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IDP camps and False Propaganda of the Tamil Diaspora

The historic subjugation of the poor Tamils by Prabhakaran and the Rich Diaspora Tamils has been brought to an end. Some 300,000 hostages have been freed and are now living in camps for "internally displaced persons" (IDPs). I have just recently visited some of these IDP camps, and I wish to categorically state that the Tamils all over the world must celebrate this moment when we have, with the help of the Rajapaksa government, triumphed over the greatest misfortune that befell the Ilankai Tamils since Independence.

The Ilankai Tamils were on the verge of extinction under the toll taken by Prabhakaran for three decades, massacring or banishing the cream of Tamil society, recruiting the younger generation for cannonfodder, and instilling a culture of violence, extortion and criminality for Tamils globally. The upper-class expatriate Tamils, driven by their hate and racism supported this exercise of self-annihilation and sadism. It is this cancer which has been surgically removed, at least in Sri Lanka. This kind of racism still exists among members of the Diaspora. They demonstrated in front of Western Parliaments hoping to save Prabhakaran the Vanni-Yakkhavar.

This is the greatest atonement of the Ilankai Tamils. It is the moment for a new "Uchhaaham" (enthusiasm). And yet, that this is a cause for celebration is being denied. It is being condemned as "Triumphalism".

The Tamil propagandists and their client intellectuals have returned to their "Pirasittamana Poi" (public lies) activity of spinning falsehoods based on self-interest and racism. In some cases, it is the ill-informed "self-righteous" individuals who agitate without information or judgment. The Tamils, and even some Sinhalese, think that there is no cause for celebration but only somber religious observations of mourning or praying "for the IDPs". The London Times is very busy falsely claiming that some 1,400 Tamils are massacred every week at the Manik Farm, a place I visited thanks to the influence of an official who works there. Leaders of the Diaspora are

demanding that the IDPs "be allowed to return to their villages" immediately.

The Mohan Sekarams and their likes are e-mailing the whole globe asking for "PUBLIC ACTION" for the release of "the elderly, children, nursing and pregnant mothers as the initial step. ... towards reconciliation, unity and equality ... to secure the release and see the well being of the IDPs". If only the old, sick and pregnant, or children are released, who are there to look after them? Can such release be done into villages where the infrastructure is destroyed, water towers and wells blown up, bridges and culverts filled with dengue mosquitoes? In any case, it is the hosting community itself, and NOT the Diaspora living in Scarborough or Melbourne who should decide about accepting such people.

These individuals do not understand that in the west, even a minor sex offender is not released to civil society

without a long period of re-education as well as consultation with the public. Many western communities refuse to accept the "healed" offender for fear of re-offending. In Sri Lanka, all the able bodied civilians under the LTTE were conscripted (by force or willingly) for terrorism. The young were snatched from school and trained as fighters and cannon fodder. How long would it take to rehabilitate an illiterate teenage fighter and train him for a job? Would you give a job to a "rehabilitated" ex-LTTE fighter in your business? Will they re-offend? That is the stark reality.

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I believe that the government is unrealistic in attempting to release the IDPs "in 180 days". IT should go more slowly and recognize

that it is doing an excellent job. The criticisms of the western press and the ever-blind Tamil Diaspora should be duly countered.

The IDP camps are much better than I expected them to be. A community sense and a new social consciousness superseding the old order of caste and class prevail in the camps. The logistics of feeding 300,000 people, ensuring their health, education and security are enormous. They would be even more enormous if they were released into derelict, dysfunctional villages full of mines and mosquitoes, as demanded by misguided Diaspora Tamils and their client intellectuals. Given the circumstances, the government is doing a far better job of handling the IDPs than India in its camps. The effort is far better than for the Muslims evicted in the 1990s.

I also visited the Eastern Province liberated in August 2007. It was indeed a pleas-

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ure to see the new network of roads in the East. There are several IDP rehabilitation schools in the Akkaripattu-Oluvil area and I learnt how the ex-fighters are being re-trained and released back to their villages. In my view, such a process needs at least five years.

