

SPUR (Society for Peace, Unity and Human Rights for Sri Lanka Inc)

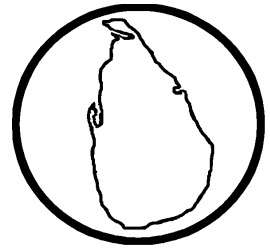
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Extremists Tamil Politicians, the LTTE Diaspora and Separatist Church men should be held accountable for future Tamil Violence

The Society for Peace, Unity and Human Rights for Sri Lanka (SPUR) notes with regret that some Tamil leaders, ecclesiastical and lay, who paved the path for the failed politics of Tamil violence, based on the disastrous Vadukoddai Resolution which declared war on May 14, 1976, are attempting to drive the Jaffna Tamils, through devious ideological perversions, into bloody conflict once again.

Our most serious concern is that those who were responsible for the launching, encouraging, financing and propagandizing violence through intransigent politics are now back in the same old business of demonizing the Sinhalese and whipping up communal hatred with the sole aim of pushing Tamil peninsula politics to the extreme again. So far neither the international community nor the state has insisted on investigating and accounting for their role in which thousands of Tamil women, children and the elderly were sacrificed to sustain geographical and historical myths. We believe that since the Tamil leadership is guilty of promoting, financing, directing brutal violence against the Tamil people a truth-finding mechanism is essential to ease the pain of the victims of Tamil violence.

Despite their role in the past, these Tamil leaders are sadly refusing to acknowledge the new realities of the post-Prabhakaran period in which both intransigent politics and violence were defeated comprehensively. Nor do they recognise the transformation in the north and the east where the Tamil people are settling down to pick up the threads of the traditional and new life styles emerging in a peaceful environment. According to a realistic assessment based on first hand reports, the post-war Tamils are indifferent to mono-ethnic extremism and violent politics and their thirst right now is to improve their day-to-day living. This can be achieved faster and more efficiently if the Tamil leadership engages in cooperative co-existence and not in confrontational politics. But sadly some sections of the Tamil expatriates and local leaders, including some Churchmen to whom Tamil racism comes before Jesus Christ, are preparing to drag the Jaffna Tamils back to the miserable politics of politicians who overestimated their strength and underestimated the strength of the nation to face and defeat divisive politics.

The latest is the statement of the so-called civil society of Eelam Tamils presenting a memorandum to the TNA castigating them for re-opening talks with the Sri Lankan government without getting any of their old demands of 1) powers over land; 2) powers over police and 3) restoration of the merger of the north and the east even, which the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka had ruled as being illegal.

In essence, these three demands repeat the old formula of the separatists led by S. J. V. Chelvanayakam. These demands clearly add up to separatism in the disguised formulas of federalism, confederation, self-determination etc. The memorandum submitted to the TNA MPs with the signatures of leading Churchmen who overtly and covertly backed Velupillai

Prabhakaran, along with some academics and a few other pro-Tamil separatists, reveals that the Tamil leadership has not learnt their lessons from their recent history.

The tragedy is that the Tamil leaders who are bent on repeating their failed past are callously dismissing the human costs arising from their dead-end politics. Most of the upper caste Tamil leaders and the well educated elite who were in the band wagon of separatist politics abandoned the Tamil people and fled to greener pastures letting the poor people face the consequences of their violent and intransigent politics. Ensnared safely in affluent suburbs in London, New York, Paris, Sydney, Toronto and Colombo etc., they continue to raise millions partly to fund their shots of whiskey, brandy and gin and partly to finance Tamil racism in Jaffna that could lead to Vadukoddai War II.

We are also concerned about the politics of the UNP led by Mr. Ranil Wickremasinghe, which refuses to recognise the new realities and is playing politics with the demands raised by the TNA and their separatist allies, without openly supporting the nation's aspiration to end, once and for all, the never ending demands of the Tamil separatist leadership. The UNP alliances with the West and India are also worrying to the nation. We, like the rest of the nation, urge the UNP to issue a clear statement that the nation can progress only by having one police, one territory shared in common by all Sri Lankans and that the land must be opened up for all communities to settle down and coexist in harmony wherever it is appropriate to accommodate the expanding population.

The international community too has been misguided by self-serving NGOs, Tamil expatriates and other misguided pundits. We wish to state categorically that their moves to interfere in the domestic affairs of Sri Lanka, supposedly on violations of human rights, smacks of utter hypocrisy and double-standards. We urge the IC to analyse the new realities of Sri Lanka in a more constructive way instead of perpetually holding a gun to its head in the hope of making it a client state.

At the end of the day, chanting the mantras of the Vadukoddai Resolution is not going to be the answer to the Tamil people's needs and the rest of the nation. The prevailing realities indicate that the Tamils of Sri Lanka have had a gutful of the failed politics of separatism, self-determination, autonomy, federalism, and you name it. All that the majority of Tamils now hope for are peace, prosperity and economic development which are essential for them to lift themselves up from the misery of the foolish Tamil leadership that promised heaven and gave them hell.

We urge, therefore, for the Tamil leadership to lead their people in the direction of peace and not counter-productive politics with confrontational and negative tactics -- tactics which have never solved problems and never will.

We wish all communities in Sri Lanka a happy and peaceful New Year. We also hope that all our leaders be blessed with the vision to lead our peoples in the direction of peaceful co-existence.

Ranjith Soysa
(Spokesman, SPUR)