

[Shri R. S. Sparrow]

Lanka played the dirtiest most and wrong type of play which was never expected from the trained up soldiers. In Colombo they just bashed their vehicles into jewellery and other shops as a first measure and then looted out everything that there was. And, then seeing that the people are hung by the nearest pole they don't move a hair. Here is something which is barbaric and leading on to genocide, half-way home. This is the very type of thing that happened and one feels very-very sad about that.

As chance has it the other aspect of it is this, that, still the Tamilians are not being settled properly. And I am very glad that one of our emissaries and a trained hand has today gone or is going to settle things to the best advantage of the people. They are not being settled properly. They are being herded about homeless and hamletless and nothing with them is left. So that part of it is, where we have to focus our attention, that is how to help them from this distance. Their supplies are inadequate—medical, household and anything for that matter—and you cannot expect much from the Government of Sri Lanka at the moment because they themselves are dithering. They are not sure of their own standing as to where they stand in relation on this episode.

The other point, which has been raised is as to their leanings to wards any kind of super-powers. Yes, it seems to be quite clearly; understandable that the leaning is there. To what extent it may mature is not easy to predict. But one thing I feel certain, geo-strategically speaking, that this particular Island is of great importance and when one notices that, already there is so much of movement forward creating a sphere of influence into the Indian Ocean and around by a Super Power knowing especially. What Trincomalee is I know Trincomalee as being one of the finest bases in South Asian seas, one of the naval best and it is very attractive, attractive strategically to anybody for that matter. And when that type of move forward, creeping move forward, by certain super powers is noticed with other intentions which we do

not have to discuss now, one feels a little bit upset. Anyway, we have to watch that thing very carefully as India and I am very glade to notice that the vein of thinking all around the House is just one, that, we stand for the Sri Lanka Tamils. At their back, as one nation, we do stand. I come from the North, but I want to assure you, Sir, I have got the feelings of my friends, of my own area. They feel as one with every Tamilian down South and we will stand for you through thick and thin, come what may. So, this is the mood of the House and it is a pleasure to notice that. Ultimately what it may form in the way of situations is very difficult to predict. All I can say is that the way, the adroit manner in which our Government and High Command is handling this issue is indeed very steady and very commandable and incidently forceful, although it may not look that way, but forceful, geo-strategically and geo-politically it is. And I think the best mark that I can give to our High Command and our Government is that it has handled the issue very adroitly, yet with force enough which is felt in the air. With these words, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : Mr. Speaker, Sir,

last week I informed the House about the outcome of my talks with president Jayewardene's Special Envoy. Immediately afterwards, Mr. G. Amirthalingam the Leader of the Opposition in the Sri Lanka parliament and Secretary-General of the TULF the main party representing the Sri Lanka Tamils, left Jallna for Delhi. Since his arrival on August 14, he has had talks with me in addition to meetings with our Foreign Minister and other members of our Cabinet and parliament members of various parties. Yesterday, I once again telephoned to president Jayewardene.

I should like to inform the House of the result of the latest developments. On behalf of the TULF, Mr. Amirthalingam has also welcomed our offer of good offices, which, he said has introduced a basic change in

regard to negotiations between his party and the Government of Sri Lanka. For many years, he and his party has sought fulfilment of the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Tamil people of the island within a united Sri Lanka, but had failed to get any helpful response. On the contrary, the Tamils have been increasingly harassed, and the latest outrages against them have left them totally without confidence in negotiations. Mr. Amirthalingam and his colleagues did not find it possible to come to the negotiating table on the basis of past offers. However, he feels that as a result of India's efforts, the picture has changed and, although differences between the two sides remain deep, there might now be some possibility of a solution.

The basic need of the hour is to bring a sense of security among the people of Sri Lanka. This in turn can restore confidence in their living together and in working out permanent solutions which are satisfactory to the Tamil minority as well as to the Sinhala majority. The search for that permanent solution also needs to be undertaken as quickly as possible.

This can best be attempted at the conference table. As I have previously said, it is for the Sri Lankan Government to decide how and when a conference with the Tamil leaders can be brought. But because of our profound concern, we have offered to help in whatever way we can. To arrive at any settlement, it is necessary for both sides to talk to each other. To facilitate this process of dialogue and to give effect to our good offices, I have offered to send a special envoy to meet President Jayewardene and others. During my telephone call last evening, President Jayewardene agreed to my suggestion. Accordingly, I have asked one of our distinguished and experienced diplomats SHRI G. Parthasarathi to undertake this delicate and important task. He will visit Colombo next week.

I asked President Jayewardene about the latest conditions generally regarding security and specially in the refugee camps. He told me that they were

steadily returning to normal and that only a few thousands now remained in the camps. In reply to my question about relief supplies, he said they had enough food and clothing but would get in touch with our High Commissioner should anything more be needed.

President Jayewardene and I agreed to remain in regular contact. He also agreed that his brother, with whom we had useful talks, would continue as his special Envoy.

During the repeated discussions in this House, hon. Members have expressed their strength of feelings at the course of events. All sections of the people all over our country share these feelings, which transcend party and other differences. I am particularly aware of the deep emotions of our brothers and sisters in Tamilnadu over these tragic happenings. As I said in the other House, the agony of the Tamils in India and elsewhere is that of our entire nation. The brutality and insensate violence to which the Tamils of Sri Lanka have been subjected were vividly described by Mr. Amirthalingam in his talks here. My Government and I personally been conveying our own anguish and concern to the Government of Sri Lanka.

At the same time, we must always bear in mind the effect of anything we say or do. Nearly all hon. Members have recognised the delicacy and difficulty of the situation with which we have to deal. I am grateful to them for this understanding, and for the support they have given to Government's approach.

In the circumstances, restraint combined with firmness is called for. These must continue to determine our policy. Above all, we wish to assist in bringing about an atmosphere which is free of communal tension and conducive to the efforts of the Sri Lankan leaders of all communities to achieve a lasting political settlement. We hope both sides will take concrete steps towards that end. This is what I want my envoy to pursue with President Jayewardene and others concerned.