Indian

\textsuperscript{150} LIBERATION TIGERS CRITIC ON INDO-SRI LANKAN ACCORD: A NATION BETRAYED, the Paper Presented by the Political Committee of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam at the International Tamil Conference held in London on 30th April and 1st May 1988, p.15.
hegemony in the Indian Ocean region. True India was without a rival in terms of geographical size and population and towers over her neighbours. But was Indian Government a really efficient super power in terms of economy and political power?

Fourthly, unluckily for Rajiv Gandhi, he was pitted against Jayawardene. In fact Jayawardene openly told to Rajiv Gandhi in Pakistan, "I know your great grand father and I was in politics long before you were born."

Fifthly, Romesh Bhandari, Dixit and R.A.W. on whom Rajiv Gandhi depended were absolutely not equal to the task to which they were responsible.

The first step Rajiv Gandhi took on the Sri Lankan ethnic problem is leaving out G. Parthasarathy and calling in Romesh Bhandari was a fatal blunder. In his political innocence Rajiv Gandhi thought that he was winning over Jayawardene. Indira Gandhi and Parthasarathy had sized up and cornered Jayawardene and he was glad Rajiv let him loose. From now on Rajiv Gandhi was giving into Jayawardene till it was too late to withdraw.

Sixthly, Rajiv Gandhi, had a poor estimate of Tamils and the 'Tigers' Rajiv Gandhi did not have even the common courtesy to make Sri Lankan Tamils a party to the agreement. He kept them out of view of Jayawardene as if they were untouchables. In his heady pride, Rajiv Gandhi believed the
Tamil will do his bidding. Rajiv Gandhi may have got this impression from his dealings with the T.U.L.F. But Prabakaran was a totally different personality. Even Jayawardene made this fatal error, he thought if the Sinhalese murder, rape, loot and burn, the Sri Lankan Tamils will submit. Jayawardene never dreamt that the Sri Lankan Tamils will hit back. In fact, Jayawardene died a disillusioned man. Jayawardene ran around the world for help and Rajiv Gandhi fell into his trap. Rajiv Gandhi locked up Prabakaran in Ashoka Hotel. Gen. Depender Singh O.C. says, one night Prabakaran rang Mathaiya in Jaffna and said, "One day I will teach them a lesson." 

There is an English saying, "Tell me who your friends are and I will tell you who you are." Romesh Bhandari was a close associate of Chandraswamy. The way Bhandari had talked to the Sri Lankan Tamil representatives at Thimpu, is a measure of his social stature. Fortunately, Satyandra was there to reply him in the same coin.

J.N. Dixit is commonly called the 'Viceroy' in political circles. His megalomania had a perfect fit to Rajiv. J.N. Dixit may have been in China, Bangladesh and Afganistan. But the Sinhala, Tamil ethnic conflict, is a very delicate affair. Tamil culture is millennia old and Tamil language is mixed in Tamil

blood. Rohan Gunaratna captures the abrasive nature of Dixit thus:

"Verma stated that the reason Dixit lost his influence over the Prime Minister were; firstly the public disclosures of payments, made to the L.T.T.E. on the eve of the Accord, secondly his arrogance and overbearing attitudes and thirdly by his conduct and actions, which has made him increasingly unpopular with the Sinhalese and Tamils."\(^{152}\)

Dixit's conduct in relation to the fast unto death is reprehensible. A. Thileepan had started the fast on 15th September 1987 to seek acceptance of the five point demand of the 'Tigers'. "The Indian High Commissioner rushed to Jaffna to listen to our grievances on the 9th day of the fasting when Thileepan was reaching the brink of death. Dixit offered vague assurances which failed to meet our demand."\(^{153}\)

Again when 17 L.T.T.E. men were captured by Sri Lankan Navy on 2nd October 1987. When Jayawardene wanted to take them to Colombo, Radriguey told him "Dixit is in New Delhi now and he is expected to land at Katunayake at 5 p.m. today."

\(^{152}\) ROHAN GUNARATNA, *op.cit.*, p.346.

He can drive to the President's house and obtain an order from President Jayawardene to hand over prisoners to the I.P.K.F.\textsuperscript{154} Jayaratne refused and attempted to send the L.T.T.E. men to Colombo. The L.T.T.E. men took cyanide and died. Dixit did not intervene.

In both instances Dixit showed his rude tendencies. Both incidents distanced the 'Tigers' from India.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement of 1987 was principally drafted by Dixit. Here all the rights of the Sinhalese are stoutly and emphatically defended, but the rights of the Tamils are vague and indecisive. The unity and integrity of Sri Lanka is guaranteed. The power of President is made supreme. Sinhala is the official language of Sri Lanka. Tamil is tagged on to Sinhala. Merger of North and Eastern Provinces is subjected to referendum. Fate of Trincomalee is left with the President. The issue of colonisation of the Tamil lands is vague. There is clear evidence that Dixit was bending backwards to please Jayawardene. On safeguarding Indian hegemony Dixit is clear and precise. The colossal intervention of Indian military in Sri Lanka in 1987, to make the Tamil Tigers forcefully to abandon their demand for independence and the effort to make them to come to a political settlement

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., p.236.
was not successful. 155

Now listen to Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer:

"What the Tamils urgently need is the recognition of their collective right to autonomous existence as the redemption of their tryst with ethnic destiny. This is what the Tamils demand and the Sinhalese should accommodate, not crush as their brutal bracket attempted. Their homeland is North and East joined together, broadly speaking. This is virtually recognised in the Accord. But in the clauses of the instrument this unification is precariously dependant upon a revocation by referendum. Such a referendum clause, with opportunities for colonization and instigation of heterogeneous elements, is a stultification of the preambular promise, a treachery against Tamil unity. The land question is also vital but has been slurred over in the instrument. The emergency provisions de facto denied even minimal autonomy. The Triarchy, where the junior-most partner is the Tamil provincial power, is subjected to the discretionary power of a puppet

Governor and the overall paramountancy of the President and the Sinhala dominated Parliament. The legislative and administrative powers conceded to the Provinces are illusory.\textsuperscript{156}

The above is really the voice of mature wisdom and justice and it is a formidable criticism of the Accord.

