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Plantation politics

The Tamil plantation workers of Sri Lanka face a particular and systematic form of racism which is qualitatively different from that meted out to the 'indigenous' Tamils. Plantation workers were brought to the country from India by the British about 150 years ago for the sole purpose of providing indentured 'coolie' labour on the newly-created plantations. The British discriminated against them in a classic sense, i.e., they discriminated in order to exploit. Every aspect of the working and domestic life of the plantation worker was subsumed to the need for profit.

The work, then as now, was very hard, monotonous and exhausting. Workers were and still are kept under a regime of strict hierarchical control. Families are born, live and die in the squalor of the barrack-like line rooms. They are treated as units of labour to be housed and fed as cheaply as possible. All family members, from the youngest child to the oldest grandparent, are forced to pluck tea just in order to subsist. And wages (relating to days worked) are ultimately dependent on the prices fixed in the international commodity market.

Tamil plantation workers are effectively segregated from the rest of the country in what can only be compared to Bantustans. They are isolated geographically — most plantations are in the Sinhalese hill country; they are kept separate from other workers by the actual

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Race & Class, XXVI, 1(1984)

production process (of tea plucking); and they are afforded second-class housing, schooling, welfare and social provision. In addition, in Sinhalese areas, where 'locals' believe that Sinhalese land was appropriated for plantation production, the fact of the Tamils' different language, religion, culture and customs has helped fuel a racist hostility.

The British were solely interested in extracting the maximum profit from plantation labour (under their control, tea, rubber and coconut plantations accounted for 90 per cent of the country's export earnings). But after Independence in 1948, successive Ceylonese governments began to exploit the racism against the Indian plantation workers for political as well as for economic purposes. They institutionalised racism into the statutes of the country, having first whipped up popular racialism against Indian workers to justify this discrimination.

Institutionalising racism

The first government of independent Ceylon set about disfranchising the plantation worker. The Citizenship Act of 1948 stated that citizenship would no longer be conferred through birth in the country but by 'descent' or 'registration'. Would-be citizens of descent had to prove three to four generations of paternal ancestry in Ceylon. As compulsory registration of births had been enforced only in 1896, nearly 99 per cent of plantation workers could not comply with this. (All other 'indigenous' groups would have been hard put to it to produce such proof, but they were automatically conferred citizenship by descent.) The Indian and Pakistan Residents (Citizenship) Act of 1949 and the Ceylon Parliamentary Elections Amendment Act of 1949 effectively disfranchised all those who failed to gain citizenship.

The vast majority of the Indian plantation workers who had been active in the elections of 1931, 1936 and 1947, and who had begun to organise in trade unions under the Ceylon Indian Congress (CIC), were now without any political clout. Moreover, as non-citizens, they could not get employment in any state enterprise and they had no right to social services, to register as traders or to buy land. They were tied lock, stock and barrel to the plantation and cut off politically once and for all from their Sinhalese neighbours. They had been rendered a captive 'stateless' labour force.

Then, in 1964, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) government took state racism one step further. Mrs Bandaranaike to justify her attempts to 'repatriate' the 'stateless' workers argued, like her United National Party (UNP) predecessors, that the Indian plantation workers had, by exercising their votes, virtually disfranchised the native Kandyans. Initially, India refused to take responsibility for the workers, but eventually a compromise was arrived at. Under the

Sirimavo-Shastri Pact, which was made without any consultation with those affected by it, 525,000 Indian Tamils were to be repatriated and given Indian citizenship, while 300,000 were to be granted Ceylon citizenship. Another 150,000 people were left out of the deal altogether, and so made ipso facto stateless. The division was quite arbitrary and, in fact, 700,000 applied for Ceylon citizenship and only 400,000 for Indian - making a nonsense of the agreed quotas. The Ceylon government responded by being very slow to grant citizenship, turning down applicants and forcing them to retreat to India. As Father Paul Caspersz of the Movement for Inter-racial Justice and Equality wrote: 'For most of the workers, it was not to be repatriation, but expatriation and in some cases deportation.'¹ In 1974, a new deal between Mrs Bandaranaike and the Indian government to speed up the 'repatriation' was agreed. The plantation workers often did not want to leave, for in many cases they faced absolute destitution in India, but they were given no choice by the SLFP and its United Front government.*

