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USE OF THE  
**TAMIL LANGUAGE**

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# USE OF THE TAMIL LANGUAGE

*This booklet gives the full text of the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Bill which was passed on August 5th, 1958, in all its stages in the House of Representatives with the speeches made by the Prime Minister, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, the Minister of Agriculture and Food, Mr. Philip Gunawardena, and the Prime Minister's reply to criticisms made against the Bill during the debate.*

USE OF THE  
TAMIL LANGUAGE

The Tamil language is one of the oldest in the world and has a rich history. It is spoken by millions of people in South India and Sri Lanka. The language is known for its literary and philosophical contributions. The Tamil script is a unique form of writing that has been used for centuries. The language is also known for its music and poetry. The Tamil language is a source of pride for many people in South India and Sri Lanka. It is a language that has stood the test of time and continues to be spoken and written today.



# TAMIL LANGUAGE (SPECIAL PROVISIONS) BILL

## MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

A Tamil pupil in a Government school or an Assisted school shall be entitled to be instructed through the medium of the Tamil language in accordance with such regulations under the Education Ordinance, No. 31 of 1939, relating to the medium of instruction as are in force or may hereafter be brought into force.

When the Sinhala language is made a medium of instruction in the University of Ceylon, the Tamil language shall, in accordance with the provisions of the Ceylon University Ordinance, No. 20 of 1942, and of the Statutes, Acts and Regulations made thereunder, be made a medium of instruction in such University for students who, prior to their admission to such University, have been educated through the medium of the Tamil language.

## PUBLIC SERVICE

A person educated through the medium of the Tamil language shall be entitled to be examined through such medium at any examination for the admission of persons to the Public Service, subject to the condition that he shall, according as regulations made under this Act in that behalf may require,—

- (a) have a sufficient knowledge of the official language of Ceylon, or
- (b) acquire such knowledge within a specified time after admission to the Public Service :

Provided that, when the Government is satisfied that there are sufficient facilities for the teaching of the Sinhala language in schools in which the Tamil language is a medium of instruction and that the annulment of clause (b) of the preceding provisions of this section will not cause undue hardship, provision may be made by regulation made under this Act that such clause shall cease to be in force.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence between persons, other than officials in their official capacity, educated through the medium of the Tamil language and any official in his official capacity or between any local authority in the Northern or Eastern Province and any official in his official capacity may, as prescribed, be in the Tamil language.

### **PRESCRIBED ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES**

In the Northern and Eastern Provinces the Tamil language may be used for prescribed administrative purposes, in addition to the purposes for which that language may be used in accordance with the other provisions of this Act, without prejudice to the use of the official language of Ceylon in respect of those prescribed administrative purposes.

### **REGULATIONS**

(1) The Minister may make regulations to give effect to the principles and provisions of this Act.



(2) No regulation made under sub-section (1) shall have effect until it is approved by the Senate and the House of Representatives and notification of such approval is published in the *Gazette*.

This Act shall have effect subject to such measures as may have been or may be adopted under the proviso to section 2 of the Official Language Act, No. 33 of 1956, during the period ending on the thirty-first day of December, 1960.

### INTERPRETATION

In this Act unless the context otherwise requires—

“ Assisted school ” and “ Government school ” shall have the same meaning as in the Education Ordinance, No. 31 of 1939 ;

“ local authority ” means any Municipal Council, Urban Council, Town Council or Village Committee ;

“ official ” means the Governor-General, or any Minister, Parliamentary Secretary or officer of the Public Service ; and

“ prescribed ” means prescribed by regulation made under this Act.





## Prime Minister's Speech

**THE Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Bill** was passed on August 5th in all its stages in the House of Representatives. The second reading of the Bill was moved by the Prime Minister, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, who said that the language issue was a difficult one for which some solution had to be found. He declared that the problem could not be solved according to the wishes of the extremists of one side or the other. It is a problem for which some middle way had to be found where the Sinhalese interests are reasonably and fairly safeguarded and also where justice is done to a section of our fellow citizens.

