



**J.R. JAYEWARDENE  
OF SRI LANKA**

BY

**T.D.S.A. DISSANAYAKA**

493







20 / -

# J. R. JAYEWARDENE OF SRI LANKA

by

T. D. S. A. DISSANAYAKA

THE INSIDE STORY OF HOW THE PRIME MINISTER LED  
THE U.N.P TO VICTORY IN 1977



923.25493

DIS

### Publishing schedule

First published	—	August	1977
First re-print	—	September	1977
Second re-print	—	September	1977
Sinhala translation	—	October	1977
Tamil translation	—	October	1977
Second edition	—	October	1977



Printed and Published  
by  
**SWASTIKA PRESS**  
209, Dam Street, Colombo-12.



## PROLOGUE

The annals of history record that in ancient Sri Lanka, on important occasions of state the rulers of our nation worshipped at the venerated Temple of the Tooth in Mahanuwara and then addressed their subjects. In the sanctum of the inner chamber they paid homage to the Enlightened One, whose teachings have ennobled the lives of countless millions, and invoked the blessings of the deities. From the balcony they spoke to their people on purely mundane matters.

With the efflux of time those rituals had hardly changed though concepts pertaining to the rulers had changed beyond recognition. Accordingly the ceremony at the Temple of the Tooth one week after the free and unfettered exercise of the franchise in 1977 was a quaint mixture of ancient ritual and modern government, the first broadcast to the nation by Prime Minister J. R. Jayewardene.

Three score and ten years ago when J. R. Jayewardene was born into a distinguished family, the astrologers predicted that he would become a just and fair ruler. For decades he had excelled in the art of politics. Many had honoured him with their friendship or with their enmity. He had tasted both splendid victory and humiliating defeat. He had mingled with the common man whom he sought to serve not as master but as servant, he had walked with kings without losing the common touch, his integrity and ability were admired by friend and foe alike and his fame had spread far beyond the shores of Sri Lanka. Yet somehow the pinnacle of power eluded him.

Then, in 1977 he sought a mandate from the nation to usher in a just and free society. The nation responded in a manner that made both the victor and the vanquished gasp in utter disbelief.



Accordingly when Prime Minister J. R. Jayewardene and his Cabinet, having fulfilled their religious obligations appeared on the Patthirippuwa, the octagonal balcony of the Temple of the Tooth, over a million voices rent the air with their acclaim. Having repeatedly and unsuccessfully attempted to speak he found a moment of relative quiet and began thus.

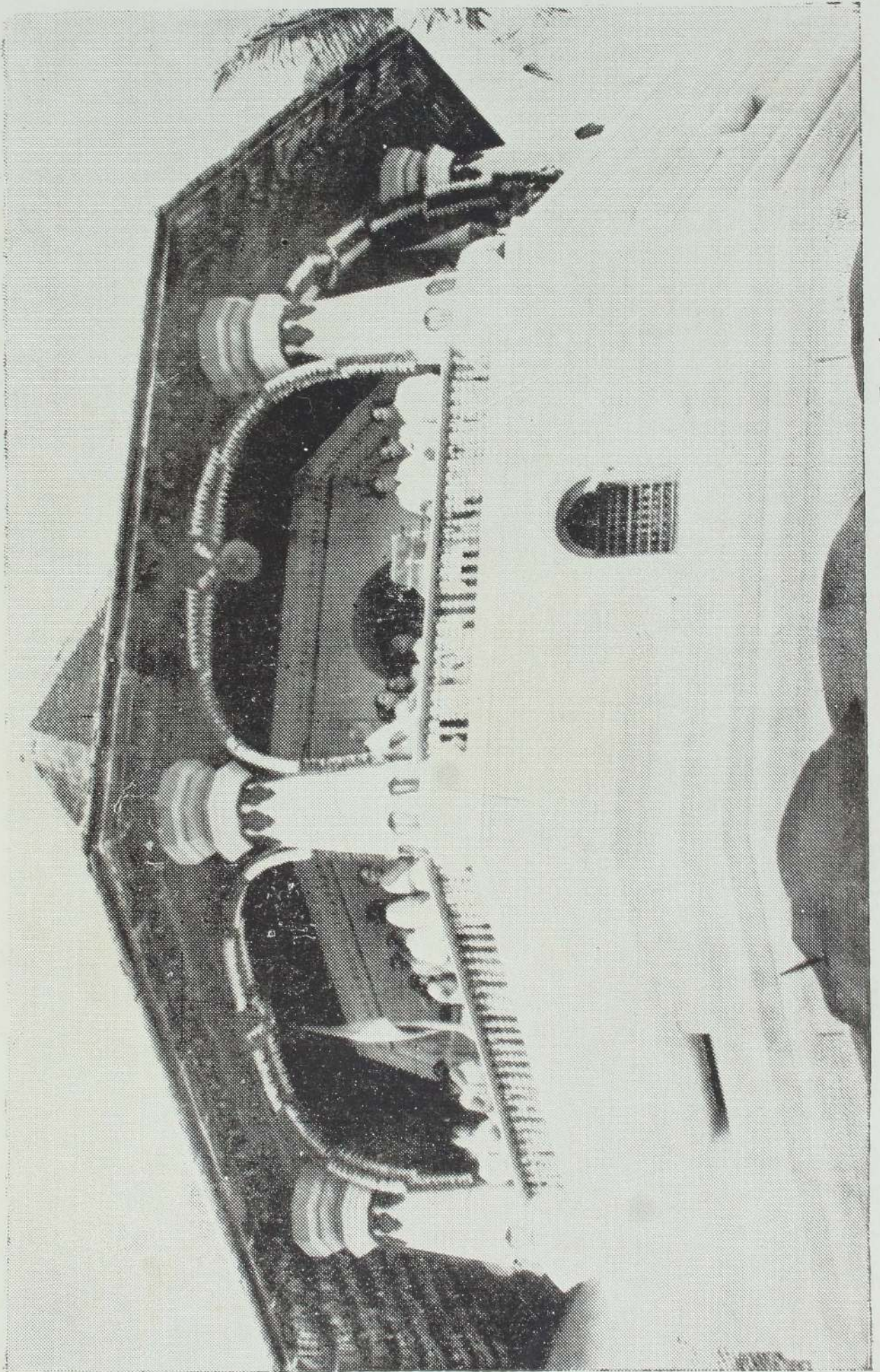
“ My fellow countrymen,

“ It is from here the kings of ancient times addressed the people and I thank you, the people of Sri Lanka, because it is you who gave me the opportunity to address the nation from here.

I ask you please to extend to me your co-operation and assistance to give you the righteous Government I promised.  
I have.....  
.....

How did J. R. Jayewardene lead the United National Party to its unprecedented landslide victory? This book, which is written without fear or favour, will attempt to answer that question.





Addressing the nation from the Temple of the Tooth.







## CONTENTS

CHAPTER I	— President of the UNP	...	1 - 30
CHAPTER II	— Co-operating with the Government	...	31 - 44
CHAPTER III	— Opposing the Government	...	45 - 62
CHAPTER IV	— Foreign Affairs	...	63 - 72
CHAPTER V	— Whither Democracy?	...	73 - 106
CHAPTER VI	— General Election 1977	...	107 - 139
EPILOGUE		...	140
POSTSCRIPT		...	141 - 152
APPENDICIES		...	153 - 176



செய்துள்ளவை

1	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
2	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
3	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
4	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
5	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
6	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
7	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
8	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
9	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
10	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
11	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
12	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
13	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
14	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
15	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
16	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
17	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
18	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
19	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை
20	செய்துள்ளவை	—	செய்துள்ளவை



## CHAPTER I

# PRESIDENT OF THE UNP.

J. R. Jayewardene was unanimously elected President of the UNP on April 26th 1973. The Working Committee which took the decision was presided over by M. D. Banda who in 1972 had favoured the expulsion of J. R. Jayewardene. His name was proposed by N. H. Keerthiratne and seconded by A. F. Wijemanne who in 1972 had also favoured his expulsion.

M. D. Banda, N. H. Keerthiratne, A. F. Wijemanne, P. A. J. Niyathapala, C. P. J. Seneviratne, W. A. P. Ariyadasa, J. L. Sirisena, Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel, Montague Jayewickreme, Gamini Dissanayake and Jabir Cader then made speeches extending their good wishes and wholehearted co-operation to J. R. Jayewardene. However in 1972 none of them had opposed the expulsion of J. R. Jayewardene whenever the issue was raised within the Working Committee. In fact such opposition had come only from one member of the Working Committee, A. C. S. Hameed (UNP-Akurana), who had resolutely stood by J. R. Jayewardene.

Of other UNP stalwarts the few who had likewise stood by J. R. Jayewardene were Cyril Mathew, N. G. P. Panditharatne, Esmond Wickremasinghe, Sirisoma Ranasinghe, Douglas Abeydeera, S. A. G. Yapa, Shelton Jayasinghe, Col. C. A.



Dharmapala, Festus Perera, P. D. Kalunnatilleke, Chandra De Zoysa and Paul Perera. J. R. Jayewardene is by nature a cautious man and on this occasion he had no alternative but to be so. This was reflected in his speech of acceptance of the Presidency of the UNP which was follows.

“You have entrusted me with the onerous responsibility of following in the footsteps of our beloved leader Dudley Senanayake.

“I am fully aware of the ideals that he wished the Party under his leadership should adopt and follow, for I was associated with him in the Ceylon National Congress and the United National Party from the beginning of his political career. May I reiterate them?

“He strove to make Sri Lanka an independent nation and he sought to preserve that Independence once obtained.

“He sought refuge in the Buddha Sasana and to assure every citizen the right to practise the religion of his choice. He believed in a democratic Constitution ensuring to every citizen the right to elect a Government, freedom of speech and publication, an independent judiciary, among other democratic freedoms. He worked for the economic development of the resources of our land, emphasising agricultural self-sufficiency, and saw to it that the fruits of such development should be equitably distributed.

“He sought to achieve the unity of the peoples of Sri Lanka. The millions who paid their respects to him on his death also accepted these ideals. With their help we, the members of our Party and I, must endeavour to establish them firmly in our land, opposing any attempt by any organization or individuals to destroy them.

“May these ideals of Dudley Senanayake, for the establishment and preservation of which he laboured and gave his life never perish from our Motherland.”

J. R. Jayewardene knew from bitter personal experiences of the quicksands of political popularity. On the other hand



his insight enables him to see through the motives of people with consummate ease. Thus when those who had plotted to end his political life came to him with peace offerings he responded with cordiality devoid of trust, reflecting the former and concealing the absence of the latter. As the days rolled by, the stream of such visitors to his home and office increased; some came sheepishly, others apologetically and still others brazenly performed somersaults. Often J. R. Jayewardene looked upon them with well concealed amusement and amazement but simultaneously assessed how he could use each of them in his plan to transform the UNP.

For J. R. Jayewardene was convinced that the UNP as it existed in 1973 had outlived its period of usefulness; that if the UNP were to survive the vicissitudes of politics it had to cease to be a relict of by gone days and instead gear itself to the aspirations of the masses in contemporary times. He recognized that the masses loved Dudley Senanayake and shared his ideals, hence the milling crowds at his funeral. By the same token he recognized that the masses had rejected the policies of Dudley Senanayake, hence the humiliating defeat of 1970.

For years J. R. Jayewardene had turned over and over again in his mind why Minneriya and Amparai never returned a UNP candidate when even the SLFP conceded that the both the Minneriya and Gal Oya projects bore testimony to the services rendered to Sri Lanka by D. S. Senanayake. It was also common knowledge that Dudley Senanayake enthusiastically implemented the agricultural policies of his distinguished father. J. R. Jayewardene was indeed puzzled when C. P. de Silva who as an SLFP stalwart and known as Minneriya deiyo<sup>1</sup> won that seat with majorities ranging from 8,000 to 10,000 but when he crossed over to the Opposition in 1964, causing the Government to be defeated in Parliament, in the ensuing General Election he won by only 1,100 votes. In 1970 as a UNP candidate he even lost to a total stranger by over 2,500 votes.

---

1. The god of Minneriya



Since the General Election of 1965 J. R. Jayawardene wondered why the UNP did not score an outright victory that year considering that the outgoing Government was defeated in Parliament and had incurred the wrath of the Sangha, the Press, the minorities and businessmen, both big and small, factors which should logically have resulted in a landslide or at least in a comfortable victory for the UNP. In more recent years he addressed his mind countless times to the debacle in 1970. In the quest of a new image Dudley Senanayake nominated to Mirigama, a seat for many years represented by D. S. Senanayake, Professor W. S. Karunaratne Head of the Department of Buddhist Philosophy at the University of Ceylon in Peradeniya. Karunaratne is a self-made man, the son of a Police Constable, acceptable to the masses and thus excellent material for the new image. The SLFP candidate was Mrs. Siva Obeysekera, a Christian who lived in Colombo - 7 and had married into the aristocratic Obeysekera family which owned several thousands of acres of land in and around Mirigama. Yet she won by over 5,000 votes. Likewise he observed that in Laggala the plebian P. G. Muthubanda (UNP), a peasant, lost badly to the aristocratic Monty Gopallawa (SLFP), the son of the Governor-General. By the same token in Matale Alick Aluvihare (UNP) who rubbed shoulders with all and sundry was defeated by Major-General Richard Udugama (SLFP) a retired Army Commander who by nature was aloof. Moreover Kelaniya, a sacred shrine for Buddhists, had repeatedly preferred the Roman Catholic R. S. Perera (SLFP) to the Buddhist A. W. A. Abegoonesekera (UNP) despite both being comparable candidates.

Above all J. R. Jayewardene often wondered why the UNP following its victories in 1947, March 1960 and 1965 was forced to form Coalition Governments. The only occasion the UNP won a comfortable victory was in 1952 and that was largely due to emotion generated by the tragic death of the revered D. S. Senanayake. In direct contrast the SLFP victories of 1956, and 1970 were by landslides



generated exclusively by political considerations. To J. R. Jayewardene it was also very significant that whenever the UNP lost it was trounced, securing only 8 seats in 1956, 30 in July 1960 and 17 in 1970 whereas the SLFP tally in defeat was a respectable 46 in March 1960 and 41 in 1965.

In the search for an answer J. R. Jayewardene often had recourse to statistics. In 1970 the United Front consisting of the SLFP, LSSP and Communist Party (Moscow wing) contested 139 seats, polled 48.9% of the vote and won 117 seats. The UNP fielded 130 candidates, the MEP 4, and the UNP/MEP coalition polled 38.9% of the vote and won a paltry 17 seats. Therefore he concluded that the UNP was beaten over and over again on the same issues and those issues were such that even Philip Gunawardene, when aligned with the UNP, lost in his pocket borough of Avissawella. J. R. Jayewardene could not easily pinpoint those issues and he was often seen deep in thought, scratching his head, stroking the bridge of his nose with his right hand and his cheeks with his palms, characteristic mannerisms when he is grappling with problems mentally.

J. R. Jayewardene compared the type of candidate which the UNP fielded in 1965 and 1970 against those in 1956 and earlier. Quite clearly the UNP had come a long way since the pre-1956 era when Ratemahatmayas, fossilised country squires and the rich received nominations.<sup>1</sup> In fact the UNP candidates in 1970 were comparable to those of the UF on the following bases:

	UNP	UF
Lawyers ... ..	13	25
School teachers ... ..	15	22
Ayurvedic physicians ... ..	2	2
Public Servants (middle grade or higher)	10	7
Public Servants (lower grades) ...	7	12
Educated in relatively better known schools	62	65
Educated in little known schools ...	68	74

1. vide "Dudley Senanayake of Sri Lanka" pages 79-80



The only disparity as such was that the UNP fielded 74 candidates who were broadly classified as landed proprietors and businessmen whereas the corresponding tally for the UF was 51.

Hence J. R. Jayewardene concluded that the overall picture clearly showed that the UNP and UF nominated candidates who were similar.

J. R. Jayewardene then turned his attention to the cultural cross currents which dominated the General Election of 1956 when there was a striking difference between the attitudes of the UNP and the SLFP. In 1970 the cultural issues were at a low ebb if they were issues at all. Sinhala nationalism and Buddhist resurgence were supported by both the UNP and the SLFP and if there were any differences at all they were only in the nuances. A side issue however was that the Roman Catholics who were openly discriminated against by the first Sirima Bandaranaike Administration<sup>1</sup> and who voted en-bloc for the UNP in 1965 after 5 years of political patronage from the UNP voted solidly for the SLFP dominated and Marxist supported UF in 1970.

J. R. Jayewardene then looked at the implementation of the UNP policies during the last Dudley Senanayake Administration. The late sixties were the most prosperous years in the post-1956 era. The queues arising from the scarcity of essential consumer goods which resulted in people cursing the first Sirima Bandaranaike Administration<sup>2</sup> were obviated by 1968; moreover, between 1966 and 1970 the the Grow More Food Campaign resulted in rice production increasing from 45 to 75% of domestic requirements and both the World Bank and the FAO predicted self-sufficiency by 1973. It was therefore logical to assume that implementation of policies had been satisfactory.

Hence by a process of elimination J. R. Jayewardene concluded that his fundamental assessment was correct. The

---

1. vide "Dudley Senanayake of Sri Lanka" pages 70-72

2. vide "Dudley Senanayake of Sri Lanka" pages 68-70



major flaw in the UNP was in its policies. The UNP just did not reflect the aspirations of the masses which the SLFP did magnificently. The UNP was looked upon as a party of the "haves" which represented the interests of the employers, whereas the SLFP was looked up to as a party of the "have nots" which represented the interests of the employees. The UNP was regarded as a capitalist party and capitalism was fast withering in Sri Lanka and in the neighbouring countries. The SLFP was regarded as a party which eschewed both capitalism and Marxism and trod the middle path of indigenous socialism a philosophy which was fast gaining popularity in Sri Lanka, in the neighbouring countries and almost everywhere in Third World. Moreover in Sri Lanka, as elsewhere in the newly independent countries people were clamouring for change. The UNP was traditionally resistant to reforms whereas the SLFP consistently initiated reforms. Thus the UNP was considered reactionary and the SLFP progressive.

J. R. Jayewardene was indeed convinced that the basic defect of the UNP was that it was out of step with contemporary times. Hence in December 1970 he prepared the following paper to be presented to the Working Committee:

#### THE UNP IN OPPOSITION - 1970

"After 23 years of Independence the problems of employment and a high cost of living, an ever-increasing national debt and lack of foreign exchange, are severe barriers to the progress of the majority of our people to prosperity.

"The conflict of political parties has divided towns and villages and created warring groups in them. If this conflict helped to solve our problems it may have been welcomed. On the contrary the solutions have been pushed away.

"Youth seem tired of power politics. They seek a solution to their problems of employment, and even of survival in a fiercely competitive society, if necessary through violence and anti-democratic means. Let us be aware of these modern trends and shape our future attitudes accordingly.



“Are we in this context to perform the role of a traditional opposition familiar in developed democratic nations or is there any other democratic course open to us?

“Are we to criticise the Government proposals and also Government Members, raising issues even of a personal nature, seeking to poison public opinion against the Government individually and collectively, as we did from 1956 to 1965, with the results that we have seen? Or are we to be a democratic opposition, co-operating with socialist measures of the Government, opposing such measures which violate the democratic freedoms, and not seeking either in Parliament or through the Senate, to block legislation that helps the establishment of a socialist economy. This will put us in step with the march of youth throughout the World, particularly in the developing nations.

“We have a fundamental faith in the individual and not in the machinery of the State. A nation must develop through the exercise of freedom, however perilous that may be in the hands of the citizens of a developing nation like ours. Our duty is to help in the establishing of democratic freedoms while economic development through the public and private sectors take place simultaneously.

“The UNP exists to establish in Sri Lanka a way of life, the democratic socialist way of life. If we cannot achieve it by ourselves, and since we are not the Government today we cannot do so, we should seek to achieve it in co-operation with others. The Party must shake itself out of its stolid, wooden, unrealistic way of thinking and existence, and not live in the hope that the people want us as individuals. They will want us as a group if we are for them. If Government measures are for the good of the people we should support them.

“The problems of contemporary Ceylon cannot be solved until the problem of the lack of foreign exchange is solved. Neither this Government nor any other



Government in the future can develop the economy properly and help the masses till then. No Government in the past had and few Governments in the future will have the support in Parliament that this Government has. A solution may need Governmental measures that could be termed as not popular. If the Government is taking such steps to solve the foreign exchange problem once and for all, it is our duty to give it our support. For our Party policy is to put the country first, Party second and self third.

“Whenever and wherever possible, in Parliament and outside collectively as a Party or as individuals, we should co-operate with the Government, with public bodies and trade unions, on issues that help to advance the cause of the many and not of the few. In our activities we should similarly avoid alienating the friendship and sympathy of members of the Government, of organizations and trade unions that believe in the democratic way of life”.

Dudley Senanayake was opposed to any proposal of co-operation with the Government but J. R. Jayewardene insisted on presenting his paper to the Working Committee which he finally did in February 1971. Further evidence of the soundness of the thinking of J. R. Jayewardene was reflected in the General Elections in India and Pakistan held in the following month. The Congress Party under Indira Gandhi, the Pakistan People's Party under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the Awami League under Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, all of which have policies very similar to those of the SLFP under Sirima Bandaranaike, won by landslides. All right wing parties in India and Pakistan suffered defeats worse than the defeat of the UNP in 1970. Regrettably the point was lost on Dudley Senanayake who did not think that politics in Sri Lanka had anything in common with those in India and Pakistan.

In April 1971 the unemployed youth provoked by the broken promises of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration unleashed their insurrection which rocked Sri Lanka to its



very foundations, cost the nation over Rs. 400 million in wanton destruction, the lives of 5,000 to 10,000 youths and resulted in the arrest of over 16,000 insurgents. J. R. Jayewardene seized the opportunity to push through his reforms within the UNP. It was as recently as March 21st of that year while addressing a meeting at the New Town Hall that he had said :

"The youth are not interested in power hungry politicians, They are in search of solutions for national problems and their own problems. Governments since Independence have failed to fulfil this duty. Therefore it is not strange to see the youth seeking solutions to their problems outside the democratic framework. If I were a youth, I too would join with them and utter the following words of Oliver Cromwell. "You have stayed here too long without delivering the goods. In the name of God go!"

"We who belong the older generation live in the present and quarrel about the past. But the youth live in the present and dream of the future. Sri Lanka is facing a grave economic crisis. There is no point in trying to put the blame on others. It is like being inside a house which is on fire and trying to find causes for the fire without first extinguishing the flames. Let us consider the problems faced by Sri Lanka.....

.....

Regrettably Dudley Senanayake and his close associates responded by misinterpreting the motives of J. R. Jayewardene. That opened old wounds and brought to surface, with renewed fury, their clash of personalities.

Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayewardene had been friends since boyhood as their parents were well known to each other. In the thirties both took to politics, became close friends, shared office as Joint Secretaries of the Ceylon National Congress and as Cabinet Ministers



in the D. S. Senanayake Administration. Though it was quite clear to J. R. Jayewardene that D. S. Senanayake was grooming his son as his successor at any cost, even alienating S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, then Leader of the House, and the prominence given to Dudley Senanayake as a young emerging leader was necessarily at the expense of J. R. Jayewardene, the friendship between the two continued to grow. Finally when Dudley Senanayake became Prime Minister in 1952 his most trusted confidante was J. R. Jayewardene with whom he shared at least one meal every day. When Dudley Senanayake was ill and contemplated resigning in 1953, it was J. R. Jayewardene whom he had in mind as his successor. Yet when he finally tendered his resignation to the Governor-General, Lord (later Viscount) Soulbury, it was Sir John Kotelawala whom he tacitly suggested as his successor. Thereafter the friendship was never the same again.

Sometime after his resignation Dudley Senanayake began to see a new dimension to his exit from politics. The Hartal\* in 1953 was a success because of the complete stoppage of transport facilities and the breakdown in Government machinery. Sir John Kotelawala was Minister of Transport and Sir Oliver Goonetilleke Minister of Home Affairs and they became the principal beneficiaries of his resignation with Sir John as Prime Minister recommending Sir Oliver for the post of Governor-General. Moreover the Central Bank which advised him to remove the rice subsidy which eventually led to the Hartal suddenly found a method of partially accommodating the subsidy after his resignation. These considerations made a significant impact on the personality of Dudley Senanayake who thereafter became very suspicious of his colleagues and ironically that suspicion was directed mostly against J. R. Jayewardene.

Consequently since 1957, when Dudley Senanayake emerged from his brief retirement, the relationship between

---

\* Note for foreign readers - A form of non-violent protest which Mahatma Gandhi used which much success against the British.



him and J. R. Jayewardene was not warm and personal as it was prior to 1953 but a good working relationship with overtones of mutual suspicion. This dichotomy ceased to be within manageable proportions following a serious rupture in 1966.

In February 1966 Dudley Senanayake, recurrently ill with his stomach ailment, was admitted to the Walter Reed Hospital in Washington. During his prolonged absence from the island J. R. Jayewardene propagated his Swadeshi Plan whereby Sri Lanka was to produce as far as humanly possible all her requirements of food, fish, meat and textiles. It would save foreign exchange and create employment opportunities thus solve two of the most pressing problems in the island. He further proposed that the Swadeshi Plan should be phased over a period of three years when imports would be drastically pruned as incentives for local production on a labour intensive basis.

J. R. Jayewardene discussed these matters on the basis of electoral development plans with Parliamentarians both in the Government and in the Opposition, proposed de-centralised budgets and a co-ordinating committee presided over by the Leader of the House and requested the help of everybody irrespective of their political differences. The proposals were enthusiastically received resulting in his popularity rising sharply and causing the attendant problem of jealousy. He then proceeded to make blueprints of the Swadeshi Plan for the approval of Dudley Senanayake on his return.

In the meantime Dudley Senanayake spent part of his convalescence in London, where a medical mishap following an inoculation delayed his return to the island. When he finally arrived suspicious relatives, mischief makers, gossip mongers and Cabinet Ministers jealous of J. R. Jayewardene poisoned the mind of Dudley Senanayake. They accused J. R. Jayewardene of plotting to become Prime Minister using his Swadeshi Plan as the lever and the ill health of Dudley Senanayake as the excuse. At that point the psychological condition of Dudley Senanayake



about the treachery of his colleagues dominated his thinking completely. He placed J. R. Jayewardene under surveillance of the CID and by sudden Gazette notification stripped J. R. Jayewardene of his Ministry of Information and Broadcasting without even bothering to inform him of the decision.

Thereafter the relationship between Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayewardene was fragile till the humiliating defeat of the UNP in 1970 when Dudley Senanayake thoroughly dejected and demoralised offered the post of Leader of the Opposition to him. Later Dudley Senanayake wanted to relinquish the Presidency of the UNP whereupon his relatives and friends beseeched him not to do so. Some months later when J. R. Jayewardene came with his proposal to co-operate with the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration on pressing national issues the same relatives and friends pointed to Dudley Senanayake that J. R. Jayewardene was once again trying to displace him. Thus the personal feud was re-ignited with fearful political consequences for the U.N.P.

The harangue went on through 1971 and on December 18th after a fierce debate and protracted agony the proposal of J. R. Jayewardene which was torpedoed sometime earlier was supplanted with another resolution by A. F. Wijemanne calling upon the UNP to unequivocally oppose the Government. Even the amendment proposed by J. R. Jayewardene, "that the UNP support the Government in such measures as bridging the gap between the "haves" and "have nots" was rejected.

On his part J. R. Jayewardene was convinced that the UNP was doomed and as Leader of the Opposition began to articulate his thinking publicly with the view to canvassing support from the rank and file of the Party where he had considerable support. On January 16th 1972 the "Weekend Sun" quoted him as saying,

"If the Prime Minister invites the UNP to join the Government and her proposal is rejected by the UNP I may have to join the Government together with those UNP members who support my views".



“The Sunday Observer” of January 23rd 1972 quoted the following dialogue :

“The Working Committee of the UNP rejected your suggestions of co-operating with the Government in implementing its socialist measures. Could you give a reason for their rejection of your proposals ?

“It may be that some of them do not wish their privileged position to be changed and are opposed to the new society which the Government seeks to usher in. I am happy that the members of the UNP Parliamentary Group do not share that view”.

On January 21st the “Sun” reported comprehensively an interview given by J. R. Jayewardene on why he thought the UNP should actively co-operate with the Government on national issues and why, in his opinion, the recent decision of the Working Committee was not in the best interests of the country.

Although J. R. Jayewardene was not even asked by the UNP to explain his controversial conduct, retaliation followed quickly. On February 4th M. D. Banda gave notice of a resolution to be tabled at the next meeting of the Working Committee on February 12th of appointing a Disciplinary Committee to inquire into the recent conduct of J. R. Jayewardene. That meeting was stormy. When the resolution was tabled J. R. Jayewardene objected to it on the grounds that “it was unconstitutional, undemocratic and illegal”. A. C. S. Hameed spoke strongly on his behalf while Mrs. Anoja Fernando wanted J. R. Jayewardene summarily expelled. Several others moved amendments and points of order most of which were hostile to J. R. Jayewardene. Finally a Committee of Inquiry was set up under the Chairmanship of A. C. Gooneratne Q.C. with Isadeen Mohamed Q.C., Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel, Montague Jayawickrema and M. D. H. Jayewardene as members.