Few incidents that took place immediately after the agreement give a clue to the hollowness of the agreement. First the conduct of the Provincial elections. It was not only supervised by the I.P.K.F. but largely influenced by them. There were gross violations, intimidation and obstruction of voters by the I.P.K.F. It could not bring any substantial solution.

The setting up of the Provincial Council was a tragic comedy. The Chief Minister Varatharaja Perumal himself was appointed by India and publicly proclaimed "he was not given table and chair to work with. The allocation of funds was chronic." The Sri Lankan Government pretended to implement the Accord, but failed even to provide office to facilitate the functioning of the Council.\textsuperscript{157}


Are all these in the spirit of agreement? Tamils had made agreement with Sinhalese and regretted their deed. India was new to the Sri Lankan tragic scene and dearly paid for their involvement, by loss of lives, arms and money. Was it politically sagacious for India to have got directly involved in the internal affairs of Sri Lanka?

Above all R.A.W. perpetrated the greatest harm to Indo-Sri Lanka relations. Rajiv Gandhi depended on R.A.W., but R.A.W. let him down. Indian Intelligence Agency was started by R.N. Kao who was earlier with British Intelligence. Kao was a Kashmiri and Nehru himself selected him. R.A.W's Colombo station was established in 1952. In a perceptive analysis of activities of R.A.W., Rohan Gunaratna states:

"R.A.W. played one Sri Lankan Militant groups against another in an attempt to control the militant offensive against Sri Lankan forces by making the groups dependent on India. The R.A.W. strategy was to isolate one group from another by creating rifts and exposing differences among them, but at the same time R.A.W. also extended their support to all the groups. The L.T.T.E. emerged as the stronger group with the clandestine support of the Indian Centre/State Government."158

158 ROHAN GUNARATNA, op.cit., p.341.
There were several sectors in which there were cleavages among Sri Lankan Tamils - (1) On the district level, Jaffna, Vanni, Trincomalee and Batticaloa had their own differences, (2) There were political differences and these have been capitalised by several kinds of parties, and (3) There were caste differences. To the R.A.W. these cleavages gave infinite scope for havoc. R.A.W. operatives met leaders and rank and file of Tamil militant groups and established close contact. R.A.W. pampered the leaders of Tamil militant groups and allowed them ample scope to accumulate wealth by international drug and contraband trade. R.A.W. suppressed all murders, tortures and criminal activities of Tamil militant leaders in India. R.A.W. arranged training programmes, funds and arms to Tamil militant groups.

To start with, R.A.W. supported the L.T.T.E. When the 'Tigers' grew too big for R.A.W. it started to build T.E.L.O. a more docile leadership. When the L.T.T.E. demolished T.E.L.O., R.A.W. started to back E.P.R.L.F. After the Provincial Council elections R.A.W. set up Tamil National Army (T.N.A.) composed of E.N.D.L.F., E.P.R.L.F. and T.E.L.O. When the 'Tigers' joined Premadasa and wiped out T.N.A., R.A.W. was forced to bring all these supporters to India with the I.P.K.F. The Hydra-headed monster created by R.A.W. became a curse to them.


The political rivalries in Tamilnadu and sinister jugglery of R.A.W. made mince meat of a Tamil Eelam freedom movement. The Tamil militants were led from pillar to post.


R.A.W's main goal was the interest of India. It thought that they had succeeded with Jayawardane came to an agreement
with Rajiv Gandhi. But when Premadasa became the President he asked the I.P.K.F. to leave Sri Lanka. Again R.A.W. had failed.

During this period (1983-'87), it appears that Indira Gandhi was following the coercive policy of Diplomacy to insist Jayawardene to accept the genuine aspirations and grievances of the Tamils within the Unitary Constitution of India. After the Black July events in 1983 Tamilnadu raised a hue and cry, and this made her to send G. Parthasarathy to talk to Jayawardene to find a solution to Tamil problem. He prepared 'ANNEXTURE C' as a solution and Jayawardene seems to accept it, but, tried to wriggle out of it. Hence Indira Gandhi arranged for training for the Tamil militants of Sri Lanka. But in 1984, she was assasinated and Rajiv Gandhi took over the power. His stand was entirely different and he appointed Bhandari in the place of Parthasarathy as a Foreign Secretary, to win over Jayawardene through negotiations.

The Thimpu Talks were also ended in failure. Jayawardene wanted to find a military solution and sent a military to advance towards Jaffna in 1987. There was hue and cry in Tamilnadu and Rajiv Gandhi was forced to take action for the people of Jaffna through Operation Poomalai. This made Jayawardene to realise that India may mount an attack on Sri Lanka and canvassed support from Western nation. But all
the countries refused to support Sri Lanka.

Now Jayawardene, was forced to come to terms with India and thus was born the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987. Even in the implementation of the Accord, Jayawardene dragged his feet and failed to implement Sri Lanka's part.

In the meantime, L.T.T.E. broke away from India and India was forced to send the I.P.K.F. to bring the L.T.T.E. under control. The Major General Sundarji went to Sri Lanka in October 1987, and made the command to the I.P.K.F. to disarm the L.T.T.E.
CONCLUSION