The plantation workers became yet further disillusioned with the SLFP when they had to bear the brunt of the effects of nationalisation. Under the 1972 and 1975 Land Reform laws, the state took over units of tea land larger than fifty acres and passed them to state boards and experimental co-operatives. The co-operatives often failed to live up to their pro-worker rhetoric, and workers sometimes went unpaid and found themselves cut out of other promised benefits. In addition, because nationalisation 'brought into everyday management, parochial patronage politics that [had] been the bane of state sector management since the 1950s',² it opened the door to massive corruption and a new racism. Tamil workers were not considered for land alienated by the land reforms. In fact, in estates in the areas of Kandy, Gampola, Pussellawa, Kotmale, Matale and Nawalapitiya, plantation workers were simply ejected as Sinhalese peasants were recruited by the new managements. Whole families were made destitute over night, reduced to begging on the streets of villages and towns in the tea country.

Elsewhere on plantations there were drastic food shortages because of problems with the distribution of basic food stuffs such as rice — partly brought about by the government's policy of import-substitution. According to Michael Gillard, who helped make the Granada TV film on tea workers' conditions which led a shocked British public to boycott tea, 'At least 1,000 people were dying every month' around the plantations in 1975.³

Cut off from political power because of their 'statelessness', the

* By October 1979, when the pact was first due to end, Sri Lanka had granted citizenship to only 160,000. And by 1982, up to 400,000 people still remained 'stateless' in Sri Lanka.

plantation workers relied increasingly on their unions – in particular the Ceylon Workers' Congress (CWC) – to fight their battles. Between 1972 and 1975 there was a plethora of strikes, many of which were related to food shortages. The 'indigenous' Tamil politicians of the North and East had seldom (with the exception of individuals such as Chelvanayakam and Arunachalam from an earlier period) been interested in the lot of the plantation workers, whom they regarded as low caste. Indeed, the plantation workers were as much outside the Jaffna social system as they were outside that of the Sinhalese South. But, as one Sinhalese government after another played the communal game and discriminated in every aspect of society against the Tamils – both 'indigenous' and plantation – the Tamil political leaders began to acknowledge the common denominators of Tamil struggle. As hopes for government redress to Tamil grievances receded, the leaders of the Tamil Congress (TC) and the Federal Party (FP) invited the CWC to join with them in a common front.

1976 saw the formation of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) with the CWC, FP and TC leaders as its co-leaders. It contested the 1977 elections with the demand for a separate socialist state in the North of Tamil Eelam (though the CWC expressed certain reservations over this demand). The TULF gained eighteen seats in the North and East and the President of the CWC, Mr Thondaman, was returned in the up-country. It was the first time in almost thirty years that the Tamils of Indian origin had been able to elect in general elections their own representative.* Since the UNP had won a landslide victory with 139 seats (the traditional opposition, the SLFP, gaining only eight seats), the TULF became the official parliamentary opposition. Suddenly the Tamil cause and the role of the CWC assumed enormous significance in parliamentary politics. From 1977 to 1983 the UNP strategy for the plantation sector focused on two concerns: the need to win over the CWC and the plantation workers politically, away from the TULF and the 'Tamil cause', and the need to 'modernise' the plantation sector economically so as to fashion it to the needs of the export-oriented 'open economy' they had ushered in. But both the political and the economic strategies were to founder on the rabid communalism that was sprouting in the interstices of the Jayewardene government.

The UNP and plantation land

The UNP inherited a nationalised plantation sector from the previous government. Nationalisation, though on the face of it a progressive move (ridding the country of foreign-based firms), had in fact been

* After the disfranchisement of the plantation workers, the government had nominated members to represent their interests in the House of Representatives.

only partially successful.* Production was down on most estates because of inefficient management and corruption. The workers were demoralised and much labour (including the skilled) had been 'repatriated' to India. Tea prices had fallen on the international market. The UNP was not primarily interested in developing this sector, but only in using it to cushion the economy from balance of payments problems. As much surplus as possible was to be siphoned off (through duties, etc.) to finance other key projects. Instead of tackling the inherited problems of this sector, the UNP government compounded them by adopting policies geared not to economic need but to an arbitrary free enterprise philosophy. Hence it ended the co-operatives, decentralised the plantation corporations, invited private investment and alienated plantation land to 'development' projects and agribusiness. The result was that inadequate re-investment took place in the industry and production fell, leading to a fall in export earnings and budgetary revenue.**