The findings of the Committee were adverse to J. R. Jayewardene. They concluded that his statements had resulted



in the Party being exposed to ridicule by the general public and vulnerable to devastating attack by the Government. They stated that they were pained to pass these strictures on a personal friend of theirs who had given so generously of his time, money and energy for the cause of the UNP and had no alternative but to recommend disciplinary action against J. R. Jayewardene. The report was placed before the Working Committee on April 8th and promptly N. A. Liyanage moved the resolution :

“ While accepting the report submitted by the Committee appointed on the resolution of Mr. M. D. Banda in regard to certain statements reported to have been made by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene in the Press and to the public. I move that Mr. J. R. Jayewardene be expelled from the United National Party ”.

Accordingly another meeting of the Working Committee was summoned on April 17th to consider the resolution of Liyanage.

In the meantime J. R. Jayewardene had left for London on April 6th to attend a Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference and was expected to be away for approximately six weeks. His lawyers had reason to suspect that his absence from the island would be used as a convenient time to expel him from the UNP and hence took preliminary steps to safeguard his interests although J. R. Jayewardene himself was convinced that Dudley Senanayake would not stoop to such folly.

As the crisis worsened, at 8.30 a.m. on April 17th H. W. Jayewardene Q.C. assisted by Paul Perera sought an injunction from the Supreme Court restraining Dudley Senanayake et al from expelling J. R. Jayewardene from the UNP. An interim injunction was duly granted and the Court order was personally handed over to Dudley Senanayake by Dharmasiri Edirisinghe, Private Secretary of J. R. Jayewardene. In the meantime Radio Ceylon incorporated the news item into their 1.00 p.m. bulletin. Despite it a crowd of over 2,000 supporters of J. R. Jayewardene from Colombo South and



Kelaniya stormed into "Sri Kotha" for a show of strength which ended not without fisticuffs although Dudley Senanayake in compliance with the Court order took no action on the projected expulsion.

Upon the return to the island of J. R. Jayewardene on May 17th the sparks ignited again because of arrangements made for the UNP Annual Sessions to be held on June 2nd. Dudley Senanayake and his supporters had decided to strip J. R. Jayewardene of the Vice-Presidency of the UNP as a first step towards removing him from the post of Leader of the Opposition. Hence J. R. Jayewardene decided to forcibly capture the Annual Sessions with the considerable support he had in the rank and file of the UNP. Thus, once again, the Party was almost split asunder. However the UNP Parliamentary Group, which often disagreed with the Working Committee on matters of policy and strategy, was able to arrange for a dialogue between J. R. Jayewardene and Dudley Senanayake. The meeting took place at the residence of Paris Perera (UNP—Ja Ela) and the exchanges were sharp with J. R. Jayewardene in a particularly bellicose mood. However Dudley Senanayake made one strategic concession. He admitted that he made a mistake in trying to expel J. R. Jayewardene while he was away abroad.

That defused the crisis and assuaged the wounded feelings of J. R. Jayewardene. A few days later Dudley Senanayake graciously called on J. R. Jayewardene at his residence and spoke to his supporters, whereupon further negotiations took place in a conciliatory mood. Later when J. R. Jayewardene called on Dudley Senanayake at his residence they finalized the negotiation. Dudley Senanayake was to propose the name of J. R. Jayewardene for the post of Leader of the Opposition in the National State Assembly and Joint Secretary of the UNP, the Annual Sessions of the Party scheduled for June were to be postponed till November when a new UNP constitution would be adopted making representation at the Sessions on a more equitable basis. That Saturday both Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayewardene addressed a hastily summoned giant rally in the market place at Nugegoda and the Party supporters heaved a huge sign of relief.



Thus the conflict between Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayewardene was once again brought within manageable proportions. A common factor in both their lives was impeccable gentlemanly conduct and after the rapprochement both tried to accommodate each other as best as they could. The detente also resulted in the UNP closing its ranks in time for the first bye-elections held after the General Election of 1970. J. R. Jayewardene was put in charge of the campaign in Kesbewa and was allowed to have Cyril Mathew as his deputy. The UNP wrested Kesbewa from the SLFP, did likewise in Puttalam, retained Nuwara Eliya and drastically reduced the SLFP majority in Ratnapura. Dudley Senanayake was jubilant over these victories; J. R. Jayewardene was happy but took a more sober view.

Due to the toiling masses having suffered hardships never suffered before, having stood in queues longer than ever before and provoked by broken promises, quite clearly there was a significant protest vote. However, J. R. Jayewardene was of the opinion that a protest vote of the magnitude already recorded was not sufficient to win at the next General Election. The United Front had polled 48.9% of the vote in 1970 against the 38.9% of the UNP/MEP. A swing of 5% was therefore required to break even, namely to share about 65 - 70 seats, and a swing of about 6% necessary to win 76 seats which was half the representation in the National State Assembly. The victories in the bye-elections, though exhilarating, represented the following swings :

Nuwara Eliya	—	0.8%
Kesbewa	+	3.4%
Puttalam	+	3.8%
Ratnapura	+	8.1%

Hence J. R. Jayewardene was more convinced than ever that without far reaching reforms the UNP was doomed and such thinking dominated his mind whenever he thought of the future of the UNP.

A few months later Dudley Senanayake passed away. J. R. Jayewardene mourned his death in a personal way and paid his final tribute with the following funeral oration at Independence Square.



x "We have gathered here to pay our last respects and to lay at rest the mortal remains of our leader, Dudley Senanayake. He was the leader of our Party. He was Prime Minister of our country on several occasions. He was beloved of the people whom he served for 37 years.

"We have gathered today at this hallowed spot where Sri Lanka was declared free once again. On that occasion, the Lion Flag was unfurled for the first time. In these events Dudley took a leading part as one who helped in their achievement. Here too we paid our last respects to our first Prime Minister, D. S. Senanayake, as we now pay our last respects to his son.

"The freedom we achieved then, he with others utilized to fashion and mould our democratic institutions. The freedom to elect a Government of the people's choice, the right to proclaim and publish one's views are the other freedoms of democracy the people have enjoyed since then. Through these free institutions Dudley hoped the country would be led to economic independence and unity.

"He urged his people to place the Noble Precepts of the Eightfold Path foremost in their thoughts and to protect the Buddha Sasana which was the heritage of Sri Lanka.

"He worked together with others at the beginning of his political career to attain freedom. He felt that democratic institutions alone could give the citizens an opportunity to achieve these rights. They are the people, men and women, young and old, who have stood for hours in endless queues, in sun and rain, in darkness and light and who surround us now.\*

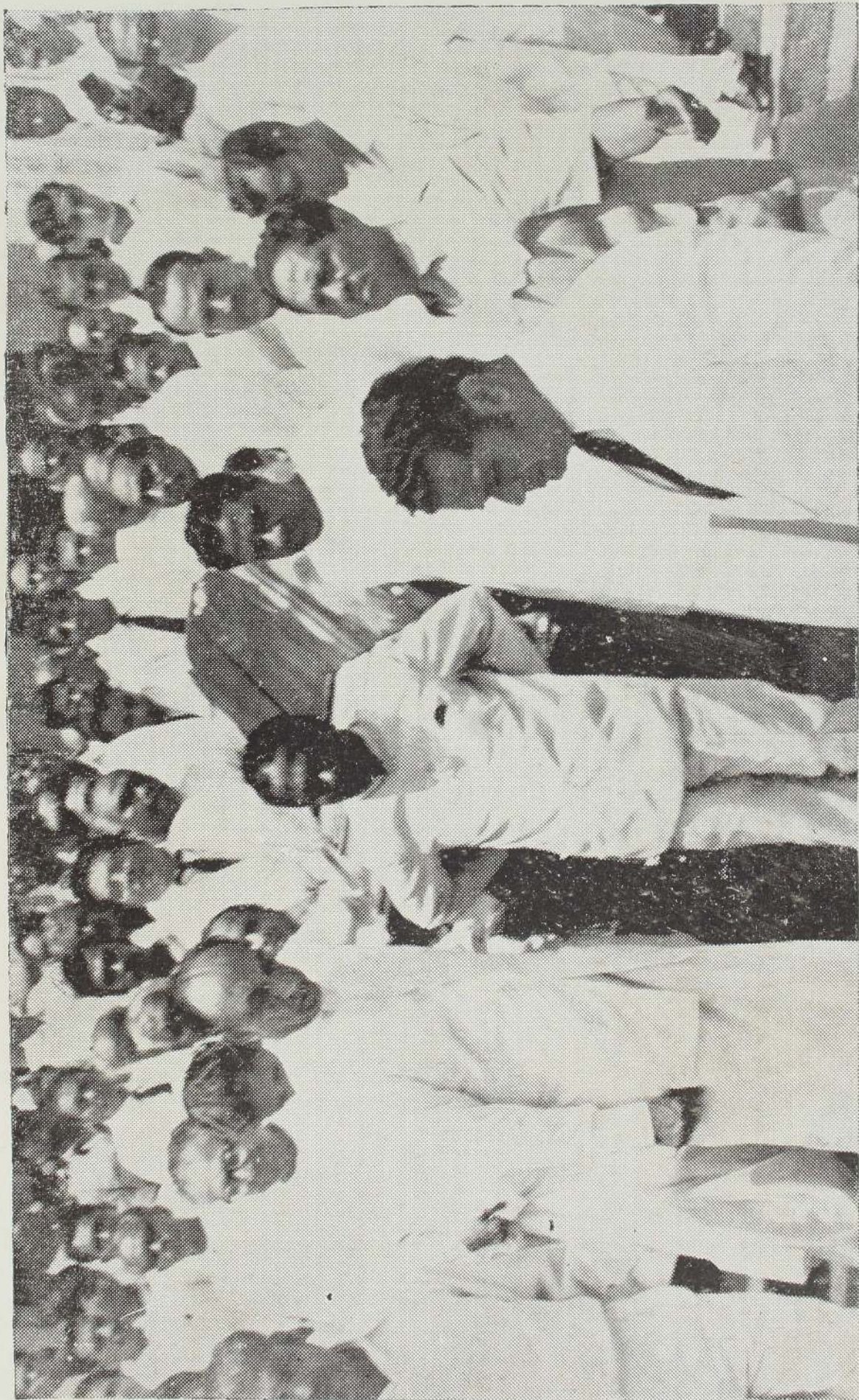
"For 25 years the people through their elected Government have utilized political freedom and democratic institutions to improve their economic conditions. In the agricultural revolution which Dudley's father began and he continued, lies their ultimate victory and salvation. To him the dagoba and the wewa\*\* were the symbols of the Nation's renaissance.

---

\* Vide "Dudley Senanayaka of Sri Lanka" pages 1-4

\*\* wewa - tank





At the funeral of Dudley Senanayake







"He was my friend. He was only 11 when I first met him. For 50 years I have known him. He was a perfect, gentle knight. No one was more humble. During the last few months, more than ever during our long association, we have travelled together throughout the length and breadth of our beloved country.

"There is no corner of Sri Lanka that did not hear our voices proclaiming and affirming the ideals that I have stated.

"The hand of Death, sudden and cruel, has stilled one voice. May the masses of this country give their support to those who seek to take to its goal the cherished ideals which were so close to Dudley's heart.

"Goodnight sweet Prince, may hosts of devas sing thee to thy sleep."

Following his appointment as President of the UNP and even after many UNP stalwarts hostile to him made their peace offerings or alternatively had done their somersaults he could not help but look upon the majority of them as dead wood in the context of reforms. Many were oblivious even to the need for reforms and hence J. R. Jayewardene pondered how he could realistically work the reforms into the archaic framework in which the UNP functioned. Indeed he had no illusions and privately looked upon the UNP as "a carcass I inherited from Dudley into which I must infuse some life."

The reform-oriented thinking of J. R. Jayewardene in the post-1970 period was looked upon with much suspicion and many misgivings in several quarters. Perhaps the best evidence of his reform-oriented thinking is in the Hansards following his entry into the Legislature in 1943 as State Councillor for Kelaniya. At that stage many were impressed by his dramatic victory over the elder statesman E.W. Perera. Perhaps many more would now be impressed by some of the far reaching proposals initiated by J. R. Jayewardene when he was only a fledgling politician.



## SINHALA AS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF CEYLON

Speech in the State Council on May 24th 1944.

“Sir, the motion standing in my name reads as follows:—

- (a) That Sinhalese should be made the medium of instruction in all schools;
- (b) That Sinhalese should be made a compulsory subject in all public examinations;
- (c) That legislation should be introduced to permit the business of the State Council to be conducted in Sinhala also;
- (d) That a Commission should be appointed to choose for translation and to translate important books of other languages into Sinhalese;
- (e) That a Commission should be appointed to report on all steps that need be taken to effect the transition from English into Sinhalese.

“My motion seeks to displace English from the position which it has held for over 125 years as the official language of this country.

“The tragedy that is enacted everyday in our Courts, in our Public Departments and in the very lives of our people is very vividly described in that famous book “The Village in the Jungle” which I would advise Honourable Members of this Council to read. There, Sir, a villager from a hamlet in the Hambantota District is brought up for trial in the Courts before an English Magistrate, and after a number of days of trial, during which he did not understand a single word of what passed between the Judge, counsel and other officials, he is sentenced to a long term of imprisonment, and even at that stage does not know what had happened. That tragedy is occurring even today.



It is argued by these who know only English, who have been educated only in English, that if we displace English and make Sinhalese and Tamil the official languages, we will be shutting out a large world of literature, and culture from our people. They little understand that the world of literature is already a closed book to 90 percent of our people. We can today after so many years of English as the official language, measure its achievements in this country. It is true that we have produced a number of famous lawyers, doctors and judges and possibly legislators, but in the field of literature, of science, of culture, we have been entirely barren of achievement.

“It was not so when the native language was the language of the Government. I think history records that wise men both from the East and the West came to the shores of Lanka to read the books that were preserved in the sanctuaries of the Buddhist Sangha. If one reads the travels of Hauen Tsang, Marco Polo and Fa Hien and the lives of great Western philosophers such as Dr. Dhalke and Rhys Davies and others, we would find the contribution that this country made to world literature when we had our own language as the official language.

“It is said that many of the mysteries of Indian history were unravelled by the translation of the Mahavansa into English, but today our youth, after so many years of British rule, are more interested in the love affairs of Henry VIII than in the historical events pictured in the Mahavansa; they are more aware of the materialism preached by Western pundits, than in the truths which are embodied in the Abhidhamma. It is with a view to changing this situation, a situation which can only be changed by substituting the national languages as the official languages, that I have thought it wise to introduce this motion.

“If we look again at our educational structure, which will come up for examination on the motion to be moved by the Minister of Education, we will find that we are spending over Rs. 20 million a year for maintaining a



system of education which creates two classes. Over 80 per cent of our schools educate our children in Sinhalese and Tamil, while only about 6 or 7 per cent of our children are given an English education. But the official language is English, and that is why this country is always in danger of being governed by a small coterie who go through these English schools whereas the vast majority who go through the Sinhalese and Tamil schools must always be in the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water.

“We have not only defects in our own system of education, as an example and an argument for accepting this motion, but the example of other countries which have been for many centuries under foreign domination, and once they have become free or almost free they have dropped the foreign language and adopted their own language. I will take an example, first, the Irish Free State. After centuries of Anglicization, the native language of the people of Ireland, Gaelic, was forgotten; hardly 10 per cent spoke the language of the people. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Hyde, who later became President of the Irish Free State, the Gaelic language was started and Gaelic was again made popular among the people. When Mr. De Valera began his great fight for freedom, and succeeded, he insisted that the native language of the people of Ireland, though it was spoken only by 10 per cent, unlike in Ceylon where only 10 per cent speak English, should be made the official language. He set aside all objection—he is a man who does not care for objections—and he made that language the official language of Ireland.

“We also have the example of India where the Indian National Congress had insisted that English should be supplanted from its position as the official language, that linguistic provinces should be created and that Hindi should be the official language. We see that in Hyderabad and in the other States of India the official language is the language of the people. No difficulty, I think, can be visualised once the spirit of the motion is accepted and the methods which I have outlined are put into effect.



“If only the Board of Ministers elected in 1931 and the Minister of Education who was elected in 1931 had taken the necessary steps with a vision that should have been theirs, to put into effect a proposal such as this, it may be that today we would be able to speak in the languages of the people in this Council, and in our other legislative assemblies. It is not too late even at this stage to make a start to see that Sinhalese and Tamil are made the official languages of this country.

“It becomes all the more important that we should adopt this motion at this stage, because the Minister of Education is introducing very far-reaching proposals next week in this Council, one of which is to make English education free. Before you create an educational system in which you teach English as a free and compulsory language, you must have clear before your eyes what is going to be the official language of this country. Are you going to educate the people of this country, 80 per cent of whom do not at present get an education, in English while the official languages of the country are to be Sinhalese and Tamil?. Or are we in the future going to have English as the official language? I think that is the most important decision which should be taken by the educational authorities before they decide whether the medium of instruction should be the mother tongue or English. The educational structure should be suited to the official languages. One might as well teach Dutch and not English if English is not going to be official language.

“Therefore, I would place this motion before the House; and I wish to speak a word of explanation with regard to my desire to include Tamil also. I had always the intention that Tamil should be spoken in the Tamil-speaking provinces, and the Tamil should be the official language in the Tamil-speaking provinces. But as two-thirds of the people of this country speak Sinhalese, I had the intention of proposing that only Sinhalese should be the official language of the island; but it seems to me that the Tamil community, who speak Tamil, wish that Tamil also should



be included on equal terms with Sinhalese. The great fear I had was that Sinhalese being a language spoken by only 3 million people in the whole world would suffer or may be entirely lost in time to come, if Tamil is also placed on an equal footing with it in this country. The influence of Tamil literature, a literature used in India by over 40 million and the influence of films and Tamil culture in this country, I thought might be detrimental to the future of the Sinhalese language; but 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.

"I do not think there will be any difficulty in this House, which is composed of representatives chosen on a universal franchise, in securing the end we have in view. It is the universal franchise that has brought the English-educated and the masses together, and it is the impulse created by the use of the universal franchise, by the ideals realized by the grant of the universal franchise, which enabled the people to choose their rulers, which will ultimately make Sinhalese and Tamil official languages of this country. I would therefore suggest to this House that we anticipate that event, and give it the sanction of our vote and decision.

"Language, Sir, is one of the most important characteristics of nationality. Without language, a nation stands a chance of being absorbed or of losing its identity. With language, it has a chance of living for centuries. It is because of our language that the Sinhalese race has existed for 2,400 years and I think that composed as we are in this House, on the eve of freedom as a free country we should prepare for a national official language. This House, I am sure, will vote with me that English should be deposed from its position as the official language of the country and Sinhalese and Tamil, the ancient languages of our people, spoken by 60 to 90 per cent of our people, should be made the official languages of Lanka".



## BUDGET DEBATE 1943

Excerpts of speech made on August 10th 1943

“It is rather difficult to consider the various problems that confront us today, without also having some knowledge of the historical reasons which created them. One of the major problems that face us today is the problem of landlessness. We know that in days gone by, land was expropriated by the Government from the people and handed over to the British capitalists and to British commercial interests. From 1835—1838 the average annual sale of the land was 6,412 acres. From 1840—1845 the average sale was 42,880 acres. In 1841 that sale reached the high figure of 78,085 acres. The Government of the day, armed with the Land Ordinance of 1840 adopted the role of the highway robber and took away chiefly from the Kandyan peasants the land they loved so much. The rebellion of 1842 and 1848 spoke only too eloquently of the feelings of the Kandyan peasants. Today when we see the mountain ranges covered with plantations, we feel that they stand as an immovable monument not only to the enterprise of the British planter but also to the dumb sufferings of the people whose homesteads they once were. I think this House and the Board of Ministers must some day take every measure possible to restore these lands to the people. We must not rest till that purpose is achieved.

“Do you know that in modern Ceylon fifty miles away from where we sit as representatives of the people, in the Ratamahatmayas Division of the Three Korales of the Kegalle District there are 2,000 people who walk the streets without owning any land. There are only 1,000 people who own only one acre and in this whole district of 323 square miles there are only 600 acres for village expansion. In the whole of the Kegalle District where 60,000 acres are needed to satisfy the hunger of the landless people there are only 7,000 acres of Crown Land.

“How is it you may ask, that in this country so rich in resources, so fertile, so endowed with every gift for the production of all that man needs, the native man alone leads a



vile life? I think, Sir, few doubt today that the cause of our problems, the cause of our landlessness, the cause of the poverty and the hunger that stalks our land is political subjugation.

“I do not think the structure of our economic life permits us to progress much further. I think we have reached the end of our tether and that political freedom alone will enable us to create that economic structure which suits the needs of our people. That alone will give us the solutions which we are all seeking for. It is only political freedom which will enable a landless peasantry to get back the land.

If for a moment we consider what other countries have done, faced with the problems of a landless peasantry, we can in this country too, given those powers and that imagination solve such problems ourselves. Denmark is a country which in 1800 had a farm tenancy of 42%. From 1800—1885 a series of Acts of legislation.....

.....  
.....  
and by 1905 resulted in 92% of its farmers owning their land.

“Ireland, Sir, seventy years ago was a land of absentee landlords. Owing to severe pressure from Irish Nationalists who were Members of the British Parliament a series of Acts was passed to bring about the transfer of land from absentee landlords, the majority of whom were English, to the Irish peasants. Ashmore's Land Purchase Act of 1885 and Balfour's Act 1891 set apart £35 million for this purpose. Between 1903 and 1906 no fewer than 1,000 large estates totalling 1.1 million acres were transferred to 21,716 Irish peasants. Today four-fifths of the Irish are farmers and the majority of them own the lands they till.

“South Africa, inspite of its colour prejudices, so long ago as 1906 intoduced a Native Trust and Land Act setting apart £10 million annually for five years for the purchase of land for coloured peasants from the white proprietors.



"I think Mexico provides an even more striking example. In 1938, 7.5 million acres were transferred from large estate owners to small-holders and President Cardenas boasts that he personally supervised the transfer of 2.5 million acres. He has been quite properly called the "greatest agrarian of all Mexican Presidents."

.....  
.....  
.....

"I appeal to the Honourable Leader of the House (D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture and Lands) to earn for himself the appellation of the greatest agrarian of this country by introducing legislation whereby the Sinhalese peasant and the Tamil peasant may again hold the land which rightly belongs to them and which is their heritage.

.....  
.....  
.....

The question then necessarily arises in the minds of both the admirers and detractors of J. R. Jayewardene as to what happened to his reform-oriented thinking during the next twenty five years. Successive UNP Administrations of which he was an important member produced no reforms of any consequence whereas SLFP Administrations which covered approximately the same number of years initiated far reaching reforms in almost every sphere of human activity.

The answer given to me by J. R. Jayewardene was that as a State Councillor he was subject to no party discipline because he did not belong to any party then\*. However when the UNP was formed in 1946 and came into power in 1947, as a young Cabinet Minister he was subject to rigid party discipline and often had to subordinate his own predilections to conform with party policy.

---

\* The Ceylon National Congress to which he belonged was not a political party but a conglomeration designed to obtain Independence from Britain.



For instance as Finance Minister he was appalled by the conduct of bus owners, the most unscrupulous of all capitalists, and proposed that bus companies be nationalized. The proposal was promptly torpedoed. He quickly realized that reforms were anathema to his colleagues in the Cabinet and hence confined his reforms to the narrow area within the context of UNP policies. However following the debacle in 1955 when even J. R. Jayewardene lost his seat, he showed tremendous resilience, resuscitated the UNP and introduced many reforms into the Party. The UNP jettisoned its Western orientation and instead identified itself with the resurgent nationalism, abandoned the pro-Western foreign policy in favour of Non-Alignment, searched for a new type of candidate and even began to court the Trade Union Movement which the Party had spurned in previous years.

Thereafter the UNP was next able to form a stable Government in 1965 but unfortunately he and Dudley Senanayake were at loggerheads since early 1966 resulting in his being in the Government nominally but in a more meaningful sense being in the opposition within the UNP.

It must also be emphatically stated that when the D. S. Senanayake Administration, knowing no better was oblivious to the need for reforms S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, then Leader of the House was pressing for far reaching reforms. Hence it would have been only logical for J. R. Jayewardene to have teamed up with Bandaranaike and if necessary for both to quit the UNP together in 1951. Had J. R. Jayewardene done so the reputation he had in the State Council for reforms would have found ample opportunities for meaningful expression.

I have repeatedly questioned him on this subject and his consistent reply has been that he could never follow S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike considering the way he conducted himself in the Cabinet. However he admitted "after my own bitter experiences in the UNP I am now in a better position to appreciate why S. W. R. behaved in the way he did".



The fundamental reforms J. R. Jayewardene had in mind for the UNP in 1973 were to eschew capitalism in favour of indigenous socialism, to champion the cause of the worker, to broad-base the Party by giving a 'special place to the toiling masses and through them to campaign at the grass-roots level, and to replace the obsolete candidates.

Thus began the J. R. Jayewardene era in the UNP.







## CHAPTER II

# CO-OPERATING WITH THE GOVERNMENT

No reference to the Government during the period 1970-77 is complete without paying handsome tribute to Sirima Bandaranaike for her courage in systematically removing the fetters of servitude which stemmed from the legacies of British colonialism. She ushered in more reforms during those 7 years than all previous Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka had collectively and for those services earned the admiration of many including that of J. R. Jayewardene.

The first Throne Speech following her landslide victory of 1970 made reference to the necessity to inquire into the activities of the Agency Houses. Though relicts of colonial times they controlled 62% of the production and sale of tea and 27% of rubber and hence reforms were desirable if not somewhat overdue. A Commission of Inquiry was duly appointed in June 1971 and its report was made available to the National State Assembly as a Sessional Paper in December 1974. It abounded with strictures on the callous disregard for human values and national interests in the quest for huge profits which enriched a privileged few.



Many of the Agency Houses such as Aitken Spence, Carson Cumberbatch, Geo. Stuarts, James Finlays, and Whittals were prestigious firms which had flourished since Victorian times and contributed to the economy of Sri Lanka in no uncertain manner, but which in more recent decades had not had the wisdom to make allowance for the sweeping changes since Independence in general and since 1956 in particular.

Even a cursory glance at the tea plantations which produce two-thirds of the foreign exchange earnings of Sri Lanka, revealed a rigid three-tier structure of colonial vintage as reflected in palatial bungalows for the planters, quarters for the staff and filthy lines for the labourers. It was indeed extraordinary that as recently as 1970 the attitude of the Agency Houses to labour was not different to what it was in 1948. According to the report of the Commission of Inquiry an estate with a budget of the order of Rs. 2 million had an allocation of about Rs. 10,000 to ensure adequate toilet facilities and water for the labourers, yet the Agency Houses bemoaned that the labourers were terribly unhygienic. The rigid discipline left no room for dialogue between management and labour, resulting in the planters looking upon labour as a nightmare and the plantation itself being some remnant of the British Empire rather than a remote area in contemporary Sri Lanka.

Moreover the Agency Houses were oblivious of and impervious to the aspirations of the Kandyan peasantry who since the advent of the British planters had their villages hemmed in and encroached upon by the plantations. To add insult to injury they were manned by cheap and subservient labour brought from India. The tragedy was compounded in that even after Independence the Agency Houses in no way attempted to alleviate the suffering of the Kandyan peasantry by making even a token contribution to their development through measures of social welfare, road construction or even through offers of employment.



Besides, the higher echelons of the Agency Houses raised a breed of Sri Lankans who in manners, mores and customs were more British than the British themselves. Within that group existed a coterie that could not visualize Sri Lanka outside the trappings of the British hegemony. It was not surprising that many of them saw a British point of view even before the British themselves did and some even periodically spoke of proceeding to Britain on home leave!

Against the background of the egalitarian concepts and the clamour for change which propelled the United Front into office in 1970, it was clear to everybody of consequence, except those in the Agency Houses and the reactionary coterie within the UNP, that the Agency Houses were living on borrowed time. Such elements took refuge behind the valid claim that the private sector was definitely more efficient than an agency of the Government would be in estate management. They pointed out that after the Land Reform Law of 1972, which restricted the ownership of land to 50 acres per family, the production of the sequestered lands dropped as reflected in the following figures pertaining to production at the national level.

	1971	1972	1973	1974
Coconut (million nuts)	2610	2,563	1,935	2,031
Tea (million lbs)	480	471	466	450
Rubber (million lbs)	312	309	304	291

On the other hand the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration had every reason to be pleased with the implementation of the Land Reforms Law of 1972. It had resulted in 5,600 families being stripped of 1,200,000 acres of land of which 550,000 were earmarked for working on a collective basis, by peasants and youths. The political kudos gained was immense. Besides it reflected much credit on the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration that the transition was carried out within a period of 2 years without any bloodshed and without unduly disturbing



production. By early 1975 the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration carefully assessed the economic loss caused by the drop in production, against the political gains and the recent increase in the prices of tea, rubber and coconut in the world market. The reasons for the better prices were altogether independent of the land reforms. The spiralling inflation in the West and the coffee blight in Brazil caused many traditional coffee drinkers to switch to the relatively cheaper tea. Besides the oil-rich Arab states made massive purchases of tea. The price of oil having increased at least three-fold since the last Arab-Israeli war in 1973, natural rubber became cheaper than synthetic rubber. The drop in the production of coconuts in the Phillipines due to pestilence, increased the demand for our coconuts. On the balance, the Cabinet decided to expand the scope of the Land Reforms Law by acquiring plantations owned by companies both local and foreign.

