

# **BROKEN PROMISES OF SINHALA LEADERS**

**AN HISTORICAL  
RECORD OF HOW SINHALA  
LEADERS MAKE AND BREAK  
*COMPILED AND EDITED BY*  
**M.THIRUNAVUKKARASU****

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### FOREWORD

In recognition of the war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Sri Lankan government and its authorities, we need to ask whether there is a unique case or distinct crime here. The answer is, YES! The genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka has taken place over a period of time involving several steps and strategies. This includes continuous dismantling and destruction of the essential foundations of human life, of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. To be precise, the Sri Lankan government has employed the ‘doctrine of double effect’, the brutal military resolution of the ethnic conflict combined with the long-term strategy of ethnic cleansing. This ‘doctrine of double effect’ has been the most unmistakable exhibition of the **genocidal intent** of the State and its Sinhala chauvinism. We need to recognize the fact that the genocidal war was caused to eliminate the de facto State and therefore real ‘reconciliation’ comes only when the national question is internationally addressed and when appropriate steps are taken to this effect by the international community. This volume “Broken Promises- An Historical Record of How Sinhala Leaders Make and Break”, compiled and edited by an eminent scholar-teacher

Mr. Thiruunavvukarasu is another remarkable revelation of the Sri Lankan government’s strategy of double speak regarding the Tamil Question.

The Tamil Question today is more political than ever before after the Sri Lankan government’s attempt to resolve ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka through a brutal military means has been recognized by the growing number of international governments and the global civil society. The criminalisation of the State and politics in Sri Lanka cannot simply be comprehended by the extent of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Sri Lankan armed forces. We need a more organized and methodical approach towards understanding of the Sinhala polity and the culpability of the State for the crimes committed against the innocent Tamils and the genocide of Tamils in Sri Lanka. This edited volume is certainly an important contribution towards understanding of the nature of Sri Lankan polity and the Sinhala chauvinist leadership resulting in the emergence of a rogue State in South Asia.

by

RAMU MANIVANNAN

# INTRODUCTION

## A CONTINUING HISTORY OF BROKEN PROMISES.

Who should take the initiative to set in motion the peace process?

It is evident to all unbiased observers that the Tamil nationality has been oppressed by the Sinhalese in modern times.

At every important juncture and at every decisive moment, the Sinhalese leaders have been very lavish in giving promises to the Tamils; but when the crisis has passed, they have failed to keep their pledges.

Making promises and then reneging on them - this is one of the techniques of oppression and deceit adopted by the Sinhalese leadership which feels no compunction in breaking its pledges overnight.

The Sinhala oppressors have recourse to the myths propagated by the Mahavamsa in order to justify their oppression and killing of the Tamils. This chauvinistic mindset induced by the Mahavamsa has nothing to do with a genuinely Buddhist culture. This is why a respected Pali Scholar like the late. Dr. E.W.Adikaram remarked after the tragic events of Black July 1983, that the only way of ensuring that there was no repetition of such a tragedy was to burn all the copies of the Mahavamsa..

So called Sinhala intellectuals who have imbibed the Mahavamsa view that the Tamils are "aliens" and "invaders" have injected this unhistorical and dangerous ideology into the minds of ordinary, innocent Sinhalese.

The Sinhalaunist class, ranging from politicians, bureaucrat so journalists, intellectuals and text - book writers ensure that this pernicious Mahavamsa ideology is reproduced

especially through the text books used in Schools so that the average Sinhalese becomes mentally warped for life: Tamil phobia is injected into him or her at a very impressionable age. Who can blame him/her then for developing a pathological hatred for the Tamils?

If one looks at the evidence dispassionately, one can discern that the Tamils and the Sinhalese have branched from one common megalithic culture which has been rooted in the Island since 1000 BC or earlier. Ethnically the Sinhalese are the brethren of the Tamils. In fact since the Sinhalese were not subjected to Brahminical culture to the same extent as the Tamils, they have better preserved some megalithic patterns than the Tamils.

Viewed from this angle the Tamils and the Sinhalese are co - owners of this Island along with the Muslims who too despite some peoples' claims of Arab descent have branched from one and the same ethnic stock.

Nationalism is a relatively modern ideology which was formulated and developed in the West. Americans, Canadians and Australians for example are comparatively recent nationality formations.

Viewed in this perspective, the Tamils and the Sinhalese have been in the Island as two distinct nationalities in modern times. So the problems of the Tamils should be looked at as a national question.

If one looks at the history of the relationship between these two nationalities in the early years of this century, one cannot help noticing that the leading Sinhalese politicians paid lip service to the rights of the Tamils and lavished promises on them in the past. But eventually they betrayed their own pledges. Before they come to power and once they lose power they suffer total loss of memory. This amnesia has become the characteristic of all Sinhalese politicians, irrespective of party affiliations.

The oppression of the Tamils by the Sinhalese has led to the burial of democracy in Sri Lanka. Democracy cannot flourish if the culture and identity of the other communities are not respected and valued.

That democracy and respect for the culture and values of communities who happen to be numerically smaller are inseparable is well borne out by what happened during the J.R.Jayewardene regime..

His government turned the Tamil areas into killing fields where his armed forces gained the necessary expertise to kill the democracy of the Sinhalese. The lesson is plain, the truth stark : there can be no democracy in Sri Lanka, without democracy for the Tamils. Only if the State ceases to oppress the Tamils, can much needed political reforms be carried out and the cause of democracy be advanced in Sri Lanka...

The periodical holocausts since 1958, 1977, 1981 & 1983 clearly show that the Tamils have become the scape - goats for the Sinhalese leadership; whenever the Sinhala leaders face internal problems and mounting pressures from their people, they cleverly divert the peoples' anger against the Tamils. The Sinhala leaders' tactic seems to be: make lavish promises to the Tamils to capture power; once in power, to forget these promises. When faced with a crisis, the Sinhala leaders will not hesitate to turn the anger of the Sinhala masses against Tamils.

The average Sinhalese tends to confuse nationalism with racism, as the Sinhala word "jati", which denotes a race is also the word used to denote nationalism in modern Sinhala usage.

The ruling Sinhalese elite has taken advantage of this semantic confusion to inject the poison of racism into the minds of the ordinary Sinhalese.

Consequently the Sinhala masses have been conditioned to think that the armed struggle of the Tamils is the root cause of the ethnic problem; they are unable to conceive that the Tamil militancy is a response to conditions of oppression.

It is against this background of the mind-set of the Sinhala masses that one should understand Chandirika's slogan of "peace". This move of hers on the political chessboard makes sense only if it is understood in its dual, Janus-faced aspects: the Sinhalese will construe it as a small "concession" to induce the Tigers to lay down their arms so that ethnic harmony may prevail; Chandirika's "other face" is designed to give the Tamils and the international community the impression that it is only she who can provide, an equitable solution to the ethnic problem.

It is worthy of note that though both at the Parliamentary elections held in 1994 and at the Presidential election Chandirika waxed eloquent about "peace" she did not place before the people any concrete detailed programme for the solution of the ethnic problem.

The fact is that Chandirika is not genuinely concerned about peace. In the context of a deep - rooted Sinhala chauvinism, only revolutionary politics can solve the Tamil national question.

Chandirika is certainly no revolutionary nor is the People's Alliance a revolutionary party.

Those who are naive enough to believe that Chandirika can solve the problem, reckon without certain realities: Chandirika is under pressure from all quarters: the Armed Forces, the bureaucracy, the Press, the Buddhist clergy, the intelligentsia and factions within the Government and the party. Only a person who can adopt a revolutionary approach to the problem can overcome the opposition, jointly and severally of all these chauvinist forces and find a solution to the problem. The attempt to propose a solution while trying to placate all these adversarial forces is doomed to end in failure.

## **Conference Between Delegates ...**

### **CONFERENCE BETWEEN DELEGATES: OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE CEYLON TAMIL MAHA JANA SABHAI**

**SECTION II** - Extracts from minutes of the Executive Committee meetings.

#### **“CONFERENCE WITH TAMILS...”**

“The President suggested that a large number of Congress delegates including full representation of outstations be appointed to meet the Tamil leaders. He stated he is in correspondence and will be able to give fuller details at next meeting of the committee” (s.2.is2)

“As regards the conference between the delegates of the Congress and the Tamil Maha Jana Sabhai, the President intimated that he received a telegram from the Hon. Mr. W.Duraiswamy informing that the names of the delegates would soon be submitted to meet the Congress delegates. The following Sub - Committee was appointed to take all necessary steps for such a conference: Mr.C.E.Corea (President), the Hon. Messrs P.De S.Kularatne / N.H.Jayatilake, Geo.E.deSilva, A.E.Goonesinghe, M.A.Arul Anandan, Dr. E.V.Ratnam, C.W.Perera, Dr.S.Muttiah (Hong Secretaries)” (is.iszs)

“The Secretary submitted to the Committee for consideration the following report of the conference held at Jaffna between the delegates of the National Congress and the Ceylon Maha Jana Sabhai, at “Mahendra” Jaffna, 28th June 1925.

This conference is agreed

1. That as regards the Legislative Council, the representation of the Northern and Eastern Provinces and of the Ceylon Tamils in the Western Province and the territorial representation of the rest of the Island in any future constitution shall be in the proportion of one( 1 ) to two(2) as at present.
2. That there shall be in the Ceylon National Congress a Subjects Committee of not more than 35 members who shall be in respect of interests represented in the Congress in the following proportion : eight(8) for the Southern Division of the Island, eight(8) for the Central Division of the Island, eight(8) for the Northern Division of the Island, four(4) for the Muslims, three(3) for the Indian inhabitants of the Island, two(2) for the Burghers and two(2) for the Europeans.
3. Any resolution or amendment to be placed before the Congress must be passed by a majority of the Subjects Committee.
4. If the majority of any particular Division or Community states that any resolution or amendment prejudicially affects their interests such resolution or amendment must be passed by a three - fourths majority of the Subjects Committee, before it is placed before the Congress.
5. Whenever the word "majority" is mentioned it is understood that it is the majority of members present;
6. It is agreed that the representatives of the Northern Division in the Subjects Committee are to be nominated by the Ceylon Tamil Maha Jana Sabbai.
7. By the Southern Division of the Island is meant the Western Province, the Southern province, and the Chilaw - Puttalam District of the North Western Province (exclusive of the Demala

Hatpattu); by the Central Division of the Island is meant the Central Province / the North Central Province, the Uva Province, the Sabaragamuwa Province, and the Kurunegalle District together with the Demala Ratpattu of the Northern Western Province; by the Northern Division of the Island is meant the Northern and Eastern Provinces (emphasis added) (19.12.1925)

DELEGATES OF  
THE CEYLON TAMIL  
MAHA JANA SABHAI

(Signed)  
W.Duraiswamy.  
A. Canagaratnam  
S. Rajaratnam  
(Signed)  
A.R.Subramaniam  
L. R. Spencer,  
F.Baily Mylvaganam,  
T.R. Nalliah,  
S.C Tambiah,  
S.R. Rasaratnam,

DELEGATES OF  
THE CEYLON  
NATIONAL CONGRESS.

(Signed)  
C.E. Victor S.Corea,  
N.H. Jayatilake,  
Geo E. De Silva,  
M.A. Arul Ananadam,  
(Signed)  
P. De S. Kularatne,  
R.S.S Gunawardane,  
S. Muttiah.

This implicitly emphasises the important fact that the Sinhalese Leaders accepted the Northern and Eastern Provinces as one SINGLE UNIT of the TAMILS -

[S.W.R.D. BANDARANAIKE (Ed), *HAND BOOK :  
THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS, Colombo 1928*].

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**S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike,**  
**“FEDERATION AS THE ONLY SOLUTION TO OUR POLITICAL PROBLEM”**, speech, at Student Congress meeting, Jaffna /

“...The minorities looked with mistrust one at the other. It is wrong to think that the difference were not fundamental. There were men who thought that the differences were created by a few ambitious persons and when those persons died the differences would disappear. A hundred years ago there were no such differences. They did not appear because the Englishman sat on the heads of the Tamil, the Low country Sinhalese and the Kandyan Sinhalese.