THE Prime Minister said: On an important Bill like this it is my duty to explain even briefly the position in English for the benefit of those who may not be familiar with the Sinhalese language.

The history of this matter is well known to the House; nor need I repeat it in detail. The issue we all know. It is a difficult issue for which some solution has to be found. It cannot be solved according to the wishes of the extremists of one side or the other. It is not a problem that will *ever* be solved by extremism—either Sinhalese extremism or Tamil extremism.



It is a problem for which we have to find some middle way where the Sinhalese interests are reasonably and fairly safeguarded and also where justice is done to a section of our fellow citizens.

The first important issue that arises and which we have to settle for ourselves is this. What really is it that we want to achieve by some solution or settlement of the language question? What is it that we are trying to achieve? There may be some Sinhalese who feel that this really is a country only for the Sinhalese, that only Sinhalese have a right to live here; and any others who live here must be forcibly converted to become Sinhalese in some way or to be subordinate to the Sinhalese. I have not the least doubt that there are some Sinhalese who feel that, but who have not the courage to say that openly. I think they should not be taken seriously.

On the other hand, there are Tamil extremists who want a Tamil kingdom embracing Tamils in South India, East Africa, Malaya and so on. There is the Tamil Nad, or whatever you call it, the Tamil flag flying over this far-flung empire. That is equally wrong. We are all fellow citizens of one country. We have differences, in countries like ours of race, of religion, of language and customs. But above all those we have one common factor—our common humanity which must be emphasized today throughout the world, internationally and nationally, above our differences; we have that common factor, which is more important,



emphasized today throughout the world,—the common factor that we are all human beings faced with common problems.

Well, now, in such a situation what are the lines on which these problems can be solved? It must surely be that while you do the just thing by the Sinhalese, even providing the Sinhalese language as a link between the various communities, just as English was earlier, at the same time recognizing the valuable needs of our other fellow citizens may be their religion, their language, and so on—all sections of the people must live as friends and as brothers and none as slaves or inferiors. Surely, that is how we must look at this problem! Looking at the problem in that way, what did our Government Party do before the last General Elections on the language issue? **We felt that it was just and fair that Sinhalese should be the one and only official language of the country. Seventy per cent of the citizens of Ceylon are Sinhalese. So that, to have Sinhalese as the only official language was not unjust or unfair. While making Sinhalese the only official language, we recognized the fact that a fairly large section of our fellow citizens use the Tamil language, the Tamil literature, and so on, and that due recognition should be given to the Tamil language. Surely the solution of the problem must lie on some such lines; otherwise, people will say there is no solution to this question.**

I challenge any of those parties which have solutions of their own, which, they think, are better than ours,

who have turned and gone out of this Chamber without having the courage to express their views on this Bill, to give us those solutions. To them I say it was their duty to express their views if they had any. But they are hiding behind our coattails. They are waiting for us to solve this issue, bearing the brunt of the blows from right and left and everywhere. Once we have solved this issue they will say, there is nothing more to do, let us get on to some other issue. That is all I wish to say about those parties; whether it is the Party that masquerades as the U.N.P., which is neither united nor national, or the L.S.S.P. for what reasons I do not know, or the Communist Party who have begun to talk of democracy. Mr. Chelvanayakam and all of them are our guests, well looked after. I offered my car to them to come to this House today though I was not able to release them because there is a feeling in the North that they want to start some Satyagraha or civil disobedience movement. That is why we were unable to release them at this stage. We had to make other arrangements in keeping with their self-respect and I went to the extent of offering my car to them to attend this meeting. It is a luxurious car that was bought during the previous regime. It is *their* business if they did not wish to come. That is no reason why we should hold up this Debate.

It is all nonsense to say that because there was a state of emergency we should not proceed with this discussion. In that case, we should not proceed with our Budget proceedings, which is far more important than



this Debate. All kinds of new reasons have been given. But everybody has considered and discussed the language issue threadbare during the last two years in this country. They know exactly where they stand. Why don't they come here and speak. Why then is this sudden realization of theirs that it is undemocratic to discuss a matter like this on the Floor of this House while there is a state of emergency? The state of emergency does not render that undemocratic.