The decision was indeed a momentous one. Economically it represented the Government taking over completely the production of tea, rubber, and coconut, the economic life-blood of the nation. Politically it represented the realisation of a cherished dream of the Kandyan peasantry. The bitterness and rancour in their hearts surfaced from time to time for several decades and in the current decade principally through Hector Kobbekaduwa (SLFP-Yatinuwara), Minister for Agriculture and Lands.

On October 10th 1975 he formally moved the Amendment to the Land Reform Law in the National State Assembly. The Amendment entailed the sequestration of the lands of 87 sterling companies and 145 rupee companies. It involved 396 estates covering 415, 508 acres of which tea accounted for 292,126 acres, rubber for 110, 021 acres and coconut for 8,036 acres. With the ownership of the land vested in the Government the Agency Houses automatically ceased to exist in their traditional role.

Hector Kobbekaduwa understandably ended his address in the emotional strain, "Permit me, Mr. Speaker, to strike a personal note. To me this is a glorions moment of my



life. To me it is a dream come true. To me it is a mission fulfilled". He then sat down, took his handkerchief and wiped off tears of joy.

J. R. Jayewardene spoke next and as follows: "Mr. Speaker, I would like to say at the outset that the United National Party is voting for the Bill. (hisses and guffaw)

"The Honourable Minister in his speech uttered a few jibes at me which I will forget and forgive because obviously he is under the stress of emotion taking part in one of the great moments of his life. Therefore, as the leader of the largest party in the Opposition and as the leader of the party with the largest number of people who voted for it at the last General Election (catcalls) I would like to assure him that whatever influence I have with them will be used to support him in implementing this Bill. (derisive remarks about making a virtue out of necessity.)

As the din subsided J. R. Jayewardene proceeded to quote from his speech in the State Council of August 10th 1943. He was repeatedly interrupted amongst others by Sirima Bandaranaike, T. B. Ilangaratne, and Vivienne Goonewardene inquiring whose speech it was, when it was made and where it was made. Once those questions were satisfactorily answered they could scarcely believe that J.R. Jayewardene had made such a far-sighted speech 32 long years ago. It was no accident that even those who heckled him earlier listened with rapt attention and silent admiration.

J. R. Jayewardene was convinced that capitalism was at the end of its period of usefulness in Sri Lanka as the capitalist class, both foreign and local were parasites on society.

For example Reckitt & Colman of Ceylon Ltd was established as a subsidiary of the well known British company and with an initial capital of the order of £ 500,000. Their factory in Ratmalana was geared to produce Goya



cosmetics, Disprin, Dettol, Mansion polish and package Robin blue all of which were household words in the island. On the pretext of encouraging Sri Lankan participation preference shares were issued at 6% and were quickly snapped up whereas the parent British company owned the ordinary shares, where the element of risk was allegedly greater. Once the factory got into production the dividends paid on the ordinary shares were in the region of 30 - 50% and thus within the tax holiday of 5 years, designed to encourage foreign investments, dividends amounting to more than the entire capital flowed back to Britain!

The only major programme of the last Dudley Senanayake Administration that remained unchanged after 1970 was the promotion of tourism. It had come under the mantle of J. R. Jayewardene and the Tourist Development Bill of 1968 had effectively established the pattern for the growth of this lucrative industry.

In 1965 only 19,781 tourists had visited the island. The figure increased to 50,781 in 1970 and 102,488 in 1975 with every promise of the figure doubling in cycles of 5 years. The tax holidays and the worldwide boom made tourism one of the principal fields of investment for local and foreign entrepreneurs. This resulted in a network of five-star and four-star hotels and inns springing up on the western and eastern coasts, in the central highlands and in the ruined cities. Having fathered tourist development J. R. Jayewardene looked upon them with justifiable pride. By the same token he looked upon the role of some of the local entrepreneurs with chagrin.

The Pegasus Reef Hotel was opened in 1970 in collaboration with British Airways but even before they commenced operations one of the key local directors got involved in an alleged racket to smuggle gems. In 1971 the Mount Lavinia Hotel operated in collaboration with Hyatts, a well known international combine. Before the year was



out one of the principal Sri Lankan directors was involved in a foreign exchange racket. As of now he is serving a term of hard labour at Welikade.

In 1965 the capitalist class in Sri Lanka had a new lease of life and during the last Dudley Senanayake Administration enjoyed much political patronage. Yet after the debacle of 1970 they did not want to be seen even dead with Dudley Senanayake or J. R. Jayewardene. Overnight they became admirers of Sirima Bandaranaike, fell over each other in contributing to her "Save the Country Fund" and all but kissed the ground on which she walked. Even such UNP "stalwarts" as Edmund Cooray, a former Minister for Justice and Chairman of the Browns Group, began to see great virtue in the SLFP.

After the bye-elections of 1972 and the out pouring of grief at the funeral of Dudley Senanayake in 1973, the toiling masses showed a marked affinity towards the UNP. There was no corresponding trend in the capitalist class who were too busy manipulating quotas, permits, tenders and contracts and inveigling themselves into positions of influence with the Bandaranaike and Ratwatte families\*.

J. R. Jayewardene looked upon them with supreme contempt and saw no reason why the UNP should permit such vermin to thrive. The Business Acquisition Act of 1970 sounded the death knell of capitalism in Sri Lanka. The UNP under Dudley Senanayake opposed the Act. The UNP under J. R. Jayewardene welcomed many of the acquisitions made under it.

J. R. Jayewardene was particularly pleased when the Sirima Bandarnaike Administration nationalized the Wellawatte Spinning & Weaving Mills, the first industrial concern to be established in the island. For several decades it generated a sharp clash of interests between the wealthy owners and the impoverished workers, a relationship unquestionably between the exploiter and the exploited.

---

\* Note for foreign readers - the maiden name of Sirima Bandaranaike was Ratwatte.



Since the early thirties when the Trade Union Movement first began in Sri Lanka. A. E. Goonesinghe, Phillip Gunawardene, N. M. Perera and Colvin R. De Silva had their first taste of leading strikes at that mill. Since 1956 protracted disputes between management and labour on issues pertaining to wages, bonuses and fringe benefits were almost annual features. In 1973 the mill was closed down for a record period of 5 months and the dominant LSSP Union used pressure on the Government to have the establishment nationalized. Even at that time the mill was still the largest privately owned textile manufacturing concern in Sri Lanka though considerably smaller than the mills at Veyangoda, Pugoda and Thulhiriya owned by the National Textile Corporation. The superannuated machinery at Wellawatte made the Government wonder whether nationalization was worth the effort and the decision was finally taken in March 1976 when it appeared that difficulties with raw materials entailed the labour force of 2,600 being laid off.

In his endeavour to create a just and free society, it was the opinion of J. R. Jayewardene that those who invest their money or their skills in a business venture should equitably share its benefits. Accordingly the decision to nationalize the Wellawatte Spinning & Weaving Mills was welcomed by him. His decision was given wide publicity through the UNP Trade Unions to create the image that under J. R. Jayewardene the Party was shifting its emphasis from capitalism to indigenous socialism.

Many are of the opinion that had J. R. Jayewardene not taken to politics he would have been an Attorney-at-Law even more eminent than his younger brother H. W. Jayewardene Q. C. or have become Chief Justice and thereby eclipsed his famous father Justice E. W. Jayewardene\*. Though J. R. Jayewardene abandoned his lucrative legal practice in 1943

---

\* Justice E. W. Jayewardene (1874 - 1932) had the unique distinction of having fathered three top professionals in three different fields. They are J. R. Jayewardene (Politics), H. W. Jayewardene (Law), and R. P. Jayewardene (Medicine)



for the lure of politics, he maintained a deep seated interest in both juridical and judicial matters. Indeed he showed much interest in the Administration of Justice Bill which was introduced in the National State Assembly in October 1973 by Felix Dias Bandaranaike, Minister of Justice, himself a son and grandson of famous Supreme Court Judges.

J. R. Jayewardene was of the opinion that in Sri Lanka the Judiciary had consistently commanded the respect of the entire nation for its independence, integrity and stature and the dispensation of justice without fear or favour even in the most difficult of circumstances. By the same token the feeling had grown through the years that the laws were hopelessly out of date, that the proceedings were next to impossible to conform to and that a citizen who had to go to Court had to go through purgatory.

The legal system which existed in 1973 had its origin in 1889 and in the intervening period the only successful attempt made to introduce legal reforms was when Sir Lalitha Rajapakse Q. C. was Minister of Justice in the D. S. Senanayake Administration. Sir Lalitha attempted to reform the Mortgage Ordinance and the Partition Ordinance and introduced two new Acts in 1949 and 1950. Those laws are still in force, but with all their checks and balances and safeguards still remain in a state of great complexity.

The entire Civil Procedure Code was subject to review by the Civil Courts Commission of 1954 headed by Justice C. Nagalingam Q. C. A splendid document was produced but none of the Governments, not even the Kotalawela Administration which appointed that Commission, had sufficient confidence and courage to implement it. Therefore J. R. Jayewardene much appreciated the efforts of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration to introduce legal reforms which were long overdue.

In essence the Administration of Justice Bill was intended to simplify the legal procedure and obviate time consuming processes without in anyway encroaching upon



the independence of the Judiciary or qualitatively reducing the dispensation of justice. The overall objective was to afford the citizen access to Court with minimum of delay and minimum of expense.

The reforms proposed were far reaching. Originally the Supreme Court formed the apex of the Judiciary and was both an original Court and an Appellate Court. With the reforms it continued as the apex of the Judiciary but functioned as an Appellate Court and an original Court only for writs. All appeals were heard by the Supreme Court by a panel consisting of a minimum of two judges. The principle of only one appeal was applied and hence the Court of Appeal was abolished. The Assize Courts were abolished and High Courts established in their place on the basis of one in each of 16 zones. The time consuming testamentary cases were heard not by the Judiciary but by the Executive. Probate Officers functioning under the Public Trustee in Colombo and the Registrar of the High Courts in the outstations were charged with that responsibility. However should they be unable to resolve such matters then the issue could be referred to the Judiciary at the level of District Judge. The time consuming non-summary proceedings were also abolished with the indictment made directly in the Magistrate's Court or the District Court depending on the gravity of the offence. Courts of Requests and Rural Courts were abolished as a measure of streamlining and their functions vested in the Magistrate's Court. The cumbersome procedure of payment of fines to Court was supplanted with the easier mode of payment to Banks and receipts being submitted to Court. Suspended sentences were introduced as a humane deterrent and an alternative to languishing in over-crowded jails. The tedious procedure of maintaining Court records indefinitely was subjected to a time ceiling. Primarily as a measure of saving money for the litigants and secondarily to encourage specialization amongst lawyers, the two branches of the legal profession, advocates and proctors, were fused into one body known as attorneys.



J. R. Jayewardene was of the opinion that many of these reforms were desirable and the UNP voted with the Government on the Administration of Justice Bill. However he did have reservations on a few minor technical points and one substantive issue.

The Bill entailed the Executive encroaching upon the traditional preserve of the Judiciary in the granting of bail. The incumbent of the new post of Director of Public Prosecutions had a hand in the granting of bail for offences involving capital punishment and J. R. Jayewardene had misgivings about the desirability of such a provision

Ironically the test case involved a UNP candidate and as the matter is still sub-judice, elaboration of the issue at this juncture would not be appropriate.

Despite the chicanery that had bedevilled the politics of Sri Lanka, the consensus of opinion in the UNP, SLFP and LSSP is that the Mahaveli Diversion Scheme is the best long-term plan to solve the increasingly difficult problem of eradicating unemployment. The initial thinking on this project took place during the D. S. Senanayake Administration and in 1957 the S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike Administration commissioned the United States Aid Mission to undertake a preliminary feasibility study. In 1961 the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration explored the possibility of obtaining financing from the World Bank. Upon its advice a formal request was made to the UN Development Programme for a comprehensive feasibility study and project operations commenced in 1964.

As soon as the UN Development Programme completed its feasibility study in 1968 the Dudley Senanayake Administration gave considerable thought to implementing the proposals. The project envisaged the diversion of the Mahaveli, the largest river in Sri Lanka, and thereby irrigating 654,000 acres of uncultivated land and making double cropping possible in 246,000 acres of existing fields.

The gigantic proportions of the Mahaveli Diversion Scheme can perhaps be best visualized in that in 1968 the total



extent of irrigated land in Sri Lanka was 925,000 acres whereas this project envisaged the irrigation of 900,000 acres. But the same token the total installed capacity of hydropower was 237 megawatts and the estimated output of this project was 508 megawatts.

The Mahaveli Diversion Scheme was estimated to provide water to sustain an annual agricultural production of the order of Rs. 1000 million, to generate electrical energy amounting to Rs. 120 million and to create employment for one million people. The total capital investment for the project was estimated at Rs. 6,700 million, including \$ 300 million in foreign exchange.

It was therefore essential to maximise agricultural production at every stage, if the scheme was to be economically viable, and the project was phased over 30 years. The first phase was to cover the period 1970-80 at an estimated cost of Rs. 1550 million. The first phase in turn was divided into three stages the Polgolla diversion scheme (1970-73) the Victoria-Minipe diversion scheme (1973-77) and the Moragahakanda multi-purpose scheme (1977-80).

The Polgolla diversion was estimated to cost Rs. 576 million including a foreign exchange component amounting to \$ 29 million. Basically this project was to divert the water of the Mahaveli to the Sudu Ganga. A dam 40 feet high and 500 feet long was to be constructed at Polgolla and the water thus collected led through a 5 mile Polgolla-Ukuwella tunnel into the Sudu Ganga. The tunnel was by far the longest and largest yet proposed for construction in Sri Lanka and the hydropower station at Ukuwella had an estimated capacity only marginally smaller than that at Laxapana. The Polgolla diversion would provide water to irrigate 186,000 acres of which 84,000 are still uncultivated. The ensuing agricultural production was estimated at Rs. 118 million per annum and the generation of electrical energy at Rs. 12 million.

By 1969 the World Bank was quite pleased with the success of the Grow More Food Campaign of Dudley Senanayake and was prepared to finance the foreign exchange component of the Polgolla diversion. Negotiations were duly completed in 1970, and project operations commenced with much fanfare on February 28th of that year.



However the United Front, then in the Opposition and preparing for the General Election, made it a political issue. They vociferously opposed it claiming that the UNP was mortgaging the country for 30 years (the entire duration of the Mahaveli Diversion Scheme). They took umbrage that all senior appointments to the project were subject to the concurrence of the World Bank, They made an election issue in the North Central Province of the water tax of Rs. 40 per acre which was a mandatory contractual obligation to defray the operational and maintenance charges for the supply of irrigation water.

That election stunt, like other stunts which the United Front tried in 1970, worked and the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration negotiated anew with the World Bank. The water tax was supplanted with a land betterment tax, a change principally in nomenclature, but the concurrence of the World Bank for senior appointments was dropped. All the other conditions remained the same and the only overall difference was that the Polgolla diversion scheme was completed in 1975 two years behind schedule, a delay caused partly by the insurrection.

J. R. Jayewardene displayed considerable statesmanship in not raising unnecessary political problems to cloud the issue and the project received the benediction of the UNP. Unfortunately the spirit of co-operation was marred when the Polgolla diversion scheme was officially completed on January 8th 1976, the 77th birth anniversary of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. The Sirima Bandarnaike Administration loudly proclaimed that the entire project was conceived by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and for good measure had the plaque commemorating the opening of the Polgolla diversion scheme by Dudley Senanayake in 1970 unceremoniously uprooted from its foundations and tossed into the Mahaveli. The request of J. R. Jayewardene to speak at the ceremony was also turned down, resulting in the UNP boycotting the ceremony but continuing to support the Mahaveli Diversion Scheme.







## CHAPTER III

# OPPOSING THE GOVERNMENT

When J. R. Jayewardene became President of the UNP in April 1973 the Party was already defiant in its attitude towards the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. The closing of ranks following the rapprochement of J. R. Jayewardene and Dudley Senanayake and the euphoria generated by the bye-election victories in 1972 had indeed had their salutary effects on the UNP, which earlier was veering towards extinction. The unbelievable crowd of 3 million who paid their last respects to Dudley Senanayake was further evidence of the dormant support for the UNP which had suddenly been activated.

The attitude of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration to the resurgence of the UNP was reflected at the bye-election in Dedigama. In the post-1956 era Dudley Senanayake had won that seat with the following majorities:

1960 March	6,579*
1960 July	1,657
1965	3,429
1970	1,067

---

\* Dudley Senanayake polled 12,208 votes against three opponents whose combined votes amounted to 12,301



Those majorities were not commensurate with the national standing of Dudley Senanayake. However there was no possibility of the SLFP winning that seat at the bye-election held within three months of the outpouring of grief upon his death, especially as the UNP candidate Rukman Senanayake was a son of the brother of the much lamented Dudley Senanayake. Against that background the attitude of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration towards the bye-election outraged J. R. Jayewardene and other UNP stalwarts.

After nomination day there was a sudden spate of transfers in the Inspectorate in the Police Stations of Warakapola, Pindeniya, Dedigama, and Kegalle which accounted for all stations within the electorate and in the immediate neighbourhood. The replacements were Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors with well established partiality to the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. The volunteer units of the Army guarding the textile mill at Thulhiriya\* were withdrawn and replaced with a guard from the National Service Regiment. That was a volunteer regiment under the command of Colonel Hector Divitotawela who is married to the sister of Sirima Bandaranaike. Colonel Divitotawela, a senior planter in the Whittalls Agency, was anything but a professional soldier. He had a brief spell as a Lieutenant in the Ceylon Light Infantry during the World War II and was demobilized but was suddenly made a Colonel in 1971. The Field Security Division under Lt. Colonel Anurudha Ratwatte was also deployed in Dedigama. Lt. Colonel Ratwatte was a Lieutenant in the Sinha Regiment (Volunteers) in 1970 when he contested the Senkadagala seat as the SLFP candidate and lost narrowly. He was overnight promoted Lt. Colonel and put in charge of the security of the Prime Minister. However his nameboard proudly announced that he was still the SLFP Electoral Organizer for Senkadagala. The soldiers from the National Service Regiment and the Field

---

\* The insurgent activity in 1971 was particularly intensive in that area.



Security Division not only carried out security operations but while off duty and dressed in civilian clothing, campaigned for the SLFP. During the bye-election 43 written complaints of mischief, robbery, assault, and damage to property were made to the Police Stations in the electorate by UNP supporters. Despite definite evidence the Police made a proper investigation only in one case. On countless occasions UNP supporters were chased out by the recently manouvred Inspectorate. In several cases Members of Parliament from the United Front brazenly gave orders direct to the Police who obediently carried them out. When J. R. Jayewardene heard these complaints he sent Fairlie Wijemanne, former Minister of Justice, to make a first hand report. Wijemanne was abused and all but chased out of the Warakapola Police Station.

On the eve of the election 62 UNP supporters including 33 of the 102 polling agents were arrested on fabricated charges. They were subsequently released by the Kegalle Magistrate because there was no evidence to warrant indictments. On the day of the election the Government arranged interviews in Colombo for the unemployed youth of Dedigama. Above all several United Front Parliamentarians unleashed a wave of thuggery to prevent UNP voters from exercising their franchise.

J. R. Jayewardene toured the electorate on election day and made the following statement to the Warakapola Police Station:

"I must congratulate the members of the United Front who organized the Dedigama bye-election held today. They have utilized the State machinery to the fullest. Likewise they have utilized vehicles of Corporations, Government Departments and the Armed Forces. If this pattern is followed up to the end of counting then the result of the election would be as they desired.

"From nomination day they have threatened and intimidated our supporters. They have promised jobs in Corporations and to distribute lands on estates acquired



after nomination day. They man the Police Stations with their favourites or their relations. On the day before the election massive crowds in red and blue lined some of the streets and hooted and jeered at our vehicles, stoned them, broke our offices and surrounded houses where our workers were staying. Some of our workers and even many of our polling agents were taken into custody. They were arrested on frivolous complaints and remanded.

This behaviour continued on the day of the election. As I am making this complaint a group of people was brought in a SLFP jeep. They were arrested by the SLFP and deposited in the Police Station. The organization of the undemocratic campaign is superb. I am going round as many booths as I can. I will make a statement in Parliament for the information of the public. I congratulate the organizers.

“They have succeeded in driving the first nail into the coffin they are preparing for democracy in Sri Lanka”.

I was then stationed in Rangoon, Burma, and during my leisure was writing “Dudley Senanayake of Sri Lanka”. Robert Senanayake wrote to me as follows:

“My youngest son, Rukman won with a majority of 4,508 votes but we have not yet got over the shock at the methods resorted to by the Government. Dedigama was not a bye-election but a civil war. I pray that our country will never again see what I saw there”.

According to T. B. Werapitiya, then Senior Deputy Inspector General of Police, “Never in my entire career have I heard of the Police Ordinance being observed in the breach as at Dedigama. It would be a travesty of justice if the entire episode is not subject to an inquiry by an impartial body”.

J. R. Jayewardene bristled with anger whenever he looked back upon the techniques adopted by the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration at Dedigama. He was firmly



of the opinion that Sirima Bandaranaike was steering the country towards a one-party State and decided to oppose unequivocally such a deviation from the path of Parliamentary democracy. He decided to do so at every available opportunity and to bring out the UNP into the streets. The first suitable opportunity he thought was later that month upon the enactment of The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. (Special Provisions) Bill.

The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. which owned Lake House, was established in 1918 by D. R. Wijewardene, patriot, dedicated newspaperman and shrewd businessman. From small beginnings it grew rapidly and bought up many rival establishments. By the early thirties it began to challenge the supremacy of the British owned Times of Ceylon in terms of circulation and by the end of that decade even in terms of influence at the national level.

From its inception Lake House associated itself with the struggle for Independence and with its rapid growth contributed to the ascendancy of D. S. Senanayake. By the same token the editorial policy of D. R. Wijewardene of unconcealed hostility to communal politics and Marxism incurred the displeasure of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, then leader of the Sinhala Maha Sabha, and the wrath of the LSSP and the Communist Party. Notwithstanding its obvious political bias Lake House at that stage commanded much respect in that it was the only indigenous commercial venture that had successfully challenged and eclipsed a rival British institution.

Following the advent of Independence, the illness and demise of the much respected D. R. Wijewardene, Lake House, controlling some two-thirds of all newspapers in Sri Lanka, took upon itself the role of king-maker and guardian of public morality. Parading itself as a paragon of virtue it had a hand in the making of Prime Ministers and the making and unmaking of politicians and even public servants. It became a State within a State, and above all was the mouthpiece of capitalism and the reactionary forces.



However the limitations of the Lake House gutter press, as S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike indignantly called it, became evident in 1956 when despite all its propaganda the UNP was swept aside by a tidal wave of discontent. At the General Elections of 1960 Lake House, which in the intervening years had functioned as an opposition newspaper, descended to crude and vulgar levels in attacking Sirima Bandaranaike to an extent that offended even the susceptibilities of UNP supporters.

Following her landslide victory in July 1960 Sirima Bandaranaike threatened to nationalize Lake House and thereby incurred much opposition in many quarters both at home and abroad. She was looked upon as a threat to the cherished Freedom of the Press, which the Wijewardene family claimed they protected.

Quite clearly Lake House, which looked upon its own role as some God-given right, had to be checked especially because 400,000 or more shares of a total of 600,000 were owned by one family, the Wijewardenes. Perhaps the remedy was firstly to diffuse the ownership and secondly to create a professional body to check on the activities of their journalists who were intoxicated with a sense of their own importance to the point of being personally obnoxious and professionally reprehensible. Lake House, which through devious techniques avoided being nationalized during the period 1960-64, played a leading role in the defection of C. P. De Silva and the dramatic defeat of the Government in the Parliament. Hence it was next to impossible for the last Dudley Senanayake Administration to have any moderating influence on it till September 1969 when a scandal blew sky high the sanctimonious pose of Lake House.

N. M. Perera read out in the Parliament the most damning evidence of a racket in foreign exchange involving several key directors of the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd, all members of the Wijewardene family. It became an election issue in 1970 and a Royal Commission



appointed later that year passed severe strictures on several who for years had masqueraded as paragons of virtue.

Suffice it to state that the transfer of ownership of Lake House from the Wijewardene family to a public corporation, as envisaged in the Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd. (Special Provisions) Bill, was most desirable especially when viewed against the march of socialism in Sri Lanka. J. R. Jayewardene in several conversations with me before and after 1973 was critical of how his kinsmen\* handled Lake House. Yet when the Bill came up in the National State Assembly in August 1973, he decided not only to oppose it but went still further in taking the issue to the country through a boycott of newspapers of the nationalized Lake House.

His immediate objective was to widen the credibility gap in the Lake House newspapers which had over the years infused a fear psychosis into politicians and public servants and which indoctrination could easily escalate once Lake House was State owned. He did not achieve that objective but managed to bring about a temporary drop in circulation. His overall objective was to bring the UNP, which was weak in the Parliament and strong in the country, out into the streets. He certainly achieved that and became the first President of the UNP to campaign on a house-to-house basis when he personally led the boycott in Colombo, Kandy, Kurunegala, Matara and Kalutara. However the dominant factor in the eyes of the general public was that Lake House was a citadel of reaction and the UNP a symbol of reaction. One had always backed the other and even in death the reactionary Lake House had the support of the UNP.

By October 1973 the Press boycott was, for all intents and purposes, forgotten and the UNP was directing all its energies to the bye-election in Colombo North necessitated by the death of V. A. Sugathadasa, a Cabinet

---

\* His mother was the elder sister of D. R. Wijewardene



Minister in the last Dudley Senanayake Administration. The bye-election took place without any disturbances of the peace shortly after the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration halved the free measure of rice. The UNP candidate, Vincent Perera, who like Sugathadasa was a former Mayor of Colombo, trounced the United Front candidate, Ananda Premasinghe (LSSP), by 17,138 votes. Up to that time it was the biggest majority any UNP candidate had recorded in the post-1956 era in a single member constituency.\*

J. R. Jayewardene then used the prevailing buoyancy in UNP circles to publicise the unequivocal opposition of the Party to the following actions of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration :

- (1) Postponing the general Elections from 1975 to 1977 through the subterfuge of a new Constitution.
- (2) The continued use of the Emergency, proclaimed in February 1971 to handle the insurrection, despite the restoration of normalcy.
- (3) The undemocratic attitude to the resurgence of the UNP as demonstrated at Dedigama and by the dissolution of Local Government bodies under the Emergency (Suspension of Local Authorities) Regulations and elections to such bodies being postponed indefinitely.
- (4) The shortage of food caused by dismantling the infrastructure set up by Dudley Senanayake in his Grow More Food Campaign and by the drought. Rice production had dropped as follows:

1970	—	77.4 million bushels
1971	—	66.9
1972	—	62.9
1973	—	56.8

In adjusting the mechanics of supply and demand the Government imposed restrictions, under Emergency regulations, on the transport of rice. That caused much hardship to farmers.

---

\* J. R. Jayewardene won the multi-member Colombo South seat by 20,826 in 1970.



As a means of bringing out the rank and file of the UNP into the streets J. R. Jayewardene decided upon a Satyagraha, a peaceful demonstration and a stoppage of work. It was a technique which Mahathma Gandhi had used with much success against British imperialism.

The first Satyagraha was held in Colombo the week after the bye-election in Colombo North. J. R. Jayewardene led one march through Union Place, R. Premadasa another through Maradana and Vincent Perera a third through Pettah. All three streams were designed to converge on the National State Assembly simultaneously. However before they arrived at their destination they were stopped by the Police in the Fort which was heavily barricaded as if it was under siege. Faced with no alternative over 100,000 Stayagrahis squatted on the road till nightfall and thereafter peacefully left for their homes.

The impact of the Satyagraha on the city was electrifying. Hence J. R. Jayewardene planned similar protests in Nuwara Eliya in November, in Attanagalla in December and in Anuradhapura in January 1974.

Once again the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration showed, in unmistakable manner, its attitude to the resurgence of the UNP. A few days before the scheduled Satyagraha in Attanagalla, axes, crow-bars, barbed wire, barricades, ropes and mammothies were drawn on special indents from the Works Services Regiment, and the Development and Construction Regiment, by the Field Security Division commanded by Lt. Col. Anuruddha Ratwatte.

The Field Security Division dressed in civilian clothing and armed with the equipment mentioned above, was deployed around Horagolla. When the Satyagrahis poured into Attanagalla by the thousands on December 9th 1973, the roads at Pasyala, Veyangoda, Nittambuwa and Urapola were blocked with trees felled across the road. Besides in broad daylight SLFP supporters barricaded the roads with tractors and boulders and indulged in acts of violence



against the Satyagrahis while the Police looked on non-chalantly. Occasionally bands of thugs armed with clubs patrolled the streets, taunted the Police, threatened the Satyagrahis and swore that they would prevent J. R. Jayewardene from entering Attanagalla. About that time J. R. Jayewardene entered the Raja Maha Vihare at Attanagalla and performed Satyagraha.

The previous day, having anticipated trouble, J. R. Jayewardene had moved into his country residence in Kumbaloluwa, not far from Attanagalla, ostensibly to spend the night there. However, sometime after midnight he slipped through a Police cordon and spent the rest of the night in the home of a UNP supporter near the Raja Maha Vihare. At the appointed time he entered the temple accompanied by about 200 supporters from the neighbourhood and performed Satyagraha. The other Satyagrahis did so on the middle of the road despite being provoked by thugs.

When J. R. Jayewardene planned the next Satyagraha in Anuradhapura during the following month, special indents were once again drawn by the Field Security Division. However such equipment was not put to use because the Government banned the Satyagraha by Gazette Notification and under Emergency regulations subjected defaulters to severe penalties including imprisonment and confiscation of property.