“The moment they began to speak of taking the Government in their hands, then the differences that were lying dormant smouldered forth. If they considered past history they would see that the three communities, the Tamils, the low - country Sinhalese and the Kandyan Sinhalese had lived for over a thousand years in Ceylon and had not shown any tendency to merge. They preserved their language, their customs, their religion. He would be a very rash man who would pin his faith on the gradual disappearance of those differences.

complete “In Ceylon each province should have autonomy. There should be one or two assemblies to deal with the special revenue of the Island. A thousand and one objections could be raised against the system but when objections were dissipated, he was convinced that some form of Federal Government would be the only solution”

**Ceylon Morning Leader, July 17, 1926.**

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**Tamil also should be given an equal status with Sinhalese**  
- J.R. Jayewardena, R.S.S.Gunawardena and S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike

**J.R.Jayewardena**, Hansard May 24, 1944.

“...I wish to obtain the permission of the House to amend my motion by the inclusion of the words “and Tamil”after the word “Sinhalese” wherever the word occurs” (Page 746)

“...if it is the desire of the Tamils, that Tamil also should be given an equal status with Sinhalese, I do not think we should bar it from attaining that position.” (Page 748)

**R.S.S.Gunawardena**, Hansard, May 24; 1994.

“But so long as we find two sections of the community speaking , two languages, it is necessary that both languages should be recognised as official languages, That would be a solution of our difficulties. (P. 760)

**S.W.R.D.Bandaranaike**, Hansard, May 25,1944

‘ ... The Tamil language, is the language of a considerable section of the people of the county. The literature of the Tamil language is a very important one. ...I feel that it would be ungenerous on our part as Sinhalese not to give due recognition to the Tamil language” (P. 810)

“I do not see that there would be any harm at all in recognising the Tamil Language also as an official language. It is necessary to bring about that amity, that confidence, among the various communities which we are all striving to achieve within reasonable limits. Therefore, on the second point, I have no personal objection to both these languages being considered official languages ; nor do I see any particular harm or danger or real difficulty arising from it.” (P. 811)

“If the object is that it is rather awkward to have more than one official language. I should like to point out that other countries are putting up with more that two official languages and are carrying on reasonably satisfactorily” (P. 811)

## THE CEYLON COMMUNIST PARTY'S RESOLUTIONS AND MEMORANDA AND THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS

(October- November 1944)

“This Committee declares that Ceylon's future development will not be along the lines of a one nation unitary state, with all except the Sinhalese people being regarded as minorities living within this state. As in fact there are two distinct nations historically evolved nationalities in Ceylon - The Sinhalese and the Tamils - **each with their own contiguous territory as their homeland**, their own language, economic life, as interspersed minorities living in the territories of these nationalities, this Committee declares that the constitution of a free Ceylon must be based on the following principles:- (Emphasis added)

(a) Recognition as the equality and the sovereignty of the people of Ceylon.

(b) (d) Recognition that the Indians, now in Ceylon, who wish to make Ceylon their permanent home and adopt Ceylon citizenship should be given the same rights and privileges as any other community in Ceylon (.zs7s-7s1

### B. RESOLUTIONS OF THE CEYLON COMMUNIST PARTY

(Oct.1944)

#### SECOND RESOLUTION :

“This rally of Colombo citizens, called by the Ceylon Communist Party, declares that in order to achieve unity between the different communities and common demand for the recognition of independence and a free constitution, it is necessary to recognise that the development of Ceylon is taking and will take a multi - national form and that a united and Free Ceylon can be realised only on the basis of guaranteeing full and equal opportunities for the development of all nationalities in Ceylon.

“As there are distinct historically evolved nationalities - for instance, the Sinhalese and Tamil - with their own contiguous territory as their homeland, their own language, economic life, culture and psychological make - up, as well as interspersed

minorities living in the territories of these nationalities, this meeting declares that the constitution of a free and united Ceylon should be based on the following democratic principles:-

(b) Recognition that the nationalities should have the unqualified right to self determination, including the right, if ever they so desire, to form their own independent state;

(d) Recognition that these Indians, now in Ceylon, who are prepared to make this Country, their own permanent homeland and adopt Ceylon citizenship, should have same rights and privileges as any other community. (Pp 2577-78)

Micheal Roberts(ED), *Documents on Ceylon National Congress*

### 124 : C MEMORANDUM ON A FEDERAL CONSTITUTION

Two stages:

5. The second point of departure of our recognition is, therefore, building up of the unity of all sections of the people to win the freedom of our Country and to maintain that freedom on the basis of the unity and equality of all nationalities and minorities in Ceylon. **UNITY OF THE PEOPLE CANNOT BE REALISED WITHIN ANY OTHER FRAMEWORK AND THIS CONTINUED SUBJECT STATUS OF OUR COUNTRY** Any attempt at building unity with those who do not stand for Freedom for Ceylon is doomed to failure.

First Stage - Recognition of principles.

7. In the First Stage, we consider that what is essential is a recognition of principles which would eliminate the fear of the non - Sinhalese people, ensure them of their right to free development and thus bring them into the common united national front. (Pp.2580-81 )

**MICHAEL ROBERTS (ed), Documents of the Ceylon National Congress in Ceylon, Colombo(1977).**

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## **D.S.SENANAYAKE AND FRANCIS MOLAMURE APPEAL FOR CO - OPERATION**

**D.S.Senanayake**, Hansard, November 8, 1945

“I am sure that their (Tamils) great men of the last generation would have been with us in this great struggle for freedom. For centuries the Sinhalese and the Tamils have lived together in peace and amity. We have been governed by their kings and they by ours. I cannot believe that they are solidly behind the reactionary elements which have seized the headlines. What is the good of six pages of long winded resolutions at this stage of our history? I put this question bluntly to my Tamil friends. Do you want to be governed from London or do you want, as Ceylonese, to help govern Ceylon? I appeal to them no to let the ambition of a few politicians stand in the way of freedom of our dear Lanka. Shall the most ancient of our civilisations sink to the level of dull and dreamy negation? We all know and admire their special qualities. They are essential to the welfare of this Island, and I ask them to come over and help us” (C.6931) (*emphasis added*)

**F. Molamure** (Balangoda), Hansard, November 8, 1945

“...I do admire the editorial that appeared in the Times of Ceylon a day after the Soulbury Report arrived in Ceylon.

They called upon all their adherents and those whom they had supported to act now in unison with the majority community and to give Ceylon a fair deal.

“When they do not give what they wanted, and when an award is given, they must accept it if they are said to know any kind of discipline whatsoever. So, I would ask this the Tamil Congress Party - to give us a fair chance; of to give us a trial; to come in with us to enable this constitution which is offered to us to be given a fair trial. After all, let them see when we have more

power in our hands whether the majority community is going to, as they say, dominate over them or whether it is going to be fair to them.” (C.7004)

Hansard, November 9, 1945:

“I wish to make one last appeal before I sit down. That appeal is to all. My appeal to the minorities is to trust us and work in co - operation with us Sir, it is absolutely necessary that the members of the minority communities in this Country should have full confidence in the majority, confidence if we are to carry on the Government of the Country, efficiently and well.” (C.7008)

“So that if some of us, one or two of us, sometimes say hard things, I sincerely trust, that the members of the minority communities will forgive us and forget that we have said these things.

“It is true that in the past we have said some bitter things concerning the minorities, when we considered their demands and what they wanted from us, but I do not trust that they will not bear any grudge against the majority community of this Country for any remarks that may all fall from the lips of some of us. Last night the Hon.member for Trincomalee (Mr. Nalliah) said certain things which, I know, will be resented by minority communities. But we must realise that it is the exuberance of youth that makes him say all those things, and when such members come tomorrow years, as some of us have come to, I am certain that those sentiments will disappear”. (700)

#### **D. S. Senanayake:**

“I am glad that there is hope in the hearts of the minorities. There is determination on our part to cement the good feelings that exist in the Country now. My good friend the Member for Balangoda (Mr.Molamure) and the Minister of Local Administration have given to our feelings, and can assure those communities

that every Sinhalese here is worthy of the trust placed in us and will not disgrace our ancestors. We shall see that good feeling is fostered, as far as the Sinhalese, to the best of our ability.” (C.7050)  
“The pity of it is that some people doubt that; there are those who have the snobbish idea that Indians are not wanted here. I can assure the Indians that we do not have that idea. We respect the Indians, we love the Indians, we admire them and we look up to most of them. There is hardly any difference between the view of my Hon. Friend the Indian Nominated member, and my view. My Hon.

‘friend tells us, oh, we do not want dual citizenship’ and I tell him, ‘well, if you want to live here, we will embrace you.’ Both of us have the same ideas, but the method of approach is the only thing that differs . . . ‘ ( cc. 7100 - 7101 )

*BY THE CEYLON CITIZENSHIP ACT, NO. 18 OF 1949 AND BY THE CEYLON (PARLIAMENT ELECTIONS) AMENDMENT ACT, NO. 48 OF 1949, D. S. SENANAYAKE*

*BETRAYED THE ‘INDIAN TAMILS’.*

*D. S. SENANAYAKE: ADOPTED THE POLICY KILL BY KINDNESS IN THE CASE OF SENSITIVE ISSUES, HE WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS TACTICIAN AGAINST THE TAMILS.*

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## FROM PARITY OF STATUS TO SINHALA ONLY

“... our essential task was to create a nation and build up our people not with one language but with two perhaps, three.”D.S.SENANAYAKE said in 1949:- quoted by N.F. Perera Hansard, October 19, 1955, C.577, also quoted in Centre for Society and Religion, Race Relations in Sri Lanka, Colombo ( 1978), (P.72;

**SLFP in 1951** Some relevant portions from the Manifesto and Constitution of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party ( 1951 ) “The question of adoption of Sinhalese and Tamil as Official Languages is further from the solution than ever before...” (P.6)

1. “Our immediate programme is as follow: -’

1 (b) “The equal rights of all citizens to whatever caste, community or religion they may belong.” (P.8)

3. “National Language”

3(b) “It is most essential that Sinhalese and Tamil be adopted as official languages immediately so that the people of this Country may cease to be aliens in their own land; so that an end may be put to the iniquity of condemning those educated in Sinhalese and Tamil to occupy the lowest walks of life; and above all that society may have administration of government must be carried on in Sinhalese and Tamil” P.9

**D.S.Senanayake**, Hansard 24, July 1951.

“We decided that Sinhalese and Tamils should be the National language. We have appointed a Commission to give effect to that. Whenever possible we got people with the knowledge of Sinhalese and Tamil into the Public Service and we

are going on with that practice and are trying our best to maintain it. How soon we would be able to give effect to that decision of ours to introduce Sinhalese and Tamil as official languages depends on the success of the university and the pundits. The Commission will see how that could be done. In this instance, although we decided that the official languages should be Sinhalese only and, if the Tamils like it, Tamil also. In spite of the fact that it was pointed out at the U.N.P. Committee Meeting that the decision was that Sinhalese and Tamil should be the official languages and that we were doing our best to introduce them, this resolution places the Tamil language in a doubtful position. “In fact, I remember the occasion. when at a U.N.P. Committee Meeting the question of introduction of Sinhalese and Tamil as official languages was considered. There were certain people at that meeting who felt that Sinhalese should be the official language, and the reason was the ancient culture and association of the Sinhalese. It was then stated that Tamils also could claim to have a culture of their own. It was ultimately decided that if the culture of the Sinhalese has to be preserved as it is to the benefit of the community, then the culture of Tamils also has to be preserved. That was the decision of the U.N.P. That was the decision of the Parliament. In spite of all that to put that decision now altogether varied and to keep the Tamil language in suspense is not the right attitude. Of course, the reason that was given for having worded the motion in that way was that the Sinhala Sabha has no objection. That shows the danger of communal organisations dabbling with politics in Ceylon.” (cc.1550-1551) “Identical status for Tamils and Sinhalese” \*

Premier **Sir John Kotelawela** ( 1954)

“The United National party, of which I am the Head, stands for development through co - operation. It eschews communalism and all forms of sectionalism in politics. It gave a clear indication of its mind on the language problem when it adopted a resolution

that the Tamil and Sinhalese languages should have identical status throughout the Island. This resolution has been adopted by the Government Parliamentary Party, and my Government intends to uphold its stand fastly," said John Kotalewela, the Premier of Sri Lanka in replying to the Address of welcome presented to him in a silver casket by the reception committee. He said further, "This is no mere lip service to an ideal, but an assurance that we intend to adhere to the resolution in the letter and in the spirit."