The only impression that the state of emergency has on the present situation is that it would probably make it more difficult for those who, over this issue at this time, might have been thinking of, not democracy, but entirely undemocratic methods such as wholesale looting, the burning of boutiques and shops, and so on, and even lying flat either on their backs or their faces, whichever posture they find comfortable, in the middle of our thoroughfares. Those who wish to do that may find it rather embarrassing during a time of emergency.

Apart from that, I do not see that it holds water to say that because of a state of emergency they are unable to take part in this Debate. We are not going to be bluffed by arguments of this nature. **There is a duty of this Government over this issue and it is performing its duty. It will not be democratic to try methods of direct action or pressure on the Government over an issue like this. We must try it out and, if the people are dissatisfied or if they think we have done wrong, if they can find somebody else who, they**



**think, will do better, they have the fullest right at the next general elections to tell the people about it and get elected into office. I accept that issue and face the challenge. Soon they will know whether the public will come round and give them support.**

It would have been against the principles of democracy if I postponed this Bill unduly, if I postponed too long. It should have been introduced simultaneously with the Official Language Bill. I did not do it at that time. I regret that we did not even delay the Official Language Bill and introduce the two Bills simultaneously. There is no violation of a democratic principle to which any objection may be raised. Everybody knows all about this issue. Any hon. Member can come here and discuss the Bill to his heart's content and express any views he wishes.

The Communist Party says that it will not participate in the Debate, but appeals to all progressive elements to support the Bill. That was the statement it made in the press. It appeals to all progressive elements to support this Bill, while it refrains from taking any part in the Debate. The obvious inference is that this party does not class itself among the progressives. However, it is not for me to cast aspersions. The members of this party act as it suits them, or as they think it is most expedient for them to act. Beyond that I do not wish to say anything. They are the very people who will

live to bless us for settling, at great difficulty to ourselves, the language issue when they have to face the polls next time.

Now, about the Bill itself. There are one or two fundamental principles that we have to bear in mind. First of all, what is it that we are after? Are we seeking to establish a Sinhalese imperialism, to forcibly make everybody Sinhalese or make everybody speak Sinhalese, or to establish a Tamil hegemony covering a large part of the world? **Let us make quite clear what we want. If what we want is to live here, protecting and safeguarding what is valuable to the Sinhalese people while giving fair and just recognition to the valuable things of others, so that we can live together as a friendly lot of citizens of this country, working in friendship for the progress of the country as a whole, then the line that we have adopted has been entirely justified. If what we want is any of the other things, then I can understand criticism. If we want to adopt the extremists' point of view, then also I can understand criticism.**

Many people do not understand what is meant by the term "official language". That is interpreted in various ways. The official language conception is a Western conception. In our country, we had no official language as such. Even in many Western countries, they have no legal official language today; it has grown up by practice. When you have a language declared by law as an official language, what does it mean? It



only means that you recognize that language for necessary official acts. That is the meaning of the term "official language". For instance, if I send a letter to a foreign country, it should really go in the official language, with a suitable translation. In due course, official records and things like that should be kept in the official language. Documents that a court would recognize would have to be in the official language, though there may be, for purposes of convenience, a translation. That is what an official language means. An official language does not mean a language that is thrust down the throats of everybody for every purpose. Most of these troubles arise out of a misconception of the term "official language".

The second point I wish to mention is this. What does this Bill itself do? Every one of its clauses is subject to the proviso that it does not conflict with the position of the Sinhalese language as the official language of the country. In fact, it is in the preamble of the Bill. The principles stated in the clauses of the Bill become operative under the regulations framed for the purpose. We have not yet framed the Regulations.

Now, what are the terms of the Bill? Clause 2 says :

"A Tamil pupil in a Government school or an Assisted school shall be entitled to be instructed through the medium of the Tamil language in accordance with such regulations under the Education Ordinance, No. 31 of 1939, relating to the medium of instruction as are in force or many hereafter be brought into force."