Nevertheless, 4,000 Satyagrahis attended a Pirith ceremony\* at the Sri Maha Bodhi and then walked in groups of less than five (thereby obviating any charge of unlawful assembly) behind J. R. Jayewardene to the Ruwanwelisaya and performed Satyagraha there.

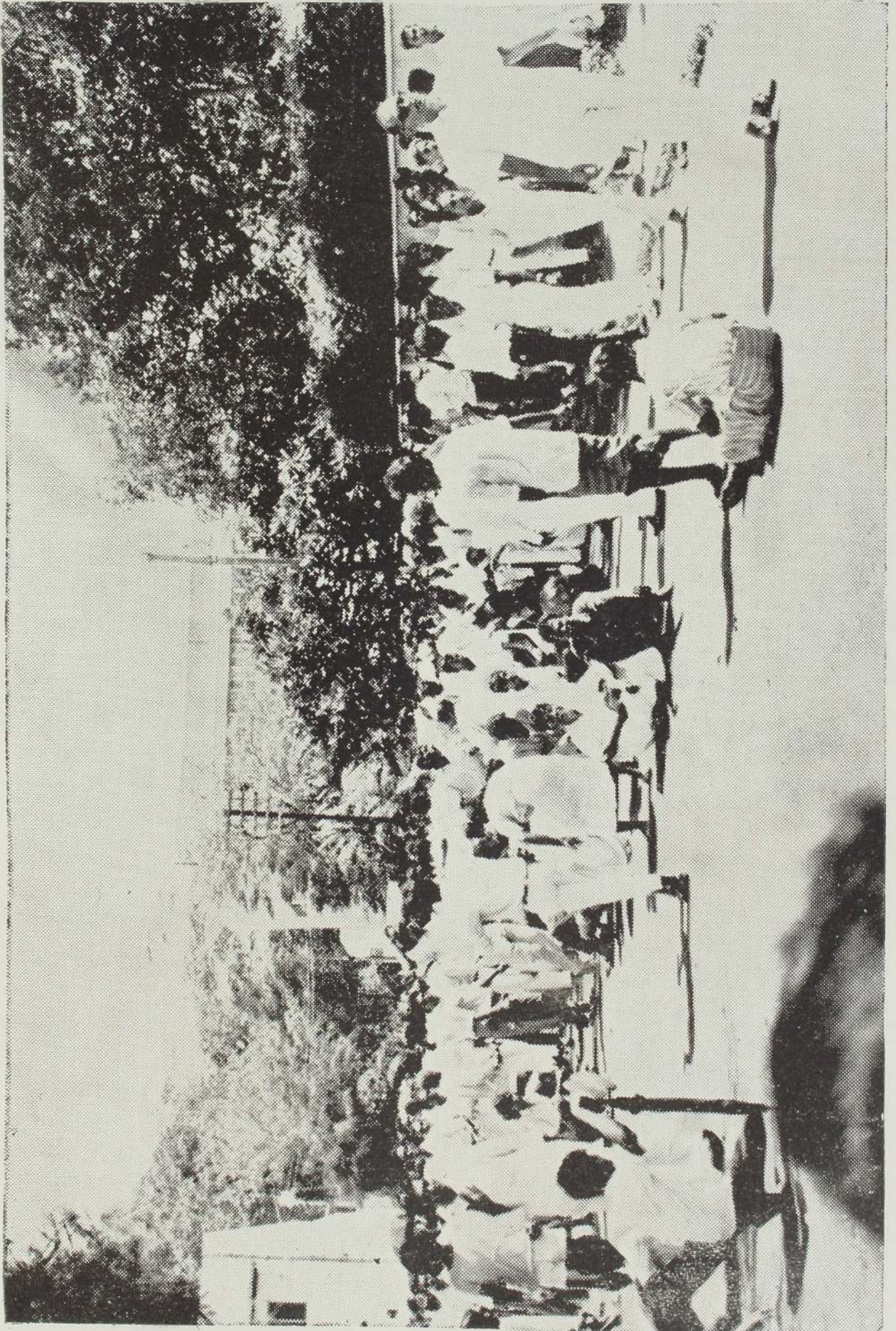
In his endeavour to further activate the UNP, J. R. Jayewardene planned to hold simultaneous meetings in all 145 electorates on April 21st, 1974, the first anniversary of the cremation of Dudley Senanayaka\*\*. Sirima Bandaranaike responded by imposing a curfew and banning the

---

\* Note for foreign readers - A Buddhist religious ceremony.

\*\* Dudley Senanayake died on Sinhala New Year Day in 1973. Hence subsequent commemorative services have been held on some other appropriate day, more often than not on his birthday.





The Satyagraha in October 1973







meetings. One month later when J. R. Jayewardene called for a Satyagraha at the Town Hall in Colombo on Republic Day, the Police tear-gassed the Satyagrahis and dispersed the more recalcitrant ones with a vicious baton charge.

About that time Sirima Bandaranaike unleashed a massive propaganda drive for her land reforms and other sweeping changes enacted during recent years. Giant rallies were held in Badulla, Kandy, Kurunegala, Ratnapura and Matara, well attended by the local population and supplemented by tens of thousands transported in chartered CTB buses and Corporation vehicles, induced with free meals, sometimes with free liquor and above all with political patronage in one form or another. The crowds were indeed staggering and the May Day rally in Colombo produced a seething mass of humanity that took 6 hours to march past a given point.

According to the reactionary coterie within the UNP, through whose thick skulls no political sense ever permeates, those shows of strength were staggering whereas J. R. Jayewardene had achieved nothing tangible through the Press boycott and the Satyagrahas. Hence they began to openly question the ability of J. R. Jayewardene to effectively lead the UNP to victory at a future General Election. Besides, there were serious misgivings in some quarters within the UNP about his attitude towards Dudley Senanayake.

J. R. Jayewardene realistically assessed the role of Dudley Senanayake on the national scene during the past decade, in that his policies were rejected in no uncertain manner in 1970 but he was immensely popular personally as reflected in even more unmistakable manner at his funeral in 1973. In implementing the reforms that J. R. Jayewardene had in mind he had no alternative but to reject outright the policies of Dudley Senanayake. In doing so he incurred the displeasure of numerous diehard Dudley Senanayake supporters, many of whom were too naive to realize that the clash between Dudley Senanayaka and J. R. Jayewardene was no mere clash of personalities.



Such animosity had a convenient focal point in the UNP in Rukman Senanayake who knew no better and refused to accept that the policies of the UNP under Dudley Senanayake had outlived their period of usefulness. Thus the J. R. Jayewardene-Dudley Senanayake feud continued beyond the grave.

The nett result of all these reservations and misgivings was the first major exodus from the UNP since the drubbing in 1970. M. M. Mustapha (UNP-Nintavur) and S. Thambiraja (UNP-Paddirippu) defected to the SLFP. A. H. M. Fowzie, Mayor of Colombo, and six of his Councillors who were recently expelled from the UNP, joined the SLFP. The overall impact was panic within the reactionary coterie, despondency in other circles within the UNP and jubilation in the SLFP.

J. R. Jayewardene faced the crisis in characteristic manner. He was calm, collected and realistic. The UNP had to face up to the authoritarian rule of Sirima Bandaranaike but to do so it could no longer function within its archaic framework. The UNP had to be broad-based and made defiant from the grass root level upwards and J. R. Jayewardene proposed to achieve those objectives through an intensive membership drive.

Since the inception of the UNP it was financed by the rich many of whom had deserted the Party after the debacle of 1970 and of the faithful many had their properties sequestered and businesses nationalized by the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. J. R. Jayewardene hence had to find new sources of financing over and above new power bases. He therefore opted to woo the poor, whose lot in life had deteriorated sharply since 1970 and whose discontent was transparently clear at the bye-elections. The basic strategy of J. R. Jayewardene was to enroll members on the payment of Re. 1/- per annum, thereby bringing the subscription within the means of the poorest, to establish UNP cells in every village and every ward in the town through a net work of Branch, Youth and



Women's Organizations and through them to canvass on a house-to-house basis. In retrospect that decision turned out to be a stroke of genius and is elaborated upon in Chapters V and VI.

By implementing those programmes by 1976 the UNP was functioning within a different framework and on a different wavelength at the grass roots level. Moreover the defection of the LSSP to the Opposition in September 1975 immeasurably strengthened the forces mustered against the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. Thus in the last year of the Parliament J. R. Jayewardene was confident that he could have a confrontation with the Government anywhere outside the National State Assembly, from a position of strength rather than from a position of weakness.

Besides resolutely opposing the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration on its repressive measures, the consistent policy of J. R. Jayewardene was to attack it on the issues of the spiralling cost of living, rampant unemployment, family bandyism and corruption.

During the General Election of 1970 Dudley Senanayake having ushered in a period of relative prosperity reminded his audiences that whereas during the period 1960-65 there were lengthy queues outside Co-operative stores and shops, due to all manner of shortages and scarcities, in 1970 the only queues were of farmers depositing cash in the People's Bank and crowds outside the cinemas. Sirima Bandaranaike met those arguments by claiming that the cost of living had increased by leaps and bounds from 1965-70 and elaborated that prices had risen as follows:

	1965	1970
Rice per measure	Rs. 0.90	Rs. 1.25
Bread per lb.	0.25	0.35
Dry fish per lb.	1.20	2.10
Sarongs (cheapest variety)	4.50	9.00
Sarees (cotton)	10.50	22.50



J. R. Jayewardene pointed out that ever since Sirima Bandaranaike was returned to power in 1970 every conceivable type of food and consumer item was in short supply. Bread queues in 1973 were sometimes one mile long, baby food, maldive fish, coriander and garlic were more often than not out of stock. Besides the cost of living had spiralled as follows :

	1970	1973	1975
Rice per measure	Rs. 1.25	Rs. 3.50	Rs. 4.50
Bread per lb.	0.35	0.75	0.90
Fish per lb.	1.00-3.00	2.50-4.50	4.50-8.00
Beef per lb.	0.75-1.25	2.00-2.50	3.50-4.00
Dry fish per lb.	1.50-2.50	2.50-4.00	3.50-6.00
Potatoes per lb.	0.90	1.50	2.50
Onions per lb.	0.24	1.80	2.40
Sarongs (cheapest variety)	9	15	20
Sarees (cotton)	22.50	40	50
Bicycles	400	600	850

Anywhere in the world where the Parliamentary system prevails the Government of the day comes in for harsh criticism on the issue of the rising cost of living and Governments are often changed on that issue alone. J. R. Jayewardene vilified the Government for the spiralling cost of living and brushed aside the pleas of Sirima Bandaranaike that it was a worldwide phenomenon. He claimed that the scarcities were not a worldwide phenomenon but a reflection of her mismanagement and made similar allegations about the cost of living. His audiences responded to those statements with thunderous applause.

In patches the management of the Government by Sirima Bandaranaike was both novel and comic. It consisted of her next-of-kin being appointed to positions for which they were ill equipped, if not altogether unsuited. Her three children, Sunethra, Chandrika and Anura, were sent to the prestigious universities of Oxford, Sorbonne and London through the back door, and it was not surprising that their performances there were mediocre. Yet when they



returned to the island they were given high appointments which in theory carried great responsibility and in practice had the influence of a Cabinet Minister. A similar position was given to Kumar Rupasinghe following his marriage to Sunethra.

Of the four brothers of Sirima Bandaranaike, Mackie was her Private Secretary, a post he has held since 1960, Seevali, who like Mackie is a doctor, was made Director-General of the Export Promotion Secretariat, Clifford an obscure planter was appointed Chairman of the State Plantations Corporation, and Barnes once a member of the minor Judiciary made a Supreme Court Judge at a time when those who joined with him barely had seniority to be on the High Court. Their brother-in-law Hector Divitotawela, whose knowledge of the Army was not much more than knowing which end of a machine gun fired, was suddenly made into a full Colonel.

This ludicrous state of affairs seeped into every State owned Corporations till Sirima Bandaranaike had practically run out of cousins, nephews, nieces, in-laws etcetera. Even more ludicrous was the disproportionate publicity given to S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. The Government controlled press and radio made it appear that he was responsible for ushering in everything in Sri Lanka except perhaps for founding the Sinhala race and introducing Buddhism into the island. Moreover the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration named after him every conceivable type of public property other than a public toilet.

J. R. Jayewardena looked upon these frolics with grave concern especially as he himself has particularly close relationships with his brothers and sisters and several other relatives though not one of them has received the patronage of the State through him. Besides he himself is the scion of two famous families, each of which is an institution by itself.

J. R. Jayewardene publicly stated that he would end family bandyism when the next UNP Government was established through his own example of not extending



political patronage to his relatives and by ensuring that his Cabinet Ministers and high ranking officials strictly follow his example. He further accentuated the position of the UNP in opposing family bandyism by deciding not to nominate for Parliamentary elections more than one member from the same family. That rule was rigidly applied with the solitary exception being Cyril Mathew (Kelaniya) and his son Nanda Mathew (Kollonne). That exception was permitted under the extenuating circumstances of the father having been a MP from 1960-64, the son from 1965-70, and both being electoral leaders since 1972.

Though J. R. Jayawardene made political capital of the rampant unemployment and its attendant evils, he was perturbed at the gravity of the problem. He has read extensively of how nations in Europe had emerged from feudalism during the last century and has seen for himself how nations in Asia are now undergoing the same transition. Against that background he looked upon Sri Lanka as an isolated example of a nation attempting to achieve 100% literacy before giving priority to rapid economic growth without which giant strides in education cannot conceivably have the impact they are intended to have. Besides he recalled that in 1953, when as Finance Minister he was reluctantly compelled to propose the removal of the rice subsidy, it had cost the nation Rs. 352 million in a budget of Rs. 1242 million. during the previous fiscal year. The removal was disastrous to the UNP politically and its re-introduction was even more disastrous to the nation economically as one generation had fed itself at the expense of new avenues of employment for the next generation.

In his opinion the problem of unemployment could be solved only through long-term plans. Sri Lanka has to produce all her food domestically. With the success of the green revolution, he contended that in contemporary times there was no justification for a fertile country not being self-sufficient in its staple food; there was still less justification for an island importing its requirements of fish.



To meet these challenges he had formulated his Swadeshi Plan and proposed to implement it on a labour intensive basis, thereby giving tangible relief to the vexed problem of unemployment. On public platforms he did not articulate such thinking but instead blasted Sirima Bandaranaike for giving jobs to her kith and kin while sorely neglecting the creation of new jobs for the masses. That too evoked thunderous applause.

Another issue on which he capitalized was the alarming levels of indiscipline and corruption amongst SLFP Members of Parliament. Whereas strict party discipline was enforced by the LSSP and the CP (Moscow wing) on their Parliamentarians, Sirima Bandaranaike turned a blind eye on the bribery, corruption and outrageous misdemeanours of SLFP Parliamentarians. On one occasion two Cabinet Ministers exchanged blows during a session of the National State Assembly. On countless occasions Cabinet Ministers and Deputy Ministers were seen drunk inside the chamber of the supreme Legislature. The tales of young women being "interviewed" in Rest Houses by SLFP MPs were enough to write several volumes of pornography. The stories of rags to riches of SLFP MPs elected in 1970 were an even greater scandal.

J. R. Jayawardene focussed attention on all these issues from public platforms at periodic meetings and especially at bye-elections. At the bye-election in Kalawewa in October 1974 the UNP recorded a swing of 7.6% and won the seat for the first time since 1952\*. Two months later there was another impressive victory in Katana. In both those bye-elections J. R. Jayawardene used new techniques of campaigning. Pride of place was given not to giant rallies but to house-to-house campaigning backed up by an intensive network of pocket meetings. A. M. S. Adhikari (UNP-Kalawewa) in particular had mastered this art despite the communications problem in his impoverished and drought-stricken electorate. When J. R. Jayawardene resigned his seat on May 21st 1975, as

---

\* The UNP needed a swing of approximately 6% to win the General Election.



a token protest against the decision of the Government to extend the life-time of the Parliament from 5 to 7 years, a bye-election was called for in Colombo South. The UNP did not hold a single public meeting but campaigned on a house - to - house and street - to - street bases. J. R. Jayewardene defeated his rival by 26,305 votes to record the largest majority anybody had obtained till then in the post-1956 era. Another new technique was adopted at the bye-election in Ja-Ela in 1976. The UNP candidate for that seat in 1947 and 1952 was Gate Mudaliyar D. P. Jayasuriya whose title reflected his elitist background. From 1956 onwards the candidate was Paris Perera whose private income ran into several thousand rupees per month. Upon his premature death the UNP nominated Joseph Michael Perera (32) a VC Member who was a ticket checker in a cinema and whose father is still a cultivator dressed in a loin-cloth. Many UNP supporters were jubilant over his victory by 8615 votes\*. Those who knew the political thinking of J. R. Jayewardene were even more jubilant over the victory of the new UNP over the old UNP.

---

\* The swing in Ja-Ela was 6.1%



## CHAPTER IV

# FOREIGN AFFAIRS

By 1970 the only difference in substance between the Foreign policies of the UNP and the SLFP was confined to the nuances, although the UNP opted for a low-profile whereas the SLFP adopted a considerably more dynamic role. Hence J. R. Jayewardene with his proven ability in the field of Foreign affairs\* was both amused and amazed at the role of Sirima Bandaranaike on the international scene. He could not help but observe that her motivation was vanity for international recognition. At one time or another during her Administration, Sirima Bandaranaike was reportedly nominated for the Nobel Prize for Peace, a claim contradicted by the Ministry of Defence and Foreign Affairs, was the leader of two-thirds of the World, a claim not yet denied by her or anybody on her behalf and the winner of the FAO Ceres Medal, "a coveted honour" according to her press and radio. The factual position was that the FAO Ceres Medal was shared by Sirima Bandaranaike and Grace Kelly in 1976 and in 1974 a recipient was Sophia Loren!

---

\* Vide Appendix B

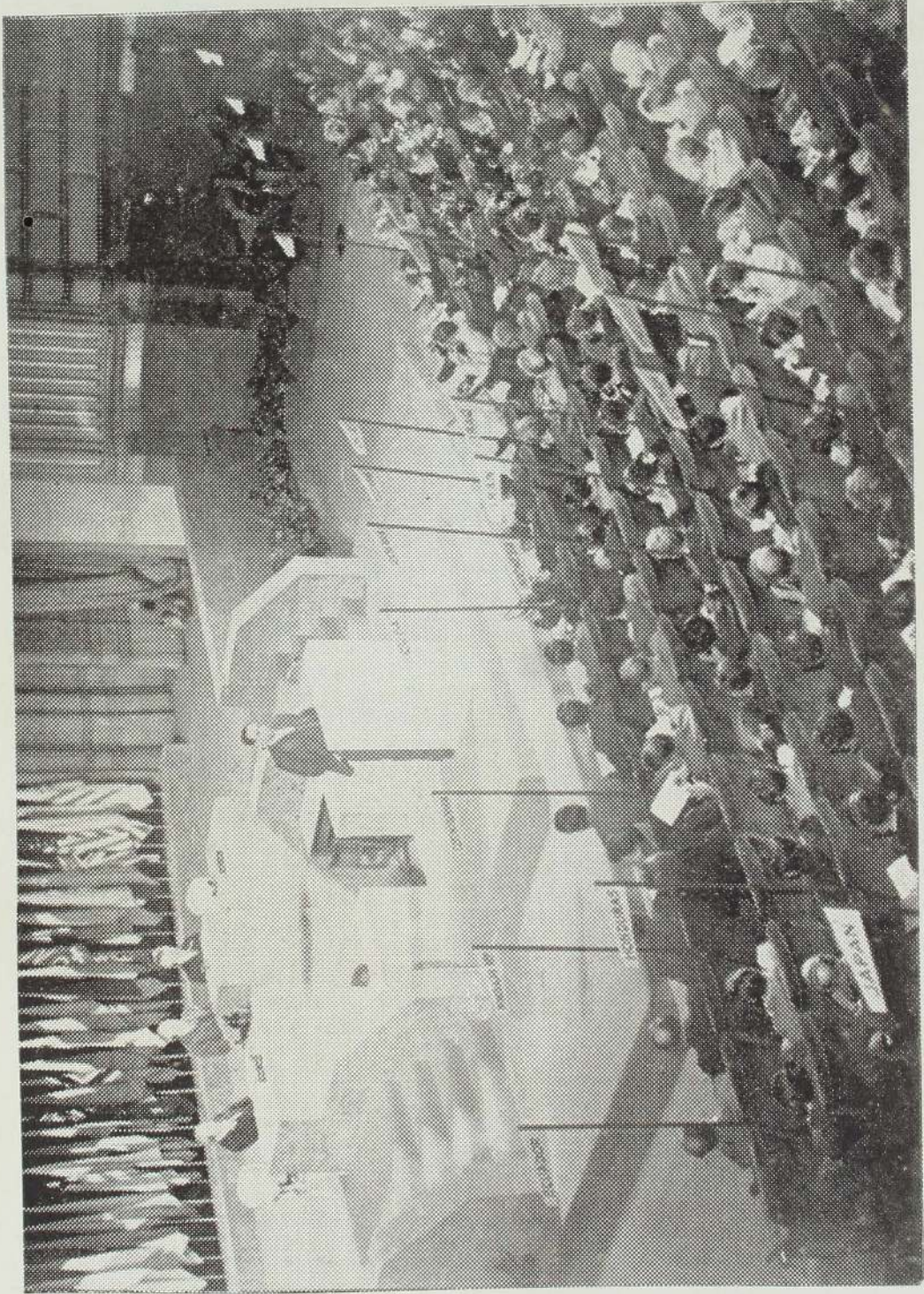


Following her landslide victory in 1970 Sirima Bandaranaike made her bid for international recognition with a proposal to make the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace. The first attempt was made in July 1970 at the Non-Aligned Summit in Lusaka, Zambia, the second in January 1971 at the Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference in Singapore and the third in November 1971 at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. All these attempts were made with the full glare of publicity in Sri Lanka, making it appear that Sirima Bandaranaike was a dominant world figure.

In theory the proposal was very sound, but in practice by 1970 the United States Navy had commissioned two 85,000 ton nuclear-powered aircraft carriers, the USS "Enterprise" and "Eisenhower" which could be out at sea for a period of 5 years without re-fuelling. Even before that nuclear-powered submarines of the class of USS "Nautilus", which could be out at sea for 7 years without re-fuelling and fire nuclear warheads while still submerged, were constantly lurking in the Indian Ocean which is equidistant from the Soviet Union and China. Also in 1970, the United States Navy decided to build a base in the lonely atoll of Diego Garcia, some 2000 miles south of the Maldives. The reason adduced was that the Soviet naval presence in the Indian Ocean was growing by leaps and bounds, with the ever increasing presence of nuclear-powered ships or ships carrying nuclear weapons and operating out of Berbera in Somalia which for all practical purposes is a Soviet base.

On his part, J. R. Jayewardene was of the opinion that it would be desirable for the United States to dismantle their base in Diego Garcia and for the Soviet Union to vacate their base in Somalia. However, he contended that it would be absurd to expect the United States or the Soviet Union to withdraw their nuclear-powered ships and submarines from the Indian Ocean as they could be out at sea for years without re-fuelling.





His finest hour in the international scene. The San Francisco Place Conference of 1951.  
(vide page 168-176)







The proposal of Sirima Bandaranaike to make the Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace was indeed very well received by the Non-Aligned nations, the vast majority of which have no military power, but much vocal power. Accordingly, a resolution was placed before the United Nations General Assembly and voted upon as follows:

Yes	—	105
No	—	0
Abstentions	—	37 (including the USA, Soviet Union, Britain and France, the only nations which have nuclear-powered ships.)

J. R. Jayewardene knew only too well that United Nations resolutions are curious documents which at times are not worth the paper on which they are printed. The resolution on the Indian Ocean bore little relevance to reality; nevertheless, it became a useful platform from which to take occasional digs at the major World powers and for that reason alone, became popular with the nations of the Third World. Moreover, whenever Sirima Bandaranaike was gallivanting abroad or receiving visiting dignitaries in Sri Lanka her hosts and guests well knowing her quest for international recognition, flattered her as the architect of the resolution on the Indian Ocean. That, in turn, she used as further proof of her standing in the international scene.

To quote one example, in 1974 while visiting the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Canberra, Australia, I observed that the resolution on the Indian Ocean was looked upon as a laughing stock. During that visit, I had dinner with a classmate of mine at Harvard who was then Special Assistant to Prime Minister Gough Whitlam. He confirmed that his Prime Minister found the resolution amusing because it was devoid of reality, but was strongly



committed to using international pressure to get the United States Navy to vacate Diego Garcia. Four months later, Gough Whitlam visited Sri Lanka. As his Qantas Boeing touched down, a twenty-one gun salute boomed and shortly after he stepped out of the aircraft, a guard of honour presented arms while the band played "Advance Australia Fair" and "Sri Lanka Matha". Then while Gough Whitlam replied to the speech of welcome by Sirima Bandaranaike, he made flattering references to her resolution on the Indian Ocean. She purred happily while the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation and the Lake House had a field day. The State visit ended four days later with Sirima Bandaranaike claiming triumphantly, "Prime Minister Whitlam has immeasurably strengthened the ties between Sri Lanka and Australia".

Such are facts of life in Foreign affairs, a fool's paradise in which Sirima Bandaranaike revelled and a field; according to J. R. Jayewardene, which should occupy nothing more than a position of low priority in any good Government of Sri Lanka.

J. R. Jayewardene was not surprised when Sirima Bandaranaike proclaimed at the Non-Aligned Summit in Lusaka that all nations should economically boycott South Africa (the sixth largest purchaser of our tea) and quickly reneged on it when she returned to the island. He looked likewise on the much publicised bid of Shirley Amerasinghe to become the Secretary-General of the United Nations Organization in 1971 which ended disastrously with Amerasinghe acquiring more vetoes than votes. J. R. Jayewardene was tickled by the fuss that Sirima Bandaranaike made in 1975 when Indira Gandhi decreed that Kachchativu, an uninhabited island in the Palk Strait about one acre in extent and used mainly by crows and smugglers, belonged not to India but to Sri Lanka. However, J. R. Jayewardene was gravely concerned when the North Korean Embassy, opened with much fanfare in 1970 following the landslide victory of Sirima Bandarnaike, had



to be closed down within a year following the discovery of incriminating evidence that the Embassy had openly collaborated with the insurgents.

J. R. Jayewardene was astonished in 1973, when Sirima Bandaranaike made a successful bid to stage the fifth Non-Aligned Summit in Colombo at a time when the rich and poor alike were bearing greater burdens in their day-to-day living than even during the dark days of World War II, when for the first time in living memory coroners were certifying deaths due to starvation, when people were seen digging into dustbins for food, when bread queues were often longer than bus queues, when the ration of a free measure of rice was halved and when assistance was sought desperately from the United States, under PL480, to stave off a famine. The principal argument adduced by the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration in favour of staging the Summit in Colombo was that it would result in excellent publicity for Sri Lanka abroad and from that enhanced image much benefit would flow. Besides the local press and radio took great pains to show that Sri Lanka being selected to host the Summit was definitive evidence of the recognition of Sirima Bandaranaike as a world figure.

On the other hand, J. R. Jayewardene had authentic information that Sri Lanka was the only Asian country interested in hosting the fifth Summit which was earmarked for Asia, just as much as the sixth Summit was earmarked for Latin America and subsequently awarded to Cuba. Besides he had reports from the World Bank, amongst other sources, that considering the expenditure incurred on the Summits, at Belgrade (1961), Cairo (1964), Lusaka (1970) and Algiers (1973) and taking into account the expansion in the Non-Aligned Movement, the Summit in Colombo would cost the tax payer more than the Gal Oya project. The benefit to the nation from the Gal Oya project is too well known to need enumeration here, but J. R. Jayewardene often wondered what tangible benefits would accrue to Sri Lanka from this massive investment on the Summit at a time when the nation could least afford it.



The questions he raised in Parliament were hardly ever adequately answered and therefore since 1974 the subject was raised on the UNP national platform with Lalith Athulathmudali as the spokesman. Athulathmudali, a brilliant product of Royal, Oxford and Harvard, had developed an interest in Foreign affairs since his days at Oxford where he had the distinction of being the President of the Union. He posed the question that the Summit would cost each family in Sri Lanka Rs. 300/- and inquired whether that money could not be better spent on food, clothing and shelter. Somehow, neither that question nor the Summit itself was ever an issue with the masses in 1974 or in 1975 notwithstanding the massive propaganda by the Government controlled press and radio which by 1976 made it appear that Non-Alignment had supplanted Buddhism as the dominant philosophy in Sri Lanka.

By early 1976 Sirima Bandaranaike had become a Prime Minister at large spending two of the first three months of the year visiting Yugoslavia, India, Burma, Thailand and Indonesia and when she finally settled down to work in Sri Lanka, the Government machinery was gravitating around one central object, the Summit. J. R. Jayewardene with his utility-oriented views on Foreign affairs was still wondering what tangible benefit would accrue to Sri Lanka commensurate with this massive investment of money and energy. Quite clearly there was an excellent new highway linking Colombo with the Bandaranaike International Airport which was itself greatly modernised and was even provided with facilities for instrument landings. Overseas telephone and communication facilities were improved immeasurably through a satellite link-up, the Police was made more sophisticated at least technologically and the 500 Peugeot cars imported for the occasion would be an asset to Government undertakings once the Summit was over. On the other hand, J. R. Jayewardene observed that the claim of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration that massive grants from abroad would minimise the capital outlay was not true. What was donated amounted to cash grants of one million dollars from Libya and Algeria



and an assortment ranging from close-circuit television from Yugoslavia, cigars from Cuba and dates from Iraq to horses from Pakistan and ornaments with love from the Prime Minister of India. Besides the costly Thompson CSF radar equipment imported from France against French credit lines, waiving the usual procedure of calling for worldwide tenders, was more expensive and less efficient than the better known American and British equivalent of RCA and Marconi.

