
CONDEMN THE APARTHIED
EDUCATION POLICY OF SRI LANKA

DISCRIMINATION.....

THE TAMILS STUDENTS IN CEYLON ARE BEING SUPPRESSED BY THE OPPRESSIVE
SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT'S APARTHIED EDUCATION POLICY.

The attached "OPINION" of the University Teachers of Ceylon and the Memorandum
issued by the Members of the Jaffna Campus will explain the situation and the plight
of the Tamil students in Ceylon.

A seminar held at the London School of Economics on the 19th March to condemn
the APARTHIED EDUCATION POLICY OF SRI LANKA passed the following resolutions.

1) We, the Tamil students studying in UK., condemn the apartheid education policy
of Sri Lanka government and extend our support to those who fight against the
"standardisation"- an expression of discrimination and oppression - in Ceylon.

2) To show our protest against apartheid education policy of Sri Lanka, we resolve to
stage a one day 'Sit in' in front of the Sri Lanka High Commission on the 11th April.

EXTEND YOUR SUPPORT AND SHOW YOUR PROTEST. **COME AND JOIN**
Us On 11th APRIL, WEDNESDAY. 9am To 5.30pm.

SHOW DOWN... ONE DAY SIT IN
IN FRONT OF THE HIGH COMMISSION.

Organised by GUTS- Group to Unite Tamil Students abroad- (CEYLON)

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8. Number of First Class:	Economics	01	06
	Maths/Stats.	09	03
	Economics	NIL	NIL

Results as percentage of the number of students who sat the Final Examination according to Communities

	Tamil	Sinhalese
Failures	24.2	16.7
Ordinary passes	16.1	20.0
Second Class (Lower)	27.4	33.3
Second Class (Upper)	17.8	20.0
First Class	14.6	10.0

Results as percentage of the number of students enrolled for the Course in each medium

	Tamil	Sinhalese
Failures	35.6	16.7
Ordinary passes	13.7	20.0
Second Class (Lower)	23.3	33.3
Second Class (Upper)	15.1	20.0
First Class	12.3	10.0

The tables reveal that the percentage of Ordinary passes and Classes is lower for Tamil candidates than for Sinhalese candidates except for First Classes where the percentage is slightly higher for Tamil candidates. It may also be placed on record here that if the Tamil students who entered in 1974 and who should have passed out in 1977 only 64.4 per cent managed to pass the Degree Examination, whereas 83.3 per cent of the Sinhala students who entered in 1974 passed out in 1977.

Although it is alleged that too many First and Second Classes have been awarded, it should be noted that the class levels set for the candidates of our Campuses was remarkably higher than those in any of the other Campuses of this Island. Unlike in other Campuses, in our campus the students selected for the Special Courses have to sit for General Degree Examination first among the Tamil students out of the 9 First Classes, 5 out of 11 Second Classes (Upper) and 2 out of the 17 Second Classes (Lower) were obtained by students following the Special Courses who, when they pass out with Special Degree Certificates, will not be given the General Degree qualification that they have obtained now. So far none of these Sinhalese students are following the Special Courses. Taking therefore only the General Degree into account only 4 have passed with First Classes, out of which three Sinhalese students and only one is a Tamil.

The examination was only in Mathematics and Statistics except in the case of eight students who also offered Economics. Subjects like Chemistry, Physics, Botany or Zoology were not involved in this examination. This fact is important in viewing the results, as a possibility of scoring very high, even maximum marks, is there in the case of these subjects. It should not be forgotten that this particular batch of Tamil students entered with very good results when the University admissions were subjected to mediawise standardisation.

Having placed these facts here, we would like to deal with the implications of the erroneous statements made by the Vice-Chancellor for us, for the staff of the Jaffna Campus and for the institution as a whole.