*The Hindu Organ 1 st October 1954. See also Eelakesari, (Tamil Weekly, Jaffna), 3rd October 1954*

#### **DR. N.M. PERERA, LEFTIST, ON PARITY OF STATUS**

Hansard October 19, 1955:

##### **Dr N.M.Perera**

I move

' That is the opinion of this house, The Ceylon (Constitution) Order in Council should be amended forthwith to provide for the Sinhalese and Tamil languages to be state languages of Ceylon with parity of status throughout the Island." (57z-7s)

Not with standing may be the traditions we have had - that we want to build up unity in diversity, if that is our objective, then I say, in all earnestness that we must take a course of action which will enable us to achieve that object." (575)

"Mr. Speaker, I want in the first instance to ask this question: What are we aiming at. What is the objective we have in mind for this Country? Do we want a united, strong and integrated Nation or not? Our attitude to that will determine the answer to the question I have posed in this motion. Do we want that or do we not? That, I submit, is the most important question that

Hon. Members have to face.

"If all of us agreed that, that is our objective, that we must endeavour to build up a united nation in this country - notwithstanding the diverse cultures we have, not with standing the diversities of language we have."(574)

##### **(Dr. N. M. Perera)**

All I want to say is that it is quite conceivable that if we had never been a colony, this language problem would never have arisen in this country. Nobody would have accepted the inevitable position and continued with the language that, for historical reasons, would have become the only one possible in the Country, we have to recognise that fact whether we like it or not." (579)

"That was one of the items in our first programme issued by the Lanka Samajamaja Party that the administration of the Country should be in Sinhalese and Tamil (583).

"I was trying to point out to Hon. Members that it is not enough for us merely to mouth phrases and say that the minority communities need not have any fears. It is not enough to say that the minority communities have nothing to fear from the majority community that in the past all have got on well and that we will get on in the same old way it is not enough for you to say, "we will continue to treat you like this. Please do not have any fears."

"That is not enough today. Today the situation has gone beyond that today. We have to do something positive in order to allay these fears that are increasing. What is worse if we do not take a positive stand, we will continue to give room for Sinhalese chauvinists to do what damage they can. That also has to be squashed if we are to cultivate the goodwill of people." (604).

“Those difficulties will be there, but that is the price we have to pay. For that conditions under which we are living - conditions brought about by our history. We cannot close our eyes to that”. (609)

“If democracy is to be treated as an arithmetical concept that whatever the majority decides must be accepted that if the majority decides that the majority religion must prevail it must be accepted merely because they have got superiority in numbers, that is not democracy. Where you have different religions, the sovereignty of the majority is automatically checked by those inalienable rights that the minorities have which cannot be overridden by the mere whim and fancy of a majority. The test of a democratic decision is the morality of the law. It is not merely a counting of heads but whether in point of fact the minorities are given full consideration of their points of view.

Democracy means an adjustment of different points of view, it means giving full weight to the rights of minority communities. That is what democracy means, it is not merely a counting of heads.” (613)

“There is no reason why they should separate unless we force them to separate by making Tamil a regional language confined to the Northern and Eastern provinces. That is what we are driving them to, that is what people who are advocating Sinhalese as the only official language do not seem to realise; if the Northern and Eastern provinces are viable, they are not going to keep quiet. They have one or two alternatives. For instance, we should be prepared to accept them as a Federation and work, give them all the assistance to make them viable and have a Federate State for Ceylon, small as it is. That is thoroughly workable and I am certain they will go away with so much disharmony and ill-feeling that the rest of Ceylon will not be

prepared to do that.

“Then what is the other alternative left for the Northern and Eastern Provinces? They must break away...

“Certainly that is what is likely to happen. That will be the Tamil minority to swallow Sinhalese and enforcing Tamil as the regional language for those areas. They will either look to other imperialist countries who will be fishing in troubled waters. (521-522).

“If you compel those people in the Northern and Eastern provinces to accept Sinhalese only as the state language and Tamil as a regional language, it will lead to so much rioting, bloodshed and civil war.

Mr. Keuneman - Ceylon will be another Korea (623)

Dr. Perera

“Why I am pleading with Hon. Members in this strain is to make them realise the dangers of the situation. We are playing with fire.” (625)

“We will all be too happy when that stage is reached, but in the interim period, we must try to allay their suspicions, make them realise that we have nothing but goodwill for them and that we want to treat them as equals. Otherwise the alternative will be disastrous. For the welfare of this Country, we shall have perpetual division of the Country. We shall never get a united Ceylon and we shall have a tremendous amount of bloodshed which will lead us nowhere and in the end this country will either become another colony or a plaything of big powers. That is what we must try and avoid. Surely, all Hon. Members in this house are interested in having this country as one united Nation, all unitedly working for the welfare of the people of this country. (C.626).

When Sinhala Only Bill was brought into Parliament in 1956,

**Mr. Leslie Gunawardane**, Hansard, June 1956:

“That is the first point which makes it difficult for us to place any trust in the assurance of the Hon. Prime Minister.

“There is also another matter that makes it difficult for us to accept his assurance and that is, as I might put it, in regard to the history of the Bill. At first, as least judging from the newspapers, we were informed that it was going to be a fairly extensive Bill with a number of clauses. Some time later, we heard that, as a result of the opposition of the Eksath Bhikkhu Peramuna and certain Government Party members to that bill on the grounds that too many concessions had been granted to the Tamil Language, the Bill was reduced to about four or five clauses. After that, the next thing we heard was that following the fast of a gentleman by the name of Mr. Jayasooriya and a virulent attack on this truncated Bill was reduced still further and today we are presented with really what could be called an apology for piece of legislation. Considering the manner in which this Bill came to be made so small, it is difficult, in those circumstances, for the Tamil Speaking Minorities to trust in the ability of the Hon. Prime Minister to give effect to his assurances.

“There is also another question. This is not a personal matter. Even, if many of us were prepared to place a great deal of trust in the sense of the Hon. Prime Minister, there is no guarantee that he will continue to be the Prime Minister even for the coming four years. In any case it would not be right and proper to decide on a place of legislation, placing trust on a particular individual.” (CC. 1099-1100)

**Mr Gunawardene:** “The other point I wish to mention is this. Our Party in opposing this Bill is also guided by another principle, namely, that the solution of this state language question is one that should be arrived at with the consent of the minorities, because our aim should be the building of a united Ceylonese Nation. I do not think that, that the aim of building a united Ceylonese Nation can be achieved without a solution of this question with the agreement and consent of the minorities.” ( C.1103)

“Finally, I pointed out that the result of forcing Sinhalese as the sole state language for official purposes on an unwilling minority brought with it great dangers. In the first place, there is the danger of communal riots. If a minority feels deeply that an injustice and a great injustice has been done, it is likely to embark upon forms of resistance and protests.” (C.1104)

**“The possibility of communal riots is not the only danger I am referring to. There is the grave danger of the division of the country, we must remember that the Northern and Eastern provinces of Ceylon are inhabited principally by Tamil speaking people, and if those people feel that a grave, irreparable injustice is done to them, there is a possibility of their deciding even to break away from the rest of the country. In fact, there is already a section of political opinion among the Tamil speaking people which is opening advocating the course of action.”** (C.1105)

“We feel that just as the Sinhalese people should have the right to be ruled in the Sinhalese language and conduct their business with the Government in the Sinhalese language, so also the Tamils should have the right to conduct their business with

the state in the Tamil language and be ruled in the Tamil Language. We feel that this bill as is, has the danger of dividing this country. We, for our part, will use all our efforts in order to prevent such a calamity from materialising, but if such a calamity does materialise, we feel that, that would result also in the destruction of whatever there is of our newly won freedom.” (C.1107)

**Mr. Samarakkody:** “In 1915 no leaders encouraged unruly elements. That was the attitude adopted in no uncertain terms by the leaders then. But the looters today are very different. They are well organised. They have got leaders behind them. They have got protection.” (c.:is66)

**Mr.Keuneman:** “They are given political patronage.”  
(C.1366)

**Mr.Samarakkody:** “Yes, they are given the patronage of certain political leaders who are associated with this Government.” (C.1366)

“But I am sure that the Sinhala people will sooner or later realise the great harm that will be done by this Bill” (C.1370)

Dr.Perera: “In point of fact, if you go back to the history of this country, you will find that the minorities have been betrayed at every possible turn, from the time of Mr.Senanayake, when the Donoughmore Constitution came up, the minorities, in particular the Indian community, were given certain promises which were broken. Then again, when the Soulbury Commission too came up, similar concessions which wore promises were denied right along. (C.1861)

I can only point this out, in 1948 when these Immigration Bills were introduced, we warned the Tamils, including my good friend the Hon. Member for Kankesanthurai (Mr. Chelvanayakam) that their turn would come next. Now may I also warn that the next turn will be of the Christians? (c.1865)

**Dr. Perera**

When I visited schools in Jaffna the Tamil children proudly recited Sinhalese verses. Tamil public servants in various departments were having special classes and studying Sinhalese; now everybody has stopped it. Can you force a people to study another language like that? That is tyranny of the worst type.  
cc. 1872

If the minorities were allowed to develop the language, naturally by continuous association with the Sinhalese people they would have felt that economic necessity would have made them to feel. So it is most desirable thing to do; I say so because the minorities want to do business in the Sinhalese areas and want to have various trade connections with them therefore would have developed the language of the majority. But what was the necessity for this compulsion? Why are you setting back this whole country for another generation - a bitterness that will never be effaced?  
C. 1872. 73.

**Dr Colvin R. De Silva,**

In the present situation, we have to face up to the inescapable and unavoidable fact that the Tamil community, one of the two major communities of our country it matters not, Sir,

which is numerically preponderant in relation to the other but it is inescapable and unavoidable fact that the Tamil community, one of the two major communities in our country has in its preponderant majority, probably in its hundred percent unity stated what it demands, wants and will insist upon its language, the Tamil language being also a state language like the language of the Sinhalese. CC. 1906

The question for statesmen, the question for wise politicians and statesmen is not whether they will stand up and issue threats to that community in respect of that demand, argue to them from unchangeable numerical communal majorities against their fundamental rights; the question is whether it is not wisdom and statesmanship to concede the demand at the beginning instead of having to concede it at the end as Pakistan had to do. CC. 1906.

**Dr. Colvin R. De Silva,**

But those whose glory should most remember that in those incidents have been displayed, exposed, for all the world to see, the true forces on which this Sinhala only Bill rests on the dark forces of communal hate; it rests on the dark forces of racial resurgence seeking in the latter part of the 20th century to replace a nationalism that is still emergent. c. 1907

It is probably our misfortune today that we are members of the Ceylonese nation and members of a nation and members of a nation which is still young, nay, very young, while the races which compose that nation are old history; it is our misfortune for this reason that Ceylonese nation still emergent, still struggling to reach adulthood has probably been hammered tether in history, amongst others, by, the major forces of foreign subjugation. C. 1907-8

**Dr. Colvin R. De Silva,**

**Let us look at it in another way. Do we, do this house, do our people want a single nation or do we want two nations? Do we want a single state or do we want two? Do we want one Ceylon or do we want two? And above all, do we want an independent Ceylon which must necessarily be united and single and single Ceylon, or two bleeding halves of Ceylon which can be gobbled up by every ravaging imperialist monster that may happen to range the Indian ocean? These are issues that in fact we have been discussing under the form and appearance of language issue.**

C. 1912.

He has, he believes, found Salvation for the Moors of Ceylon, though to my knowledge most of the Moors do not agree with him. He believes that the road to salvation for the Moors of Ceylon is to accept Sinhalese as the sole state language. As I said at the beginning, they have a right to accept it and none can say them nay, but that they do not in a majority accept it is shown by the fact that in the last few months thousands and thousands of Muslims in every part of Ceylon have turned towards the L.S.S.P. and to our knowledge thousands and thousands voted for our candidates who stood on the parity issue. But that is by the way.

C. 1912.

**Dr. Colvin R. de. Silva,**

**“... if you mistreat them (Tamils) if you illtreat them, if you misuse them. if you oppress and harass them, in that process you may cause to emerge in Ceylon, from that particular racial stock with its own particular language and tradition, a new nationality to which we will have to concede more claims than it puts forward now. It is always wiser statesmanship to give generously early instead of being niggardly too late” (emphasis added)**



“If we come to the stage where, instead of parity, we, through needless insularity, get into the position of suppressing the Tamil people from the federal demand which deems to be popular amongst them at present -if we are to judge by electoral results- there may emerge separatism.