No comment on the Summit itself is complete without paying handsome tribute to its magnificent organizational success which reflected much credit on Sirima Bandaranaike. Even in retrospect it is difficult to believe that Sri Lanka, with her limited technological and managerial skills, could have risen to the marvellous levels she did and J. R. Jayewardene wistfully observed how prosperous Sri Lanka would be if that skill could conceivably be channelled into the development effort. However, he could not help but observe that the people of Sri Lanka as a whole were less than interested in Non-Alignment itself. For instance, the bullet-proof Mercedes Benz SE 600 limousine of President Joseph Tito attracted more attention than the much respected President of Yugoslavia, who in a very real sense was the founding father of the Non-Aligned Movement.

When the Summit was on, for the first time in history, Sri Lanka appeared in the headlines of Upper Volta, Outer Mongolia, North Korea, Southern Yemen and the Central African Republic. Advertising Sri Lanka abroad as a tourist paradise is part and parcel of sound Government policy which J. R. Jayewardene, as Minister of State, initiated in 1966. Yet he construed that only one of unsound mind would think that an enhanced image of Sri Lanka in those countries or in Algeria, Bhutan, Comoros, Papua-New Guinea, Lesotho or Ruanda would result in tourists from there coming here. By the same token, the cornerstone of the economy of Sri Lanka is in the export of tea, rubber and coconut and it would be difficult to find anybody who would claim that the enhanced image would result in worthwhile



markets in Afghanistan, Barbados, Cameroons, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Ivory Coast, Swaziland, Togo or Zaire. To J. R. Jayewardene, it is a stubborn fact that many of these countries are poorer than Sri Lanka and he was not surprised when he heard that their delegates, though billeted at expensive five star hotels such as the Oberoi, the Inter-continental and Galle Face, were seen wandering into snack bars in search of cheap meals. He was however amused when he heard that all the major hotels in Colombo had run at a loss during the Summit and were forced to sell the large quantities of choice food and wine, specially imported with scarce foreign exchange, to affluent Sri Lankans thereby making their festive season in 1976 merrier than in recent lean years.

J. R. Jayewardene is convinced that in contemporary times, it is vital that the Foreign policy of Sri Lanka should be strictly in accordance with the philosophy of Non-Alignment. Moreover, he is of the opinion that Sri Lanka should participate in the periodic Non-Aligned Summits and take her rightful place in the comity of nations, but do so strictly within a realistic framework. An essential component of such a framework, to his mind, is financial stringency and therefore he had serious misgivings about the Summit being held in Colombo. Nevertheless he decided that as the UNP had espoused the philosophy of Non-Alignment since 1957 that he, all UNP Parliamentarians and other UNP invitees should attend the opening ceremony.

The ceremonial opening of the Summit, complete with the traditional pomp and pageantry, took place during the height of the campaign of the bye-election in Mulkirigala. J. R. Jayewardene left for Colombo from his base at Mirissa having a few days earlier made critical references about the Summit and pithy remarks about some of the delegates at public meetings at Weeraketiya and Katuwana. It resulted in A. C. S. Hameed and me pleading with him not to make such statements from public platforms in view of the consideration that as the next Prime Minister



of Sri Lanka he would automatically be the Head of the Non-Aligned Movement from 1977 till 1979 when the next Summit is scheduled to be held in Havana, Cuba. Following the opening of the Summit, the local newspapers hailed Sirima Bandaranaike as the leader of two-thirds of the World and some went even further in claiming that J. R. Jayewardene, even if he became Prime Minister, would never be tolerated as the Head of the Non-Aligned movement because he was unacceptable to the Communist countries. When J. R. Jayewardene returned to the Mulkirigala electorate, he claimed amidst loud laughter that he was not interested in leading two-thirds of the World, that all he wanted was to lead Sri Lanka to prosperity and said in lighter vein that if Sirima Bandaranaike was so obsessed with the Summit, upon assuming office as Prime Minister he may hand over the title of Head of the Non-Aligned Movement to her.

Once the Summit was over, it was quite evident that the project had not resulted in tangible benefits accruing to Sri Lanka commensurate with the capital outlay. However, there was every expectation in Government circles of such benefits flowing in from the oil-rich Arab States which of late had become generous donor nations and reportedly were greatly impressed by Sirima Bandaranaike. Accordingly the Minister of Finance, Felix Dias Bandaranaike, left on a much publicised mission to Libya and Qatar where according to the Government of Sri Lanka the image of our country had reached commanding heights because of the Summit. However three weeks later when he returned to finalise his budget proposals, all he had brought were good wishes and fraternal greetings not to mention confirmation that the image of Sri Lanka was excellent in those countries. Since then Government propaganda claimed that the image of Sri Lanka got better and better in more and more parts of the world, but as 1976 drew to a close all the nation had received was a galaxy of Christmas and New Year cards so thoughtfully sent by foreign dignitaries who had attended the Summit and had enjoyed the traditional hospitality of Sri Lanka,



Even in 1977 the Government propaganda, mercifully in smaller doses, still harped on the enhanced image. Perhaps the moment of truth dawned when Lake House had to interview not the living but the dead to establish it\*. Another such moment of truth, in the reckoning of J. R. Jayewardene, was when Sirima Bandaranaike addressed the United Nations General Assembly, according to some as the leader of two-thirds of the World and according to the articulate as the spokesman for the 86 nations which had met in Colombo. That speech was ignored by the Western news media and given little publicity in the Communist news media except Tanjung of Yugoslavia. However in Sri Lanka it was made out to be a milestone in the evolution of the Non-Aligned Movement.

To J. R. Jayewardene the Summit was yet another manifestation of the vanity of Sirima Bandaranaike in her quest for international recognition at any cost. Nevertheless he observed that with the Summit, so dear to her heart she had put into his skilful hands a devastating weapon.

---

\* "The Observer" of August 18th 1976 published a front page article of how wonderful the Summit was. The names of all those interviewed had appeared in the obituary column of the "Daily News" of the previous day!



## CHAPTER V

# WHITHER DEMOCRACY ?

On January 24th 1976 D. M. Jayaratna (SLFP-Gampola) while addressing a meeting in Peradeniya presided over by Hector Kobbekaduwa, Minister for Agriculture and Lands, claimed that "there is no necessity to hold a General Election in 1977 because the citizens are quite happy with the Government." That speech was largely ignored as it was looked upon as an utterance of a MP with a reputation for intemperate statements and J. R. Jayewardene was surprised only in that the influential Minister for Agriculture and Lands, who was particularly close to Sirima Bandaranaike, did not publicly retract the statement. However there was general consternation three Saturdays later when H. M. Navaratne (SLFP-Minipe), Deputy Minister for Agriculture and Lands, while speaking at a meeting in Bogambara, also presided over by Hector Kobbekaduwa, claimed that "the next General election will be held not when J. R. Jayewardene wants it but only when the people who voted this Government in to power want it." On that occasion too Hector Kobbekaduwa chose to remain silent.

Both those statements were made immediately after Indira Gandhi had taken steps in the Lok Sabha, through an amendment to the Indian Constitution, to postpone the



General Election scheduled for early 1976. Hence there was much speculation in Sri Lanka whether Sirima Bandaranaike would emulate Indira Gandhi, whom she greatly admired and with whom she had in common many strengths and even more weaknesses. Against that background T. B. Ilangaratne, Minister for Trade and Commerce added fuel to fire by repeatedly speaking in a strain that justified the postponement of the General Election in India. He supported the draconian Emergency clamped down by Indira Gandhi on the pretext that the implementation of progressive measures justified such action against reactionaries and generally hinted that a similar course of action may be beneficial to Sri Lanka.

Not only J. R. Jayewardene but the entire Opposition viewed these developments with grave concern and wrote to Sirima Bandaranaike on the following lines:

“Recently certain members of the Government including Ministers have publicly advocated the postponement of elections. We the members of the Opposition would like you to make a statement in the National State Assembly re-affirming the views you expressed earlier that the Government will not continue in office beyond May 1977 and that a General Election will be held in that year.”

Notwithstanding the fact that leaders of all parties in the Opposition and 37 MPs were signatories to that letter the reply of Sirima Bandaranaike was as follows.

“In the SLFP freedom of speech is something very real and precious and I have no intention of preventing members of my Government including Ministers from expressing their views on political questions and thereby creating public opinion.

“Your request moreover involves an important question of principle involving the Office of the Prime Minister and I am sure that it had not been made with any intent to do anything to lessen or prejudice the dignity or status of that Office. It is my view that accommodating your request would lead at least in the public mind to that kind of situation.



“In any event the law prevailing will be followed and you need entertain no apprehension in that regard.”

J. R. Jayewardene recalled that in 1975 the three LSSP Cabinet Ministers were unceremoniously removed from office after exercising their freedom of speech. He suspected that the Government was considering amending of Section 42 Clause 5 of the Constitution which stipulated, “Unless sooner dissolved, the first National State Assembly shall continue for five years commencing on the date of adoption of the Constitution by the Constituent Assembly.” To do so the Government needed two-thirds of the votes in the National State Assembly or more specifically 105 votes. Its strength, even after the extrusion of the LSSP, was a staggering 102. The cautious and ambiguous statement of Sirima Bandaranaike and the absence of much publicity to it in her press and radio at a time when they were indulging in propaganda with nauseating frequency created an impression in the mind of J. R. Jayewardene, his colleagues in the Opposition and many an articulate observer that the postponement of the General Election through an amendment to the Constitution was more than a theoretical possibility.

J. R. Jayewardene by nature is mild mannered and by the same token is defiant when challenged or provoked. He responded with strongly worded statements at Agalawatte, Rakwana, Ruwanwella, Senkadagala, Baddegama, Homagama, Dandegamuwa, Katana and Colombo to the effect that if the dissolution of Parliament was postponed beyond May 22nd 1977, he would personally lead a movement to overthrow the Government. In that endeavour he received much support from the LSSP with N. M. Perera and Colvin R. De Silva publicly making clarion calls for an uprising should Sirima Bandaranaike seek to extend her term of office unilaterally.

In the next few months the Government was pre-occupied with the Non-Aligned Summit and the call for the postponement of the General Election was next heard



from public platforms at the bye-election in Mulkirigala. On August 25th Lakshman Rajapakse, the SLFP candidate, and Deshapriya Senanayake (SLFP-Minneriya), Deputy Minister for Planning and Economic Affairs, claimed at Weeraketiya and Walasmulla that because Sirima Bandaranaike was the head of the Non-Aligned Movement from 1976-79, in order to enable her to discharge her international obligations as leader of two-thirds of the World, there would be no General Election in 1977. At Walasmulla, Senanayake made this statement immediately before Sirima Bandaranaike spoke and his references to the postponement of the General Election resulted in the crowd chanting "Haththa hathey chanday epa" ("We do not want a General Election in 1977") but Sirima Bandaranaike did not bother to make a retraction.

On September 2nd the SLFP celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary on an island-wide basis. The celebrations, spread over a week, included giant rallies in Kandy, Kurunegala, Ratnapura, Badulla, and Anuradhapura, each attended by over 50,000 people of whom a large percentage was transported in chartered CTB buses and Corporation vehicles and whose attendance was induced with political patronage in one form or another. The SLFP had indeed a most impressive list of achievements in the past 25 years and in the preceding two weeks had every reason to be buoyant having inflicted a crushing defeat on the UNP at Mulkirigala by 4001 votes, and Sirima Bandaranaike had enhanced her reputation both at home and abroad with the marvellous arrangements for the Non-Aligned Summit. However the cry of the thousands of SLFP supporters who paraded through the streets of Kandy, Kurunegala, Ratnapura, Badulla and Anuradhapura was

**"HATHTHA HATHAY CHANDAY EPA!"**

**(WE DO NOT WANT A GENERAL ELECTION IN 1977!)**

The claim that Sirima Bandaranaike was leader of two-thirds of the World was mouthed in many quarters ranging from the ludicrous to the sublime and included T. B.



Ilangaratne, Hector Kobbekaduwa and Felix Dias Bandaranaike who in one way or another claimed that as she was head of the Non-Aligned movement till 1979 she should continue as Prime Minister uninterrupted till then. In the recent history of Sri Lanka never have so few, fooled so many, so well, as when Sirima Bandaranaike toured the length and breadth of the island in 1970 promising to bring the second measure of rice even from the moon. J. R. Jayewardene suspected that another hoax was about to be perpetrated on the people and his conclusions were confirmed when Felix Dias Bandaranaike said on September 7th at Dompe, at a meeting to celebrate the silver jubilee of the SLFP, "that the present mood of the nation is dissatisfaction with the slow rate of economic development and as periodic changes of Government have retarded rather than accelerated such progress a proposal placed before Parliament to postpone the General Election may well result in a vote against a General Election in 1977." The clear indication was that the Government was looking for support in the ranks of the Opposition to increase its voting strength from 102 to the requisite 105 to amend the Constitution. While rumours abounded and many a UNP supporter was either panic-stricken or dejected the Government reportedly made overtures and tempting offers to W. Dahanayake (Independent-Galle), C. X. Martyn (Independent-Jaffna), Rukman Senanayake (Dudley Peramuna—Dedigama) and General Richard Udugama (SLVB-Matale). To their eternal credit they all publicly opposed such an unprincipled move. In the meantime Anura Bandaranaike who had hitherto associated himself strictly with the Parliamentary process surprisingly presided over a session of the SLFP Youth League at their headquarters in Darley Road which unanimously passed the resolution that, "If the Government bows to public opinion and decides not to have a General Election in 1977, then the SLFP Youth League urges the Government to take every precautionary measure to safeguard democracy from any conspiracy launched by the reactionary forces." A few days later T. B. Ilangaratne



who was facing certain defeat in Kolonnawa claimed in Ratnapura that the real danger to Parliamentary democracy was the UNP and that if J. R. Jayewardene became Prime Minister he would abolish elections altogether.

The crisis made J. R. Jayewardene more defiant than ever. In Kandy he said "if the Prime Minister postponed the dissolution of Parliament one day beyond May 22nd 1977 I will lead a movement to overthrow the Government and hoist the flag of revolution over Sri Lanka." Later in Gampola he emphatically said "I would even sacrifice my life to overthrow any illegally constituted Government." Gamini Dissanayake drummed the same message in Nuwara Eliya, Bandarawela and Ratnapura, Lalith Athulathmudali in Ratmalana and Tissamaharama, Nissanka Wijeyeratne in Dedigama, Rambukkana and Anuradhapura and A. C. S. Hameed read to his audiences in the Eastern Province extracts of the Hansard of June 12th 1971. He had raised the issue in Parliament during the debate on the new Constitution and Felix Dias Bandaranaike himself replied that "if we postpone the elections the people will shoot us." In the meantime, R. Premadasa who was on a visit to the United States voiced the sentiments of J. R. Jayewardene on the issue adding that he himself shared those views. The same battle cry, perhaps in a more belligerent manner, was made by the LSSP. N. M. Perera made a fiery speech in Kalutara saying "that woman can set up an illegal Government only over my dead body and those of my comrades." According to an Intelligence Services Division\* (ISD) report that statement "resulted in tumultuous applause for about 5 minutes accompanied by frenzied anti-Government slogans." Leslie Goonewardene and Colvin R. De Silva, the other two LSSP Cabinet Ministers during the 1970-75 era, made similar speeches in Panadura and Agalawatte and Vasudeva Nanayakkara (LSSP-Kiriella) made blood curdling threats in Colombo.

There was however a persistent rumour in the South that Sumanapala Dahanayake (LSSP-Deniyaya) would cross over. That turned out to be a fabrication but in direct

---

\* A new unit in the Police.



contrast at public meetings in Colombo, Sarath Muttetuwegama (CP-Kalawana) and T. B. Subasinghe (SLFP-Katugampola), the Minister for industries, expressed in no uncertain manner that they were personally opposed to the postponement of the General Election. The dissent shown by T. B. Subasinghe was a critical factor in that he was not only a Cabinet Minister but a much respected Parliamentarian held in high esteem in many quarters. Shortly afterwards R. S. Perera (SLFP-Kelaniya), Minister for Information & Broadcasting, also expressed his dissent. The following week Pieter Keuneman (CP-Colombo Central), Minister for Housing, returned from Moscow and indicated his opposition. It was widely interpreted as the dissent of the Communist Party (Moscow wing) which had 7 MPs of whom six were elected. Thereafter in rapid succession followed P. B. G. Kalugalle (SLFP-Kegalle), Minister for Tourism, Shipping and Aviation, Badi-ud-din Mahmud (SLFP-Appointed), Minister for Education, and Bonnie Jayasooriya (SLFP-Avissawella),

J. R. Jayewardene was relieved that the crisis was over and on September 20th left for Madrid, accompanied by Mrs. Jayewardene, to attend an Inter-Parliamentary Conference. The following week Sirima Bandaranaike left for New York to address the United Nations General Assembly and on a State visit to Norway. Upon her return she saw that under the prevailing circumstances the proposal of Felix Dias Bandaranaike to postpone the General Election was not realistic. Hence she made a virtue out of necessity and proclaimed that she had abiding faith in Parliamentary democracy.

By this time many thought that Indira Gandhi was going from strength to strength after postponing the General Election and soon the one whom she referred to as her sister Prime Minister began to flirt with the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). The TULF had 12 MPs and together with the 95 of the SLFP, at least mathematically, could have mustered 105 votes. The bait which Sirima Bandaranaike used was an offer to the TULF to accede to the



bulk of their demands through a series of amendments to the Constitution, one component of the package deal being the postponement of the General Election by 3 years. The proposal was not unattractive to the TULF but opinion was sharply divided within their ranks. One faction led by Joint Secretary A. Amirthalingam looked upon it as a Trojan horse; another led by V. Dharmalingam (FP-Uduvil) favoured it on the basis that the Tamil people wanted not a General Election but their rights, which had been denied to them for so long. However the consensus of opinion was that postponing the General Election under those circumstances would result in civil war and S. J. V. Chelvanayakam quickly silenced the dissenters. A formal TULF communique followed indicating that they would not be a party to a postponement of the General Election under any circumstances.

It thus became evident even to Felix Dias Bandaranaike that postponing the General Election through an amendment to the Constitution was not a feasible proposition. Sirima Bandaranaike was then preparing to gallivant in Asia, visiting Malaysia, the Philippines and Japan. She once again reaffirmed her faith in Parliamentary democracy and for good measure added that she always followed the policies of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike who had been wedded both to her and to Parliamentary democracy.

On November 14th 1976 J. R. Jayewardene informed the Working Committee that the dark cloud had at last rolled by. He added that the nett loss to the UNP was that he could not replace the superannuated candidates who refused to retire as he did not want to rock the boat during the storm. In making those observations he even looked straight in the face several former UNP Cabinet Ministers with well established reputations for reactionary views and whose inistence on contesting in 1977 was a huge liability to the new image of the Party. The problem of J. R. Jayewardene with superannuated candidates was indeed difficult from a humanitarian point of view especially as he is loyal to a friend to a fault. Such candidates stood



by the Party admirably in its darkest hours, namely after the debacles of 1956 and 1970; they had given generously of their time, money and energy and, to complicate matters further, they did not realise that their period of usefulness was over. For instance, one candidate who had contested in almost every General Election since Independence was asked to stand down in favour of his own son, yet he rejected the proposal outright resulting in the UNP losing an excellent young candidate and the new image suffering a setback.

The solitary but refreshing example of an aging candidate standing down was Noel Wimalasena (UNP-Senkadagala) who was a MP since March 1960 and was Deputy Minister for Finance in the last Dudley Senanayake Administration. Though certain of winning his seat in 1977 and reasonably assured of a Cabinet portfolio he stated that he preferred to retire and make way for a younger candidate. His admirable gesture was further accentuated by his offer to help whomever J. R. Jayewardene nominated for the Senkadagala seat.

Indeed there was much evidence that J. R. Jayewardene was having an uphill task with his reforms. His principal problem was the lack of talent in the UNP, a shortcoming so clearly reflected in the UNP newspapers. With Lake House and the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation reduced to ludicrous levels of sycophancy, the Times group controlled by Anura Bandaranaike and the Sun group muzzled under Emergency regulations, in theory UNP newspapers should have flourished. However in practice they were the most pathetic newspapers in the island reflecting very poorly on the ability of their journalists who according to Esmond Wickramasinghe represented the best available journalistic talent within the Party.

J. R. Jayewardene figured out that the new image of the UNP would be most effectively portrayed through the personality and thinking of the candidates, who in UNP jargon were referred to as electoral organisers till such time



as nomination was formally given. Yet at every turn he was hampered by the dearth of good candidates. For instance 36 applied for nomination to Polgahawela and all were sub-standard; 18 applied for the new seat of Tangalle\* and all were found to be unfit.

On the other hand J. R. Jayewardene did find many excellent candidates from different walks of life and different social strata who favoured a shift from capitalism to indigenous socialism through progressive legislation, who were capable of independent political thinking, an attribute rare in the UNP prior to 1973, and a sensitivity to the aspirations of the masses, which attribute was even rarer in the UNP before his enlightened leadership. Such excellent candidates picked by J. R. Jayewardene included Nissanka Wijeyeratne (Dedigama), Ronnie de Mel (Devinuwara), T. B. Werapitiya (Pata Dumbara), Lalith Athulathmudali (Ratmalana) all top professionals with elitist backgrounds, Keerthi Abeywickrema, (Deniyaya) a V. C. Chairman, Lionel Jayatilleke (Kuliyapitiya) a U. C. Chairman, Daya Walagambahu (Mihintale) a Trade Unionist, Wijeratne Banda (Laggala) and Sarathchandra Rajakaruna (Dompe) both of peasant stock. It was indeed a pleasure to observe their campaign. They were quick to realise the effectiveness of the strategy of J. R. Jayewardene to turn away from giant rallies as the principal mode of campaign and supplant them with intensive house-to-house canvassing followed by a series of pocket meetings culminating in a giant rally.

Another feature of the reforms introduced by J. R. Jayewardene was the appointment of youthful candidates. The party nominated 155 candidates of whom 62 were 40 years of age or younger with Anura Daniel (Hewaheta), the son of the late Daniel Appuhamy who defeated T. B. Illangaratne to win that seat in 1965, being only 23 years old. Of those candidates Ranil Wickremasinghe (Biyagama), Premaratne Gunasekera (Maharagama), Gamini Atukorale (Nivitigala) Samaraweera Weerawanni (Wiyaluwa), Dayananda Wickremasinghe (Akuressa), Anura Daniel (Hewaheta), G. M. Premachandra (Mawatagama) and A. K. D. Wanigaratne (Deraniyagala) came through the Youth League.

---

\* The Delimitation Commission created 15 new seats returning 17 MPs.



Another facet in the role of the youth was in the higher echelons of the UNP. Nobody in the entire history of the Party had had such a meteoric rise as Gamini Dissanayake who rose from complete political obscurity in 1970 to become by 1977, when he was only 35 years old, the third most influential member next to J. R. Jayewardene and R. Premadasa. Daham Wimalasena was 38 when he was appointed General Secretary of the UNP, one of the most influential posts in the Party.

Traditionally the UNP was devoid of brain power, talented youth and new ideas. With the emergence of young people of the calibre of Gamini Dissanayake, Daham Wimalasena and Lalith Athulathmudali amongst others and the ascendancy of R. Premadasa, Ronnie de Mel and Nissanka Wijeyeratne the word got around that J. R. Jayewardene in a very real sense was effectively reforming the Party.

Having made all these laudable changes J. R. Jayewardene made a major error of judgement in the composition of of the Working Committee, the highest organ of the UNP which consists of 50 influential members hand-picked by him. The reforms were restricted to appointing to the Working Committee three Youth Leaguers, Ranil Wickramasinghe, Premaratne Goonasekera and Samaraweera Weerawanni and a Trade Unionist, S. A. G. Yapa. Regrettably not a single peasant was appointed to the Working Committee nor was there even one representative of the income group of less than Rs. 250/- per month which accounts for a segment of a third of the population. In direct contrast there was a preponderance of lawyers, enough to form a Bar Council. There was also a surfeit of old Royalists but not one product of the Maha Vidyalayas.

J. R. Jayewardene is a staunch old Royalist and lustily sings "The School of our Fathers," the Royal College anthem, whenever he has an occasion to do so. Like thousands who have had the good fortune of being educated at Royal, he refers to it as the best school of them all



but his fondness for old Royalists in UNP circles went to the extent of being politically unwise. For instance of the younger generation of members of the UNP, Gamini Dissanayake, Daham Wimalasena, Lalith Athulathmudali, Wickrama Weerasuriya, Ranil Wickramasinghe, Tyronne Fernando, Navin Gooneratne, and I had the ear of J. R. Jayewardene. Except for Gamini Dissanayake who was educated at Trinity College and Law College all the others were educated at Royal and later at the University of Ceylon (English medium) and/or at the prestigious universities of London, Oxford and Harvard. Though J. R. Jayewardene insists that the rapport with these old Royalists was purely coincidental it was a pity that not one product of the Maha Vidyalayas, Vidyodaya or Vidyalankara had any comparable dialogue with him. These considerations and more so those pertaining to the Working Committee resulted in a huge credibility gap in the new image of the UNP which was exploited in full by the SLFP in general and Felix Dias Bandaranaike and Anura Bandaranaike in particular.

Another radical change introduced by J. R. Jayewardene was in the financing of the UNP. Till he took over the leadership, the UNP was financed exclusively by the rich. Thereafter the principal financing of the Party was through the Rs. 1/- membership fund which averaged about Rs. 22,000/- per month as against the costs of running "Sri Kotha" which was around Rs. 20,000/-. In 1970 Sirima Bandaranaike craftily used the One Rupee Fund not to finance her election campaign but to test the strength of her support. For instance in Polgahawela 15,000 people contributed to the Fund and with the electoral strength at 35,000 she was certain that M. D. Banda (UNP-Polgahawela), Minister of Agriculture and Lands, would be convincingly beaten. On the other hand J. R. Jayewardene made use of the Re. 1/- membership fund for a dual purpose of broad-basing the Party and financing it because the traditional sources of financing had dwindled. The Re. 1/- membership fund was open to abuse and initially J. R. Jayewardene often reprimanded lazy electoral leaders who sold tickets by the hundreds to rich mudalalis without the UNP gaining one bona fide



member, but it was an unqualified success in creating an impression with the poor that they had easy access to the UNP and a stake in the Party. Reports from all parts of the island showed that the poor were enthusiastic about the Re. 1/- membership fund and were convinced that the new UNP was different from what it was prior to 1973. In 1976 according to Navin Gooneratne, Secretary of the Membership Drive, over 500,000 were enrolled. It was no accident that at the May Day rally of 1977 the UNP had over 300,000 processionists, the largest crowd any single Party had mustered in the entire history of May Day celebrations in Sri Lanka. The crowd was so large that it could not be accommodated in the Sugathadasa Stadium where the procession started on its 6 mile march.

With the Re. 1/- membership fund, it was also possible to give new meaning to UNP Branch, Youth and Women's Organisations which accounted for a network of over 18,000 on an island-wide basis. Often the strength or weakness of the electoral leader was reflected in the level of activity of these organisations. The weak electoral leaders had only mushroom organisations which sent in bogus reports and far-fetched claims, the good electoral organisers made them into hives of activity and campaigned effectively on a house-to-house basis through them.

Yet another dimension of the reforms introduced by J. R. Jayewardene was in the Trade Union Movement. During the period 1948-56 successive UNP Administrations looked upon Trade Unionism as a Marxist-inspired menace as did the British rulers prior to Independence. Hence it was next to impossible for the UNP to establish its own Unions in the aftermath of 1956 and J. R. Jayewardene after strenuous efforts managed to establish the first Jatika Sevaka Sangamaya, as UNP Trade Unions are known, at Heath & Co. in 1959. He nurtured the Trade Union movement while the UNP was in the Opposition from 1960-64 and managed to establish Jatika Sevaka Sangamayas as splinter groups in the Port, CTB, Railways and amongst school teachers. Above all he was able to create the overall impression that the UNP was no longer hostile to the Trade Union Movement.



Notwithstanding the political patronage given to the Trade Union Movement by the last Dudley Senanayake Administration, the Jatika Sevaka Sangamayas all but collapsed after the drubbing in 1970. In 1973 J. R. Jayewardene not only re-activated them but also amended the Constitution of the UNP elevating the Trade Unions from being mere appendages to an integral part of the Party with mandatory representation in the Working Committee, the Executive Committee and at the Annual Sessions. Thereafter Cyril Mathew and UNP Trade Union leaders Douglas Abeydeera and S. A. G. Yapa functioning directly under J. R. Jayewardene built up the Jatika Sevaka Sangamayas and by 1976 had a membership of over 20,000 in the CTB, 6,000 in Railways, 4,000 in the Port, 4,000 amongst school teachers and 3,000 in the Local Government Service. Though these figures were records by UNP standards the Jatika Sevaka Sangamayas were they small compared to the rival LSSP and SLFP Unions. Nevertheless J. R. Jayewardene used them as a medium of effectively propagating the new socialist image of the UNP amongst workers.