The government should NOT listen to ill-informed political meddlers and do-gooders. It should follow the advice of professional educationists, psychiatrists and probation officers in dealing with the IDPs. Finally, before individuals are released to civil society, the community (i.e., the local citizens) should be consulted to ensure that the returned ex-fighters are accepted into that society with their full knowledge, and NOT in some clandestine manner.

G-8 is not enough: Calls for larger, recast group

L'AQUILA, Italy (AP) - For all the smiles and upbeat talk, the just-ended Group of Eight summit showed how unwieldy the forum has become, run by Cold War-vintage powers while relegating the world's fastest growing economies - China, India and Brazil - to observers.

It also showed just how sharp the divisions are between old-world and new-world viewpoints.

The meeting fell short of expectations on many counts, from climate control to trade. The global economic crisis weighed heavily on everyone and complicated efforts to find consensus, resulting in avoiding or putting off some major decisions. Members appeared divided on how soon to roll back stimulus packages, although they agreed now was not the time to start.

G-8 leaders themselves are quick to point out the shortcomings of a three-decade-old exclusive club in dealing with 21st century problems.

Excluding emerging world powers is "wrongheaded," U.S. President Barack Obama said Friday in a wrap-up news conference. He also said the creaky system of international institutions, including the United Nations, needs to be overhauled to reflect geopolitical changes.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy called G-8 expansion all but a done deal. Italian leader Silvio Berlusconi, this year's host, said limiting the club to rich, industrialized nations is "no longer adequate."

But finding the right formula for an overhaul will prove tricky. "Everybody wants the smallest possible group ... that includes them," Obama said. Nations not included "think it's highly unfair if they've been cut out."

Sarkozy said he expected the G-8 to expand to 14 nations - adding Brazil, China, India, Mexico, South Africa and an Arab country - when France holds the rotating presidency in 2011.

But no clear path was laid this week as existing members clung to their elite status.

"They will not give up their power," said Milena Elsinger of the DGAP foreign policy think tank in Berlin. "They will still meet and they will still pretend to be the leaders of the world."

The Group of Eight grew out of a democracy-promoting economic forum in France in 1975 of the then-six wealthiest industrial nations, all in the Northern Hemisphere: France, West Germany, Italy, Japan Britain and the United States. The member-



President Barack Obama, second left, stands with, from left to right, Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, and Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi before a moment of silence for quake victims at the G8 Summit in L'Aquila, Italy, Friday, July 10, 2009. (AP)

ship was expanded to seven the following year with the addition of Canada, and to the present eight in 1997 when Russia joined. The group meets annually, rotating among the eight countries.

However, in recent years there has been a dramatic expansion and dispersion of global economic power outside the G-8, a trend accelerated by a recession

that has hit the U.S. and Europe particularly hard while allowing some developing economies to keep growing.

China is now the third-largest economy in the world after the U.S. and closing in fast on No. 2 Japan. Nonmembers Brazil and Spain both have stronger economies than Canada, which ranked only No. 11 on the 2008 list

of world economies by the International Monetary Fund.

"The days in which a handful of European and Atlantic countries could dictate to the rest of the world are passing," said William Galston, a scholar at the Washington-based Brookings Institution and a former Clinton administration official.

"The G-8 is still useful for dis-

cussing items of common interest among the European and North American democracies, but for many purposes it ought to be expanded," Galston said.

Still, some of the fast-growing new economic powerhouses do not want to be full members of the club "because they have to accept all the responsibility ... they are not ready," said John Kirton of the G-8 Research Group at the University of Toronto. He said this includes decisions by G-8 members to commit resources and, if necessary, troops to hot spots like Afghanistan.

To many, the so-called Group of 20 - formed last year to combat the spreading global recession - seems more relevant. It includes G-8 countries along with China, India, Brazil and many other fast-growing economies. It first met last November in Washington, then this April in London, and will meet again in September in Pittsburgh.

Some see it as a good candidate to replace the G-8 as the top forum for dealing with global challenges.

But so far, the G-20 has not stood "the test of experience," said Reginald Dale, a Europe scholar at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.