The UNP dismantled the co-operatives soon after coming to power and put all plantation land under the two state corporations – the Janatha Estates Development Board (JEDB) and the Sri Lanka State Plantations Corporation (SLSPC). In 1979 the two corporations were made into ministries and placed under presidential control, and by 1980 the ministries were reorganised on a regional basis. The argument was that the ministries' land holding was 'too unwieldy for efficient management' and that the new local regional boards would have more autonomy. In reality, the state held more control with the President now the minister in charge. And, for the first time, competition was introduced between plantation workers – under the two ministries and between regions. At a social level, efforts were made to imbue workers with a spirit of competitiveness by means of sports fixtures and beauty contests. This was a blatant attempt at manipulating the workers to compete with one another, whilst the real purpose – increasing profits while cutting costs – was hidden from view.

Less productive mid-country tea land was handed over to a new National Agriculture Diversification Settlement Authority, and when this project foundered, the land was given to the local Sinhalese villagers. Nineteen estates in Kotmale valley were alienated for resettling Sinhalese families displaced by the Kotmale Reservoir Project (part of the Mahaveli Scheme). These alienations were carried out to benefit the

* In any event, the foreign companies which were nationalised still retained control of the shipping, marketing, packaging and retailing of tea. The price of the product rested with them.

** It was not until 1983 that any consideration was given to the decline, when it was realised that 'the rehabilitation of the plantation industries has assumed crucial importance in view of their overriding present and potential contribution to the export earnings.'⁴

Sinhalese peasantry, without any concern for their impact on estate workers, who, as a consequence, faced eviction and unemployment.

Some land was simply returned to its former owners (where compensation schemes had not been settled), other land was opened up to private investment. A tax holiday was given to new investors, and a new company, headed by both government and private sector officials, was set up by the government in 1981 to run the estates owned by the Land Reform Commission. Behind all these moves was the intention of ensuring tighter control over profitable land, whilst spreading the risk of less profitable lands to private hands.

The UNP and the CWC

Whilst the UNP dealt ruthlessly (if short-sightedly) with plantation lands, it tried at the same time to cajole and win over plantation labour by buying off Mr Thondaman, on the one hand, and making minor concessions by way of pay and conditions to the workers, on the other. For the CWC occupied a unique position in the Tamil opposition.

The communal violence against the Tamil people unleashed after the 1977 election particularly affected the plantation workers. And this, coupled with the growing realisation that the UNP had no intention of living up to its election manifesto promise to solve Tamil problems 'without loss of time', had strengthened the demand for a separate state of Eelam. In the post-election period, therefore, the UNP was determined to weaken and divide the Tamil opposition and to draw Mr Thondaman into its ranks.

An important step in this direction was the inclusion in 1979 of Mr Thondaman into the cabinet, as Minister of Rural Industries Development. As far as the government was concerned, the inclusion of Mr Thondaman served three purposes. First, it created a split in the main opposition party, the TULF. Although the CWC was part of the TULF, it was more concerned with the many forms of discrimination faced by Tamils generally than with the call for Eelam. The CWC also took the position that the problems of the plantation workers had to be solved outside this issue. By involving the president of CWC in the government, the UNP was able to use the CWC as a wedge between the Tamil liberation movement and the plantation Tamils, something that was to prove important as the call for Eelam received increasing support amongst the people in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Second, Mr Thondaman was in control of at least 200,000 votes in the plantation areas. This was largely due to the speeding up of the repatriation/citizenship process under the Sirimavo-Gandhi Agreement of 1974. As a consequence, more of the hitherto 'stateless' plantation workers were gaining voting rights, and had an important impact on the voting patterns in their areas. Mr Thondaman's presence in

the cabinet had the effect of shifting the CWC's popular base from the TULF towards the UNP government, as many of the workers felt that, with their leader in the cabinet, they had some chance of getting policies in their favour.*

The importance of this 'captive vote' was shown most clearly in the presidential election of 1982 and the subsequent referendum in December. An analysis of the election results reveals that Jayewardene won largely due to the shift of the bulk vote of the plantation workers to the UNP. The shift was highest in the Nuwara Eliya District, with an increase (from 1977) of 20.14 per cent to the UNP. The importance of the plantation workers' votes was even more evident in the referendum. While most parties opposed the extension of parliament for another six years, the highest votes in favour of the government were in the plantation areas. Without these votes, the government might not have been able to swing the referendum in its favour.