As 1976 drew to a close it was evident that the UNP and SLFP had interchanged their traditional roles. The SLFP was intoxicated with power the UNP was trying hard to be humble; the SLFP was ridden with nepotism, the UNP had taken steps to eradicate it; the SLFP had the support of the rich, the UNP had the support of the poor; the SLFP transported supporters to meetings in chartered CTB buses and Corporation vehicles, the UNP supporters denied even public transport trudged defiantly; the SLFP campaigned through giant rallies, the UNP at the grass roots level. J. R. Jayewardene was personally responsible for all these reforms in the UNP. The monumental patience he showed while the reforms took root in the UNP, his sagacity and skill in handling the lethargic, the naive and the recalcitrant bore eloquent testimony to his unquestioned skill in the art of politics.

However J. R. Jayewardene did injustice to himself on one issue. Those who have the privilege of knowing him well would gladly testify that though he is an introvert he



is very warm hearted and that the qualities of his heart of which so little is known match the qualities of his head of which so much is known. For instance J. R. Jayewardene is a model employer. William has been his domestic servant for 50 years, Dharmasiri Edirisinghe his Private Secretary for 30 years, J. A. Paulusz his stenographer for 17 years, Herat his overseer at his estate in Kumbaloluwa was his employee for 50 years and upon his death the widow was paid a pension. Not one of his employees or former employees ever speak ill of him and many were moved to tears, when interviewed by me, in narrating the kindness J. R. Jayewardene showed them when they were in sorrow, in adversity or during illness. Nearly all of his younger brothers and sisters look upon him as a paragon of virtue. His in-laws share that opinion. According to his friend Justice V. Manikavasagar, his classmate at Royal, J. R. Jayewardene has not lost the friendship of one of his colleagues at school or at the Bar. According to Dr. M. C. M. Kaleel, veteran UNP politician, none of his Cabinet colleagues, which included amongst others D. S. Senanayake, Dudley Senanayake and Sir John Kotelawala, had a heart so warm as J. R. Jayewardene. The only occasion, in my knowledge, when J. R. Jayewardene deliberately forsook the new image of the UNP was when in 1976 he brushed aside all opposition and appointed Edmund Samarawickreme as the candidate for Colombo East to repay a debt of gratitude which he owed him. In July 1960, Samarawickreme had allowed J. R. Jayewardene to shift from Kelaniya to Colombo South thereby sacrificing the seat he had won at the General Election three months earlier. Any visitor to the country residences of J. R. Jayewardene at Kumbaloluwa, Mirissa or Madampe be it a villager, a minor official or otherwise, is offered food and drink often served personally by him. Any mortal to whom a fraction of these attributes apply must surely be looked upon as one with a kind heart, but regrettably not J. R. Jayewardene. He has been misunderstood by so many for so long because he is basically an introvert, is unfathomable, shows neither emotion nor sentiment and cannot suffer fools gladly.



After the humiliating defeat of 1956, J.R. Jayawardene made a deep introspective search and attributed his personal unpopularity at that stage to his inborn aloofness. With painstaking effort over a period of time he developed a more pleasing personality. The pleasant smile he now has was totally missing prior to 1956. Another such attribute is his reputation for being easily accessible, which in most recent years regrettably has been abused by the pathetic elements of the UNP who intrude into his privacy, waste his time and whisper arrant nonsense in his ears.

In the democratic system a good image is a prerequisite of a successful politician. For instance in 1957 when John F. Kennedy, then 39, first began to campaign for the Presidency of the United States his father paid a fee of \$1 million to J. Walter Thompson Inc. of New York, one of the best known advertising agents in the world, to publicise his son as a fine, handsome, clean-cut young man with appeal to the men as a Harvard-educated intellectual, with even greater appeal to women as one who could effortlessly stir emotion in their hearts, and was complete with a family unit of a lovely wife and a beautiful baby. It is no accident that as the years rolled by President Kennedy, both in life and death, was remembered by millions for those attributes above anything else.

J. R. Jayewardene is more than aware of that example and countless others in contemporary times. Unfortunately he made a major error of judgement in 1973 and thereafter, of projecting an image of himself merely as an exceptionally able leader with an unimpeachable reputation for integrity, but sorely neglecting the human aspects of his being a warm hearted person, loyal to his friends and generous to his subordinates.

For reasons adduced in Chapter III the J. R. Jayewardene-Dudley Senanayake feud continued beyond the grave to the considerable detriment of the UNP. The simmering crisis was finally precipitated at the bye-election in Colombo South when Rukman Senanayake refrained from campaigning



for J. R. Jayewardene while a few misguided members of the Party supported the rival candidate J. R. P. Suriyapperuma who had recently been expelled from the UNP for breach of discipline. Following the sweeping victory of J. R. Jayewardene the Working Committee expelled 23 members including P. A. J. Niyathapala the Joint Secretary of the UNP, for having supported Suriyapperuma and appointed a Disciplinary Committee to inquire into the conduct of Rukman Senanayake. On the findings of that Committee J. R. Jayewardene could well have expelled Rukman Senanayake and thereby escalated the J. R. Jayewardene-Dudley Senanayake feud to dangerous levels. On the contrary he showed great restraint and gave Rukman Senanayake an opportunity to rehabilitate himself within the UNP. The latter however used the opportunity to embarrass J. R. Jayewardene and committed a totally unnecessary provocation strategically timed for the bye-election in Ja-Ela in April 1976. Following that incident Rukman Senanayake was expelled from the UNP on a unanimous decision of the Executive Committee.

After his expulsion Rukman Senanayake quickly shook off the lethargy which hitherto had been a characteristic feature of his performance as an M. P. With the assistance of J. R. P. Suriyapperuma and Jinadasa Niyathapala, both experienced politicians, Dr. C. D. L. Fernando, a respected UNP worker in Kandy who resigned from the Working Committee on the expulsion of Rukman Senanayake, and backed by the financial empire of Robert Senanayake, Rukman Senanayake launched the Dudley Peramuna in May 1976 at Ambepussa in the Dedigama electorate. In the eyes of general public the Dudley Peramuna functioned as a break-away part of the UNP, used the green colour and the symbol of the elephant, and had the benediction of the Lake House newspapers and the tacit support of the Government in general and Felix Dias Bandaranaike in particular.

Though initially the strategy of the Dudley Peramuna was to create the impression that the UNP had split into two, their real objective became apparent only after the demoralising defeat of the UNP at MulKirigala.



Suriyapperuma, the political brain behind the Dudley Peramuna, estimated that the General Election of 1977 would result in a stalemate with the UNP winning about 75 seats and the SLFP about 65. He argued that the General Election would be even more closely contested than the one in 1965, when the UNP/SLFSP won 71 seats and the SLFP/LSSP/CP 55, with 25 seats being won with majorities of less than 1000 of which the UNP won 14. Thus Suriyapperuma figured that if the Dudley Peramuna contested all the marginal seats and polled a mere 1000 votes per seat the UNP would lose the General Election and Sirima Bandaranaike would form a minority Government. She would then continue as Prime Minister, but without being a threat to Parliamentary democracy. J. R. Jayewardene would be Leader of the Opposition but would soon retire from politics or would die whereupon Rukman Senanayake would re-join the UNP and lead the Party to victory at the subsequent General Election just as other Senanayakes had done in 1947, 1952, March 1960 and 1965. This proposition was particularly attractive to several members of the Senanayake family who since 1973 firmly believed in the horoscope of Rukman Senanayake which claims that he will be Prime Minister by 35, that is by 1983. The technique of winning 1,000 votes per marginal electorate was a realistic proposition as the Dudley Peramuna mounted a two pronged attack. Firstly they nominating those who had sought UNP nomination unsuccessfully and were embittered. Accordingly such candidates were appointed in Habaraduwa, Maharagama, Kotmale and Medirigiriya and negotiations were on in Nattandiya, Kamburupitiya and Teldeniya. Secondly they extolled the virtues of Dudley Senanayake and appealed to his diehard supporters.

On public platforms the Dudley Peramuna vilified J. R. Jayewardene at a personal level, equating him to Hitler. Mussolini and Idi Amin, cursed the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration at an impersonal level, deified Dudley Senanayake to the same extent that the SLFP does to S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and claimed that only the Dudley Peramuna could give Sri Lanka a good Government. However



the leadership of the Dudley Peramuna never lost track of their strategic objective and if the well attended meetings in Maharagama, Beruwala, Dedigama, Minneriya, Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama were an indication of their strength they had every reason to believe that they would achieve their objective of 1,000 votes per seat. In fact they originally intended to contest only 46 marginal seats but as their confidence increased the number progressively increased to 78, 102, 120 and finally to all the seats in the Sinhala speaking areas.

The Dudley Peramuna effectively confused the floating vote and Suriyapperuma cleverly indulged in psychological warfare when he claimed that he would deprive the UNP of its symbol of the elephant at the General Election of 1977. He referred to the crisis in the Congress Party in India when the breakaway group, supported amongst others by Morarji Desai, petitioned the Supreme Court after the dissolution of Parliament in 1971 and on a Court order prevented the parent Congress from using the traditional symbol of the bullocks. Suriyapperuma claimed from public platforms that he would repeat the performance after the dissolution of Parliament. An unperturbed J. R. Jayewardene looked upon that claim as being far-fetched because in India the judgement was given on the premise that the breakaway Congress was an integral part of the parent Congress till the rupture took place. In direct contrast the Dudley Peramuna was not a breakaway unit but a conglomeration of those expelled from the UNP for different reasons and at different times and some as far back as one year earlier. Nevertheless the war of nerves continued especially in the eyes of those who tended to over-react to the disproportionate publicity in the Lake House gutter press.

On his part J. R. Jayewardene virtually ignored the growth of the Dudley Peramuna and many UNP workers including myself looked upon his nonchalance with misgivings. He hardly bothered to rebut even the vicious allegations made by the Dudley Peramuna and instead



preferred to ignore them with silent contempt. However when peace moves were made he emphatically reiterated that those expelled by the UNP would never be re-admitted to the Party. His contention was that Rukman Senanayake being a callow youth could never lead a political party at the national level and that assessment proved to be amazingly accurate when towards the end of 1976 when Rukman Senanayake beset by personal problems lost interest in politics and his Dudley Peramuna suddenly folded up.

Apparently the complex intelligence network of J. R. Jayewardene had given him advance information of the problems that Rukman Senanayake had created for himself. Likewise information through the grapevine from the venerated shrines in Bellanwila, Mahiyangana, Kataragama, Munneswaram, Seruwila and Temple of the Tooth indicated that Sirima Bandaranaike was strenuously attempting to appease the Gods whose wrath she had incurred over and above the wrath of many mortals. Inquiries into the field of the occult science revealed that Saturn was entering into a destructive phase in the planetary movements pertaining to Sirima Bandaranaike and that she would be having the most disastrous phase of her political career between mid-November 1976 and mid-July 1977. She was accordingly advised by her astrologers to cross water over and over again to ward off evil and not to hold the General Election till after mid-July 1977.

Intelligence reports from "Temple Trees" confirmed that besides her journey to Malaysia, the Philippines and Japan in November, Sirima Bandaranaike would be visiting Italy in December, the United Arab Emirates in February 1977, India in April and Britain in June. The Budget of Felix Dias Bandaranaike presented on November 9th was anything but one geared to an early dissolution and J. R. Jayewardene correctly anticipated a General Election in July/August 1977 on the basis of political science. Others predicted it around July 20th or around August 8th on the basis of the occult science.



It is a matter for conjecture which of these sciences prevailed when the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration was unexpectedly confronted with unprecedented disturbances in mid-November 1976.

The Campus at Peradeniya was seething with discontent over the handling of affairs by its President, Professor P. W. Vithanage.\* An excellent field geologist he had limited experience in academic life and strong views on maintaining discipline. His approach resulted in his systematically alienating himself from the students and the non-academic staff who repeatedly pressed for his dismissal. Moreover dialogue between him and the students and his non-academic staff broke down completely resulting in chaos and the Campus being closed more often than not after September 1st 1976. The situation deteriorated still further when the Government refused to relieve Professor Vithanage of his duties despite a recommendation to that effect by a special committee appointed by the Minister of Education, to inquire into the unsatisfactory state of affairs on the Campus. This resulted in the non-academic staff striking for the fourth time in three months on November 11th and the students coming out in sympathy. Anticipating a breach of the peace Professor Vithanage requested Police protection. After clearing the request with Police Headquarters the acting Superintendent of Police, D. B. Von Hagt, despatched a riot squad to the Campus which was closed down as of that afternoon.

A crisis was precipitated when hungry students deprived of their breakfast and lunch because of the strike of the cooks in the Hall of Residence, gathered around the Administration Block firstly to collect their travel allowance to return home and secondly to prevent Professor Vithanage and his staff from leaving the premises. By nightfall Police reinforcements were brought in from Kurunegala and Kegalle and the students also augmented their numbers to over 1,000, greeting the new convoys of Policemen with jeers, hoots, catcalls and ribaldry. By dawn the situation worse-

---

\* Vide Chapter IX of the report by Justice D. Wimalaratne.



ned with students armed with stones and sticks joining and another Police riot squad being brought in from Matale. By 7 a.m. the Police used tear gas to disperse the crowd and when that failed Von Hagt ordered a baton charge. The students withdrew but retaliated with stones, sticks and other projectiles accompanied with a stream of obscenities. The missiles alighted on the Policemen causing injury to ten of them whereupon Inspector D. C. N. Gunasinghe waived the formal warning which precedes the use of musketry and ordered his riot squad to open fire, on the basis of self-defence. As a result W. M. Weerasooriaya (21) an undergraduate from the Polgahawela electorate fell dead.

In the history of University education in Sri Lanka this was the first occasion that a student was killed by Police fire. The shooting outraged University students in all Campuses and according to the Intelligence Services Division reports, "over the week-end of 13-14th November the undergraduates mapped out their strategy and on Monday left for the schools from where they had sat for the G. C. E. (Advanced Level). On Tuesday they persuaded their former schoolmates to support their plan. On Wednesday all Campuses and 861 schools came out in a sudden wave of anti-Government strikes. Neither the UNP nor the LSSP nor even the outlawed JVP had any hand in organising this upheaval."

It was indeed an extraordinary event with students ranging from Royal College to Madyama Maha Vidyalayas in the interior taking to the streets, chanting anti-Government slogans, carrying placards, tarring buses and defacing walls. The knowledge of obscene words of the school children was shocking but what shocked J. R. Jayewardene even more was the extent to which politics had seeped into the younger generation. He could not help but recall that unemployed school leavers had campaigned on a house-to-house basis in 1970 and had inflicted a crushing defeat on the UNP. In 1971 the same youth provoked by broken promises of the Government took up arms against the very rulers whom



they had helped to install in office, and shook the nation to its foundations. Now even school children had become a political force. Though J. R. Jayewardene was convinced that the present crisis was a massive blow to the Government he could not help but look upon the future of Sri Lanka with grave concern.

The Government had barely recovered from the shock of student unrest when the Government Medical Officers Association (GMOA) began operating on a work-to-rule while workers at the Railway Workshop at Ratmalana having unsuccessfully negotiated their demands with the Minister of Transport, K. B. Ratnayake, went on strike on December 7th. Their principal demand was an interest free loan of Rs. 500/- necessitated by the spiralling cost of living which left them with no money to buy school books for their children for the next academic year commencing in January 1977. Despite the well-earned reputation of the SLFP for championing the cause of the common man the Government bluntly told the strikers that there would be no negotiations while they were on strike. That caused the engine drivers and the locomotive assistants to join the strike. J. R. Jayewardene then issued a statement indicating that whereas this Government refused to negotiate with the strikers, as acting Prime Minister in October 1968 he had negotiated with striking Government servants at his residence and thereby obviated a General Strike. Under mounting pressure the Government recanted and offered an interest free loan of Rs. 200/- and later supplemented it with a bank loan of Rs. 300/- with the standard interest. The strikers still smarting under the refusal to negotiate, turned down the offer and all Railway Unions except those affiliated to the SLFP, joined the strike. It mushroomed quickly with the non-SLFP Unions in the Port Commission, Electricity Board, Water Works Department and Department of Food joining in. However the SLFP Union also joined in when the Government Press came out on strike. Among other Unions which came out were the Public Service Workers Trade Union Federation (PSWTUF) and the Government Servants Clerical Union (GCSU). When the Military was called out



to maintain essential services J. R. Jayewardene became apprehensive that the strike may be used to postpone the General Election. Already the strike had clearly shown that the workers were sullen and defiant and that they detested the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. The UNP therefore had no strategic advantage to gain from the escalation of the strike and much to lose from a postponement of the General Election. Hence at a close-door session at "Sri Kotha" J. R. Jayewardene explained his thinking to office bearers of the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya (UNP Trade Unions) but it became evident that neither they nor he himself could control the workers whose hatred for the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration oozed out at every turn. J. R. Jayewardene was then in constant touch with the leadership of the LSSP and was reliably informed that they too had the identical problem. To J. R. Jayewardene two issues became obvious. Firstly the workers, like the students, hated the Government. Secondly the Trade Union movement had matured to a point where the workers no longer accepted direction from their political leaders. Thus J. R. Jayewardene had no alternative but to reluctantly give his blessing to the escalation of the strike.

The last week of 1976 also revealed two major developments in the political scene, one overt the other covert. The Communist Party (Moscow wing) observing that the Government had alienated itself from diverse sections of the population and now had incurred the wrath of the students and the workers, two sectors whom they have always wooed assiduously, began to wonder whether it was wisdom or folly to remain in the Sirima Bandaranayike Administration. As a preliminary measure the Communist Unions came out on strike in all the Government institutions mentioned in the previous paragraph. Besides Pieter Keuneman carried out his own strike by boycotting Cabinet meetings. An even more startling development was in the Armed Forces. According to reports from the Intelligence Services Division "In the



following regiments\* .....

.....  
.....  
the other ranks have bitterly complained to their Commissioned Officers that they would not be a party to depriving the workers of their rights. Our investigations reveal that many of the soldiers who raised these objections have either no political affiliations or alternatively have been hitherto loyal to the Prime Minister. As such the present situation .....” J. R. Jayewardene had similar reports pertaining to the Navy and he even had an unconfirmed report of Sirima Bandaranaike telling the Service Commanders “I am fed up. You may rest assured that I will not go on for one day beyond May 21st 1977 but I now need your help to restore normalcy.”

Scrutinising all incoming intelligence reports, J. R. Jayewardene was indeed relieved that it would be impossible for Sirima Bandaranaike to postpone the General Election by misusing the Armed Forces.

As the strike continued to mushroom in the New Year the Government issued an edict invoking the Essential Services Order in respect of the Railways, CTB, Port, Electricity Board, Waterworks Department and the Department of Food. The edict was greeted at the Railway Yard at Dematagoda with strikers raising their sarongs. The Port Workers at the Chalmers Granaries reacted likewise, the only difference being that the stevedores had no underwear.\*\*

The strike entered a critical phase on January 10th when the CTB Unions including the SLFP Unions loyal to Nanda Ellawela (SLFP-Ratnapura) joined the strike defying an Essential Services Order. The Government retaliated by arresting 240 strikers predominantly from the UNP Unions. Amongst others G. V. Punchi Nilame, the UNP electoral leader for Ratnapura, was incarcerated at Welikada

\* Names deleted for security reasons

\*\* Note for foreign readers — The sarong is a loosely draped garment covering the lower half of the body.



for inciting strikers. However the Government conveniently turned a deaf ear to similar speeches made by Nanda Ellawela (SLFP-Ratnapura) and Sarath Muttetuwegama (CP-Kalawana) at the same meeting in Ratnapura.

Whereas a lesser mortal would have caved in under a crisis of this magnitude, Sirima Bandaranaike, assailed on all sides, displayed the guts and tenacity which have distinguished her career in politics. The SLFP Unions in the CTB not on strike amounted to 30% of the work force. She supplemented it with retired bus crews and those under interdiction, Army personnel and drivers provided by Dasa Mudalali and thereby bolstered the work force to half the normal turn out. Then by diverting buses from the outstation routes to Colombo and its suburbs gave a service which from the view point of the commuters in and around Colombo was near-normal. In fact the Meetotamulla Depot which normally operated a fleet of 176 buses had 181 on the road and the Mahragama Depot with a usual complement of 186 had an augmented fleet of 203. Thus the word got round quickly that Sirima Bandaranaike had broken the CTB strike; that certainly was so in and around Colombo. By January 15th many workers had been on strike for three weeks and the Railway employees for over five weeks. With finances severely strained and both the Government and the strikers desperately searching for a face-saving solution a compromise formula was reached over the week-end. The strike would be suspended effective Monday January 17th, all strikers who were remanded would be released and those served with dismissal orders under the Essential Services Order would be re-instated.

The strike petered out but one striker who did not report to work was Pieter Keuneman. He continued to boycott Cabinet meetings and thus revealed the displeasure of the Communist Party (CP). The woes of the CP were many after the expulsion of the LSSP from the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. The Government made a noticeable shift to the Right as reflected in the Budget



presented by Felix Dias Bandaranaike in 1975 and later in the White Paper to attract foreign investments in selected fields subject to guarantees of repatriation of profits and indemnity against nationalisation. The CP was thus in a dilemma on the issue of whether or not to continue its association with the remnants of the United Front. On the one hand the Marxist philosophy strongly favours infiltration from within. On the other hand, the SLFP was quite clearly moving away from Marxism and following the policies of S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike who in the same breath rejected both capitalism and Marxism, eschewed revolution and in general searched for an empirical philosophy. Following the adoption of the Delimitation Report in April 1976 the CP which fielded 9 candidates in 1970 asked for 17 seats in 1977. The request was turned down by Sirima Bandaranaike on the premise that the representation in Parliament had increased only from 151 to 168 and hence the request was disproportionate. That exacerbated tensions. The CP was also opposed to Sri Lanka hosting the Non-Aligned Summit on the basis that it was a scandalous waste of good money (the LSSP took an identical view) and that in turn annoyed Sirima Bandaranaike. Finally the handling of the strike on the Campus at Peradeniya embarrassed the CP which got tarred with the same brush as the SLFP. When the workers came out on strike the following month the CP had hardly an alternative but to join them whereupon the Government retaliated by censoring their daily newspaper "Aththa" to an even greater extent than the UNP "Dinapatha" and the LSSP "Janadina". The CP had to suffer all these indignities merely to subscribe to the Marxist philosophy of infiltrating from within.

When their Politbureau met on January 29th 1977 to discuss whether or not to remain in the Government the weightage was in favour of defecting. However the pressure from Moscow was to the contrary. In India Indira Gandhi had humiliated the Communist Party and another setback in neighbouring Sri Lanka would result in acute embarrassment to the Soviet Union. Sergei Litovski, a KGB agent who



had once served in Sri Lanka, was then in Moscow on home leave. He rushed back with the plea that for the sake of international Communism the CP continue its alliance with the SLFP,

In the meantime J. R. Jayewardene had several intelligence reports that the SLFP was in a state of disarray. Following the departure of the LSSP, the disenchantment of the Communists and the unmistakable swing to the Right in the SLFP, the militant elements in the SLFP became restive. Cabinet Ministers Hector Kobbekaduwa and T. B. Subasinghe belonged to that group and so did Nanda Ellawela (SLFP-Ratnapura), Tennyson Edirisooriya (SLFP-Tissamaharāma), Monty Goppalawa (SLFP-Laggala), Gamini Ariyatileke (SLFP-Maskeliya), A. D. J. L. Leo (SLFP-Wattala) and A. M. Jinadasa (SLFP-Kekirawa) amongst others. When the pressures increased and tensions mounted Hector Kobbekaduwa and his son-in-law Monty Gopallawa threw in their lot with Sirima Bandaranaike. The others reacted differently with Nanda Ellawela precipitating a crisis in the SLFP Unions and thereby defying the authority of Sirima Bandaranaike. The radical element was vexed not only because the SLFP was moving towards the Right but also because Sirima Bandaranaike was governing neither through the Cabinet nor through Parliament but through an invisible Government consisting of her next-of-kin. The issue came to a head on February 8th when Nanda Ellawela, Tennyson Edirisooriya, Gamini Ariyatileke and A. M. Jinadasa resigned from the SLFP and crossed over to the Opposition. It was also rumoured that T. B. Subasinghe and A. D. J. L. Leo would follow suit and Bonnie Jayasuriya (SLFP-Avissawella) would do likewise for a different set of reasons.

In the meantime J. R. Jayewardene was planning to rub salt into the wounds of Sirima Bandaranaike with his no confidence motion on her Government, due to be taken up on February 17th. Even had the Communists crossed over the vote would have been of the order of 65 - 90. However Sirima Bandaranaike had a traumatic fear of what happened in December 1964 when C. P. de Silva



crossed over suddenly with 13 others and defeated her Government by a vote 74 - 73. She had already threatened to deny nomination to over 20 of her MPs on grounds of bribery and if more than a dozen of them suddenly crossed over she could lose the vote of no confidence. To avoid such a hypothetical possibility, without consulting the Cabinet or even the Speaker she advised the President to prorogue Parliament till May 19th. The prorogation outraged the Communists who first heard of it over the radio. They soon defected to the Opposition. T. B. Subasinghe and Bonnie Jayasuriya followed in rapid succession.

J. R. Jayewardene looked upon the recent developments as certain evidence of the downfall of Sirima Bandaranaike. He doubted whether the present Parliament would meet again and was relieved when the Emergency lapsed at midnight on February 16th after a spell of almost six years. The Emergency Regulations, if enforced in their fullest measure, would have transformed Sri Lanka into a police state. However even within the limits within which they were applied, they restricted political activity in every conceivable sense. For instance wall posters of an advertisement of this book (picture facing this page) had to be personally approved by Stanley Senanayake, Inspector General of Police, because they were used on an island-wide basis.

As the dark cloud of the authoritarian rule of Sirima Bandaranaike under the guise of Parliamentary democracy began to roll by J. R. Jayewardene could not help but note the heavy toll it took of the civil liberties of UNP workers. To cite a few of the worst examples, during the recent strike there was a vague report that a bomb was thrown from a vehicle which resembled the only one owned by the UNP. The Kollupitiya Police made a routine inquiry and drew a blank. The following day shortly after dawn a CID raiding party of 26 officers and men under Superintendent of Police H. G. Gunawardene, accompanied by armed escorts and Police dogs swooped on "Sri Kotha."



After an over-zealous inquiry the CID found little evidence but for reasons know only to them and to God detained under Emergency regulations UNP Trade Union leader S. A. G. Yapa who at the time of the incident had been away in Dickwella, some one hundred miles away. In 1976 Lalith Athulathmudali was arrested like a common criminal and thrown into the Remand Jail for allegedly throwing acid and disfiguring a man 15 months earlier. Those who persecuted Athulathmudali were too embarrassed to appear in Court when he was prosecuted because the Attorney General informed the Magistrate that there was no evidence against him to warrant even an indictment. Athulathmudali, a close friend of mine since our days at Royal, was remanded the day I left Honolulu, Hawaii, for Colombo to work on a 12 month assignment under J. R. Jayewardene. It caused my mother to panic and run to J. R. Jayewardene wailing "his father ended up in the Magazine Jail, his friend is now in the Remand Jail and he will himself end up in some Jail." The Police had me under constant surveillance as a suspected CIA agent, a figment of their own imagination, but otherwise I was left alone. However two of my schoolmates had very different experiences. Wickrema Weerasooriya, who is married to the elder sister of Gamini Dissanayake, was suspected of having produced a book of provocative cartoons and poems about Sirima Bandaranaike which sold at the astonishing rate of 1,000 copies per day. Within a week the CID raided the press and hauled Wickrema Weerasooriya to the fourth floor \* for questioning and later arrested him. He was released on bail but was never formally indicted. However his passport was impounded thereby precluding his leaving the island at the end of his sabbatical leave from Monash University in Melbourne, Australia, where he was a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Law. Nihal Weeratunga, a nephew of J. R. Jayewardene and a Director of Lewis Brown, was suddenly taken into custody for having provided Mrs. Jayewardene with a pre-paid ticket for travel to Madrid in 1976. Weerarunga had obtained the ticket as a gift from Satochi Izumi the local

---

\* The infamous CID interrogation centre in the New Secretariat building where more than one victim has committed suicide,







**COMING SHORTLY !**



**J. R. JAYEWARDENE  
OF SRI LANKA**

A book written by T. D. S. A. Dissanayaka  
who wrote the best-seller Dudley Senanayake  
of Sri Lanka

**SWASTIKA PRESS**

Digitized by Noolaham Foundation.  
noolaham.org | eavivahanam.org  
**COLOMBO 12.**



representative of Nichiman & Co., of Osaka, Japan, who was a personal friend of his. Six months later when Izumi was arrested on an alleged exchange control offence the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration looked upon it as a heaven-sent opportunity to besmirch the reputation of J. R. Jayewardene, who was then away in Perth, Australia visiting his son Ravi. The rumour spread like wild fire that J. R. Jayewardene would be arrested or at least be taken in for questioning upon arrival and when he stepped out of Singapore Airlines flight 581 on March 13th 1977 he was greeted by a crowd of over 25,000 UNP supporters at the Bandaranaike International Airport.

