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Mr. K. Sritaran Secretary General of the Eelam Tamils Association of America spoke openly with "The New Saivite World" in sharing the separatist view.

New Saivite World: What is the status of the Lanka crisis?

Mr. Sritaran: There is a stalemate now between the Tamils and the Sinhalese. In fact, India has offered their good offices to assist in negotiating a settlement. One of the proposals, I understand, is a federal setup, like you find in Canada, USA, India. This was offered to the SL government as a way that this problem could be solved and keep a united Ceylon. It would be a federal form of constitution whereby the Tamils can have their original autonomy and the Sinhalese can have their autonomy and the central government can have the defense, external and foreign affairs, currency controls and so forth. In that way, you don't have to divide the country. The main point here is that the Sinhalese have to be prepared to share the power and allow the Tamils to rule themselves. This is one idea.

Q: Are negotiations underway?

A: The government has rejected everything and postponed the arrival of the Indian envoy, Mr. Parathasathy, representative to Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, indefinitely. He was to be the mediator, and we accepted the offer of medication. What the SL government does when they say no is first postpone. then things do not take place. They are now trying to play the same game with the Indian people. They want to keep the Tamil minority a suppressed nation, or they want to have the whole of Ceylon as pure Buddhist country. Now in SL you find a defacto separation, because the Tamils no longer live in the Sinhalese areas. There is no transportation. If J.R. Jayawardene has any intention of solving the problem, then he must withdraw his armed forces, especially from the north and East. That is the

main irritant in this whole situation - the occupational forces in the North and East, roughly 7-8,000 now. The Tamil youth feel that they can handle this army effectively, and they are also preparing on one side.

Q: Is there any truth to reports of Sinhala colonization?

A: Yes, recently truth is a case in Vadarmunai, in the Eastern Province near Batticaloa. After these riots the Sinhalese from Polonnaruwa. Mr. Nelson, a Member of Parliament from this area, brought about 5-6000 Sinhalese people and forcefully chased away the Tamils. To protect them, they put up two police stations in front of those settlements. They are still there. That happened last month.

Q: Do you know if private properties have been confiscated?

According to the government, they have taken over lands to prevent the Sinhalese from coming in and occupying Tamil houses. They say the Tamils cannot rebuild those houses, that they must take it over rebuild it, that it now belongs to the state. Even if I have built a house and paid for everything and it is free from all encumbrances, now the government builds it again and I have to pay for it again to the government.

Q: What does Eelam see as the best course of action?

A: There are two ways of thinking. One is non-violent, a Satyagraha form of struggle started by the TULF and the Tamil people. But the Tamil Youths feel that non-violence does not work. They have tried for the last 30 years, and it has not worked. So there is a group of Tamil youths who want to achieve their ends by violence, and more or less they have achieved what they have wanted so far...The next best things that anybody could do would be to form a government in exile. The best course of action is to fight it out among ourselves. The Sinhalese must realize that it is in their interests to settle this once and for all. If it not settled, then must realize that it is they who will be the ones to suffer...India is very concerned, and there are over 50 million Tamils in South India. We are saying now that Eelam is inevitable for India's security. It's definitely going to happen. The only question is

how and when.