(C. 1913)

“Parity, Mr. Speaker, we believe is the road to freedom of our nation and unity of its components. Otherwise two torn little bleeding States, may yet arise of one little State, which has compelled a large section of itself to treason, ready for the imperialists to mop up that which imperialism has only recently disgorged.”

(C. 1917)

All the promises of major Sinhala Parties were broken with the Sinhala Only Act of 1956.

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## BANDA - CHELVA AGREEMENT (PACT) OF 1957 ADJUSTMENT

### PART - A

“Representatives of the Federal Party have had a series of discussions with the Prime Minister in an effort to resolve the differences of opinion that had been growing and creating tension.

“At an early stage of these conversations it became evident that it was not possible for the Prime Minister to accede to some of the demands of the Federal Party.

“The Prime Minister stated that from the point of view of the Government, he was not in a position to discuss the setting up of a Federal Constitution, or regional autonomy, or take any step that would abrogate the Official Language Act.

“The question then arose whether it was possible to explore the possibility of an adjustment without the Federal Party abandoning or surrendering any of its fundamental principles of objectives.

“At this stage the Prime Minister suggested an examination of the Government’s draft Regional Councils Bill to see whether provision could be made under it to meet, reasonably, some of the matters in this regard which the Federal Party had in view.

“The agreements so reached are embodied in separate documents.

“Regarding the language issue, the Federal Party reiterated its stand for parity, but in view of the position of the Prime Minister in this matter they came to an agreement by way of adjustment. They pointed out that it was important for them that there should be a recognition of Tamil as a national language, and that the

administrative work of the Northern and Eastern Provinces should be done in Tamil.

“The Prime Minister stated that as mentioned by him earlier it was not possible for him to take any steps that would abrogate the Official Language Act.

“After discussion, it was agreed that the proposed legislation should contain recognition of Tamil as the language of a national minority of Ceylon, and that the four points mentioned by the Prime Minister should include provision that, without infringing on the position of the Official language as such, the language of administration of the Northern and Eastern Provinces be Tamil, and that any necessary provision be made for the non-Tamil speaking minorities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

“Regarding the question of Ceylon citizenship for people of Indian descent and the revision of the Citizenship Act, the representatives of the Federal Party put forward their views to the Prime Minister and pressed for an early settlement.

“The Prime Minister indicated that the problem would receive early consideration.

“In view of these conclusions the Federal Party stated that they were withdrawing their proposed satyagraha”.

## **PART - B**

1. REGIONAL areas to be defined in the Bill itself by embodying them in a schedule thereto.

2. THAT the Northern Provinces is to form on regional area whilst the Eastern Province is to be divided into two or more regional areas.

3. PROVISION is to be made in the Bill to enable two or more regions to amalgamate even beyond provincial limit; and for one region to divide itself subject to ratification by Parliament.

Further provision is to be made in the Bill for two or more regions to collaborate for specific purposes of common interests.

4. PROVISION is to be made for direct election of regional councillors. Provision is to be made for a delimitation commission or commissions for carving out electorates. The question of M.P.s representing districts falling within regional areas to be eligible to function as chairmen is to be considered. The question of Government Agents being in regional commissioners is to be considered. The question of supervisory functions over larger towns and municipalities to be looked into.

5. PARLIAMENT is to delegate powers and to specify them in the Act. It was agreed that regional councils should have powers over specific subjects including agriculture, co-operatives, lands and land development, colonisation, education, health, industries, and fisheries, housing, and social services, electricity, water schemes and roads. Requisite definition of powers will be made in the Bill.

6. IT was agreed that in the matter of colonisation schemes the powers of the regional councils shall include the power to select allottees to whom lands within the area of authority shall be alienated and also power to select personnel to be employed for work on such schemes. The position regarding the area at present administration by the Gal Oya Board in this matter requires consideration.

7. The powers in regard to the regional council vested in the Minister of Local Government in the draft bill to be revised with a view to vesting control in Parliament wherever necessary.

8. The Central Government will provide block grants to the regional councils. The principles on which the grants will be computed will be gone into. The regional councils shall have powers of taxation and borrowing.

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## EXCERPTS FROM TARZIE VITTACHI'S "EMERGENCY'58"

"The Prime Minister, Mr S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, presiding at the prize distribution of the Sri Gnanaratna Buddhist Sunday School. Panadura, said that knotty problems of State had been successfully tackled by invoking the principles and tenets of Buddhism. "The Middle Path, Maddiyama Prathipadawa, had been my magic wand and I shall always stick by this principle," he said. (*Ceylon Daily News*)

"Mr. Bandarnaike said much the same thing when he justified the Bandaranaike Chelvanayakam Pact at the Annual Sessions of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party held at Kelaniya on March 1 and 2.

"The relevant section of his Presidential Address is:

"In the discussion which the leaders of the Federal Party had with me an honourable solution was reached. In thinking over this problem I had in mind the fact that I am not merely a Prime Minister but a Buddhist Prime Minister.

"And my Buddhism is not of the "leabel" variety. I embraced Buddhism because I was intellectually convinced of its worth. "At this juncture I said to myself: Buddhism means so much to me, let me be dictated to only by the tenets of my faith in these discussions."

"I am happy to say a solution was immediately forthcoming." (*Sunday Observer, March 2, 1958*)

"But the oftener he defended the B-C pact the clearer it became that, in the Prime Minister's own opinion, it needed defending.

The longer he delayed its implementation with the twin instruments of the Regional Councils Act and the Reasonable Use of Tamil Act, the weaker became the enthusiasm of the Sinhalese as well as of the Tamils."

"On the morning of April 9 a police message reached Mr. Bandaranaike warning him that about 200 bhikkus or monks and 300 others were setting out on a Visitation to the Prime Minister's residence in Rosemead Place to demand the abrogation of the Pact. They would arrive at 9 am.

"The Prime Minister left the house early that morning to attend to some very important work in his office. The bhikkus came, the crowds gathered, the gates of the Bandaranaike Walawea were closed against them and armed police were hurriedly summoned to throw a barbed wire cordon to keep the uninvited guests out. The bhikkus decided to bivouac on the street. Pedlars, cool - drink carts, betel sellers and even bangle merchants pitched their stalls hard by. Dhana was brought to the bhikkus at the appointed hour for food.

"In the meantime , the Prime Minister was fighting off the opposition to the Pact among his own party colleagues with desperate fury.

"At 4.15 pm the B-C Pact was torn into pathetic shreds by its principal author".

"The Prime Minister consulted his colleagues. The monks had won. The Magic Pact was no more. But the monks insisted on getting this promise in writing. The Prime Minister went into the house and the Health Minister, hardly able to suppress the look of relief on her face, brought the written pledge out to the monks. Yet another victory for Direct Action had been chalked up.

"The nation was left wondering what next. In two years the people had experienced two new theories of politics: government by crisis and government by scapegoat. What crisis next? was the big question.

"Then the Communist-party-inspired inspired strikes broke out. The Public Service Workers Trade Union Federation, whose leadership was Communist but which was mainly independent at the rank-and - file level, staged one of the most costly farces in the history of trade unionism in Ceylon.

"The Government, unofficially of course, resorted to thuggery to break the strike.

"A gang of thirty-eight thugs, imported, according to police sources, from the Grandpass area and from Shanty Town in McCallum Road, had been organised into a mobile unit. They went round the city in a truck, beating up strikers demonstrating on the streets."

"The Government tried every device which had been employed by the previous Government against the Public servants eleven years ago: the Finance Minister put out propaganda to the effect that there were only 1, 750 on strike when actually many thousands were out: the Labour Minister, T.B. Illangaratne, declared the strike illegal and appealed to the patriotic sentiments of the clerks even as the Labour Minister of 1947 strike".

"From the PSWTUF crisis to the next. The Communist controlled Ceylon Trade Union Federation, which had come out a day after the PSWTUF, found they had caught a Tartar for once during the past two years. On the management side the Ceylon Employers' Federation, encouraged by the Government's firmness against the PSWTUF, had decided to stage a Custer's Last Stand against political traditional unionism. The Prime Minister and the

Labour Minister, stout heartened by the defeat of the PSWTUF concerned about the grave losses to revenue caused by the cancellation of tea shipments, declared the CTUF strike illegal and refused to intervene. The Employers' Federation was advised by the Prime Minister to hold out even as he had done against the clerks. The employers went to it with a will. Large notices appeared in the newspapers calling attention to the illegality of the strike. These were followed by notices calling for new recruits. This too was done at the instance of the Government.

“When events had reached this pass, the Trotskyite Unions which had watched the CTUF struggle with lofty detachment were impelled by pressure from their rank and file to make some display of solidarity. From the moment they showed signs of active interest in the CTUF - CEF struggle, the Prime Minister began to relent - perhaps retract is the after word. Instead of allowing the Employers' Federation to make their last - ditch stand against the Communists, the Prime Minister called for “negotiations”. The CEF took the view that there was no point whatever in “negotiating” at that stage in an illegal strike. But on the ground of national interest the Government pleaded, cajoled and then finally tried to browbeat the employees into agreeing to accept every striker back and retain in addition, if they must, the men already recruited. At the last meeting the Prime Minister threatened to use emergency powers to take over the companies and run them himself if they did not give in. It was dangerous to the CEF to keep the men newly recruited in performance to those on strike, it was argued. The CEF replied they would cope the best they could. That evening shocking and tangible justification of the Prime Minister's concern for the danger to the CEF was forth coming.

“An explosive meeting of the Communist and Trotskyite Unions was held in Hyde Park - not a hundred yards away from Lipton's Circus, sensitive nerve of the dispute.

“The police, for some strange reason, withdrew every officer on duty fifteen minutes before the meeting concluded. On a nice calculation, a dashing cracker was exploded in the crowd by a man whose identity the police and press reporters well knew. When the noise died down hysterical panic took over. The mob ran panting, bleating, slobbering with fear and subhuman anger, breaking every glass window and door in the vicinity. A dispensary which had supplied meals to the strikers for weeks, was damaged. Several Ceylonese firms - Car Mart, United Tractors, Tuckers, Bousteads - against whom the CNUF had no quarrel whatever at the time, were given the “treatment”. Passing cars were stoned. A taxi was burned. Some motor bicycles were set on fire. A hunt began for ‘Europeans’ to molest and, maybe, lynch.

There was pandemonium for forty minutes. Then the police returned and restored order. It was a very costly forty minutes. Thuggery had scored another.

“The employers still held out. The Prime Minister who, not a fortnight before, had denounced the strike as illegal was now all for appeasement. He threatened again to nationalise the CEF firms. Their answer was direct: “If we capitulate to the CTUF now we might as well pack up for good.” They were determined to call what they believed to be the Government's bluff. The impasse was complete. Elsewhere, in the meantime, the next crisis which was to help the Government over the labour crisis was gathering. The Fifth Horseman had pounded his way into Ceylon with his treacherous army of destruction.”  
(PP. 27-32)

“Mr. Bandaranaike, for his part, declared that not with standing the abrogation of the Pact he would present the two controversial. Bills guaranteeing ‘fair play’ to the Tamils when Parliament reconvened in June.

“This announcement was greeted with loud protests from the militant Sinhala elements who stood by the slogan: ‘CEYLON FOR THE SINHALESE’ and Sinhalese Only from Point Pedro to Dondra Head”.

**“This in turn increased the fervour of the Tamils for a separate State.”** (Emphasis added) “In May - June 1957, confronted by the threat of a mass Satyagraha by the Tamils, Sinhalese settlers and labourers in the Padaviya area had been warned by the politicians to prepare themselves against a Tamil invasion from the Trincomalee district. They began to refer to themselves in epic terms as the Sinhala Hamudawa or Sinhalese Army. But the tension had eased on both sides of the communal barrier when the Bandaranaike - Chelvanayakam Pact was signed at the end of July that year. The Sinhalese politician, too, had then shown signs of remorse. The Minister of Lands had instructed his official to set apart 4000 allotments for the Tamil labourers who were being laid off by the evacuation of the Royal Navy from Trincomalee. On the basis of five to a family this meant the settling of 2 000 Tamils in Padaviya.

“The Sinhalese labourers, however, would have none of it. Led by a monk, a gang of Sinhalese squatters came in one night and occupied eleven Wadiyas intended to accommodate the Tamils who would camp there to clear the land for settlement.