Anybody now drafting or redrafting those regulations under the Bill in keeping with this clause will have two things to bear in view—not to create a situation of conflict with the position of the Sinhalese language as the official language, while at the same time extending this amenity to the Tamil child. That is how we will shape the Regulations under every one of these clauses.

Similarly with regard to the University, please remember this. Under any conception of fundamental rights, held by international law earlier in the world, or later as promulgated in the Statement of Human Rights by the United Nations Organization, one of the most important ingredients of fundamental human rights is the preservation of language. For instance, if you give a Tamil child the option of studying in the lower classes through the medium of Tamil, have you the right to say that, when he enters the University, he should turn over to the medium of Sinhalese? Surely, we must provide him an education in the University also in the Tamil medium. I do not see anything wrong in that. We have to do that in spite of all the difficulties Mr. Mettananda points out.

The other alternative is worse. If you convert the Peradeniya University into a purely Sinhalese University, you will not be able to resist the demand of the Tamils for a separate Tamil University on the same footing as the Peradeniya University, situated may be

in Jaffna or some place like that. That position will not be better, nor can that request be reasonably resisted.

Then I come to the Public Service. There, again, we follow the principle that a person educated in the Tamil language can sit for the examination for admission to the Public Service in the medium of the language in which he has learnt. He cannot answer the papers in Sinhalese. But you will ask me, then, what is the position of the Sinhalese language as the official language? That person will be only given a probationary appointment and will be required, under the Regulations, to acquire, within a specified period, the necessary knowledge of the official language. Otherwise, he ceases to be a member of the Public Service. If he knows Sinhalese beforehand, all that process can be cut out by setting one or two papers in Sinhalese in the examination for admission itself. At a point of time in the future when Sinhalese, I trust will be taught as well as learnt as a second language in Tamil schools, you can do away with this provision of subsequently obtaining a knowledge of Sinhalese by setting one or two papers in Sinhalese in the entrance examination itself. It will take some years to do that, but I am sure, that position will normally and naturally be reached. I do not see anything wrong in that.

Of course, Mr. Mettananda has a good deal to say about disproportionate appointments to the Public Service. He maintained that the Tamils in the Public



Service are far too many in proportion to their total number and that this Bill will only weigh the balance in their favour. It will do nothing of the kind. The other suggestion which Mr. Mettananda makes in this connection, of having in the Public Service numbers in proportion to the total population, is not an issue that I am dealing with under a language Bill. If indeed, the other communities like to have it, I am perfectly sure that, from the Sinhalese point of view, we will not object to proportionate representation in the Public Service according to population. As a matter of fact, there are some Tamils who are urging it. I will mention one name openly, that of Senator S. Nadesan, who is such an able representative of everyone in this country—of the Federalists, of the U. N. P., of the S. L. F. P.

With regard to correspondence any regulations framed under this will have to conform to these two principles. It must be seen that there is no conflict with the position of Sinhalese as the official language, while at the same time extending a certain amenity to those who know Tamil.

Let us consider how such Regulations may be framed. I am now speaking without prejudice. I am speaking in order to give an example with a view to allaying the fears of some of these people. Up to December 1960 under the Official Language Act the status quo can be preserved. No difficulties will arise till then because we have the power to do it. After

December 31, 1960, how will we deal with it? That is a question which has often been asked. Any Tamil gentlemen must have the right to correspond in the Tamil language but the position of Sinhalese as the official language must be preserved. He can be sent a reply in the official language, Sinhalese, but for the convenience of the Tamil gentlemen who may not know Sinhalese a copy of a Tamil translation or the substance of the reply will be attached to such letter. But as Sinhalese is also taught in the Tamil schools we might later be able to drop the Tamil copy. What on earth is wrong with that? I cannot understand whether anything is wrong with that.