The Government had planned not to arrest but to harass J. R. Jayewardene and had sent Capt. J. de S. Wijeratne, Deputy Controller of Immigration and Emigration to take possession of his passport. J. R. Jayewardene brushed him aside, made an emotional speech to the crowd and left for his residence where another large crowd had gathered. At the first available opportunity he telephoned W. T. Jayasinghe, Secretary, Ministry of Defence & Foreign Affairs, who as Controller of Immigration and Emigration had once worked under him and inquired why the proper procedure was not followed nor even a request made in writing had the Government wanted his passport for reasons best known to itself. The reply was hogwash and a livid J. R. Jayewardene angrily rebuked Jayasinghe and slammed down the telephone. I was by the telephone and never before or after have I seen J. R. Jayewardene so angry or such fire in his eyes.

With the Government treating the Leader of the Opposition in this high-handed manner, it was not surprising that many UNP candidates were arbitrarily arrested. Raja Samaranayake (Bandaragama) a respected lawyer in that area was arrested for "robbing" a Co-operative Store, K. W. R. M. Ekanayake (Dambulla) was arrested for "intimidating" the family of his SLFP rival T. B. Tennekoon, Minister for Cultural Affairs, Mallimarachchi



Weerasinghe (Kolonnawa) was arrested under Emergency regulations for "harassing" his rival T. B. Illangaratne, Minister for Trade and Commerce, Chandra Gankande (Pelmadulla) was arrested for "unlawful assembly", Alick Aluvihare (Matale) was arrested for "obstructing" the Police, and A. W. G. Seneviratne (Attanagalla) was arrested for "threatening" the supporters of his rival who in some quarters was referred to as the leader of two-thirds of the World. In none of these cases was the "accused" formally indicted nor was D. M. Ariyadasa (Madawachchiya) and C. P. J. Seneviratne (Mahiyangana) who were incarcerated at Welikada without trial for about an year ever told why they were arrested. On the other hand according to the Police Dickson Silva, SLFP candidate for Devinuwara and Chairman Fisheries Corporation, led an attack on a UNP procession resulting in one death and several receiving injuries. Yet he was not remanded.

Even leaving allowance for the fact that the female of the species is more deadly than the male, J. R. Jayewardene was shocked at the perversion the Rule of Law in Sri Lanka underwent under Sirima Bandaranaike and the even greater perversion in India under Indira Gandhi. He was genuinely surprised when Indira Gandhi suddenly dissolved Parliament on January 18th 1977 giving the Opposition which had languished in jail for 19 months, barely 2 months to prepare for a General Election.

J. R. Jayewardene followed the events in India closely as the campaign gathered momentum, the Janata Party was formed, Jagjivan Ram defected and the Imam of Delhi and Vijayalakshmi Pandit came out openly against Indira Gandhi whose authoritarian rule they flayed at every turn.

Indira Gandhi and Sirima Bandaranaike have much in common. Both are women, both are widows, both became Prime Ministers under unusual circumstances, both have strong qualities of leadership, tenacity and charisma, both are socialists, both imagined that only they can rule their



respective countries, both wanted family dynasties, both groomed their sons to succeed them, both extended their terms of office unilaterally, both despised the Opposition. However a difference was that one advocated compulsory sterilisation whereas the other advocated the pill.

Both J. R. Jayewardene and Sirima Bandaranaike figured out that the General Election in India would have a significant impact in Sri Lanka. Sirima Bandaranaike predicted a victory for her friend and, to herald the victory locally, prepared posters in blue with her rubbing shoulders with Indira Gandhi and having Anura Bandaranaike and Sanjay Gandhi strategically placed in the background. The results were due to be announced commencing on the evening of March 20th and J. R. Jayewardene and his gracious lady were the guests of honour that evening at the home of Gamini Dissanayake who was celebrating his birthday. The birthday boy and I arrived late from Devinuwara, still rubbing our eyes after the tear-gassing.\* Just when dinner was being served there was an All India Radio bulletin to the effect that the Janata Party was leading in Gujerat and Maharashtra. Sometime later the overseas service of the BBC reported that the Janata Party had won Hariyana and had inflicted crushing defeats on V. C. Shukla, Minister of Information, and Bansai Lal, Minister for Defence, both of whom had been strong advocates of authoritarian rule. Just before J. R. Jayewardene left there was another BBC report that Indira Gandhi and her son were facing defeat in Rae Bareli and Amethi respectively.

When the bulk of the results came in the next morning, J. R. Jayewardene was jubilant. The parallel with India being so striking and the psychological advantage to the UNP being so great, his entire speech that day at Hiniduma was on what happened to one dictatorial woman

---

\* The skill of the Police resulted in the UNP deaths being confined to one, after our procession was savagely attacked by SLFP thugs. However the sea breeze caused the tear gas to blow in all directions to the discomfort of the UNP supporters, many of whom were already injured.



Prime Minister and what would happen to another. The following day J. R. Jayewardene presided at the biggest meeting ever held in Matara. Having waded through a procession two miles long and paid his respects to the memory of D. S. Senanayake, whose death anniversary was being observed that day, he elaborated on what happened to the authoritarian Indira Gandhi and the fate that awaited her friend. The other main speakers that day, Gamini Dissanayake, Lalith Athulathmudali, Nissanka Wijeyeratne and Ronnie de Mel drummed the same message. The battle cry for freedom from tyranny, with special reference to neighbouring India, was thereafter echoed from every UNP platform in every nook and corner of Sri Lanka.

---

#### NOTE BY THE SWASTIKA PRESS

As the author has omitted such reference, we feel obligated to add that he spent ten months living in huts and hovels in every electorate in which the UNP fielded a candidate and travelled only by public transport in his endeavour to obtain first hand reports. That was indeed a new dimension of the UNP campaign and a service which we are personally aware was much appreciated by the Prime Minister.

---



## CHAPTER VI

# GENERAL ELECTION 1977

The results of the General Election in India had a shattering impact on the SLFP. Even Sirima Bandaranaike was unusually reticent and addressed only one political meeting during the rest of the month, in Attanagalla, where she conceivably could not lose in 1977. There she said that whereas the UNP boasted the General Election in Sri Lanka would be a repetition of that in India she was confident that it would be repetition of that in Pakistan. Earlier in March Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Butto had led his Pakistan People's Party to a landslide victory and it was merciful that Sirima Bandaranaike did not attempt to repeat his performance as it subsequently appeared that Bhutto had rigged the polls and all but plunged Pakistan into civil war.

On the other hand J. R. Jayewardene intensified his campaign with meetings in rapid succession in Wariyapola, Dodangaslanda, Mihintale, Nattandiya, Bandaragama, and Bulathsinhala where he focussed attention on the large scale abuse of power by the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration with constant reference to the parallel in India.

In April the Government launched a new programme. Triumphant claims were made of prosperity and as tangible proof the local market was flooded with textiles and



foodstuffs of foreign origin which had hitherto been scarce. There was also a plentiful supply of rice from the recent bumper Yala crop.\* Felix Dias Bandaranaike who in his new capacity of Minister for Co-operatives and Finance was in overall charge of the crash programme also claimed that the soundness of the policies of the Government, both domestic and foreign, had resulted in record earnings from tea and rubber. Therefore the Government decided to revalue the rupee by 20% with a view to reducing the cost of living.

Revaluation of currency necessarily entails a strong economy and visible prosperity. For example during this decade West Germany revalued the mark by 8% and Japan the yen by an unprecedented 12%. The revaluation by Felix Dias Bandaranaike not only set a world record but was done against the advice of the Central Bank which saw no justification for any revaluation whatsoever.

About that time it was evident that Felix Dias Bandaranaike was in danger of losing his seat in Dompe, which he had won by a record majority of 22,373 in 1970. Reportedly his arrogance and the alleged obnoxiousness of his wife Lakshmi had taken a heavy toll on his one-time popularity. However he claimed that the Colombo West electorate was seething with discontent because J. R. Jayewardene was a chronic failure as MP, and that as a remedial measure the SLFP supporters in that electorate had invited him to contest the seat and defeat J. R. Jayewardene. The invitation was made with the full blare of publicity and Felix Dias Bandaranaike stated that "the proposal was irresistible". Shortly thereafter he left for London for medical attention and with that his theatrics came to an end.

About that time J. R. Jayewardene made one of his best decisions as President of the UNP. The new constitution of the UNP had no provision for a Deputy President or even a Vice-President. Though a question of succession never arose there was a very definite problem of who would be next in line in the hierarchy.

---

\* Due to a good monsoon in October—December 1976



Of the senior politicians in the UNP Montague Jayawickrema had entered Parliament in 1947 and had been elevated to Cabinet rank in 1954. E. L. Senanayake had entered Parliament in 1952 and had reached Cabinet rank in 1968. Though their junior in terms of Parliamentary experience R. Premadasa had the biggest following in the UNP next to J. R. Jayewardene. His ability was unquestioned. His contribution to the new image of the UNP was immense by virtue of being a product of a home where English was not spoken and Western attire not worn. Besides he belonged to a minority caste and all minority castes have the uncomfortable feeling that the higher echelons of leadership are denied to them due to accident of birth. In one master stroke J. R. Jayewardene brushed aside all opposition and appointed Premadasa as his deputy. That convinced even the sceptics that the new UNP was indeed very different from what had existed prior to 1973.

As the days rolled by and the UNP campaign gathered momentum it mattered little to J. R. Jayewardene whether Parliament would automatically dissolve on May 21st or whether it would be dissolved while still under prorogation. He spent his time putting together the most sophisticated election machine yet set up in Sri Lanka and often paused to wonder why the corresponding SLFP organisation was not even functioning.

The UNP election machine was a three-tier structure with J. R. Jayewardene at the apex. He had under him a President's Committee appointed by him and consisting of G. V. P. Samarasinghe, N. G. P. Panditharatne, Paul Perera and W. M. P. B. Menikdiwela, and an Election Committee duly elected by the candidates and consisting of R. Premadasa, Gamini Dissanayake, A. C. S Hameed, K. W. Devanayagam, Ronnie De Mel, Gamini Jayasooriya, E. L. Senanayake, Lalith Athulathmudali, Cyril Mathew and E. L. B. Hurulle. They operated from their hide-out at 75/1 Ward Place and even the telephone number of 92777 was known only to a select few. At the District level the UNP network was headed by a District Organizer, sometimes a retired



politician e.g. Col. C A. Dharmapala (Matara), Noel Wimalasena (Kandy) and sometimes a dynamic executive e.g. S. B. Silva (Kurunegala), Dr. R. C. A. Johnpillai (Anuradhapura). At the electorate level the organisation was headed by the candidate himself.\* An essential feature of the system was its decentralized nature with maximum importance given to the candidate and his electoral network of Branch, Youths' and Women's Organisations, which bore the brunt of the campaign through house-to-house canvassing and intensive pocket meetings. It would not be an exaggeration to add that the 18,000 grass roots organisations operated on the basis that victory meant a new lease of life and defeat meant certain doom.

Therefore "Sri Kotha" was not the nerve centre it was at previous General Elections, but instead serviced the district and electoral organisations. Its management was handled admirably by Daham Wimalasena, General Secretary of the UNP. He was assisted by A. B. Talagune, Chandra De Zoysa and Navin Gooneratne.

The disbursement of finances from the UNP central fund was handled with characteristic professional skill by N. G. P. Panditaratne, the well-known chartered accountant.

G. V. P. Samarasinghe used his remarkable knowledge of the public service, where he had distinguished himself as a top civil servant, in advising the candidates of how the Government machinery functioned and how it could be misused by the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. In that endeavour he was assisted by Paul Perera, a lawyer, and W. M. P. B. Menikdiwela, Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition.

Paul Perera, who has a particularly close relationship with J. R. Jayewardene ever since his crisis in 1972, advised the candidates and their staff on matters pertaining to

---

\* By July 1976 J. R. Jayewardene had appointed 87 candidates, by January 1977 the figure had risen to 131 and by April to 142. Thereafter only four more candidates, those for Medirigiriya, Galle, Avissawella and Polgahawela were appointed besides the 9 who were appointed nominally for the seats in the Jaffna district.



election offences and other legal problems. He was assisted by A. C. "Bunty" De Zoysa and B. J. Fernando, both well known lawyers and the advice of H. W. Jayewardene Q. C. was sought on more complex problems.

During the recent past J. R. Jayewardene was of the opinion that seminars at the electoral level for office bearers in the UNP electoral network had proved to be very useful. The lectures were mainly on the vast changes in the UNP since 1973 and with the General Election drawing near the frequency of such seminars increased sharply. The management of that operation devolved on Chandra De Zoysa. He was assisted by Dr. Hector Alahakone, Piyasena Jayaweera and Michael Hettiarachi.

Regrettably the UNP election machine lacked worthwhile newspapers. Against that background the Party was singularly fortunate to have the services of the Swastika Press owned by Sirisoma Ranasinghe who was prepared to risk the continued existence of his business interests in his endeavour to assist the UNP.

Another such glaring error was the absence of a sophisticated intelligence apparatus to systematically sieve the vast amount of information coming in regularly from several unconnected sources ranging from the sublime to the ludicrous. In the circumstances I volunteered to give the intelligence feed back direct to the candidates in the marginal seats scattered throughout the island. In that work Godwin Fernando was a tower of strength to me.

A refreshing new feature was a co-ordinated effort to maximise the support of the Trade Unions. It was handled by Douglas Abeydeera and S. A. G. Yapa, both experienced Trade Union leaders. Another such new feature were the booklets of cartoons and cassettes produced by Wickrema Weerasooriya. The booklets which more often than not were published by Sirisoma Ranasinghe, were stunning best-sellers and reached almost every village in the island; the songs were sometimes more popular than those on the Hit Parade.

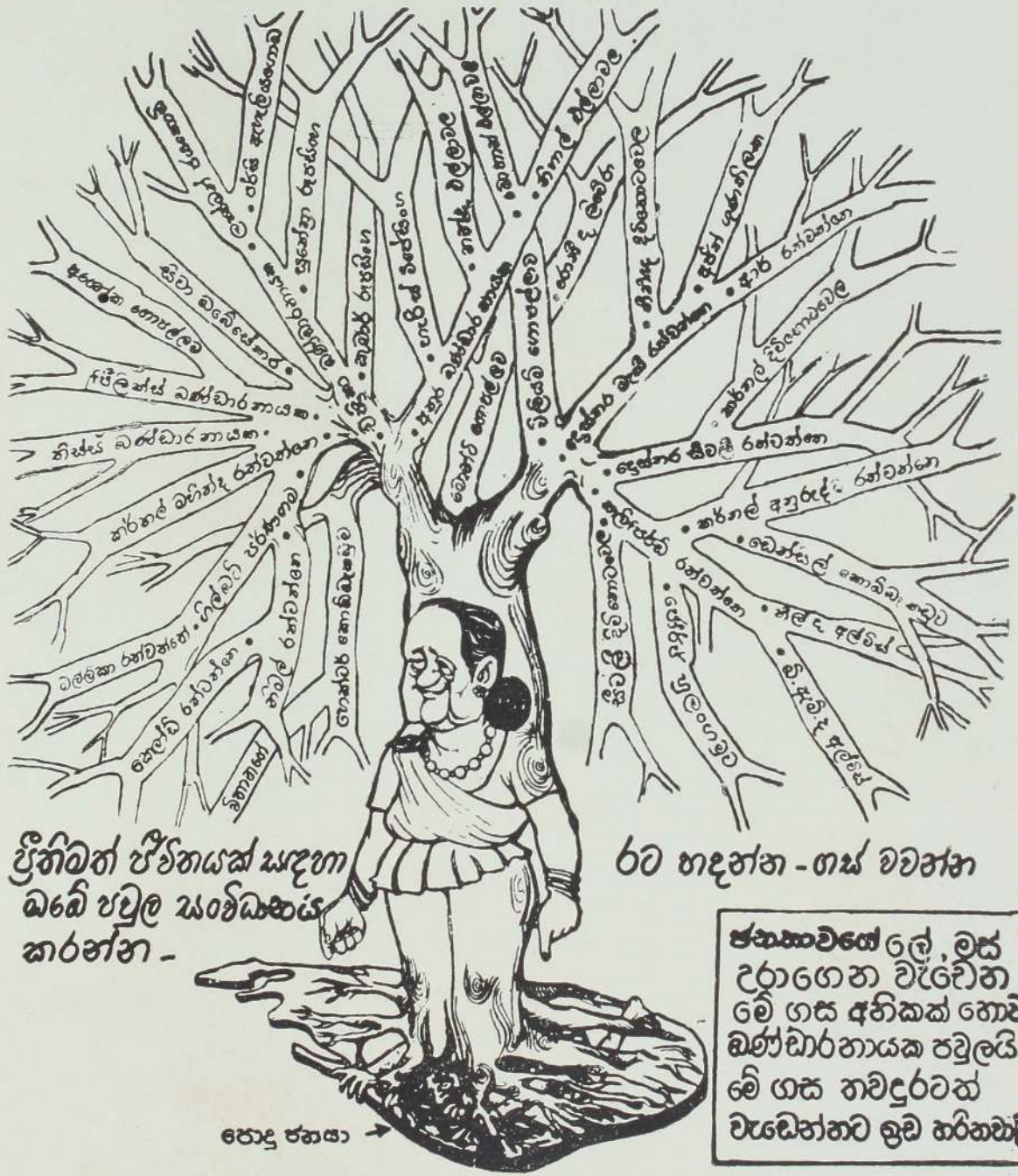


The speakers on the UNP platform at the national level were determined by J. R. Jayewardene, and at the District level by the District Organizer with Daham Wimalasena co-ordinating the effort from "Sri Kotha". At the electorate level it was determined exclusively by the candidate. J. R. Jayewardene was to address one meeting in each of 145 electorates, which the UNP contested seriously. (There were 9 electorates in the Jaffna district contested on a nominal basis.) Initially he decided to speak of what type of alternative Government the UNP would offer. R. Premadasa was likewise to address meetings in every electorate and was assigned the task of demolishing the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration on the issues of the spiralling cost of living and the recurrent scarcities of foodstuffs and consumer goods. A similar task was assigned to Gamini Dissanayake on the issues of the large scale abuse of power and the steady erosion of basic freedoms. Other speakers on the islandwide network represented special interests. They were S. A. G. Yapa (Trade Unions), A. C. S. Hameed and Mashoor Moulana (Muslim community), Asoka Karunaratne (Bathgama community), the Venerable Meetiyagoda Gunaratna and the Venerable Devamottawe Amarawansa (Buddhist clergy). Professor W. S. Karunaratne was added to the list by virtue of his being one of the finest orators in the island in Sinhala.

The regional speakers were selected largely on the basis of regional influence over a period of years. They included E. L. Senanayake (Central Province), E. L. B. Hurulle (North Central Province), S. B. Herat (North Western Province), C. P. J. Seneviratne (Uva) and K. W. Devanayagam (Eastern Province). Due to sheer individual brilliance Nissanka Wijeyeratne, Ronnie de Mel and Lalith Athulathmudali were assigned to several districts. Likewise Joseph Michael Perera was assigned on the basis of his being a youth of humble origins who had had a meteoric rise.

One of the several refreshing features of the UNP campaign in 1977 was the total absence of the Colombo-7 types, both the male and the female of the species. It was





The Family Tree  
 A cartoon from the booklet "The Seven Year Scourge"







regrettable but nevertheless true that in the years gone by one UNP Prime Minister got his confidential reports from Colombo-7\* and another from his friends in Colombo-7 who went fact finding in the rural areas from one Rest House to another. Such elements were conspicuous by their total absence, though at the last moment some Colombo-7 types did volunteer to work for J. R. Jayewardena. He adroitly asked them to work directly under UNP candidates in their respective areas. Chores such as putting up posters or canvassing house-to-house were too much for them and hence they disappeared from the UNP scene altogether, much to the relief of those committed to transforming the image of the UNP.

The entire UNP Task Force numbered over 250,000 and J. R. Jayewardene had the capacity to evoke from them an emotional attachment to the Party. That was indeed an endorsement of the faith reposed in him personally because successive UNP Administrations had established a tradition of being harmless to its enemies and useless to its friends. Dudley Senanayake in particular had helped his detractors at the cost of his friends in the furtherance of some vague philosophy or in conformity with some obscure Government regulations.

The overall picture however was marred by one consideration, one which conceivably could have adversely affected the performance of the UNP at the General Election. Even after the manifesto was formally issued on May 1st the intelligentsia was sceptical that the UNP could shed its well established affinity to reaction and capitalism, though many admitted that J. R. Jayewardena had changed his own image significantly. Such reservations were particularly evident on the Campuses where the undergraduates were hyper-critical of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration but were not enthusiastic about the UNP. Another such striking example was that the unemployed graduates were not with the UNP although the unemployed

---

\* Note for foreign readers - The elite lives in Colombo-7



high school drop-outs often spearheaded the UNP Youth Organisations. Regrettably the phenomenon of those with under developed brains being enchanted with the UNP and those with developed brains being disenchanted with the UNP was not confined to the unemployed youth alone.

About that time all reports received by J. R. Jayewardene indicated that the Marxist coalition of the LSSP, the Communist Party and the group led by Nanda Ellawala was facing extinction. Firstly they entered the political scene far too late and could not agree even on a leader, or a common programme let alone make an effective impact. Secondly they had been associated with the discredited Sirima Bandaranaike Administration far too long and found it impossible to explain why they had been a party to such an unholy alliance.

The Marxist alliance claimed that day-to-day living had become intolerable but could not disown responsibility for having contributed to that unsatisfactory state of affairs; by the same token the Marxist alliance could not dissociate themselves from the pernicious habit of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration of using routine administrative procedures as a means of seeking political advantage and wreaking political vengeance.

Above all whenever the Marxist alliance raised the cry that Sirima Bandaranaike had used the victory of 1970 to set up a family dynasty rather than usher in socialism there was the pertinent question why they had been silent about it for so long.

These considerations gave ample credibility to the claim of both the UNP and the SLFP that the Marxists were mere adventurers and opportunists lurking in the corridors of power because the throne itself was beyond their grasp.

The decline of the Marxist influence was so rapid that the absence of the no-contest pact between the Marxists and the SLFP was only a marginal gain for the UNP although such a pact had been a major contributory factor to the



landslide victories of the SLFP in 1956, July 1960 and 1970. Judging from all reports, in the Sinhala-speaking electorates the impending General Election caused a definite polarisation of forces for the UNP and the SLFP. J. R. Jayewardene was therefore puzzled at the reports he had of inactivity in the SLFP. The Government machinery was working round the clock making preparations for the General Election, yet there was hardly any visible activity in SLFP quarters. For instance all our reports from the CTB crews on the Colombo-Kataragama, Colombo-Kandy and Colombo-Kurunegala routes were that on Saturday and Sunday evenings there were UNP meetings every 10 miles and that green flags, green shirts and green caps were seen everywhere. On the other hand the same sources confirmed that there were hardly any blue flags, blue shirts and blue caps and no SLFP meetings whatsoever. A more detailed intelligence survey conducted privately by some salesmen of Lever Bros. and Reckitt & Colman revealed that the green flags were hoisted not only in public places, which could in theory have been put up by paid workers, but also in private homes thereby clearly establishing that many households were prepared to identify themselves openly with the UNP.

The protracted agony of the Parliament came to an end at midnight on May 18th. To celebrate the occasion J. R. Jayewardene arranged Deliverance Day meetings in every electorate, designed to focus attention on the seven year curse that had just been lifted. He addressed the meeting in Colombo East and appealed to all UNP supporters to act in accordance with the law and after the General Election to show compassion to the SLFP supporters. He spoke in the same vein the previous day at Ratmalana. Such an appeal became necessary as there was a definite possibility of outbursts of anger from UNP supporters who had silently suffered humiliation and indignities for seven long years. On May 25th he formally launched the UNP campaign for the General Election with a massive meeting at Bogambara. According to Police reports it drew the largest and the most enthusiastic crowd ever seen in Kandy up to that time\*.

---

\* A substantially bigger crowd turned up two months later to listen to the new Prime Minister address the nation from the Temple of the Tooth.



During the campaign J. R. Jayewardene used his residence at 66 Ward Place Colombo-7 as his base. He travelled either in an air-conditioned Chevrolet Impala or a Holden Statesman or by an Air Force helicopter (made available on on June 23rd and withdrawn without adequate reason on July 16th) and covered 145 electorates in 6 weeks. His staff who suffered from fatigue often wondered how J. R. Jayewardene, who had reached three score and ten in September 1976, had the energy to maintain the scorching pace as reflected in the following schedule, a random sample from his itinerary.

Monday	Colombo West • (night in Colombo)
Tuesday	Moratuwa Kesbewa Kotte (night in Colombo)
Wednesday	Gampaha (night at Veyangoda)
Thursday	Teldeniya Minipe Mahiyangana (night at Kalkudah)
Friday	Kalkudah Batticaloa Padirippu (night at Amparai)
Saturday	Amparai Sammanturai Kalmunai Pottuvil (night at Pottuvil)
Sunday	Moneragala Wellawaya Balangoda Pelmadulla (night in Colombo)



During his circuits J. R. Jayewardene was accompanied by R. Bodinagoda, his Private Secretary from 1947 - 1956, and Ranjan Wijeratne a Company Director, while G. V. P. Samarasinghe and W. M. P. B. Menikdiwela provided the logistic support at 66 Ward Place. T. B. Bongso, a burly retired Police Inspector, handled the security arrangements and H. W. Jayewardene Q. C. handled the Colombo West electorate in the absence of his brother.

During the entire itinerary J. R. Jayewardene was behind schedule only once, in Divulapitiya, because the road on which his motorcade was travelling was rendered impassable due to an unexpected flood. By the same token J. R. Jayewardene fell ill only once during those hectic eight weeks. He suffered from a sore throat in the second week of June. As a matter of routine he brushed aside medical advice to the effect that he was straining himself and insisted on addressing meetings and keeping to his schedule ignoring even the pleas of Mrs. Jayewardene who in her own quiet way was a great source of strength to him.

During the entire campaign J. R. Jayewardene ate very little. He had a thambili\* in the morning before a light breakfast, and ate no rice whatsoever at lunch or dinner. However he ate cadju nuts in large quantities whenever he got an opportunity. Once when an attractive cadju vendor from Pasyala presented him with a garland of cadju nuts at the meeting in Dedigama he proceeded to eat the garland immediately, to the delight of the crowd. After he had munched half of it he gave the balance to me as I was sitting behind him, having rushed in from Colombo with an important intelligence report. I ate the balance and strolled around while J. R. Jayewardene was looking for me, not so much to obtain my latest intelligence report but to retrieve his garland of cadju nuts!

J. R. Jayewardene was particularly pleased with that intelligence report. The Senanayake family had sworn to defeat Nissanka Wijeyeratne in Dedigama but Godwin Fernando,

---

\* Note for foreign readers - Water of the young coconut



Godwin Fernando, my classmate at the University of Ceylon and now a Company Director, had finally broken through their ranks. He had prevailed upon Ariya Senanayake, the campaign manager of Dudley Senanayake, to be the campaign manager for Nissanka Wijeyeratne. Thus the Diyawadana Nilame of the Temple of the Tooth was free to campaign for the UNP outside Dedigama and that he did in outstanding manner.

In the meantime R. Premadasa and Gamini Dissanayake had made their own elaborate arrangements. Premadasa used his office in Sucharita Mawatha in Colombo-12 as his headquarters. He travelled around in a caravan accompanied by B. J. Fernando, his lawyer and confidante, a truck-load of several books he has written over the years on political subjects and the requisite sales staff. His headquarters were run by Maha Kumarage and Sirisena Cooray both Municipal Councillors and the propaganda arm was managed by Ajantha Wijesena, an advertising executive. Gamini Dissanayake, who had to address even more meetings than J. R. Jayewardene, had his headquarters in Nuwara Eliya. It was managed by Palitha Pelpola, a former President of the UNP Students' Organisation, while Dakshita Talgodapitiya and Joe Abeywickrema, the well known film star, travelled with Gamini Dissanayake. Shrima Dissanayake also accompanied her husband and looked after him because he had lost as much as 15 lbs during the past few months due to vigorous campaigning. Their three little children were distressed at the prospect of both parents being away from home and in their loneliness often cried loudly.

Nomination Day was on June 6th. It was uneventful except that UNP candidates evoked mass support wherever they went to hand over their nomination papers. About that time intelligence reports from Ceylon Cold Stores indicated that Lanka Lime, their green-coloured soft drink, had sold throughout the island on an unprecedented scale, and not even a crash programme could cope with the demand. Further subtle evidence of the popular support for the UNP was on the night of June 6th when green-coloured Wesak lanterns suddenly appeared in most electorates.



On his part J. R. Jayewardene methodically checked on all incoming field reports and the consensus of opinion was that the UNP should win 100 - 120 seats. However he was perplexed on one issue. The SLFP was still dormant.

Besides, Sirima Bandaranaike had given SLFP nomination to all the well-known bribe takers amongst her former MPs although she was reportedly attempting to discard them. In addition she had shamelessly accommodated two former SLFP MPs who had been convicted of bribery in 1961. They were D. B. Moonnekulame (Kurunegala) and M. P. De Zoysa (Ratgama) who filed their nomination papers as Independents and were not contested by the SLFP. At the last moment Sirima Bandaranaike also gave her patronage to leading members of the defunct Dudley Peramuna. J. R. P. Suriyapperuma (Minuwangoda) and Chandra Munaweera (Matale) were given SLFP nomination, while Jinadasa Niyathapala (Kotte) and R. P. Wijesiri (Harispattuwa) contested as Independents with active support from the SLFP. Another similar SLFP candidate was Piyadasa Palandegama (Ratnapura). He contested as the UNP candidate in Pelmadulla in 1970, in Ratnapura in 1972 and defected to the SLFP in 1977.