“The Ministry could or would do nothing to counter this forcible occupation. Once again the Government, by inaction, gave it tacit sanction to a fait accompli carried out deliberately and openly by people who seemed to be confident of being able to flout authority with impunity. The squatters formed Action Committees and proceeded to clear the land and settle in according to the pattern set by the official settlers.

Their political bosses now decided to use these ‘shock troops’ to stage demonstrations against the Tamils bound for the

Vavuniya Convention. There is reason to believe that no murderous violence was intended at this stage. The orders were to stone buses and trains, hoot and generally signify ‘disapprobation’. The Sinhalese labourers were ready and began the treatment on razidom passers, by who happened to be Tamil, even before the real trek to Vavuniya began.

“But events moved too fast for them. On May 22, five hundred thugs and hooligans invaded the Polonnaruwa station, and smashed up the windows of the Batticaloa train in their frantic search for Convention bound Tamils”.

(PP. 33-35)

“Community life in Polonnaruwa was completely disorganized. The bazaar was soothing with frenzied hatred. The first task of the administration, or what there was of it, was to provide a refuge for the Tamils whose lives were in danger”

“The thugs displayed a temerity which was quite unprecedented. They had complete assurance that the police would never dare to open fire. The **“Apey Aanduwa”** (The government is ours) bug had got deep into their veins. As the situation deteriorated, desperate measures were needed. The ringleaders of the racial revolt and people suspected of using their position and influence to stir up trouble were arrested. **Among them were half a dozen chairmen of village committees and a few other parish pump politicians.** The goondas had developed a slick technique of throwing dynamite. They carried it in their breast pockets of their shirts, with the fuse hanging out. As the “enemy” approached they struck a match, lit the fuse, pulled out the stick of dynamite and flung it at point - blank range. (Emphasis added)

“On May 24 and 25 murder stalked the streets in broad daylight. Fleeing Tamils and Sinhalese who were suspected of having given them sanctuary, had their brains strewn about. A

deaf mute scavenging labourer was assaulted to death in the Hingurakgoda area - just to see what made him tick. The **goondas** burnt two men alive, one at Hingurakgoda, and the other at Minneriya.

“On the night of May 25, one of the most heinous crimes in the history of Ceylon was carried out. Almost simultaneously, on the Government farms at Polonnaruwa and Hingurakgoda, the thugs struck remorselessly. The Tamil labourers in the Polonnaruwa sugar cane plantation fled when they saw the enemy approaching and hid in the sugar cane bushes. The goondas wasted no time. They set the sugar cane alight and flushed out the Tamils. As they came out screaming, men, women, and children were cut down with home made swords, grass cutting knives and katties, or pulped under heavy clubs.

“At the Government farm at Hingurakgoda, too, the Tamils were slaughtered that night. One woman in sheer terror embraced her two children and jumped into a well. The rioters were enjoying themselves thoroughly. They ripped open the belly of a woman eight months pregnant, and left her to bleed to death. First estimates of the zmass murders on that night were frightening: 150 - 200 was a quick guess on the basis of forty families on an average of four each. This estimate was later pruned down to around seventy, on the basis of bodies recovered and the possibility that many Tamils had got away in time.

The hoodlums were, now motorized. They named the district in trucks, smashing up kiosks and houses and killing any Tamils who got in their way.

“On the morning of May 26, the expected Emergency had not yet been proclaimed. The situation in Polonnaruwa seemed beyond hope. Government Agent Aluwihare, A.S.P. Weerasinghe and their colleagues had not had a wink of sleep or rest for four days. They had been promised army reinforcements and Bren guns but there were no signs of their coming.” (emphasis added)

“As the day wore on the tension increased. The crowds outside the police station had grown to about 3, 000. The small army unit and the handful of police kept them at bay. But the goondas were enjoying themselves, hooting, hurling obscenities at the police and officials. They caught a Tamil official making his way to the station and beat him up to the gates of the station and then withdrew. The police dared not fire and the army said that they had no orders to shoot if there was a charge.” (Emphasis Added)

“They were still confident that Apey Aanduwa would not shoot them down.” (PP. 38 - 43)

“If there had been any chance whatever at this stage of keeping Sinhalese tempers under control it vanished completely following the Prime Minister’s broadcast call to the nation of May 26. The call was no doubt, well intentioned and a statement to the nation was, for once, essential and even overdue. But, unwittingly or otherwise, it contained a reference which had the effect of blowing raw oxygen into a fire that was already raging vigourously. By a strangely inexplicable perversion of logic Mr. Bandaranaike tried to explain away a situation by substituting the effect for the cause. The relevant portion of the speech was: (Emphasis added)

“ An unfortunate situation has arisen resulting in communal tension. Certain incidents in the Batticaloa District where some people lost their lives, including Mr. D.A. Seneviratne, a former Mayor of Nuwara Eliya, have resulted in various acts of violence and lawlessness in other areas - for example Polonnaruwa, Dambulla, Galawela, Kuliyaipitiya and even Colombo. (Emphasis added)

“The killing of Seneviratne on May 25 was thus officially declared to be the cause of the uprising, although the communal riots had begun on May 22 with the attack on the Polonnaruwa Station and the wrecking of the Batticaloa - Colombo train and several other minor incidents.”

“No effort was made to check whether the Seneviratne killing was a political affair or the outcome of a private feud as suggested by Mr S.J.V. Chelvanayakam during the debate in Parliament on June 4. If it was, indeed, a ‘private’ murder, the use of this man’s name in that context was a grievous and costly error.”

“On Tuesday morning, May 27, at seven - fifteen a group of citizens, who had distinguished themselves in various fields of public activity, called urgently to see the Prime Minister and implored him to proclaim a State of Emergency. Mr. Bandaranaike’s answer was that it was an ‘exaggeration’ to call the situation an ‘emergency’. His supplicants later said they were appalled at the insouciance with which the Prime Minister appeared to be taking the mass murders, looting and lawlessness which had broken out everywhere in Ceylon.” (Emphasis added)

“Even during the rush of communal killings that occurred two months after he became Prime Minister in 1956 the reports of at least 150 people being slaughtered by mobs had not impelled him to call an emergency. He had survived that conflict because the police, not yet demoralized by two years of official condonement of thuggery, had acted firmly - even against Government party politicians who were inciting people to riot.”

“While this discussion was going on, Colombo was on fire. The goondas burnt fifteen shops in the Pettah and row of kiosks in Mariakaday. Looting on a massive scale took place in Pettah, Maradana, Wellawatte, Ratmalana, Kurunegala, Panadura, Kalutara, Badulla, Galle, Matara and Weligama.

“The cry everywhere in the Sinhalese districts was ‘Avenge the murder of Seneviratne’. Even the many Sinhalese who had been appalled by the goondas’ attacks on Tamils and Tamil owned kiosks, now began to feel that Tamils had put themselves beyond the pale. Across the country this new mood of deep-seated racism surged. The Prime Minister’s peace call to the Nation had turned into a war cry.”

“While the Prime Minister was telling the citizens’ delegation it was an ‘exaggeration to call the situation an emergency’ in every village from Kalawewa to Nalanda people’s houses were in flames.”

(PP. 44 - 51 )

“Despite Mr. Bandaranaike’s characteristic attitude of ignoring the presence of a monster in the hope that it would go away or fall dead of its own accord, the pressure for the declaring of a State of Emergency was rising overwhelmingly. The Governor General had broken with convention to visit the Prime Minister at his Rosmead Place home in order to impress on him the need for firm, urgent action.”

“Shortly after noon on May 27, the Governor General proclaimed that a State of Emergency had arisen in Ceylon.”  
(PP.54 - 55)

“With the announcement of the emergency came the simultaneous imposition of press censorship and the appointment of an Information Officer as Competent Authority for this purpose.

Two hours later the editors of the newspapers were invited to a conference by M. J. Perera, the Competent Authority. He met them at the head of the stairs and by the way of an opening gambit he pointed through the window at the neon sign atop the Grand Oriental Hotel building which read: ‘2500 Years of Buddhism’. He remarked: ‘Two thousand five hundred years of Buddhism - and see what we’ve come to.’ One of the editors replied: “Two thousand five hundred years of Buddhism and two and a half years of Bandaranaike.’ If the Competent Authority was amused, he did not show it.

“ ‘Gentlemen,’ he observed as the conference began, I have been appointed Competent Authority but I must confess that I feel quite incompetent to deal with journalists”.



“The Competent Authority felt that he was incompetent to settle this issue at his level. The entire conference walked across to Queen’s House for a man - to - man talk with the Governor General.

“That conference will live in my memory for a long while. It was farce at it’s most accomplished. From the moment we entered nuen’s House the comic unreality of it began to impress itself upon me. At the gate the sentry challenged us but was ignored as though he were a street urchin begging for coins. We were a motley crowd, perhaps the most clad informally visitors to enter those marbled halls. We were met at the door by a glamorous aratchi who wore a quaint little tortoise - shell comb in his hair. He passed us on to resplendent senior aratchi who wore a fancy waistcoat of more intricate design. He wore his hair in a bun and mantilla comb of enormous dimensions ornamented his coiffure. The ridiculousness of these costumes and the old - world characters who wore them with such peacock pride had never struck me so forcibly as now when the whole country was in upheaval outside the cold, formal, out - of - this - world luxury of nuen’s House.

“Upstairs, as we were ushered into the air - conditioned ‘office’ room of the protagonist of the great tragicomedy, H.E. the Governor-General, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, C.G.M.G., K.C.V.O., K.B.E., was already trying out his lines.

“As the curtain went up he was ‘discovered’, as the playwrights say, sitting at a desk with six telephones and no papers on it. He held a telephone to each ear. He did not even look up as we entered. We stood inside the door as he told the mouthpiece of one telephone - ‘sh - sh -sh - shoot them’.

“That settled, he cradled that telephone and said into the mouthpiece of the other : ‘O.E.G. here. Clear them out even if

you have to sh - sh - sh - shoot them.’ The second telephone clicked back on it’s cradle.

“I was definitely impressed. In two short sentences, one of the most polished players ever to bestride the public stage had created the atmosphere he needed for the drama that was to unfold.

“I watched silently marvelling at the facility with which Sir Oliver had slipped into the old ‘O.E.G.’ role which he played with such extravagant distinction as Civil Defence Commissioner during the World War Two.

“The only difference.

(PP. 68 - 71 )

“News trickled out from Queen’s House that the Governor - General had announced, off the record at the press conference, that the riots had not been spontaneous. What he said was: ‘Gentlemen, if any of you have an idea that this was a spontaneous outburst of communalism, you can disabuse your minds of it. This is the work of a Master Mind who has been at the back of people who have planned this carefully and knew exactly what they were doing. It was a time - bomb set about two years ago which has now exploded.’ “ (Emphasis added)

“The Prime Minister never set foot in the Royal College camp for Tamil refugees, but he was one of the first callers at the Thurstan Road camp which accomodated the Sinhalese evacuees from Jaffna. Perhaps it was bad politics for Sinhalese politicians to be seen commiserating with Tamil refugees.” (PP. 79-88)

“The terror and the hate that the people of Ceylon experienced in May and June 1958 were the outcome of that

fundamental error. What are we left with? A nation in ruins, some grim lessons which we cannot afford to forget and momentous question: Have the Sinhalese and the Tamils reached the parting of the ways?" (P. 117)

"Emergency' 58 ends with a question: `Have we come to the parting of the ways?'

"Many thoughtful people believe we have" (p.8).

***Tarzie Vittachi, Emergency '58: The story of the Ceylon Race Riots, Andre Deutsch, London (1958).***

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## **SOULBURY'S BITTER DISAPPOINTMENT**

Soulbury "Foreword", B.H. Farmer, Ceylon: A Diuided Nation, London, New York, Bombay ( 1963) PP VII-VIII.

"The Commission devoted a substantial portion of its report to this minority question, and stated that it was satisfied that this Government of Ceylon was fully aware that the contentment of the minorities was essential not only to their own well - being but to the well - being of the Island as a whole. And to quote the Commissioner's report. If it were otherwise, no safeguard that we could devise would in the long run be of much avail. Recent years have shown that this observation was only too true.