We are told terrible things. We are told that one Tamil man in a Sinhalese village will write in Tamil and if he is sent a reply in Sinhalese he will be caused grave hardship. Then again according to Mr. Mettananda 5,000 to 10,000 extra Tamil clerks will have to be employed to do the translations. This is all moonshine of the worst type. In these matters the proof of the pudding is in the eating. We are having the courage to deal with the language issue according to the policy of our Government. Let us see how it turns out. If we have done wrong the people of the country have the remedy in their own hands. If the people feel we have done right, in one year's time there will be no language issue spoken of in this country. I can tell you that. There will be no language issue for people to exploit or on which lives are to be



sacrificed. It would have ceased to be any real live issue. That is what some people are afraid of. That is the position with regard to correspondence.

Then I come to the fifth Section which relates to the Northern and Eastern Provinces. In these provinces we are going to permit certain administrative work to be done as prescribed. But we have to look into it. What are the administrative purposes that will be served and how will such work be carried on in Tamil? The question is asked: Why do you specify the Northern and Eastern Provinces? Are you not thinking of one community? It is not that at all. It is because there are a very large number of Tamil citizens. Then the question is asked: What is the position of Sinhalese and non-Tamils in those areas? **Anybody who wants to transact any business in Sinhalese has the fullest power to do it not only in the Northern and Eastern Provinces but also in any part of the country. That concession is there and it can be made use of. What on earth is all this fuss about?**

The other Sections are merely formal ones which I do not want to refer to in detail.

It has not been a pleasant or easy task for this Government to handle this language issue during the last two years. We have attempted to do it according to our expressed principles prior to the last elections

in a way which we sincerely believe is a really satisfactory solution of this problem giving to the Sinhalese language its due place, giving due recognition to the other important language in the country, Tamil, in the way that we proposed to do. In doing so we have been criticized from all sides. From the Tamil side, from the Sinhalese side, from this side and from that side. Every kind of oprobrious epithet has been flung at me. Sinhalese anonymous letters have come to me that I have been a traitor to the Sinhalese people. From the Tamil point of view I have simply ruined the Tamil race. All types of things have been said. They are all wanting to bump me off. I have no objection for the purpose quite sincerely of what I consider to be right if anybody wants to bump me off. **But the Government as well as I am satisfied that we are doing the right thing.** We are ready to let the people of this country decide when the time comes whether we have done right or wrong. I leave the final and ultimate decision in the hands of my people and my country without any fear or any doubt. In the meanwhile, the task of governing this country which the people of this country have entrusted to us will be carried out without fear but with sincerity to the best of our ability undeterred by threats of all kinds, leaving it democratically for the people to decide in due course whether in fact we have been right or not.



## Food Minister's Speech

**THE Minister Agriculture and Food, Mr. Philip Gunawardena, speaking first in Sinhalese and then in English said that it would not be correct to vote on the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Bill without speaking on it. He said that the Bill would go a long way towards settling the differences between the Sinhalese and the Tamils and bringing peace to the country.**

Here is the text of the Minister's statement :

I am very happy that I am able to offer a few remarks on this Bill to make provision for the use of the Tamil language and to provide for the matters connected herewith and incidental thereto. I remember the time when the language question engaged the attention of the people of this Island in a very acute form, I remember the time when Sir John Kotelawala, as Prime Minister gave utterance to a foolish remark in Jaffna which precipitated the language struggle. Sir John Kotelawala is not a man who ever thinks or is capable of thinking. Somebody, I suppose, who was round him must have whispered into his ear : " This is a great occasion. A large number of ladies are present. You had better come out with some nice thing ". And he promised parity for the Tamil language—parity with Sinhalese. Of course even before he returned to the South, political leaders of a different philosophy—leaders of the Communist Party and the Nava Lanka

Sama Samaj Party, Mr. Pieter Keyneman and Dr. N. M. Perera—thought that, in order to win the support of the Tamil voters, it was necessary to move a resolution in Parliament for the purpose of giving parity to Tamil on the same basis as Sinhalese. The motion was moved, but it did not find much support. A number of meetings were held by these Gentlemen which roused the Sinhalese people and made it impossible for either the Communist Party or the Nava Lanka Sama Samaj Party to hold a public meeting for a very long time in any part of the country, except perhaps in the Tamil areas.

