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## Cover Story

# Dining with terrorists

by Judi McLeod, Canadafreepress.com

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No one should have been surprised that the same Tamils who supply guns to terrorists are collecting money in Canada for the tsunami victims of South Asia.

Long before devastating tsunami waves claimed tens of thousands of souls in Sri Lanka, the Canadian Liberal government had

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established a record for being soft on Tamil Tiger fundraising.

Both Prime Minister Paul Martin when he was Minister of Finance and Member of Parliament Maria Minna attended a May 2000, \$600-a-plate fund raising dinner organized by a front organization for the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Genial dinner hosts to Martin and Minna, Tamil Tigers have been pegged as the most ruthless and murderous terrorist group in the world.

Neither Martin nor Minna ever apologized for breaking bread with terrorists, and in fact both were re-elected in last June's Canadian federal election.

Canada is now home to approximately 200,000 Sri Lankans, and has the dubious distinction of being host country to the biggest Tamil Diaspora in the world.

Petitions to the government claim that Canada, albeit unwittingly has opened its doors to some 8,000 paramilitary-trained Tamil terrorists contrary to its own immigration laws.

Long before the tsunamis hit, Martin and Minna triggered public outrage by ignoring national and global interests and trying to secure the ethnic vote by what some call political pandering.

Canadian relief efforts have shown that the Liberals have yet to curb fund-raising by LTTE front groups who continue to operate on Canadian soil.

In the aftermath of the tsunami tragedy, Minna was openly critical of the speedy relief effort of the United States.

"I have serious concerns about this coalition that the United States is putting together," said Minna. My reaction to this is very negative. It sounds like this is (Bush's) counterpart of the coalition of the



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willing in Iraq. I resent it. We are coming across like we are joining a coalition of the willing of the U.S."

The victims of South Asia are desperate for help not politics.

Minna, described by *Canada Free Press* columnist Arthur Weinreb as the "unphotogenic and charismatically-challenged replacement for American-bashing MP Carolyn Parish wasn't long in bringing Liberal government anti-Americanism to a new level.

In June of 2000, more than 400 Sri Lankans living in Canada converged on Parliament Hill, urging the government to crack down on fund-raising by LTTE front organizations. According to the *Ceylon Daily News*, it was the largest anti-LTTE show-of-force ever held in Canada.

"We are here to thank the Liberal Government for its endorsement of the UN convention banning fund-raising by terrorists organizations," said Daya Hettiaracchchi of the Sri Lankan United National Association (SLUNA) of Toronto.

The demonstration was spurred by unprecedented negative publicity the LTTE and its front organizations have received in Canada. Canadian media, spearheaded by Canada's national newspaper the *National Post* have been critical of the way the ruling Liberals handled the issue of LTTE fund-raising in Canada.

Newspapers, the parliamentary opposition, academics and former Canadian diplomats were highly critical of then Finance Minister Paul Martin and International Cooperation Minister Maria Minna, who that May had attended the dinner hosted by the Federation of Associations of Canadian Tamils (FACT).

"Why do Liberals stoop so low for Tamil votes?" read some of the placards carried by demonstrators.

According to a recent report authored by international terrorism expert Rohan Gunaratne, Tamil Tiger fronts in Canada raised about \$22 million in 2001, with most of the money filling LTTE coffers. Money raised in Canada is channeled to European bank accounts and is subsequently used for the purchase of arms and explosives by the LTTE.

Meanwhile, little wonder that a letter writer to the *Post* commenting on Martin's trip to the Tsunami Zone wrote: "Haven't people there suffered enough?"

*Canada Free Press* founding editor [Judi McLeod](#) is an award-winning journalist with 30 years experience in the media. A former *Toronto Sun* and *Kingston Whig Standard* columnist, she has also appeared on *Newsmax.com*, the *Drudge Report*, *Foxnews.com*, and *World Net Daily*. Judi can be reached at: [letters@canadafreepress.com](mailto:letters@canadafreepress.com). You can read your [Letters to the Editor](#) here.



The sidebar on the right side of the page features a vertical image of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a teal top. Below the image is a search filter interface with the following elements:

- A dark blue header with the text "Seeking a".
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- A "Search Free" button.
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