"But had Mr D.S. Senanayake, the first Prime Minister of independent Ceylon, lived, I cannot believe that the shocking events of 1958 and the grave tension that now exists between Tamils and Sinhalese would have ever occured. Mr. Senanayake would have scorned the spurious electoral advantages that a less far - sighted Sinhalese politician might expect to reap from exploiting the religious, linguistic and cultural differences between the two communities, for it was his policy to make Ceylon a United Nation and as he told the State Council in November 1945 in his great speech, recommending the proposal of the British Government, The Tamils are essential to the welfare of this Island."

"Unhappily and for reasons indicated by Mr. Farmer, the death of Mr. D.S. Senanayake led to the eventual adoption of a different policy which he would never have countenanced. Needless to say the consequences have been bitter disappointment to myself and my fellow Commissioners. While the Commission was in Ceylon, the speech of certain Sinhalese politicians calling for the solidarity of the Sinhalese and threatening of the suppression of the Tamils emphasised the need for constitutional safe guards on behalf of that and other minorities, despite the confidence felt by the Commission in Mr. D.S. Senanayake and any Government under his control."

## DUDLEY - CHELVA PACT OF 1965

Mr. Dudley Senanayake and Mr. S.J.V. Chelvanayakam met on the 24.3.1965 and discussed matters relating to some problems over which the Tamil-speaking people were concerned, and Mr. Senanayake agreed that action on the following lines would be taken by him to ensure a stable Government:

1. Action will be taken early under the Tamil Language Special Provisions Act to make a provision of the Tamil language of administration and of record in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

Mr. Senanayake also explained that it was the policy of his party that a Tamil - speaking person should be entitled to transact business in Tamil throughout the Island.

2. Mr. Senanayake stated that it was the policy of his Party to amend the Language of the Courts Act to provide for legal proceedings in the Northern and Eastern Provinces to be conducted and recorded in Tamil

3. Action will be taken to establish District Councils in Ceylon, vested with powers over subjects to be mutually agreed upon between two leaders. It was agreed, however, that the Government should have power under the law to give directions to such Councils in the national interest.

4. The Land Development Ordinance will be amended to provide that citizens of Ceylon be entitled to the allotment of land under the Ordinance. Mr. Senanayake further agreed that in the granting of land under colonisation schemes the following priorities be observed in the Northern and Eastern Provinces

(a) Land in the Northern and Eastern Provinces should in the first instance be granted to landless persons in the District.

(b) Secondly - to Tamil - speaking persons resident in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, and

(c) Thirdly - to other citizens in Ceylon, preference being given to Tamil citizens in the rest of the Island.

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## LEFT BETRAYS ITSELF AND THE TAMILS

The Leftist Parties - the L.S.S.P. and the C.P. - were not keen to fight for their promises after 1956. They gave up their promises step by step. Then finally they frittered away their promises with the slogan of "Thossais and Masal vadais appitta eppa". (we don't want Thosai, masal vadai eating Tamils) at the May Day rally of 1966.

Colvin's role as Minister of Constitutional Affairs, in the drafting of the 1972 constitution, the removal of even the inadequate constitutional safeguard provided in the Soulbury Constitution, and the promulgation of Buddhism as the state religion, for the first time in recent constitutional history are some of the milestones on the road to betrayal.

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## DUDLEY SENANAYAKE, DISCUSSION ON DISTRICT COUNCILS WHITE PAPER IN THE PARLIAMENT IN 1968. (HANSARD, 13TH JUNE 1968).

The amity so glibly talked about is the amity of subjugation. Other cultures other languages, other aspirations, all must be subject to one dominating force. Well one had only to listen to the speech of the Hon. Member Dambadeniya (Mr. R.G. Senanayake) to realize that this talk of amity is the biggest sham perpetrated on this country.

c. 3072

I shall come out with it in the due time. They speak of amity; We want amity; We want to get together in brotherhood: The brotherhood they speak of is to shoot people. - (Interruption.) When you were speaking you wanted not to be disturbed. Will you please do that when I am speaking? That is the sort of amity they talk of.

cc. 3073 - 74.

"I am glad the Hon. Member of Nikkaweratiya thanked me for having first introduced a White Paper for discussion. We are hiding nothing."

"So, we want to approach this question in the correct way. But still the Hon. Member for Dambadeniya says, decentralization is good. But then again, if I followed him right - 'But not now; decentralization is very good but not now'. Considering the way he is behaving, could we ever have decentralization? He says decentralization must come after there is amity among the communities. And you do everything in your power to prevent that amity. This is the 'hypocrisy of it all. In regard to Hon. fair Member for Uva - Paranagazna (Mrs. Rajaratna), I do not say there was hypocrisy. She quite innocently and sincerely wanted certain things clarified. She said decentralization is a good thing. But how are we proposing to have this decentralization?"

“I was listening to the speech of the Hon. Member for Dambadeniya. After admitting that he was for the Bandaranaike - Chelvanayakam Pact, after admitting that he said that because of the Bandaranaike's name should be written in letters of gold in history, I do not know why he condemns this. Right through out this speech of four hours odd, I did not hear one statement. - cc. 3080.81.

“...he (The Mahanayake Thero) says, in the letter that these bodies have ten times less power than the regional councils contemplated in the Bandaranaike - Chelvanayakam Pact.” c. 3092.

“As I state, all along there was a feeling that a certain measure of decentralization was necessary. This feeling prevailed right along. It was recommended by the Donoughmore Commissioners; It was discussed in the State Council; The State Council accepted a motion by Mr. R.S.S. Gunawardana and Mr. Bandaranaike himself but forward the idea in 1947. Then we have the Choksy Report recommending the idea. Then, of course there was the Bandaranaike - Chelvanayakam Pact which included regional councils.

“That is the point I wish to stress. The fair Leader of the Opposition says, ‘Well, Mr. Bandaranaike brought a proposal to establish regional councils. It was opposed. He tore it up and now we have nothing more to do with it’. That is not correct. That is absolutely and totally false, to say the least. They had it in to Throne Speeches - before the Coalition was formed, in the 1963 Throne Speech, and in the 1964 Throne Speech after the Coalition was formed. And there it was not a question of district councils under the direction and control of the Central Government. There was nothing to that effect.

“Then there was the Mahantila Committee which was appointed when they were the Government. There was a report

of that committee and also a draft Bill which gave much more powers than the proposed District Councils Bill, and never contemplated in the Bill. There were minutes of meetings where the Minister handling the subject had deferred the discussions on the matter. So that, the idea of decentralization was never given up. It was always there; it continued to be there, and practically every party was in favour of decentralization of power”

cc. 3094-95.

“So, practically every party was for decentralization.

There was an occasion when the Hon. Member for Yatiyantota asked the question, ‘When are you going to bring in the District Councils Bill?’ When I ask him, ‘Are you for it’ as late as 1966, he said, ‘I am hundred percent for it. When are you going to replace the colonial Kachcheri system? So, what I contend is this; there is no party that was against decentralization. The U.L.F. Common Programme was quoted by the hon. Member for Vaddukoddai yesterday. You will see there for that every party is for decentralization.”

“I should say in fairness to the Federal Party that this is not what they want. This is nothing like they want. The hon. Member for Jaffna himself will bear testimony.”

“Nationally they wanted very much more powers. There had to be a certain amount of compromise in the matter: That is how we arrived at this draft Bill ultimately. There must have been umpteen drafts at this draft Bill ultimately. There must have been umpteen drafts at various times. I was rather amused that some sections of the press got hold of a draft and said, ‘This is the District Councils Bill’ without realising within a couple of days that draft was amended. Since they said that was a great secret they revealed, We have had about 25 drafts.

“In a matter like this .there was discussion between the Federal Party and myself; There was discussions between the leaders of parties that formed the National Government and myself along with some of my Ministers; There was discussion in the Cabinet. At all these stages various amendments were made”.

C.3095-96.

“May this country be saved from those people who say, ‘First bring about national unity; Then decentralization is good,’ and at the same time do every thing possible to prevent unity.”

C.3097.

“Therefore, on the one hand, I would like Hon. Members not to be taken in by these mischievous false prophets. Everybody here has intelligence. This is not a very intricate proposal, and the White Paper can be read in a matter of half an hour. I asked Hon. Members to consider whether any of the points raised against this proposal can hold water. On the other hand, I would like them to consider seriously the question whether some measure of decentralization is desirable, and, in the circumstances of the country today, whether this is not the best compromise we can arrive at. I ask hon. Members to look at this proposal in that light, and I am confident that the doubts which some of them have will then be cleared”

C.3098.

**Dudley Senanayake said in 1966:**

“I will not easily promise, but if I promise, I never fail to fulfill the promise” said Mr.Dudely Senanayake, Prime Minister, on the occasion of Federal Party Convention of 1966 at Kalmunai

The Dudely Senanayake’s government brought the District Councils White Paper before the Parliament, after three years elapsed after the Dudley - Chelva Pact. But finally the Pact torn by the government and the White Paper was dumped into the dust-bin.

cited in Ilankai Thamillzarasu Kadchy Vellivillza Malar (Tamil), Jaffna( 1974) (P.49)

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## AN IMPORTANT PORTION FROM. THE MANIFESTO OF THE U.N.P (1977)

“The United National Party accepted the position that there are numerous problems confronting the Tamil- speaking people. The lack of solution of their problems has made the Tamil-speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate state. In the interest of national integration and unity so necessary for the economic development of the whole country, the Party feels such problems should be solved without loss of time. The Party when it comes to power will take all possible steps to remedy their grievances...”

The Ceylon Daily News, Parliament of Sri Lanka 1977,  
Colombo( 1978?) (P.2s2)

\* \* \* \* \*

## Prime Minister J.R.Jayewardena, “A just and a Free Society”( 1977)

“The United National Party government intends to fulfil all the promises that it gave to the country in establishing a just and free Society based on the teachings of the Buddha. I want to assure followers of every religion that these principles are consonant with all the religions values that they too cherish.”

“...I conclude by saying that the United National Party Government under my leadership will dedicate itself to establish a just and a Free Society in this land”

Address to the Nation from the Octagon of the Dalada Maligawa in Kandy on 28.07.1977, “A New Path.” Sri Lanka ( 1978), (PP23).

Prime Minister J.R.Jayewardena said in the Parliament when the holocaust was going on in August 1977.

“In Matale a Tamil Liquor Shop and a Tamil Boutique have been looted.

“In Dambulla the situation is still not satisfactory.

“In Anuradhapura about 100 Tamil houses have been looted in the area. About three Tamils have been killed. Three boutiques have been burnt at Kekirawa About 400

Tamil Officers and their families who were given refuge in the Kachcheri.

“In Kurunegala a Tamil hostel has been attacked. In Galgamuwa about 11 Tamil shops have been burnt.

“This is the latest information upto 4. o'clock today... ‘

“I will give an account of what has happened up to date. “Fourteen persons have been killed so far, that is, up to the 17 th. of them eight are Tamils and six are Sinhalese. Three Tamils succumbed to their injuries in the police firing in Jaffna. On 16th one Tamil died of head injuries in the Anuradhapura Hospital. On the 17th four Tamils were found dead at Puliyankulam.

“One Sinhalese has been shot dead in Anuradhapura. Three Sinhalese have been killed in Megellawa near Galgamuwa in the Kurunegala District, when a Tamil engineer opened fire on the mob in self defence. Two Sinhalese were shot dead in the Matale District when Tamil boutique-keepers fired on them in self - defence.

“In Anuradhapura in addition to what I said, 12 shops have been burnt and 40 shops looted. Ivo rice mills, one theatre and cars have been burnt. Five hundred Tamil Officers who were in Kachcheri have been sent to Vavuniya.

The Railway Station has been attacked. The hospital has been attacked and the House Officers quarters have been looted.

“At Kahatagasdigiliya.....”

He continued the long list so. it gave the impression to the Sinhalese that a war was going on between the Tamils and Sinhalese and this continued the holocaust against the Tamils

Then he said finally:-

“If you want to fight, let there be fight :

If it is peace, let there be peace.....”

“It is not what I am saying. The people of Sri Lanka will say that.” (Hansard, 18.8.1977 cc.242-246)

This was stated in Parliament when the holocaust was going on against the unarmed Tamils. This statement approved

the holocaust and gave enthusiasm to the Sinhalese goondas and thugs to act mercilessly more and more.

Actually this is a sort of war declaration against unarmed Tamils. Really the holocaust was very severe after this war declaration. These words quoted by Jayewardena were in fact said by the Kandyan king Vimalatharmasooriya - “If you want to fight .... let there be peace” to the Dutch. Such a declaration by Jayewardena now was against the unarmed Tamils.