On the 10th September, a very largely attended public meeting was held presided over by Rev. Baddegama Vimalawansa. At that meeting a resolution was adopted, which demanded that Sinhalese be made the only State Language and that Tamil be made a regional language in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. At this meeting speeches were made by my hon. Friend the Member for Gampaha and by Mr. Rajaratna who was the Member for Welimada some time ago. There were others. I remember the hon. Member for Mawanella was present. He supported this resolution in a very lucid speech.

That was the situation about the end of 1955. I tried my best to convince my old friends of the Nava Lanka Sama Samaj Party and the Communist Party not to take an active part in the struggle for parity. In trying to convince my old friend, Dr. N. M. Perera, I told him



that if it were not possible to support the stand that we have taken, he should at least keep quiet and remain silent. He laughed at the idea. I told him then that, if he could not join a front that is going to defeat the United National Party at the forthcoming general elections, it was necessary to form a united front which is capable of overthrowing the United National Party. The Hon. Prime Minister formed that front—the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna—and we fought the elections on a number of other issues in addition to the language issue which undoubtedly took a very prominent part in the electoral campaign.

**At election meetings we did not hesitate to say in clear and unmistakable terms that we were going to make Sinhalese the only State Language and give a reasonable status to the Tamil Language. We made that position very clear. We told the voters in various electorates that it was not possible, nor was it necessary or desirable, to kill all the Tamils in this country ; that we cannot possibly drive them away or dump them in the Indian Ocean ; that some of them had lived in this country for thousands of years ; and that it was necessary to give them a certain status, to allow them to develop their culture and language. It was made clear that, while making Sinhalese the State language, we were prepared and that we would in turn give a reasonable status to the Tamil language.**

Immediately after the elections, when the Language Bill was introduced, we tried our best—the Hon. Prime Minister and a good many Members tried their best—to include in the original Bill this particular section. But Professors thought they could stage hunger strikes under the portico of this House! And as a result of a persistent campaign carried on by people who wear yellow robes but who do not live the philosophy of the Buddha, we had to delay the introduction of that second part, and it is that delay that has caused unnecessary suffering to the people of this Island. We are sorry that that delay has taken place, but we are very glad that we are able to honour our pledge. That is the reason, why we are supporting this Bill.

I do not want to take more time. Let me, before I conclude thank the Muslim Members in this House, the Moor Members in this House for supporting the Bill whole-heartedly.

I remember the time in 1915 when, during the riots, some boutiques, houses, estates belonging to some of our Muslim friends were destroyed. I remember also the reign of terror of the Punjabis and Marathis who were brought here during the Martial Law days. The father of the hon. Second Member for Colombo Central (Sir Razik Fareed) was in the old Legislative Council. I remember the time; I remember also the father of the hon. Member for Kalkudah (Mr. Macan Markar),



who tried to bring peace between the Sinhalese and the Moors in Galle and other places. That was in 1915. But today we have resolved all conflicts between the Sinhalese and the Muslims ; we have no problems ; we are getting on well.

**Is it too much to expect and hope that the problems between the Tamils and, the Sinhalese, the unfortunate disturbances that took place in April and May, will never repeat themselves? I hope that this Bill will go a long way towards settling those differences and bringing peace and friendship between the Tamils and the Sinhalese.**

## Prime Minister's Reply

THE Prime Minister in winding up the debate on the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Bill said that the Government had made a sincere effort under all kinds of difficulties from various sides to secure a solution that would reasonably satisfy all sections of the people.

He said : This Debate is really not intended to be an occasion for acrimony. It is really and fundamentally an occasion for assuaging feelings.

I explained that in introducing a Bill of this nature defining the position of the Sinhalese language, while intending to give a place to the Tamil language, you

obviously are bound also to produce legislation defining the position which you propose to accord to the Tamil language. If you do not do that, the whole position is utterly vague ; it is at the mercy of anybody from day to day ; I may change my mind tomorrow, or the day after, and make an order, or some other Prime Minister, who perhaps favours parity, may, by administrative order, give very much more than is now contemplated under specific legislation.