Third, the inclusion of Mr Thondaman in the cabinet also served to divide the working-class opposition. For the CWC now supported anti-working class and anti-democratic legislation, as was clearly illustrated during the island-wide strike of 1980. The Essential Services Act of 1979 had robbed workers in public sector corporations of the right to go on strike – workers who were being hit by rapid inflation and who had begun to experience extreme difficulties in getting adequate food and affording decent lodging. As economic pressures increased, the various trade unions formed the Joint Trade Union Action Committee in March 1980, which subsequently launched a series of protest strikes. Not only did the CWC fail to support this working-class struggle – although its members were just as affected – but it actively supported the government.

In return, though, there were some concessions. The issue of 'statelessness' and deprivation of rights had been the most serious setback the plantation workers had experienced. With Thondaman in the cabinet, these issues had to be tackled. The 1978 constitution abolished the distinction between 'citizenship by descent' and 'citizenship by registration' – the vast majority of plantation workers (if granted citizenship) were in the latter category and were now given nominal equality of status. The constitution also extended 'fundamental rights' to the 'stateless' for a period of ten years. 1978 also saw the repealing of the Local Bodies Election Ordinance, which meant that plantation workers could now vote in local elections. The Indo-Ceylon Agreement (Implementation) Amendment Act No 47 of 1981 provided that the

* Thondaman himself was quoted in *Virakesari*, in June 1981, as saying: 'Our political position has changed to the extent that we have no longer to wage struggles to find solutions to our common problems but are now in a position to ask for and obtain our rights at cabinet level.'⁵

number of persons granted citizenship of Sri Lanka and the number of persons to be recognised as Indian citizens would be in the ratio 4:7, irrespective of the number who had actually been repatriated.

However, the situation of the plantation workers remained fundamentally unchanged, for the concessions were minimal and did not address themselves to the real issues behind the 'statelessness', nor provide any means by which this discrimination could be removed. Moreover, policies adopted at the national level were not automatically implemented at the local level. The net result was that the plantation workers remained trapped in their historical position of segregation and exploitation. The lack of any genuine commitment to improving the lot of the workers can be seen in the fact that all the economic measures – concerning employment, wage levels, welfare, etc. – that the government took in relation to them were basically concerned with retaining them as cheap, segregated labour in a sector which could be used to finance other UNP development programmes.

Plantation conditions under the UNP

In its election manifesto, the UNP had committed itself to tackling unemployment. What this meant in the plantation sector was, in fact, an increase in Sinhalese employment at the expense of Tamil employment. As already noted, plantation lands alienated for other schemes were handed to the Sinhalese peasantry. Where numbers of workers were increased on estates (so as to raise productivity without capital investment) – ratios going up from 1 to 1.25 per acre in tea, 0.45 to 0.75 in rubber, and 0.1 to 0.3 in coconut – the jobs were given to Sinhalese workers, most of whom were women. Sinhalese villagers lived around the low and mid-country plantations and these began to have an excess of labour, which in turn affected the estates' profitability. In the up-country, where the high quality tea was grown, there was a shortage of labour, for Indian Tamil workers had been driven from these areas by a combination of government racism – as evinced in the repatriation policy – and the unchecked communal riots of 1977 and 1981. Since Sinhalese did not live in the up-country, because of the distance of the plantations from their villages, the isolation and the hardships, the most profitable estates could not even replace their labour, let alone increase it.

The standard minimum daily wage of the plantation worker appears at first glance to show a small increase during the UNP period of office. In fact, this is not the case. Though wages appeared to increase between 1977 and 1979 (and then decrease after that), this is only because they had fallen so sharply under the SLFP (1970-77) that a return to the pre-1970 position shows up as an increase. And though a minimum wage is fixed by the Wages Board, this does not guarantee a

steady income. Estate workers are paid once a month and pay depends on days worked. There is no guarantee that workers will be offered a reasonable number of days of work per month – in fact, many recent worker protests have centred around the fact that work was scarce. Basic wage differentials between men and women have also been continued by this government; the way work is allocated discriminates against women; alternative sources of work are less available to women than to men; and women overall work longer hours for less pay. All these factors reflect the discrimination meted out to estate workers under the UNP, resulting in severe hardship.