He said in the parliament after two months - “Mr.Speaker, I should like to reply to this matter straightaway so that there may be no necessity to go any further into .it.

“We just received this document sent by the Hon. Member for Mullaitivu (Mr.X.M.Sellathambu) to the Clerk of the assembly dated 16th October.” “The questions raised by the Hon.Member for Mullaitivu are very serious... . He said that a person came to Mullaitivu Police Station and made a complaint, and that the complainant was locked up while the accused was released.”

“This is the way some police officers have been trained by the Government of Mrs.Srimavo R.D.Bandaranaiake. You must get them out of this habit. About 4000 to 5000 personnel have been recruited from 1970. It may be that they were the people who started this riot in Jaffna. (emphasis added) (Hansard, 7.10.77, cc.1609-1610)

Here, he (Prime Minister) agreed that his police force started the “riots”. The tragedy was, he blamed the Tamils and declared the war in spite of his police force originating the holocaust.

Minister Gamini Dissanayake said in 1979:

“We will solve the problems of the Tamils very soon. Whether any party participated or not in the proposed Presidential Commission, or we are criticised as running a dictatorship government by any party, still we will not shrink from any action we propose to adopt.



“It is necessarily urgent to solve the problems of the Tamils, otherwise no progress could be made” **VIRAKESARI** (A Tamil Daily, Colombo),6.8.1979

### **TAMIL - BASHER LALITH WANTS TO SMASH TAMIL HEADS OF THE TAMILS.**

“David Selbourne, Oxord Professor and journalist with the Manchester Guardian spoke in Toronto recently He has worked extensively on South Asia and was expelled from Sri Lanka in 1982.

“This article is from a speech at a seminar organized by South Asian Resources and Information (SARI) at in University of Toronto.”

“David Selbourne Rides Again”, Saturday Review, 10th August 1983.

Some relevant portions from the article

“I am very uneasy as an academic. I dislike the world academia profoundly. I earn my living from it but not only do I dislike the world of academia, I dislike most academics. So I am viewed with a certain amount of disapproval. I find academics in general singularly unwilling to make a moral commitments. Singularly unwilling to declare what they know when it becomes rather awkward to declare it. Unwilling to jeopardize their carriers, even when they possess truths that they ought to disclose. This is a sad lesson I have learned from my experience as a journalist. As soon as you make a commitment to tell the truth, you are denounced from all quarters as being subjective, unsound, and, unacademic or impressionistic. This has been my experience.”

Ref. “David Selbourne Rides Again”, Saturday Review, 10th August, 1985.

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### **THE HOLOCAUST AND AFTER. by L.PIYADASA**

“In Kelaniya, Industries Minister Cyril Mathew’s gangs were identified as the ones at work. The General Secretary of the government ‘union’, the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya (JSS) was identified as the leader of gangs which wrought destruction and death all over Colombo and especially in Wellawatte, where as many as ten houses in a street were destroyed. A particular UNP municipal councillor of the Dehiwela-Mount Lavinia municipality led gangs Mount

Lavinia. In the Pettah (the bazaar area, where 442 shops were destroyed and murders committed) the commander was the son of Aloysius Mudalali, the Prime Minister’s right-hand man. And so on. The thugs who worked regularly for the leader of the UNP, both ministers of state and Party Headquarters, and in some cases uniformed military personnel and police, were seen leading the attack. They used vehicles of the Sri Lanka Transport Board (Minister in charge, M.H.Mohamed) and other government departments and state corporations. Trucks of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation’s Oil Refinery came from many miles away bringing the men who destroyed so much of Wellawatte. There is much other evidence of this sort” (page 81 ).

“We have talked to people who were eye - witnesses of the killings the beatings-to-death and burnings-alive in cold blood of individual Tamils, with never a case of police opposition, on the streets and in vehicles. Most people have read and heard the account, which we are convinced authentic, of the Norwegian tourist who saw twenty people burnt alive in a minibus by one of these gangs. One of the most remarkable exploits of the ‘heroes’ was the massacre, that day, in Welikade Prison (Sri Lanka’s most important) of 35 people, including some convicted men, most either on remand or arbitrarily detained by the military. All were Sri Lanka Tamils. We were convinced that the massacres could not have been carried out without government and National Security Council

authorisation and preparation at a level which have guaranteed immunity from prosecution and public investigation. The men and women responsible for the conspiracy to commit this atrocity were never named, nor were those who organised and directed it. Fellow prisoners of the murdered persons who were set up to commit some of the killings, and provided with weapons (and what else? ), were collectively but not individually identified, but no one charged!" (pages 81, 82)

"By the end of the week, the majority of the some 600,000 Sri Lanka Tamil children, men and women in the predominantly Sinhala-speaking areas in Colombo, and many of the 800,000 'Indian Tamils' had been driven or fled from their homes and places of work into refugee camps and homes of neighbours and friends, or were in hiding, some of them actually in the jungles." (Page 82)

'...the Indian Tamil votes were responsible for the record vote that Jayawardene obtained in Nuwara Eliya District and for the massive 'Yes' vote there in the Referendum. Towards the end of that fatal week what the President of Sri Lanka justified on Thursday night on radio and television as the 'national reaction' of 'the Sinhalese' was manifested in the town of Nuwara Eliya. Nuwara Eliya is in the satrapy of Dissanayake, who travelled in a helicopter, Here is an eye-witness account:

"29.7. Nuwara Eliya. The town was closely guarded by the army. All vehicles were checked. Bus conductors had been ordered not to transport Tamils. Minister Gamini Dissanayake came from Colombo to Nuwara Eliya to hold a meeting with party members. The day before, MP. Herath Ranasinghe had arrested precariously (sic) some well-known rowdies. Soon after the end of Gamini Dissanayake's party meeting they were released. These people went out immediately, well-equipped with petrol, iron rods and other kinds of weapons, and tried to attack two Tamil priests in town. They managed to escape. Without having succeeded they moved on - another mob joined up with the first one. They laid a

ring of petrol around a Tamil's shop which was then burnt. They were supported in this by the army who supplied them with gallons of petrol. During the day nearly all Tamil-owned shops were burnt. Mrs. Herath Ranasinghe ordered the army to disperse the looters but it was already too late. The Member of Parliament was banished from town under a hail of insults. Tamil people who walked the streets were armed by soldiers. The fire brigade which stood waiting was hindered by the army and the Sinhalese mob in doing its job. Shops which had not been burnt by the mob were set fire by the army. Around noon Nuwara Eliya was like a sea of flames.... (Sri Lanka Co-ordination Centre, Kassel. 1983.

The account goes on, to include an account of how the soldiers and thugs who had gone into action after the Minister gave his orders burnt alive a little girl whom they caught, along with 13 of her relatives, the head of the family being the local UNP organiser.

We do not intend to go on with our account of what the 'heroes' did. The morning of the 25th, when one of us, caught completely unprepared for the holocaust, asked a bystander in the Fort what was happening, he explained what our Sinhalese boys are doing...'We are absolutely clear that even though what was done to Sri Lankans who were Tamils was approved and commended by all the senior members of the cabinet, it was not the action of the Sinhalese. It was a planned, well-organised action which took over 90 per cent of the population by surprise. It was carried out largely by the same people who had been trained and paid to smash strikes, terrorise and crush political dissent and kill when necessary. Some of the masses, including workers and students, had previously been stirred up by the unashamedly and virulently anti - Tamil propaganda put out by member of the Sangha and by leading politicians; now, believing that anti - Tamil programmes organised and commended by the country's leaders were a good

thing, they joined in the action once the hit squads had begun. At the corner of Galle Road and Dickman's Road a unit of Jayawardane's troops turned their weapons on six Tamils to prevent them from escaping and got the Sinhalese 'heroes' to batter them to death and burn the bodies. Some mobs, like the master - minds, took a sadistic pleasure in causing pain and suffering, whether they had been recruited into the armed forces or not" (pages 83 & 84)

"How else could anyone interpret what Jayawardene said in the course of an interview with a British reporter (an interview which he had republished in the government - run Colombo Sunday Observer of 17 July):

"I am not worried about the opinion of the Jaffna people now... Now we can't think of them. Not about their lives or of their opinion about us" (P.88)

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## INDO-SRI LANKA AGREEMENT

To establish peace and normalcy in Sri Lanka.

The President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka His Excellency Mr. J.R. Jayawardene, and the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, His Excellency Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, having met at Colombo on 29 July 1987:

Attaching utmost importance to nurturing, intensifying and strengthening the traditional friendship of Sri Lanka and India, and acknowledging the imperative need of resolving the ethnic problem Sri Lanka, and the consequent violence, and for the safety, well - being and prosperity of people belonging to all communities in Sri Lanka.

Have this day entered into the following agreement to fulfil this objective in this context.

1.1. desiring to preserve the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka:

1.2. acknowledging that Sri Lanka is multi - ethnic and multi - lingual plural society consisting, inter alia, of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims (Moors) and Burghers:

1.3. recognising that the Northern and the Eastern Provinces have been areas of historical habitation of Sri Lankan Tamil speaking peoples, who have at all times hitherto lived together in this territory with other ethnic groups:

1.5. conscious of the necessity of strengthening the forces contributing to the unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, and preserving its character as a multi - ethnic, multi - lingual and multireligious plural society, in which all citizens can live in equality, safety and harmony, and prosper and fulfil their aspirations:

2. Resolve that:

2.1. Since the Government of Sri Lanka proposes to permit adjoining Provinces to join to form one administrative unit and also by a referendum to separate as may be permitted to the Northern and Eastern Provinces as outlined below:

2.2 During the period, which shall be considered an interim period (i.e. from the date of the elections to the Provincial Council, as specified in para 2.8 to the date of the Referendum as specified in para 2.3 the Northern and Eastern Provinces as now constituted, will form one administrative unit, having one elected Provincial Council. Such a unit will have one Governor, one Chief Minister and one Board of Ministers.

2.3. There will be a referendum on or before 31 December 1988 to enable the people of the Eastern Provinces to decide whether:

(a) The Eastern Province should remain linked with the Northern Province as one administrative unit, and continue to be governed together with the Northern Province as specified in para 2.2, or

(b) The Eastern Province should constitute a separate administrative unit having its own distinct Provincial Council with separate Governor, Chief Minister and Board of Ministers.

The President may, at his discretion decide to postpone such a referendum.

2.4. All persons who have been displaced due to ethnic violence, or other reasons, will have the right to vote in such a referendum. Necessary conditions to enable them to return to areas from where they were displaced will be created.

2.5. The referendum when held, will be monitored by a committee headed by the Chief Justice, a member appointed by the President, nominated by the Government of Sri Lanka, and a member appointed by the President, nominated by the representatives of the Tamil speaking people of the Eastern Province.

2.6. A simple majority will be sufficient to determine the result of the referendum.

2.7. Meetings and other forms of propaganda, permissible within the laws of the country, will be allowed before the referendum.

2.8. Elections to Provincial Councils will be held within the next three months, in any event before 31 December 1987. Indian observers will be invited for elections to the Provincial Council of the North and East.

2.9. The emergency will be lifted in the Eastern and Northern Provinces by 15 August 1987. The process of surrendering of arms and the confining of security personnel moving back to barracks shall be completed within 72 hours or the cessation of hostilities coming into effect.

2.10. The Government of Sri Lanka will utilise for the purpose of law enforcement and maintenance of security in the Northern and Eastern Provinces the same organisations and mechanisms of government as are used in the rest of the country.

2.11. The President of Sri Lanka will grant a general amnesty to political and other prisoners now held in custody under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and other Emergency laws, and to combatants, as well as to those persons accused, charged and / or convicted under these laws. The Government of Sri Lanka

will make special efforts to rehabilitate militant youth with a view to bringing them back into the mainstream of national life. India will co-operate in the process.

2.12 The Government of Sri Lanka will accept and abide by the above provisions and expect all others to do likewise.

2.13 If the framework for the resolutions is accepted, the Government of Sri Lanka will implement the relevant proposals forthwith.

2.14 The Government of India will underwrite and guarantee the resolutions, and co-operate in the implementation of these proposals.

2.15 These proposals are conditional to an acceptance of the proposals negotiated from 4 May 1986 to 19 December 1986. Residual matters not finalised during the above negotiations shall be resolved between India and Sri Lanka within a period of six weeks of signing this agreement. These proposals are also conditional to the Government of India co-operating directly with the Government of Sri Lanka in their implementation.

