

would be affected, and Mr. Clark acknowledged that some firms might incur losses as they sought alternative sources of supply. Goods in transit on October 1, or contracted for before August 5, would be allowed to enter Canada (External Affairs communiqué, September 26).

SRI LANKA

High Commissioner

The Globe and Mail reported on August 28 that Prime Minister Brian Mulroney and External Affairs Minister Joe Clark had both known for more than a month before granting diplomatic credentials to the new Sri Lankan High Commissioner, retired General Tissa Indraka Weeratunga, of allegations that the envoy had been linked to torture and repression in Sri Lanka. The report said that the Tamils of Canada Association had urged Mr. Mulroney in a memorandum last March to deny General Weeratunga acceptance as a diplomat in Canada. The Tamils of Canada said that Amnesty International had evidence of a violent army campaign by the General to suppress dissent in the Tamil region of northern Sri Lanka. The Prime Minister had referred the memo to Mr. Clark, the report said, and had notified the Tamil association on April 16 that he was doing so. Mr. Clark then wrote to Rev. Philip Ratnapala, a Tamils of Canada spokesman, on May 21 that the General "obviously enjoys the confidence of the President of Sri Lanka" and "is well placed not only to represent the interests of his Government but also to convey to the Sri Lankan Government the concerns of the Canadian Government when the need arises." On August 27, a spokesman for the Minister said that even though Mr. Clark was aware of the allegations against the envoy, the Sri Lankan government and General Weeratunga had denied them (*The Citizen*, August 28).

The evidence referred to by the Tamils of Canada was contained in a 1982 Amnesty International report on human rights violations in Sri Lanka. Charges in the report, which included murder and dragging prisoners in bags behind jeeps, were made against police and soldiers in northern Sri Lanka where the General was army commander in 1979, *The Citizen* reported on August 28. The General refused to be interviewed on August 27 by *The Citizen*, but his personal secretary Lester Corea said that the allegations were "of no concern" to the High Commissioner.

Further details of the Amnesty report were published by *The Citizen* on August 28. The paper reported that Amnesty had taken affidavits, examined documentary evidence, and conducted interviews (including one with General Weeratunga) before concluding there was evidence of systematic torture by the army and police in the period immediately following the declaration of emergency rule on July 11, 1979. Among the techniques Amnesty said were used were suspension by a rope attached to the neck and genitals, and systematic beatings with fists, boots and pieces of wood, sometimes with nails attached, for several hours, *The Citizen* reported.

On September 15, *The Globe and Mail* reported that spokesmen for the Department of External Affairs had said

they considered the charges against General Weeratunga to be unsubstantiated.

The same report said that during an interview in Paris with CBC television reporter Ian Parker, Tamil torture victim Umapathisivan Pararajasegaran (known as "Baby") had identified General Weeratunga on videotape as the man who had supervised his torture for fifteen days in Jaffna, northern Sri Lanka, in 1979. *The Citizen* reported the same day that Mr. Pararajasegaran had sworn an affidavit (in the presence of Amnesty International) before a Sri Lankan magistrate on March 20, 1983.

Earlier in September, the Sri Lankan government had called on the Canadian government to take action against the news media in Canada for their "libellous statements" about General Weeratunga. The Department of External Affairs had refused, citing freedom of speech (*The Citizen*, September 15).

On September 16, *The Citizen* reported that the Department of External Affairs would be taking a "good hard look" at the sworn affidavit made by Mr. Pararajasegaran in Sri Lanka. Spokesman Natalie Kirschberg said that Canadian government officials might then raise the "very serious allegations" directly with the Sri Lankan government, but refused to speculate on what would happen if satisfactory answers were not received. Ms. Kirschberg said that the affidavit, which had been presented that week to Canadian officials in Paris, was the first "concrete written evidence" linking General Weeratunga to human rights abuses, maintaining that even the Amnesty International report had not mentioned the General. She cautioned that it was not up to the Canadian government to "accuse or defend" the envoy, saying it was "up to the Sri Lankan government to take any action in terms of the General." Meanwhile, a spokesman for Tamils of Canada accused the Canadian government of "stalling" on a Canadian visa application made by Mr. Pararajasegaran in Paris; however, Canadian officials denied that his visa was being delayed.

On September 21, Mr. Pararajasegaran arrived in Canada. He said, "I want to inform the Canadian public that a torturer is the Sri Lankan ambassador to Canada. . . . Here he can't do anything to me. . . . I'll finally be in a position to ask him why he tortured me" (*The Citizen*, September 22).

In a statement and an interview with *The Citizen* on September 22, General Weeratunga accused Tamil separatists living in Canada of raising false accusations against him in order to poison diplomatic relations and "distort and disrupt the bond of friendship" between Canada and Sri Lanka. "There is no truth at all" to allegations that he had been involved in torture, he said. "This is a total fabrication." The General referred to the allegations as a "ruse" to divert the attention of Canadians away from the backlash over 155 Tamil refugees who had arrived by boat off the Newfoundland coast in August (See Policy — Refugees, below). The General responded to Mr. Pararajasegaran's challenge to meet with him during his 2-week stay in Canada by saying, "Why should I dignify this man. . . . I don't need to meet separatists." He also said that reports that Mr. Pararajasegaran was afraid to file charges of torture in Sri Lanka were an insult to the Sri Lankan judicial