

Open the gates of Hell - and let my people go ... (By: Selva Gnanam- Melbourne)

I was not at all surprised to read the article by Dr. Nadesan in the 'Asian Tribune' explaining why it was time to release the long suffering people from the clutches of the LTTE and their despotic leader. I applaud him wholeheartedly for writing what most Tamils wanted to say, but did not have the 'ticker' to take the first step. I, as he once was, was an ardent supporter of 'Eelam'.

I came to this country by using the excuse of 'genocide' by the Sinhala-Buddhist people, when in reality I left the country with a passport issued by the Sri Lankan Government, and boarded a plane from her international airport. Before 'becoming a refugee', I lived amongst the Sinhala people all my life, went to school with 99% of my friends from that community, enjoyed life with them and graduated from one of that country's premier universities. I was able to find gainful employment (yet it was more difficult then back there, because of my so-called 'Indian accent') in this country because of the quality of education I received, free of charge.

As soon as I landed in Australia, I began working towards obtaining my Permanent Resident Visa by betraying and demonizing my best and dearest friends. I used the '1983 Black July' riots to very well that no decent remotely involved in it. I problem'. I knew it was a people living on the fringes situation to loot and grab wherever they could. They including Tamils. I was it was temporary. All thewhile, the people whom I demonized (when I came here) were my 'guardians'. They lived in our homes till the situation became normal. I blamed the government of the day entirely for letting the situation get out of control, and I still do.



justify my case, when I knew Sinhala person was even knew it was not an 'ethnic 'social' problem whereby the of society, made use of the whatever they could from came from all ethnic groups, frightened but I also knew that

As time passed, I began reflecting on what I had done and was continuing to do. As a devout Hindu, I could not justify my support for an organisation that had decimated the Tamil population, eliminated its academics and leaders, taken our youngsters and turned them into killers but claimed to be our 'sole representative'. I read of young girls (who had escaped from the Vanni) being raped by senior LTTE cadres and later offered to foreigners as 'entertainment' (these girls would later volunteer as suicide bombers because they were not 'pure' any more).

Then I realised why so many Westerners came to the Vanni for 'direct negotiations' with the LTTE, and why they were backing the LTTE in Sri Lanka, while fiercely opposing terrorism in their countries. It was an 'erotic escaped' in an exotic island, far away from

wife/husband and family. I heard of Tamils terrorising their communities in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, etc. to collect funds for the 'cause'. I heard of some of them 'living it up' with these funds. I realised, slowly and painfully, what was happening to our people in the guise of 'liberating' them.

We had created a huge monster which was devouring our people but had no power to destroy it. A 'global business' with ships, credit card frauds, people smuggling, narcotic trading, arms smuggling, a bandwagon of NGOs and the 'international community' to support the 'cause' But the 'cause' itself was now nowhere in the picture. The 'effect' or the outcome of the cause was far better than the actual 'cause'. It was big money and living the good life in the West, as it also was for the Tiger 'big wigs' in the Vanni. So who cared about the helpless people in 'Eelam'.

First the Tamil Diaspora began whispering these concerns. Now they have begun writing about them. Soon it will become be a huge roar. But will it be too late for our people back home.

We need to act immediately. Let the people living in the Vanni decide their future. Let the 'international community' the NGOs, church leaders, Human Rights organisations and everybody supporting the LTTE come and observe who decides to leave 'Eelam'.

Let the Government afford safe passage to anybody who wants to leave. Offer them decent living conditions in safe refugee camps, till they are able to go to their homes once the fighting ends.

Let us add a little prefix to Dr. Nadesan's article heading and say "Open the gates of Hell - and let my people go in peace, to wherever they want to go".

Courtesy: The Island

