

Sri Lankan may seek extradition of Tamil. (1986, September 24). *The Ottawa Citizen*.

# Sri Lanka may seek extradition of Tamil

By Stephen Bindman  
Citizen staff writer

A Tamil refugee who has accused the Sri Lankan high commissioner to Canada of torture says a threat to seek his extradition to his homeland is a "despicable and desperate attempt" to discredit him.

The war of words between local Tamils and the Sri Lankan High Commission flared Tuesday after a government minister in Colombo said the country is considering whether to attempt to have Umapathisivan Pararajasegaran stand trial in Colombo.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali told a press conference his government is reviewing its evidence against Pararajasegaran in connection with the attempted murder in 1978 of a former Tamil member of parliament of the ruling United National party.

Sri Lanka may seek extradition now because it did not know of the Tamil's whereabouts until he recently made the allegations about the past military activities of High Commissioner Tissa Weeratunga, the government spokesman said.

An External Affairs spokesman confirmed Canada does not have an extradition treaty with the country and therefore no obligation to co-operate with a request.

In a sworn affidavit to Amnesty International, Pararajasegaran says Weeratunga — in 1979 the army commander in the northern district of Jaffna — personally supervised sessions in which he was tortured.

In an interview Tuesday, Pararajasegaran said he was about 300 kilometres away from Colombo working on a refugee farm when the MP was shot.

Pararajasegaran said he was arrested the day after the incident, but released without charges a day later.

Another Sri Lankan minister, acting Foreign Affairs Minister Tyrone Fernando, called the accusations against Weeratunga a "well-orchestrated campaign of slander."

He also hinted at reprisals against Canadian diplomats if the government decides to inquire into Weeratunga's record.