

Terrorist label irks Tamil tigers. (1994, August 26). *The Toronto star*.

## Terrorist label irks Tamil Tigers

Re The Star's editorial, *Sri Lankan election* (Aug. 19), in which the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are referred to as "Tamil Liberation Tiger terrorists." We object to the reference to the Tigers as terrorists.

For decades, the Tamils pursued a peaceful path of political struggle. For a quarter of a century, the Tamils pleaded for a Tamil homeland within united Sri Lanka. Pacts and agreements made by the ruling governments with Tamil leaders were unilaterally abrogated by the same Sinhalese governments. It was when the Tamils were presented with no alternative, other than to defend themselves against a savage form of genocidal oppression, there arose the phenomenon of armed resistance. Thus, the birth of the Liberation Tigers as saviors against the Sri Lankan state terrorism.

Also, we wish to correct the remark: "Separatist Tamil Hindu rebels." The defensive armed struggle of the Tamils is not waged by Hindus alone; it includes Christians and Muslims as well. The conflict in Sri Lanka is not religious, but ethnic.

The boycott of the election is not on "orders" from the Tigers. The bulk of the Tamil population knows these elections bring no salvation under a unitary form of constitution that assures the permanent rule of the majority Sinhalese.

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