On 1 April 1984, in one of the biggest ever strikes of plantation workers, 600,000 withdrew their labour in protest against a private deal first entered into with a UNP union – the Lanka Jathika Estate Workers' Union (of which cabinet minister Gamini Dissanayake is president) – and then put to all the workers. In this deal, male and female wages were equalised (at Rs. 21.75 per day) and a guarantee of six days work per week was given. But the wage increases were nothing near the workers' entitlement (about Rs. 40 per day) and they were also being denied the cost of living and other allowances granted to workers in other sectors. The *Christian Worker* commented on the fact that the government had not been able to buy up the plantation workers via political concessions: 'Coming in the wake of the All Party Conference to grant Sri Lankan citizenship to 93,000 "stateless" people ... it is most significant that *this strike has focused attention on the economic issues faced by the working people.*'⁷

The cynicism of the government towards the plantation workers is most clearly shown in the area of social and welfare provision. From the cradle to the grave, management's sole concern is the supply of an adequate labour force. In 1979, UNICEF started a programme of collaboration with the Sri Lankan government to up-grade existing crèches, build new ones, provide milk powder and equipment and train attendants to take care of children. There are still only comparatively few of these up-graded crèches. The majority of children are confined to badly built buildings with poor sanitation and water facilities. Moreover, where new crèche attendants have been recruited, most of them are political appointees and therefore Sinhalese. They do not even speak the language of the children in their care.⁸

Again, in housing, improvements supported by foreign aid agencies have been woefully inadequate. The Tea Rehabilitation Project plans 13,000 housing units, the Integrated Tea Development Project 3,420, the Tea Rehabilitation and Diversification Project, 5,900. But since it has been estimated that over a quarter of a million housing units need to be improved,⁹ as 90 per cent of workers live in line rooms, this barely touches the housing problem.

Family planning is the one area in which the government has exerted

itself – with the stress on terminating rather than controlling fertility. Most available information is on vasectomy and tubectomy. Mothers are paid Rs. 500 for a tubectomy, men Rs. 250 for a vasectomy. Given the low income in this sector and the patriarchal social structure, this tends to increase the state's control over women's reproduction.

Medical facilities (other than for birth control) are totally deficient. Plantation workers are invariably exposed to difficult weather conditions, bad drinking water and inadequate sanitation, and most of their illnesses are related to these – the most common complaints being bowel disorders, boils, coughs and headaches. The response of management and estate medical attendants is to dole out superficial cures, such as aspirin, so that illnesses more often than not recur. No steps are taken towards preventive medicine.

Until nationalisation in 1975, education provision was the responsibility of individual estate managements, who often took the view that the most important use of the schools was to keep the children occupied so their parents could work. The UNP continued SLFP policy of attempting to absorb estate schools into the national education system. This has resulted in the closure of schools with no alternatives being provided, a persistent shortage of teachers, buildings and equipment and the falling of attendance rates.¹⁰

Communal violence and the plantations

But the largest impact on the lives of plantation workers – and the issue which was ultimately to confound UNP attempts to co-opt Thondaman – was the massive communalism unleashed under the UNP government from 1977 to date. Communal violence against plantation workers was, more than any other factor, responsible for the shortage of labour in the up-country. And it was because workers fled from the plantations to settle (for the first time) close to 'indigenous' Tamils in the North and East that a genuine organic unity began to grow up between the two communities.

Violence against 'indigenous' Tamils had, of course, taken place since 1956, but it is under the present UNP government that plantation Tamils have been attacked on a massive scale by Sinhalese thugs – in 1977, 1981 and 1983. The first assault on plantation workers came in the wake of the 1977 elections. While the violence was experienced all over the island, it was concentrated in the southern and central parts of the country. Plantation workers were attacked on the estates, subjected to arson and rape, rendered homeless and their possessions looted. Thousands of them were left destitute. The police and army did little to help them and in many cases actually joined in the plunder.*

* It was clear that many of those who had been involved in organising the violence had the patronage of those in power, and little was done to bring them to justice or punish them.