(1) In the first place, the statements made by the Vice-Chancellor and others lead one to conclude that those who received Degrees from the Jaffna Campus do not really deserve them and that these degrees cannot be taken on their face value. For any ordinary man who happened to read or hear about these utterances, this will apply not only to one particular batch of graduates but, by extension, to all graduates of the Campus. This will mean that those of us who earn a degree from this Campus after several years of hard work will have to face humiliation and discrimination when we compete with other graduates for jobs. We will be made to suffer for no fault of ours but as a result of statements made by responsible men who did not care to check their facts or to tell the whole truth to the public. One need not go into the many disabilities that we will have to face and the mental agony that we will be suffering from when both serious-minded employers and mischief-makers use these statements. This will not be confined to the shores of this Island but will also spread to other countries whose recognition of our degrees will be affected by this.

(2) Perhaps the most serious implication is that resulting from the aspersions cast on the staff of the Science Faculty, which again by extension will apply to the staff of the whole institution (this is no baseless fear, for it seems to have already happened, as for instance, when in a certain Campus some members objected to scripts of the Arts Faculty being sent for second marking to the Jaffna Campus on the grounds that the marking at the latter place is very lenient; and they referred to the Science results to prove this). The integrity of the staff of the Jaffna Campus is being questioned. The integrity of even those staff members of other Campuses who were second examiners for the Jaffna Campus examination is involved here. This is a very serious matter for any academic community who are engaged in a search for truth. We wonder whether the Vice-Chancellor realised the implications of his statement for his own community.

(3) The Jaffna Campus is a young institution and like all young institutions it is struggling to establish itself and earn a name. The staff of the Campus are admirably engaged in the task of achieving this and anyone who cares to visit the place will see for oneself the difficult conditions under which they are doing this. Having seen this, the Secretary to the Ministry of Higher Education has on many a public platform, even when addressing predominantly Sinhalese audiences (as at the Navarangahala in September 1976 when parents of the fresh Arts students were assembled to listen to him) stated that admirable work is being done in this Campus. At a time when the hard work of the pioneers here is beginning to show results, the degrees awarded by this institution are being made to be viewed with suspicion. And this is being done by no other than the one who is the highest authority for the institution - the Vice-Chancellor. It is indeed a shame that the good work of this institution is being rewarded in this manner. Will not the institution become the subject of ridicule? When it is struggling to raise its head, why should it be struck down in this manner? Will not mischief makers use this to ruin the institution? We are aware that the attempts made in this Campus to raise the quality of higher education and the standard of the degrees, especially by emphasising the role of English, have upset many. The fact that the Campus is now attracting more and more qualified personnel is a pointer to the development of this institution. There is no doubt that the graduates from this place will be able to compete with others with equal qualifications. It will not be surprising if there are people in this Island who do not like such developments. The Vice-Chancellor has played into their hands and provided them with ammunition to damage the Jaffna Campus.

(4) That the allegations discussed above, coupled as they are with similar allegations against Tamil examiners in the other Campuses, have implications for the Tamil community as a whole goes without saying. We are fully aware that with the partial removal of the standardisation scheme for admission to the University, many feel the need to introduce a scheme that will ensure the admissions of a majority of Sinhala students to the prestigious faculties of Medicine, Engineering and Science. The Vice-Chancellor himself has been suggesting at the press conferences mentioned above that the best method would be to ... allot places in the University in relation to the population percentage of the races (an internationally renowned scientist is talking of races). In order to make a case for increased intake of Sinhala students, we humbly ask, is it necessary to discredit a community? Should a section of the academic community be made the scapegoats for this purpose? Why should a whole community be humiliated in order to help another community?

It is for these reasons that we would like the Vice-Chancellor to check the facts again and to issue a corrected statement in his own interests and in the interests of the Jaffna Campus and also he owes a public apology to the Staff and students of the Jaffna Campus.

We are issuing this statement to help clear any misunderstanding that might have been caused in the minds of the public as a consequence of the Vice-Chancellor's statement.

President

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Secretary

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