2.16 These proposals are also conditional to the Government of India taking the following actions if any militant groups operating in Sri Lanka do not accept this framework of proposals for a settlement, namely,

(a) India will take all necessary steps to ensure that Indian territory is not used for activities prejudicial to the unity, integrity and security of Sri Lanka.

(b) The Indian Navy / Coast guard will co-operate with the Sri Lanka Navy in preventing Tamil militant activities from affecting Sri Lanka.

(c) In the event that the Government of Sri Lanka requests the Government of India to afford military assistance to implement these proposals the Government of India will co-operate by giving to the Government of Sri Lanka such military assistance as and when requested.

(d) The Government of India will expedite repatriation from Sri Lanka of Indian citizens to India who are resident there, concurrently with the repatriation of Sri Lankan refugees from Tamil Nadu.

(e) The Government of Sri Lanka and India will co-operate in ensuring the physical security and safety of all communities inhabiting the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

2.17 The Government of Sri Lanka shall ensure free, full and fair participation of voters from all communities in the Northern and Eastern Provinces in electoral processes envisaged in this Agreement.

The Government of India will extend full co-operation to the Government of Sri Lanka in this regard.

2.18 The official language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala. Tamil and English will also be official languages.

3 This Agreement and the annexure thereto shall come into force upon signature.

In witness whereof we have set our hands and seals here unto. Done in Colombo, Sri Lanka, on this the twenty-ninth day of July of the year one thousand nine hundred and eighty-seven, in duplicate, both texts being equally authentic.

**JUNIUS RICHARD  
JAYEWARDENE**  
President of the Democratic  
Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka

**RAJIV GANDHI**  
Prime Minister of the  
Republic of India

### **Annexure to the Agreement**

1. His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India agree that the Referendum mentioned in paragraph and its sub-paragraphs of the Agreement will be observed by a representative of the Election Commission of India to be invited by His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka.

2. Similarly, both heads of Government agree that the elections to the Provincial Council mentioned in paragraph 2.8 of the Agreement will be observed by a representative of the Government of India to be invited by the President of Sri Lanka.

3. His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka agrees that the Home Guards would be disbanded and all para-military personnel will be withdrawn from the Eastern and Northern provinces with a view to creating conditions conducive to fair elections to the Council.

4. The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India agree that the Tamil militants shall surrender their arms to authorities agreed upon to be designated by the President of Sri Lanka. The surrender shall take place in the presence of one senior representative each of Sri Lanka Red Cross and the Indian Red Cross.

5. The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India agree that a joint Indo - Sri Lanka observer group consisting of qualified representatives of the Government of Sri Lanka and the Government of India would monitor the cessation of hostilities from 31 July 1987.

6. The President of Sri Lanka and the Prime Minister of India also agree that in terms of paragraph 2.14 and paragraph 2.16 (c) of the Agreement, an Indian peace keeping contingent may be invited by the President of Sri Lanka to guarantee and enforce the cessation of hostilities.

### **President of Sri Lanka**

29 July 1987  
Excellency,

Please refer to your letter dated 29 July 1987, which  
reads as follows: Excellency,

1. Conscious of the friendship between our two countries stretching over two millenia and more, and recognising the importance of nurturing this traditional friendship, it is imperative that both Sri Lanka and India reaffirm the decision not to allow our respective territories to be used for activities prejudicial to each other's unity, territorial integrity and security.

2. In this spirit, you had, during the course of our discussions, agreed to meet some of India's concerns as follows:

(I) Your Excellency and myself will reach an early understanding about the relevance and employment of foreign military and intelligence personnel with a view to ensuring that such presences will not prejudice Indo-Sri Lankan relations.

(II) Trincomalee or any other ports in Sri Lanka will not be made available for military use by any country in a manner prejudicial to India's interests.

(III) The work of restoring and operating the Trincomalee oil tank farm will be undertaken as a joint venture between India and Sri Lanka.

(IV) Sri Lanka's agreement with foreign broadcasting organisations will be reviewed to ensure that any facilities set up by them in Sri Lanka are used solely as public broadcasting facilities and not for any military or intelligence purposes.

(I) Deport all Sri Lankan citizens who are found to be engaging in terrorist activities or advocating separatism or secessionism.

(II) Provide training facilities and military supplies for Sri Lankan security forces.

4. India and Sri Lanka have agreed to set up a joint consultation mechanism to continuously review matters of common concern in the light of the objectives stated in para. I, and specifically to monitor the implementation of other matters contained in this letter.

5. Kindly confirm, Excellency, that the above correctly sets out the Agreement reached between us. Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,  
(Signed) Rajiv Gandhi.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LALITH'S MURDEROUS CYNICISM

An important portion from: Bruce Palling. "An 'Independent' view from London:"

"Athulathmudali's most influential role was his period as National Security Minister between 1984 and 1989. He was the only cabinet minister who positively relished his dealings with the press. He was willing to discuss any topic but was only available to make appointments between 5:30 and 6 in the morning when he would invariably pick up the telephone himself. A man of immense charm, he was also capable of ruthless behaviour. Easily the most intelligent government minister, he could be shockingly frank.

"During the abortive 1987 peace agreement, Athulathmudali insisted that the Indian army hand over some Tamil Tigers they arrested in the Palk Straits en route to India. Half of the captives subsequently committed suicide, which then widened the conflict as the Tigers directly attacked the Indian army in Northern Sri Lanka. When I said to Athulathmudali that he must have known this would occur, he readily agreed, saying that is was exactly what he wanted to happen, in order to have India on his side."

Bruce Palling, "An Independent view from London." The Sunday Times, 2.5.93, reproduced from Independent (London)

It is clearly evident that the National Security Minister Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali and the Jayewardene government planned and acted calculated to break the Indo - Lanka Agreement of 1987.

The Agreement and peace process were entirely broken with this momentous incident. This time too, the Sinhalese leaders broke their agreement.

Dixit blames the Sinhalese for the breaking of the Indo - Lanka Accord:

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## “TAMIL HOPES NOT MET”

“the first pulling back from the commitments given was from the Sinhalese side.”

**Mr. Joytindra Nath Dixit**, India’s pipe - smoking controversial former High Commissioner in Colombo and later foreign Secretary feels that the legitimate Tamil aspirations will lead Sri Lanka to face a choice between unity and division.

A man known not to mince his words, Mr. Dixit who came to Sri Lanka during a volatile period in Indo - Lanka relations and the ethnic crisis was soon dubbed as the Viceroy of India by critics for his outspoken style.

Now in retirement Mr.Dixit looks back at those turbulent times and the cloak - and - dagger politics behind the Indo - Lanka Agreement.

Q. You said earlier that the Accord failed to reach its full potential because both the governments and the militants did not stick to their obligations. What in your view actually went wrong and at what point?

A: (Laughs) I could speak for half a day. The entire period between the end of September 1987 and middle of October was full of gaps in communication and pulling back from commitments from both sides. But even if I become a little unpopular with your government, the first pulling back from commitments given was from the Sinhalese side.

They delayed in giving the due status to the Tamil language. They got involved in what you call delaying and desultory discussions about devolution of financial power.



So, the LTTE and other Tamils felt it was again the same situation as it was before the APC and 1983. That was one.

But the one incident which really resulted in the LTTE backing out and India having to go into military operations was the late Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali's insistence of bringing those 17 LTTE youngsters back to Colombo whereas whatever they did, they had been captured and they could have been left in the custody of the Indian forces. We could have negotiated something. In fact Mr. J. R. Jayewardene had agreed that was the wisest political move but then Mr. Athulathmudali had other plans and while Mr. Jayewardena was still passing instructions.

Athulathmudali sent off the planes to prevent your President's decision being conveyed to me. Those boys took cyanide. It was very tragic and the LTTE leadership's reaction was naturally that of hurt and anger. Some sort of a betrayal.

It is fascinating and I feel very sad about it that in their propaganda, they have accused me of not having helped them get these people released. I was in Delhi when this incident happened. I rushed back to Colombo and I managed with difficulty to persuade your President to be understanding about it but then you can't sit in value judgement about things that have happened.

Q: Did this situation arise in your view due to International politics in Sri Lanka?

A: Of course. yes. No doubt about it that President Jayewardena had to make a bold and imaginative stand about this Agreement. There was a lot of opposition to him within the

cabinet. Mr. Gamini Jayasuriya, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali and Mr. Premadasa disassociated themselves completely from the Agreement.

The Sunday Leader, Sept. 4, 1994.

THE HALF - BAKED SOLUTION OF THE INDO-SRI LANKA ACCORD OF 1987. WAS A TACTICAL AND A DIPLOMATIC MOVE OF THE JAYAWARDENE GOVERNMENT TO TACKLE AND DEFEAT THE EELAM ARMED STRUGGLE OF THE TAMILS FOR TAMIL EELAM WITH THE HELP OF THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT MR. JAYAWARDENE VERY TACTFULLY TRAPPED MR. RAJIV GANDHI INTO THE WEIR AGAINST THE EELAM TAMILS, WHO WERE THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDS OF INDIA.

HERE, ONCE AGAIN THE PROMISE WAS BROKEN BY THE SINHALESE GOVERNMENT, BUT IT WAS DIFFERENT IN CERTAIN ASPECTS. UP TO 1987, THE SINHALESE LEADERS BROKE THE PLEDGES, WHICH WERE GIVEN TO THE TAMIL LEADERS, BUT THIS TIME THE PROMISE THAT IS GIVEN TO INDIA, TOO, WAS BROKEN BY THE SINHALESE LEADERS.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE ACCORD, THE JAYAWARDENE GOVERNMENT WAS VERY KEEN AND PLANNED TO BREAK IT. MR. JAYAWARDENE AND HIS LIEUTENANTS WERE DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY INVOLVED IN CREATING THE CONDITION STEP BY STEP TO MANOEUVRE INDIA TO INTERVENE THE EELAM.

THE STATEMENTS OF THE FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY MINISTER OF SRI LANKA, MR. LALITH ATHULATHMUDALI, AND THE FORMER "VICEROY" OF INDIA TO SRI LANKA, MR. J.N. DIXIT CLEARLY PROVE HOW THE JAYAWARDENE GOVERNMENT BROKE THE ACCORD.

FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION MANIFESTO OF  
MR. GAMINI DISSANAYAKE:  
( 1994)

“UNFORTUNATELY, LACK OF POLITICAL WILL AND AN  
INADEQUACY OF THE POWERS UNDER THE 13TH  
AMENDMENT HAVE FRUSTRATED THE PEOPLE OF THE  
NORTH-EAST. “

HERE, THE U.N.P. AGREES THAT THE PEACE PACKAGE  
OF 1987 WAS NOT COMPLETE ENOUGH TO SOLVE THE  
PROBLEMS OF THE TAMILS.

‘Cited in Jehan Perera “Gamini’s last Testament was  
Federalism”, the Island, 13.11.1994.

\* \* \* \* \*

## **AN OUT - OF - POWER JR BACKS FEDERALISM, FISHES IN TROUBLED WATERS**

Former President J.R. Jayawardene said he believed the  
granting of Federal status would be the best solution to the North-  
East conflict.

He could not allow a federal system during his two terms  
as President, because the majority at that time was not prepared  
for it.

Q: At this stage what would you feel is the best solution to  
the N-E conflict?

A: The federal system.

Q: Why didn’t you do it as a President? A: At that time our  
people were not prepared to give a federal system.

The Sinhalese Leaders accept a federal solution for the  
problems of the Tamils before they come to power and after they  
are out of power. But the tragedy lies when they are in power.

J.R. Jayawardene (Interview), The Sunday Times, I. I. 1995.  
Dr. Colvin R. De. Silva said in 1956.

‘ .. .....do our people want a Single nation or do we want  
two nations? Do we want a single state or do we want two? Do  
we want one Ceylon or do we want two?

“ .. if you [S.W.R.D. Banaranaike] mistreat them (The Tamils) if you illtreat them, if you misuse them, if you oppress and harass them, in that process you may cause to emerge in Ceylon, from that particular racial stock with its own particular language and tradition a new nationality to which will have to concede more claims than it puts forward now. It is always wiser statemenship to give generously early instead of being niggardly too late”

\* \* \* \* \*

**THE WORDS WERE PROPHETIC. BUT ALAS THE DEEDS WERE NEGATIVE.**