

Voice of Shakthi - Thursday 18 May 2000

Many of our friends in the Sinhalese community in [Melbourne](#), and indeed in Australia, are very busy these days. Some are raising funds, some are organising [meetings](#)

. Still others have taken to reciting emotive poetry. The Sinhala radio programs? Well, they play nothing but patriotic [songs](#). All this activity and emotion is focussed on one important mission: Saving the Sinhala nation!

But is the Sinhala nation in need of saving? We too feel that the Sinhala people in Sri Lanka have serious concerns and problems right now. One of them is the enactment of new laws restricting their basic freedoms. Then there is also the serious threat of the Sinhalese becoming foreigners in their own country due to the increasing encroachment of foreign interests. But our friends in the Sinhala community are not worried about these problems. In fact, to them, these are not even problems to start with. The real problem for them is the threat of the LTTE taking over Jaffna.

Now we too are a bit worried about the LTTE taking over Jaffna, because we think that will only escalate the war and cause the deaths of thousands of people, mostly civilians. It will also increase government repression of the basic rights of all peoples in Sri Lanka. Besides, we are also not sure if the LTTE is really going to "liberate" the people in Jaffna. But our Sinhala patriots are not worried about any of this. They are worried about the Tigers taking over Jaffna because the Tigers are TAMILS!

But whose lands are these Tamils taking over. Is it traditional Sinhala land? Hell no! It is land inhabited - and made habitable - by Tamil people for centuries. It is this land that our Sinhala patriots in Melbourne do not want the TAMILS to take over.

We believe this is simply due to racism. If not why worry about the Sinhala nation only when the Tigers are about to take Jaffna? Why not speak out against the real threats to the Sinhala people, like the selling-out of THEIR traditional land to foreigners or about the ruthless assault of globalisation on traditional Sinhala values. To these people these are not threats simply because the TAMILS are not involved. Give the land to anybody but not the TAMILS - that is their slogan.

And what are willing to do to prevent this? What are they willing to sacrifice? People who live in mansions will give a few spare dollars and some of them will not even do that if they do not get something in return - like a Buriyani feed for instance. Doctors who make a comfortable living in Melbourne while weeping for the plight of the Sinhalese will not even dream of putting their expertise at the

disposal of those suffering Sinhalese masses in Sri Lanka. No, they will never do anything that will upset their easy, comfortable lives in Melbourne.

And what do they expect from the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka? Quite a lot actually. In their [opinion](#), the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka should develop a "war mentality" and learn to bear all the hardships that entails without a murmur. Complaining about the restrictions on basic freedoms is an unpardonable sin at a time like this. What will the suffering masses in Sri Lanka not give to preach these pure patriotism from a Melbourne suburb while tucking into a hot buriyani and listening to the latest Sinhala bailas.

There is no doubt that many Sinhala expatriates are worried and concerned about Sri Lanka at this present critical moment. All we ask them is to consider exactly why they are concerned.