

"It is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the Rule of Law" - United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights - 1948.

Tamil Action Committee

(Formed in Association with
Tamil Film and Cultural Society in 1982)

A Movement for Human Rights for 3.5 million Tamil
speaking people of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)

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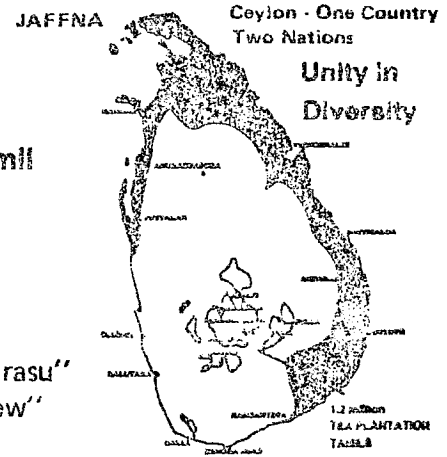
Joint Treasurers:

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House of

Human Rights: "Jaffna"



Your Ref:

Home Office Ref: A353383

Date: 14 January 1984

Jeremy Corbin Esq

Member of Parliament for Islington North

House of Commons

Westminster

London SW1

For the attention of Liz Phillips

Dear Liz

Miss Ankayatkanny Selvarajah - Sri Lankan Tamil Passport holder

We are most grateful for your timely intervention to stay the deportation of the above-named, as notified by the Home Office letter of 5 January 1984 (enclosed).

The above-named entered the UK on 9 November 1983 and asked for political asylum. On this ground she was given leave to enter into the UK. By their letter of 5 November, she was to have been deported to India, which would have placed her in a serious position according to the Madras Immigration Authorities, copy enclosed. She was under threat of deportation out of India, which led her to flee to the UK in the first place.

I have interviewed her in detail as to her educational background and political involvement.

Ankayatkanny was born in a village called Milydy in the Jaffna Peninsula, and all her educational career was in the leading colleges of Jaffna extending from 1962 to 1973. In 1974 she became a visiting lecturer in the Poly-technical Institute in Jaffna.

Her political involvement started as a student in 1972, when the new Constitution was promulgated, which declared a second class status to the Tamil people. Mr Chevanayagam the Leader of the Tamil Party, which was then called the Federal Party, immediately resigned his Parliamentary seat as a boycott and called the people to support his re-election as a mandate to reject this Constitution. Ankayatkanni belonged to his constituency, and with the other student groups played a vital role to re-elect the leader. She had played a prominent part in speechmaking, marches and protests against police and army repression under the Srimavo Bandaranayake regime. She became a marked person.

Police shooting at innocent gathering during the 4th Tamil International Research Conference in Jaffna killing nine people aroused the conscience of the people, and she became prominent in these agitations from 1974 onwards. In May 1976 she was arrested in Jaffna and questioned by the police at the Jaffna Police Station. She was subjected to torture, which the Police applied to all youths in the police cells. Unable to bear

It should be noted however, that acting discriminatory government policies and adopting the policy of a separate State of Eelam are legitimate exercises of the right to free speech. - Professor Virginia A. Leary State University New York. - International Commission of Tamils report - October 1981.

"At the time when the West is awake to the evils of racialism, the racial persecution of the Tamils and denial of their human rights should not pass without protest. The British have a special obligation to protest, as these cultivated people were put at the mercy of their neighbours less than thirty years ago by the British government. They need our attention and support." - letter to The Times, September 20 1977 from SIR JOHN FOSTER, QC., DAVID ASTOR, ROBERT BIRLEY, LOUIS BLOOM-COOPER, JAMES FAWCETT, DINGLE FOOT, MICHAEL SCOTT.

"The making of an embattled freedom movement now seem assembled martyrs, prisoners and a pitiful mass of refugees. - Baha seemed here used in 1979. WALTER SCHWARTZ in "TAMILS OF SRI LANKA" quote from the report of Minority Rights Group.

up this continued repression, she went into hiding in her village. This had been and it is the existence for many youths who agitate for their right to free speech, assembly and education. With the anti-tamil violence of 1977 which affected the tea plantation and Eastern parts of Sri Lanka, the traditional homelands of the Tamil-speaking people. A charitable organisation called the Tamil Refugee Rehabilitation Organisation was formed under the Presidentship of late K C Nithiananthan, a well respected trade unionist by all sections of the community in Sri Lanka, and ably supported by an eminent human rights lawyer Mr K Kandasamy, who himself had to flee the country for fear of his life. Ankayatkanny managed to go to the area called Kannaddi, in the Vavunia district and helped to organise and rehabilitate the refugees in farms that were created from jungle clearings. This government disbanded this organisation without due consideration for its humanitarian work. On an appeal made to us, we gave support by organising a charitable organisation called the Central British Fund for Tamil Refugees Rehabilitation to create worldwide recognition of their plight. Ankayatkanny played a vital role in helping the refugees. Brigadier Weeratunga warned the President of this charity to produce her before him.

Under the Emergency Law, with exceptional powers of the army, houses were searched and youths were arrested who were no more than political activists. Many disappeared, - four known youths' bodies were recovered with severe torture, ie Inpam, Balendran, Rajeswaran and Parameshwaran. The security services still failed to capture her. Instead of further searching her, they took her sick uncle Mr Sivanadiar as a 'hostage' and was kept in solitary confinement for four days and nights ('Emergency '79' extract enclosed). He was only released after the former Leader of the Opposition Mr Amirthalingam raised this issue in Parliament. For fear of her life, Ankayatkanny left in disguise to South India.

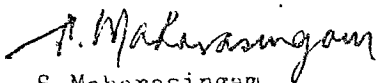
Her stay in Tamil Nadu was not peaceful either. She was pursued by the Sri Lankan Criminal Investigation Department (CID) for her movements. Finally Madras Government by their letter dated 4 April 1983 asked her to leave India. Her activities were to propagate the freedom of the Tamil-speaking people of Sri Lanka through self-determination of Tamil Eelam amongst the Tamils of Tamil Nadu, which is a cherished democratic right of hers.

In my interview with Ankayatkanny, she expressed her deep fear that Indian Government will not consider her reentry and she will not stand the torture of being beaten naked and other abuses as a Hindu woman; and it is preferable to take one's life rather than sent from here to undergo these tortures. I am sure she has not divulged these innermost feelings to anyone else before. From what I have read of another inmate of Welikade Prison, who escaped in the Batticaloa breakout couple of months back, I will believe all what she has said to me (report of Mr David, President of Gandhium in Vavunia is enclosed).

I will strongly recommend that she be given political asylum in the UK. I also strongly believe that the Indian Authorities having already approved its refusal for her stay by their letter dated 4 April 1983, will again admit her back. I strongly suspect that she will be returned to Sri Lanka. On 10 January she was again interviewed (Ref TN3/RLE/129/84 by Immigration Officer Mr Hogan to whom I explained her background and fear of return.

With kindest regards

Yours faithfully


S. Maharasingam

Enclosures:

Home Office letter of 5 Jan 1984

Tamil Members of Parliament letters of her political activity

Emergency '79 extract

TN3/RLE/129/84

Detention, Torture and Murder - Sri Lanka by S A David President Gandhium Society