



TAMIL WRITERS GUILD

TWG Editorial

As Chief Editor of TWG, I have been shocked and shaken by the graphic BBC News report of Tuesday, 23 September 2008, extracts of which are given below, about the sheer scale of the Sinhalese war of unmitigated barbarity against the terror stricken Tamil women, children and old men.

These hapless people try to run away from this unrestrained and senseless bombardment but there is nothing to protect them. The international world of smoke and mirrors pretends not to see it. Local Buddhist monks beat the drums of this Sinhala Buddhist war of conquest. The local Christian churches in the hands of the Sinhalese have long abjured a moral stance and are mostly praying for the military victory of their race. They have cosied up to the ruthless President Mahinda Rajapakse. The foreign Christian churches have taken their cue from the largely racist local churches and are hiding behind their hands to shield their consciences from the prevalent ethnic murder and human rights abuse. Christianity and moral timidity are contradictory in the sight of Jesus Christ, its founder, but waiting for Sinhala victory is an expedient for the churches..

The foreign aid agency worker (a brave soul himself) involved in this BBC News report is left reeling with fear and anxiety. This is the first time that I have literally been able to feel the ferocity of the attack as if I were there myself, from the terrifying emotional viewpoint of an objective third party reporter. But he can get away from it all and feels a sense of shame when he is forced to leave. The Tamil people are trapped and forced to run; to be chased and forced to meet with yet more bombardment by air force jets and multi-barrel rocket launchers. Do you think the Tamil people will ever forget this slaughter? It will be etched forever in their collective genetic memory.

It must be to the eternal shame of the hypocritical International community represented by the likes of Lord Malloch Brown, who have closed their eyes to this racial genocide and by their prevarication, have encouraged the Sri Lankan government to this turkey shoot of the Tamils. They have armed this government with the latest in modern warfare and by their unconscionable bans abroad have forced the Tamils to defend themselves with bows and arrows. It can never be said that the Sinhalese armed forces met the Tamils bravely in the field of battle, because it is evident from this report that the Sinhalese government is waging war from afar with jets and rockets.

The Tamil spirit for liberation will never be vanquished, as it arises in the heart of every Tamil, living, dead and yet to be born. You cannot kill an idea and a dream.

The Tamils cannot depend on the international community for justice and freedom any longer but we must strengthen the hands of the present and future generations of Tamils to keep alive this dream of a Tamil Eelam that is brave and fair and even open to the world that tried to abort it at birth. We have to learn our lesson that the international community's interest is heavily based on its own vested interests. Those who pontificate from their cosy ivory towers about human rights, are unwilling to assemble the necessary international consensus to apply international sanctions against this execrable Sri Lankan regime. The Tamil Diaspora has to get involved in the national politics of our host countries and get our demands into the national political agenda for the resolution of international issues.

Please put yourself in the position of the huddled Tamil people when you read the report extracted below.

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Extracts of the BBC report are given below:

'Pain' of Sri Lanka aid pullout:

"During my last weeks in Kilinochchi there was a foreboding sense of a massive army approaching from the south-west.

.....
I remember one morning when an air attack happened very close to me. I managed to get into the bunker quickly and narrowly escaped being hurt. I will never forget the noise of that fighter jet, the unbelievable sound of the engine as it swooped from the sky and the explosions of the bombs dropped close by.

But the lasting image I have is of the sheer panic and traumatised people when I emerged. As aid agencies we have concrete fortified bunkers, but the population of Kilinochchi has muddy holes in the ground. I saw children shaking with fear and mothers trying to calm them while they themselves were shaking with fear. or the final two days in Kilinochchi we spent much time in our bunkers as the artillery and air attacks intensified in and around the town. The sound through these days was tremendous, everything would shake and the air implode as the shells landed. In the near distance we could hear the terrifying sound of helicopter gunships, firing rockets.

.....
Shame

On the morning of 16 September we lined our vehicles up at our compound and under heavy shelling and air attacks, wearing bullet-proof vests and helmets, we drove out of Kilinochchi town and headed for the government areas.

Troops are now near Kilinochchi

We left a number of our staff, who could not get passes, behind. We shared tears, we shared the feelings of terror and intense guilt, and we left.

I remember feeling deep shame as I drove past civilians who were watching me from the side of the road, in my ballistic vest, heading for safety, as they stood there in their trousers and shirts and saris. We drove through the site of a fresh air attack on the A9 road and once again saw the devastation it caused and understood what may come for Kilinochchi and its civilian population.

Although I appreciate and respect the security rules that govern aid workers and understand why we had to leave, I still have to deal with a great sense that I abandoned those people. There is the pain and guilt of saying goodbye and good luck to our staff who had worked so hard and with such passion for the victims of war in the Vanni - and leaving them behind.

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