The plantation workers were crowded into refugee camps, from which hundreds opted to leave for India. Those who remained were later transported by the government under armed escort to Vavuniya and Kilinochchi. A number of non-government organisations of Tamils subsequently came to their assistance. The Sansoni Commission was appointed to look into the 1977 violence, and in all instances it showed that the plantation workers had been innocent victims of racially motivated attacks.

Four years later the plantation workers were again subjected to brutal and systematic racial violence. In the aftermath of this pogrom, the CWC made it clear that this had not been a spontaneous outburst but that there had been a degree of planning behind it. As the statement of CWC issued on 29 August 1981 makes clear, the plantation workers had been 'forced to flee their line rooms', to become the 'targets of hoodlums and thugs' who ran riot 'looting, murdering, maiming and raping these defenceless people'. The CWC noted that the attack on the workers 'followed a pattern' and that, as in 1977, 'the machinery established to provide safety and security to members of the public' remained 'passive and mute while rowdies went on the rampage and ruled the roost against members of one community'. Significantly, the CWC went on to state, 'the very fact that the plantation workers, innocent of any crime, were singled out ... created a feeling among the people that the thousands of hooligans covertly enjoy the patronage of powerful personalities, and that the incidents were planned, and orchestrated by unseen hands'.

As in 1977, this violence led to an increased rate of repatriation to India and the movement of refugees to the Trincomalee District in the East and to Vavuniya and Mannar, where they tried to eke out a living as 'settlers'. The government has done all in its power to attack these settlements and break the solidarity between the 'indigenous' and the 'Indian' Tamils. In 1982, it declared Vavuniya a part of its Agricultural Production Zone for foreign agribusiness, forcing Indians to flee yet again. In April of 1983, the police and army raided the Gandhiyam settlement in Vavuniya, where Tamils had been running a self-help project on Gandhian lines (with the help of western aid agencies) to help resettle the refugees. Gandhiyam's leaders ('indigenous' Tamils) were held in army camps and tortured. Gandhiyam's offices, trucks and settlement huts were destroyed on a number of occasions. And, on the eve of the pogrom in July 1983, the huts of Trincomalee settlers were burned to the ground. During the pogrom, Indian Tamil settlers in the Trincomalee District were rounded up, herded against their will into police lorries and army jeeps and driven across the country to be dumped and left as destitutes in Hatton and Nuwara Eliya in the hill country.

The violence against the plantation workers forced Mr Thondaman into a choice between his ministerial obligations and his loyalty to the

CWC. And he could not but choose the workers. In a statement issued by the CWC on 1 August, he made it clear that he believed that the state apparatus no longer acted to protect victims of this 'savage form of violence' and that 'these squads of goondas and rabble have been allowed to parade the streets freely, causing havoc and inflicting misery of such proportions with impunity'.

At an emergency meeting of the National Council of the CWC, held on 14 August under his chairmanship, a statement was issued which went even further in its condemnation of the government.

Instead of implementing the declared policy of regularising the settlements of persons of Indian origin in these areas, where they were transported and dumped as refugees after the previous holocausts, a concerted attempt has been made by the officials to drive them out of their holdings under various false pretexes. This had further intensified around the middle of July when the police and security personnel set in motion a wave of terror intimidating the settlers and driving them away.

Violence against the Tamil minority, which has been a permanent feature of Sri Lanka's political scene during the past three decades, has erupted once again on a large scale with unprecedented savagery. Organised groups went on the rampage, unchecked for nearly a week, destroying and looting property, setting houses and establishments on fire, and killing and maiming the innocent and defenceless victims while the guardians of the law remained inactive and in some instances even encouraged and assisted the lawless. It is this attitude of the law enforcing agencies that has shaken the confidence of the people and eroded their faith in the government.

Government policy towards the Tamils and the pogrom of 1983 has turned Mr Thondaman away from his political/class allegiance to the UNP and headed him straight back to his Tamil constituency. But with a difference. In an outspoken interview with the *Lanka Guardian*, he was asked to explain his meeting with Maheswaran (one of the Tamil liberation movement leaders), and he appeared to hold to a Tamil unity which he had hitherto eschewed.

Whether it is Amirthalingam or the CWC or Maheswaran ... an identification has been created by the manner in which all Tamils have been treated in the past. We have different organisations, different policies, different problems but when there is a determined policy to discriminate, to harass, to persecute, to crush, then all Tamils, whether in Tamilnadu or here or anywhere in the world, feel that injustice is done.¹¹

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