

Berger's mission

On the 9th of May 1994 'The Island' reported in its front page that a lawyer called Berger representing the Tamils in Canada has written to the Swiss government saying "Apparently information that you may have been receiving from your country's Ambassador in Sri Lanka may have suggested that it is now safe for Tamils to return to Sri Lanka and they would be safe. In fact the opposite is true."

For the benefit of the Swiss Ambassador, I give the following points to show that there is no truth in the statement that the Tamils are in danger in Sri Lanka as stated by Mr. Max Berger.

1. There is a law called the Thesavalami Law

claimed by the Tamils, which prohibits a Sinhalese from settling down in the so-called Tamil areas and as a result there are no Sinhalese settlers in those areas.

2. The Tamils can legally settle down anywhere in the country, and they are found everywhere including in the estates of the deep South owned by the Sinhalese.

3. Sometime ago the government of Sri Lanka wanted to settle some Sinhalese families in an upcountry estate because they lost their homes in a landslide, but the Tamil union leader, Mr. Thondaman who controls the estates, objected to any Sinhalese being settled in the estate areas where the labour is mostly Tamil. I

do not know what happened to those families. They may even be sleeping on the roadside simply because they happen to be Sinhalese and even the Sinhalese government cannot help them. Such is the Tamil power in Sri Lanka. Mr. Max Berger has made several appeals to Mr. Thondaman to visit Canada to malign the Sinhalese.

4. Most of the properties in Colombo are owned by Tamils and Muslims. These statistics are not published by the Department of Census and statistics. I would not be surprised if the Sinhalese own even 20% of the property in Colombo.

5. There is a place called the "Galle Face Green" which is about the only piece of open ground available for all

residents in Colombo. The majority of the people on the Galle Face Green at any given time are Tamil though they are a minority. Sinhalese and Tamils both use this open space without any problems.

6. There have been several massacres of entire Sinhalese families, entire Muslim families and Buddhist priests by the LTTE Tamils. These have been well documented and cannot be denied.

7. Large numbers of Tamils have fled the Northern areas and are now living with the Sinhalese in the South.

8. There are Tamils working both in the government and in the private sector at all levels. Just to give an example, the post of Secretary to the Treas-

ury, considered a very high post, is held by a Tamil.

Based on the above facts when Mr. Max Berger says that Sri Lanka is not safe for a Tamil to live in, he is lying without shame. Most lawyers in the world are hired by the guilty party to defend themselves and evade the consequences of their crimes, but this person Max Berger is a lawyer that has been hired to malign the government of Sri Lanka and in the pursuit of his aim he has not hesitated to make it appear to the government of Switzerland that their Ambassador in Sri Lanka as being unreliable and incompetent.

J. D. Jayatissa
Colombo 7.