

Remembering the July '83 violence against the Tamil people

"[In July 1983]... (Tamils) were beaten, hacked and burnt to death in a frenzy of racial hatred ... Their houses and businesses were selectively looted and destroyed. The Sri Lankan government has admitted that the violence was pre planned and well organised and that even sections of the security forces joined in the attack against the Tamils. 53 Tamil detainees held in a maximum security prison were brutally killed on July 25th and July 27th. Yet to date no impartial inquiry into these violent attacks has taken place..."

David Alton MP, Paddy Ashdown MP, Norman Atkinson MP, Tony Banks MP, Prof John Barret, Kevin Barron MP, Alan Belth MP, Tony Benn MP, Gerry Berningham M.P., Prof Tom Bottomore, Sydney Bidwell MP, Malcolm Bruce MP, Dale Campbell-Savours MP, Dennis Canavan MP, Alex Carlile MP, Tom Clarke MP, Bob Clay MP, Anne Chwyd MP, Harry Cohan MP, Jeremy Corbyn MP, Ron Davis MP, Eric Deakins MP, Alf Dubs MP, Professor Michael Dummet, Derek Fatchett MP, Mark Fisher MP, Martin Flannery MP, Roy Hattersley MP, Michael Foot MP, Simon W.H. Hughes MP, Lord Jenkins, Russel Johnston MP, Sir David Lane, Robert Kilroy Silk MP, Archy Kirkwood MP, Ted Knight, Terry Lewis MP, Bob Litherland MP, Ken Livingstone, Tony Lloyd MP, Eddie Loyden MP, Max Madden MP, Joan Maynard MP, Willie McKelvy MP, Bill Michie MP, Dr. Paul Noone, Bob Parry MP, Alan Roberts MP, Ernie Roberts MP, Allan Rogers MP, Aubrey Rose, Ernie Ross MP, Steven Ross MP, Clare Short MP, Dennis Skinner MP, Prof Peter Townsend, Jim Wallace MP, Gareth Wardell MP, Dafydd Wigley MP and many others in the Guardian, July 1984

"Within Sri Lanka... the Tamils do not have the protection of the rule of law"

Report of Working Group chaired by Goran Backstrand, Swedish Red Cross, January 1985

"What is essential is that the political status of the Tamil people should be freely determined by the people themselves."

Professor Virginia Leary, International Commission of Jurists Report 1983

"...the evidence points clearly to the conclusion that the violence of July 1983 amounted to acts of genocide."

International Commission of Jurists, December 1983

"The basic human rights of the Tamil community have been subject to gross and continued violations."

Minority Rights Group, 1983

"Human rights is not an idea with much currency for the Sri Lankan government. Quiet diplomacy is not an option for our policy in Sri Lanka."

Deanna Hodgkin, Insight, 1992

"In order for the human rights of the Tamil people.. to be realised, the international community must invoke the principle of self determination .. in the case of Sri Lanka we consider 40 years is clearly long enough for any group to wait for their human rights."

International Educational Development at UN Sub Commission on Protection of Minorities, August 1990

"any meaningful attempt to resolve the conflict should ... recognise that the armed struggle of the Tamil people for self determination, arose as a response to decades of an ever widening and deepening oppression by a permanent Sinhala majority, within the confines of an unitary Sri Lankan state... there is an urgent need for the international community to recognise that the Tamil population in the North - East of the Island of Sri Lanka are a 'people' with the right to freely choose their political status."

Pax Christie International, the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, Centre Europe Tiers Monde, International Educational Development, the International Organisation for the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination the World Confederation of Labour, and other NGOs at the 49th Sessions of the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva, in February 1993

Support call for international recognition of Tamil right to self determination