I am grateful to my Friend the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food for referring to the proceedings at a certain meeting which I had lost sight of where the husband of the present Member for Welimada as well as the hon. Member for Gampaha were present and spoke supporting a resolution to the effect that while making Sinhalese the official language of the country, the status of a regional language should be given to Tamil in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. That was not very long ago. It was in September, 1955. It was only some months before the General Elections in 1956. This proves the attitudinizing which some of them adopt from time to time over such a fundamental question as this, on which the fates of millions rest ; to them this is a matter, to some extent, of caprice, opportunism or expediency from moment to moment. Is that so now ? Does it not completely prove that these are not carefully thought out ideas ? They are just attitudes adopted from time to time,



purely because they think it will serve their purpose for the moment, without considering the affect on the whole country.

I will now go further and say that, a few weeks before the S. L. F. P. addressed its mind to this question and came to a decision, Mr. K. M. P. Rajaratna and Mr. F. R. Jayasuriya called on the Rev. Talpawila Seelawansa—I mention the names because it is important—and told him that what they should do was to really support parity for Sinhalese and Tamil. But, a week or two later, they turned round and said, “No, now we must stand for Sinhala only, and not for both Sinhala and Tamil.” I am mentioning that as a fact, and I am also giving the names of the person to whom that decision was conveyed. You can now realize for yourself the value of this type of attitude on this question, which changed from week to week and month to month.

I am very sorry that the hon. fair Member for Welimada (Mrs. Rajaratna) was so moved at this stage as to shed tears—when we are giving much less to the Tamil language than her own husband contemplated at the time he discussed this matter with the Rev. Talpawila Seelawansa and also went to that meeting of September, 1955, to which the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food referred. That is indeed a matter about which I feel very sad.

**I do claim once again that we have made a real effort and a sincere effort, under all kinds of difficulties from various sides, in order to secure a solution to this very difficult problem, to reasonably satisfy all sections of the population that are involved with a view to securing that unity and friendliness which alone would enable us to solve our other problems, grave economic problems, that face us which otherwise could not be solved at all.**

The Sinhalese people need have no fear that the Sinhalese language will disappear under this Bill or that the Sinhalese people are being destroyed or that some grave wrong will happen to them. The Tamil people, at least the majority of the Tamil people, who I believe are quite moderate and reasonable, will have a place given to their language, which will be satisfactory for all purposes that they could have in mind. In this matter, I am not dealing with the Federal Party. I am not catering for them by this Bill. My hon. Friend the Member for Gampaha in accordance with his general genius for inaccurate statements said that by this Bill I am giving effect to the Pact, my Pact with Mr. Chelvanayakam. Mr. Chelvanayakam and the Federal Party Members are completely rejecting this Bill as quite unsatisfactory. I am appealing over their heads to the Tamil people just as I am appealing over the heads of the hon. Member for Gampaha and the hon. Member for Welimada to the vast majority of the Sinhalese people in bringing forward this Bill. We will see and time will disclose whether my analysis is



correct or not. I am satisfied that extremism in this country consists of the activities of a small minority, whether they are Sinhalese or Tamil, but that the vast majority of the people are reasonable and moderate and only wish to live together with mutual respect for each other as well as self-respect, so that we can march forward together and achieve that progress and that position for us all which we have been hoping to obtain under this freedom which we have, freedom for the Sinhalese—yes, remember too,—that it is freedom for the Tamils, for the Muslims, for the Malays, for the Burghers, who are all fellow-citizens,—yes, and if it is not freedom in that way for all, I too, repeat the words of another leader, a Prime Minister very much greater than myself, **SHEI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU**, who stated recently, after being many years in jail and having suffered for many years to obtain freedom, that if freedom meant internal communal strife or injustice or suppression of minorities “To hell with Swaraj”. Those are the words I would recommend to the hon. Member for Gampaha—the Sinhalese communist, standing up for communist principles in the guise of the narrowest and most fanatical nationalist—a curious combination which only such a mentality as his would be capable of.

Of all the important measures from time to time introduced in this House I feel prouder of this particular measure than of any other as one disclosing courage, statesmanship and vision and one which I have not the least doubt will in the years to come accrue many benefits to us all.







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