The irresistible conclusion was that Sirima Bandaranaike knew many of her former MPs to be liabilities but just could not find any better alternatives. That prospect elated J. R. Jayewardene.

The UNP intensified its campaign after Nomination Day and J. R. Jayewardene made a slight but very significant alteration in his approach to his audiences. During the past few weeks it was consistently observed that he was welcomed at meetings as a conquering hero. However when he spoke on the proposed just and free society with detailed reference to how he would not tolerate bribery, corruption and drunkenness among UNP Parliamentarians and would enforce a rigid code of ethics as a first step toward a moral upliftment of the nation, he evoked no visible response from the audiences. They listened to him



in the same way as they would listen to a Mahanayake\* speaking on the virtues of Buddhism and J. R. Jayewardene realized he was operating on the wrong wavelength. Therefore he changed his technique and focussed attention on the distressing features of the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration and suggested his just and free society as a viable alternative. Thereafter thunderous applause punctuated his speeches and often he had to plead for silence so that he could continue his discourse.

At the commencement of his speeches R. Premadasa adopted a philosophical attitude and spoke of the supreme worth of the individual and the primary duty of society to safeguard the welfare of the individual. Then he proceeded to elucidate how the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration had safeguarded the individual. In the past he claimed only cats and dogs fought for the contents of dustbins whereas today human beings were doing so. The individual he said had every right to feed and clothe himself but even essential foodstuffs were subject to chronic shortages if available at all. The clothing available was of such inferior quality, that wearing the available sarongs in daytime would involuntarily cause indecent exposure. While the audiences rocked with laughter Premadasa with his superb sense of theatre quickly made women weep by referring to the atrocities committed during the period 1970-1977. The youth were shot like dogs during the insurrection, beauty queen Prema Manamperi was raped and murdered in Kataragama in 1971, undergraduate W. S. Weerasooriya was shot dead in the Campus at Peradeniya in 1976 and UNP worker K. T. Douglas was killed outside the sacred Raja Maha Vihare in Devinuwara in 1977 while participating in a peaceful UNP procession. He then roundly condemned the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration, drew a parallel to what happened in India and claimed that the only alternative for Sri Lanka was a just and free society as proposed by J. R. Jayewardene. According to J. R. Jayewardene Premadasa is the finest orator in Sinhala in

---

\* Note for foreign readers - The equivalent of an Archbishop in the Buddhist hierarchy



the UNP. He drew massive crowds and his speech caused outbursts of thunderous applause with unfailing regularity.

Gamini Dissanayake focussed attention on the steady erosion of personal freedom and the large scale abuse of power under the Sirima Bandaranayake Administration. He spoke of the arbitrary arrests of D. M. Ariyadasa (Madawachchiya), and C. P. J. Seneviratne (Mahiyangana) both of whom had languished in jail for almost a year for no rhyme or reason, of the arbitrary arrests of other UNP candidates G. V. Punchi Nilame (Ratnapura), Lalith Athulathmudali (Ratmalana), Chandra Gankande (Pepadulla), Raja Samaranayake (Bandaragama), and of the arbitrary arrest of Nihal Weeratunga and Ravi Jayewardene\* nephew and son of J. R. Jayewardene. He claimed that the Sirima Bandaranayake Administration even contemplated arresting J. R. Jayewardene on several occasions and cited as an example the incident at the Bandaranaike International Airport.

He further claimed that political vendetta had become a way of life under Sirima Bandaranaike. Transfers, cancellation of appointments, non-allocation of import quotas, and sequestration of lands were decided upon for reasons of political victimisation without any consideration for merit or natural justice. He stated that Sirima Bandaranaike had postponed the General Election from 1975 to 1977 and had strenuously attempted to postpone it till 1980; that she had muzzled the Press; that her Administration was a Mafia-like rule with the sole criterion for advancement being connections with the Bandaranaike and Ratwatte families. Gamini Dissanayake directed his speeches to the youth but it was quite evident that he was accepted by the young and respected by the old. His pronouncements were greeted with periodic resounding cheers and the biggest cheer of them all was when he proposed as an alternative Government, a just and free society under J. R. Jayewardene.

---

\*He was arrested during the insurrection for no known reason.



The other principal speakers on the UNP national platform hammered home similar messages with S. A. G. Yapa and W. S. Karunaratne being devastating on their respective specialities of trade unionism and university education.

In direct contrast the SLFP was still inactive. They finally woke up from their slumber on Sunday 12th June when Sirima Bandaranaike launched her campaign from outside the Raja Maha Vihara in Kelaniya. The immediate impact was the activating of the dormant SLFP support which had accounted for 36.9% of the popular vote in 1970, 30.2% in 1965, and 33.6% in July 1960. It had a definite impact on the equilibrium and caused panic in many quarters especially amongst the Colombo based western-oriented people.

There was a spate of rumours that Lalith Athulathmudali (Ratmalana) Anandatissa De Alwis (Kotte) Ranil Wickremasinghe (Biyagama), Cyril Matthew (Kelaniya) Denzil Fernando (Negombo), Neville Fernando (Panadura) amongst others would lose their seats. The Colombo based western-oriented minority was the unquestioned elite prior to 1956 but in the recent past have been out of touch with reality on political issues. They tended to believe the ludicrous Lake House newspapers. Even in 1977 they claimed Sirima Bandaranaike would follow the example of Indira Gandhi in postponing the General Election. Whenever UNP supporters went to their homes to canvass support they were either treated like dogs or greeted with boards which warned "Beware of dogs." Even when J. R. Jayewardene wanted to visit their homes in his electorate of Colombo West they turned down the offer. Politically they were the most pitiable of all segments of the population and the only redeeming feature was that the UNP under J. R. Jayewardene was not under obligation to them.

Sirima Bandaranaike herself maintained a blistering pace and soon began to travel by helicopter, whereupon the same concession was given to J. R. Jayewardene. The strategy of her campaign was to expose the UNP as a reactionary



capitalist party, that the UNP would negate the splendid gains of the masses from the social revolution of 1956 ushered in by S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, above all that J. R. Jayewardene was a Fascist and given half a chance would make Sri Lanka into a naked dictatorship.

It was indeed extraordinary for the SLFP with its very definite dictatorial tendencies to accuse J. R. Jayewardene of being a threat to Parliamentary democracy, a process he had safeguarded in a very real manner in the recent past. He decided to ignore the vile accusation altogether and requested other UNP speakers to follow suit.

However J. R. Jayewardene took up the challenge that the next UNP Administration would negate the gains of the social revolution of 1956. He pointed out that he was the first politician to raise in the Legislature the need to make Sinhala the official language and to propose the nationalisation of foreign-owned estates. He stated that within the UNP prior to 1973 he had been surrounded on all sides by reactionary elements and he had no alternative but to conform with Party policy. Even as Leader of the Opposition he had been all but expelled when he had attempted to deviate from Party policy. However he emphasised that now, as the undisputed leader of the UNP, his hands were free to usher in social reforms and his envisaged programmes were duly summarised in the UNP manifesto.

J. R. Jayewardene also accepted the challenge on the charges of capitalism and reaction. The manner in which the UNP functioned at the grass root levels was the best advertisement of the extent to which the Party had eschewed reaction. The floating vote needed little or no convincing but the SLFP elements refused to see reason and hence indulged in empty rhetoric. In direct contrast the position of the UNP having eschewed capitalism involved a huge credibility gap made even greater by the proposal of J. R. Jayewardene to make 200 square miles near Katunayake into a free trade zone to attract foreign capital. The proposal itself was denounced by the Marxist parties but he



managed to stem the hostile tide with the issuance of one million copies of his personal message "From J. R. to You". In that booklet he stated that the UNP would enforce a ceiling on capital and challenged Sirima Bandaranaike to promise similar legislation. He taunted her that such legislation would spell the doom of her numerous financiers such as Dasa Mudalali and her silence was indeed eloquent.

As the battle raged J. R. Jayewardene made another master-move. While on circuit in the Matara district, which had been insurgent-infested in 1971, he promised a new deal for the convicted insurgents by reviewing their sentences on an individual basis. Sirima Bandaranaike retorted that she had no intention of interfering with the Judiciary. By that time three well-known Professors, W. S. Karunaratne, Hema Ellawela and Stanley Kalpage were vigorously campaigning for the UNP and the university dons had come out openly in favour of the UNP. As that tide swelled the university students also threw in their lot with the UNP. The militant youth followed suit as reflected in the number of ex-insurgents who spoke from UNP platforms.

An unusual feature in the SLFP campaign was that the focus of attention was not their achievements during the past seven years nor their programmes for the next six years but the unsuitability of J. R. Jayewardene to be the next Prime Minister. That was indeed definitive evidence of their current liabilities and by early July it appeared that the UNP had broken through whatever defences the SLFP had put together at the last moment. Thereafter Sirima Bandaranaike began to indulge in periodic frivolity. On July 5th at Moneragala she said that whereas the situation had looked bad one month ago, it had changed and the SLFP was now winning. Premadasa pounced on her and queried that if the situation had been so bad a month ago what had caused it to improve mysteriously. He inquired sarcastically whether the cost-of-living had come down or jobs found for the unemployed. On July 8th at Gampola she prattled that J. R. Jayewardene had concrete proposals to handle drunkards in Parliament but had no such proposals to bring down the cost-of-living. On July 10th at Kundasale she claimed that



the UNP was using obscene language from public platforms and was hence not fit to rule the country. The following day in Hiniduma she claimed that J. R. Jayewardene had insulted her and her son by referring to them as cow and calf, the derisive epithet used in India to describe Indira Gandhi and her son. Later that week she made an election issue of it and whined that J. R. Jayewardene had insulted not only her but all women of Sri Lanka with his remarks. The following week in Ratnapura she claimed that J. R. Jayewardene had offended women all over the world. It was curious how Sirima Bandaranaike could speak on behalf of all women in the world. Perhaps she was exercising her prerogative as "leader of two-thirds of the World".

Indeed she spoke at length of her role in the Non-Aligned Movement. J. R. Jayewardene ignored those claims with contempt but A. C. S. Hameed and Latith Athulathmudali promptly demolished them. They both used the arguments adduced in Chapter IV and reference to the relative costs of the Gal Oya project and the Summit was particularly effective.

Another peculiar feature in the SLFP campaign was that Sirima Bandaranaike did not have adequate supporting speakers. Though in a very real sense she was the centre of attraction in the SLFP fold, the crowds gathered not to hear her but to see her, out of curiosity. Often they waited for hours and left a few minutes after she got up to speak.\* The absence of other SLFP stalwarts on the national platform was determined by their own electoral problems. Maithripala Senanayake was involved in a David and Goliath style battle with D. M. Ariyadasa in Madawachchiya. Ariyadasa who had been incarcerated in Welikada for one year without any reasons being assigned appeared to have got the better of the exchanges. Felix Dias Bandaranaike had a similar battle in Dompe with Sarathchandra Rajakaruna whom he had once unnecessarily humiliated. In Kolonnawa T. B. Ilangaratne had all but conceded defeat to his volatile opponent Mallimaratchi

---

\* A speaker could be seen best on the platform when he or she gets up to speak.



Weerasinghe. Initially Hector Kobbekaduwa and S. K. K. Suriyarachchi campaigned on the national platform but soon had to beat hasty retreats to Yatinuwara and Mahara respectively. Thus by the time Sunethra Rupasinghe had resigned her post as Co-ordinating Secretary to the Prime Minister, Mackie Ratwatte had sent in his papers for retirement and Sirima Bandaranaike had vacated "Temple Trees", the writing on the wall was quite clear to all except those who were blind to reason. Nevertheless Sirima Bandaranaike travelled the length and breadth of the country by helicopter broadcasting that she could foresee a SLFP victory of the magnitude of that in 1956 or alternatively of the magnitude of that in July 1960, when she had formed a stable Government without any support from the Marxists. Thus her entourage, complete with elaborate security arrangements, soap-box orators, courtiers and relatives, was in effect a travelling circus.

In direct contrast the UNP election machine was functioning at peak efficiency. J. R. Jayewardene, R. Premadasa and Gamini Dissanayake though following three separate circuits were a remarkably well-knit team. They were ably supported by A. C. S. Hameed who covered the Muslim pockets on an islandwide basis and Nissanka Wijeyeratne covering many of the weak spots with his unique knowledge of the grapevine.

For instance when Daya Walagambahu (Mihintale) was slipping because of a sensitive caste issue he used his influence as the Diyawadana Nilame and rushed in Siyan Nikaya priests who stemmed the tide. When Yasapala Herat was under pressure from K. B. Ratnayake, Minister for Transport, Nissanka Wijeyeratne used his influence as a former Government Agent for Anuradhapura with decisive effect. Both A. C. S. Hameed and Nissanka Wijeyeratne buttressed Sunil Abeysondera in Yatinuwara as he began to close, in on Hector Kobbekaduwa, thereby making victory a realistic possibility.

Besides the different components of the UNP network co-ordinated beautifully. In the last week of the campaign when the Madawachchiya Police unleashed a reign of terror



Dr. R. C. A. Johnpulle District Organiser, Anuradhapura, sent a distress signal to J. R. Jayewardene. Within 24 hours Paul Perera and a team of lawyers on the one hand and my colleagues and I on the other arrived in Anuradhapura from different parts of the island. Within 48 hours the Officer-in-Charge of the Madawachchiya Police Station was in the dock in the Magistrate's Court of Anuradhapura looking scared as a rabbit. He pleaded that the well documented private plaint brought against him to have him bound over to be of good behaviour was most humiliating and he needed time to prepare his defence against the serious charges. That plaint incidentally was the first step towards an election petition.

Moreover the UNP began to show its strength strategically in sensitive areas. For instance the UNP Jatika Sevaka Sangamaya at Lake House controlled the printing room and threatened to strike if UNP meetings were not given adequate coverage. The first such strike was shortly after the dissolution of Parliament and the management initially took cognisance of their demands. Later when the management reneged, at the height of the election campaign Lake House was paralysed by a strike.

In direct contrast the Marxist Trade Unions like the Marxist parties were virtually impotent during the General Election. From all reports J. R. Jayewardene concluded that the United Left Front was facing extinction. In doing so they directed maximum fire-power at the SLFP causing perhaps a marginal gain for the UNP in the floating vote.

J. R. Jayewardene also had reliable information that the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) was heading for a landslide victory in the North and might well win all 14 seats in that Province. His attitude towards the language problem was that the Sinhalese must not discriminate against the Tamils and that the Tamils must not provoke the Sinhalese. Within that framework he was confident that a just and equitable solution could be arrived through an all party conference.



The election campaign drew to a close on July 19th and J. R. Jayewardene drew an unprecedented crowd of well over 100,000 people at Havelock Park where he wound up his campaign in Colombo West. By then according to the Sun group of newspapers, over 90% of those who had entered their election forecast contest had predicted a victory for the UNP. According to J. R. Jayewardene the UNP would win a minimum of 100 seats and a maximum of 120. R. Premadasa, Gamini Dissanayake, A. C. S. Hameed, Nissanka Wijeyeratne, Mashoor Moulana, S. A. G. Yapa, W. S. Karunaratne, and I predicted results in the same range, on the basis of field surveys. R. Bodinagoda predicted up to 125 seats and the Venerable Devamottawe Amarawansa up to 130. My friend Godwin Fernando predicted UNP-138, SLFP-10,\* ULF-0, TULF-17. I felt it was silly and hence did not pass that information on to J. R. Jayewardene.

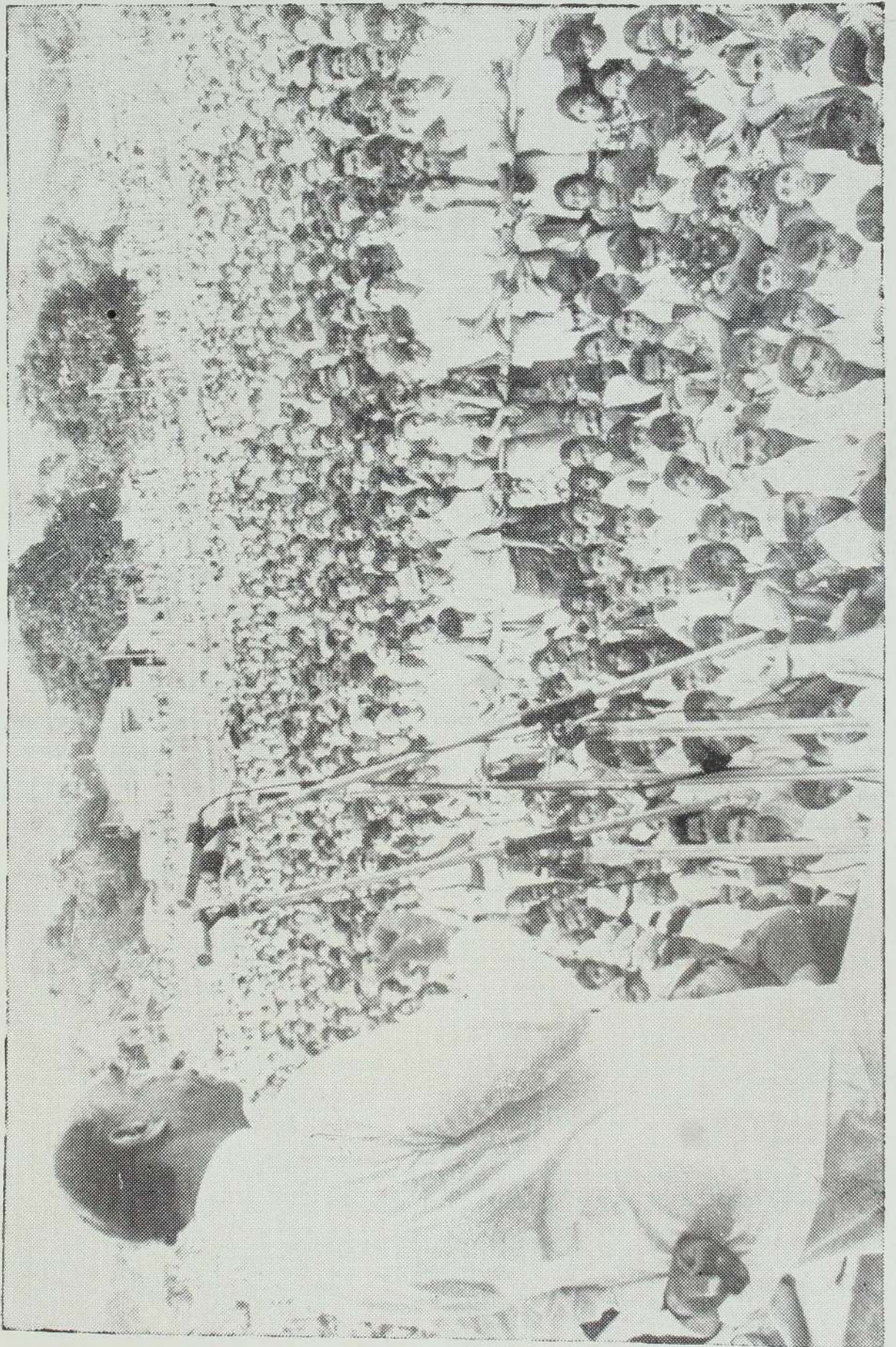
87.1% of the adult population of Sri Lanka exercised their franchise on July 21st and thereby improved upon the world record of 85.2% set up by Sri Lanka in 1970. Of the 6.6 million voters who exercised their franchise one was J. R. Jayewardene. Accompanied by his wife and other members of their household he unobtrusively walked to the polling booth at Alexandra Place in the Borella electorate and stood in the queue awaiting his turn. On the other hand Sirima Bandaranaike was whisked in and whisked out of a polling booth in a motorcade under heavy guard with Police officers of different shapes and sizes gravitating around and a former Olympic boxer keeping an eye on her even as she exercised her franchise. The contrast was so striking that it was even reported in the foreign press.

No commentary on the General Election is complete without paying tribute to the Department of Elections in general and its Commissioner E. F. Dias Abeysinghe in particular for the outstanding manner in which they served Sri Lanka. Their devotion to duty, efficiency and being readily acceptable to all political parties have indeed set standards worthy of emulation by all Departments in the public service.

---

\* Attanagalla, Anamaduwa, Beruwela, Colombo Central, Gampaha, Kegalle, Kotmale, Madawachiya, Mahara, Nuwara Eliya.





Campaigning in July 1977







On election night while the nation was glued to their radios J. R. Jayewardene spent several hours at the Colombo Campus of the University of Sri Lanka watching the counting of votes in his electorate of Colombo West. The new counting procedure was more complex and time consuming than before and he felt somewhat bored and returned home around 12.30 a. m. There he first received unconfirmed reports coming through Police radio network and duly passed on through our informants. The first 31 results indicated that the UNP was winning 27 seats, the Tamil United Liberated Front (TULF) 3 and the SLFP 1. Though immensely pleased J. R. Jayewardene, much to the surprise of everybody, retired to bed immediately.

At 1.23 a. m. the first result was officially announced over the radio. The UNP had won Sammanturai by 5,027 votes. Then followed in rapid succession the results in Karadeniya, a UNP victory by 6,903, Galle, a UNP victory by 5,009, Hewaheta, a UNP victory by 6,750, Mahanuwara, a UNP victory by 7,111, Pata Dumbara, a UNP victory by 10,497, and Kalmunai, a UNP victory by 5,543. The first defeat for UNP was in Vavuniya where the TULF won by 4,377 and that was the fore runner to a TULF landslide in the North. Then followed the results in Kundasale, a UNP victory by 7,138, Badulla, a UNP victory by 3,706, Kelaniya, a UNP victory by 6,519 and Bulathsinhala, a UNP, victory by 4,429. It thus appeared that the UNP was winning not by a landslide but by an avalanche.

Around 3. a. m. when results in 40 seats had been officially announced even UNP supporters were suffering from shock. The overall tally was :—

UNP	—	34
TULF	—	6
SLFP	—	0
ULF	—	0

By 4 a. m. the results were :—

UNP	—	43
TULF	—	7
SLFP	—	0
ULF	—	0



It was 5.12 a. m. when J. R. Jayewardene came down from his bedroom to the parlour. He was dressed in a green sarong, a torn shirt and was unshaven, the white stubble being the only indication of his age. His sisters and nieces kissed him and his brothers, the campaign staff and his guests shook his hand enthusiastically. The results then were :—

UNP	—	61
TULF	—	9
SLFP	—	0
ULF	—	0

Though the entire household was agog J. R. Jayewardena was calm and unruffled and spoke in a matter of fact way. Those who remembered his behaviour in 1956, when the landslide was at the expense of the UNP and J. R. Jayewardene himself suffered a humiliating defeat, recalled that he had then acted in an identical manner. Indeed he is one of the very few who can meet with Triumph and Disaster and treat those two impostors just the same.

In his hour of victory he was truly magnanimous and expressed regret that both N. M. Perera (Yatiantota) and Hector Kobbekaduwa (Yatinuwara) had lost. The persistent rumour was that Sirima Bandaranaike had lost Attanagalla by about 650 votes and J. R. Jayewardene was relieved when the official verdict indicated that she had won by 10,663\*. His concern for the Opposition was indeed genuine and when the results of Madawachchiya came in he expressed the hope that Maithripala Senanayake who had won by a mere 366 votes would not lose the envisaged election petition. When the results of Agalawatte came in there was more than a tinge of sadness in J. R. Jayewardene because Colvin R. De Silva, his classmate at Royal, had lost.

Around 7 a. m. when breakfast was served the UNP had just cleared the three figure mark and J. R. Jayewardene was even more delighted shortly thereafter when his son Ravi telephoned from Perth, Australia, to convey his

---

\* Her majority in 1970 was 21,723



congratulations. At 9.42 a. m. President William Gopallawa telephoned to offer his congratulations. He also indicated that in conformity with the Constitution he would invite J. R. Jayewardene to be the new Prime Minister as soon as the last election result is announced. That message was thereafter broadcast over the radio.

By that time the residence of J. R. Jayewardene was packed with visitors. A few were his guests. Many were those who had stood by the UNP magnificently both in dark days and in brighter ones. Many more were charlatans joining the bandwagon.

By evening that day only the results in the sprawling multi-member seat of Nuwara Eliya - Maskeliya were due\* and the tally was as follows :—

UNP	—	138
TULF	—	17
SLFP	—	7
Independents	—	1

Thus the UNP had won by the biggest landslide victory in the recent history of the world.

The results of the last seat to be announced came in around 9 a. m. the following morning and shortly thereafter J. R. Jayewardene answered the summon of the President to assume duties as Prime Minister. In a typically austere gesture he left his residence in a small Toyota car and had a minimum of Police protection. Even the swearing-in was devoid of any ceremony.

Later that evening the following Cabinet was sworn-in:

Defence, Planning & Economic Affairs, Plan Implementation	—	J. R. Jayewardene
Local Government, Housing & Construction	—	R. Premadasa
Agriculture & Lands	—	E. L. Senanayake

\* Due to the death of one of the candidates the election to the multi-member seat of Pottuvil was not held on July 21st.



Public Administration & Home Affairs	—	Montague Jayawickrema
Transport	—	M. H. Mohamed
Plantation Industries	—	M. D. H. Jayewardene
Cultural Affairs	—	E. L. B. Hurulle
Social Services	—	Asoka Karunaratne
Foreign Affairs	—	A. C. S. Hameed
Irrigation, Power & Highways	—	Gamini Dissanayake
Trade	—	Lalith Athulathmudali
Education	—	Nissanka Wijeyeratne
Finance	—	Ronnie De Mel
Justice	—	K. W. Devanayagam
Health	—	Gamini Jayasuriya •
Shipping, Aviation & Tourism	—	Wimala Kannangara
Posts & Telecommunications	—	Shelton Jayasinghe
Labour	—	C. P. J. Seneviratne
Industries & Scientific Affairs	—	Cyril Matthew
Fisheries	—	S. De S. Jayasinghe
Information & Broadcasting	—	D. B. Wijetunge
Food & Co-operatives	—	S. B. Herath
Textile Industries	—	Wijepala Mendis
Parliamentary Affairs & Sports	—	Vincent Perera

The Cabinet regrettably did not reflect the new image of the UNP. That lapse was however set right in the appointment of the following Deputy Ministers who were sworn in shortly thereafter:

Defence	—	T. B. Werapitiya
Planning & Economic Affairs	—	M. H. M. Naina Marikar
Plan Implementation	—	D. B. Welegedera
Local Government, Housing & Construction	—	P. C. Imbulaua
Agriculture & Lands	—	M, A. Abdul Majeed
Public Administration & Home Affairs	—	Percy Samaraweera
Transport	—	Harold Kularatne
Plantation Industries	—	Alick Aluvihare
Cultural Affairs	—	W. M. G. T. Banda
Social Services	—	J. L. Sirisena
Foreign Affairs	—	Ranil Wickremasinghe



Irrigation. Power & Highways	—	A. M. S. Adhikari
Trade	—	M. S. Amarasiri
Education	—	Lionel Jayatilieke
Finance	—	Festus Perera
Justice	—	Shelton Ranaraja
Health	—	Dharmasena Attygalle
Shipping, Aviation & Tourism	—	Nanda Matthew
Posts & Telecommunications	—	A. H. B. Pilapitiya
Labour	—	Joseph Michael Perera
Industries & Scientific Affairs	—	Denzil Fernando
Fisheries	—	Sunil Abeysundera
Information & Broadcasting	—	Chandra Karunaratne
Food & Co-operatives	—	S. Rajakaruna
Textile Industries	—	R. A. Dharmadasa Banda
Parliamentary Affairs & Sports	—	Edwin Tillekeratne

The results of the General Election merit analysis with special reference to why almost everybody failed to predict the outcome.

As enumerated in detail in Chapter I, the considered opinion of J. R. Jayewardene was that in the years gone by the political base of the UNP was never too large. According to him that was reflected in the UNP being compelled to form coalition or minority Governments after winning the General Elections of 1947, March 1960 and 1965. The sole exception to that pattern was the landslide of 1952 which was determined largely by the emotional forces generated by the tragic death of D. S. Senanayake a few months earlier. Even then the UNP received only 44% of the popular vote. Hence J. R. Jayewardene methodically set about the task of expanding the political base of the UNP ever since the leadership of the Party devolved on him.

In 1977 there were no emotional issues nor extenuating circumstances but the UNP won in a manner which made both the victor and the vanquished gasp in utter disbelief. Hence it would be logical to conclude that the UNP had in a very real sense expanded its political base substantially.



J. R. Jayewardene achieved that primarily through an efficient grass - roots organisation which took the basic thinking of the new UNP to every village and every town and also maximised the unpopularity of the discredited Sirima Bandaranaike Administration. Thus he generated a tide which surged through towns and villages and swept aside almost every rival. That splendid organisation also caused the thinking at the grass-roots level to seep upwards and thereby allowed J. R. Jayewardene to assess on a realistic basis what the new programmes and policies of the UNP should be, over and above the rejection of capitalism and reaction.

The performance of that grass-roots organisation was self-evident at every turn. Whereas in 1970 and before a UNP pandal or rostrum was constructed by one or more mudalalis\*, in 1977 it was constructed entirely with contributions of cash and labour of several hundred UNP members in the area. To cite an example, when J. R. Jayewardene visited Nattandiya on April 3rd 1977 his motorcade traversed a distance of 8 miles with gokkola\*\* decorations on both sides of the road and green bunting across the road. It represented the labour of over 5,000 UNP members working continuously over a period of 24 hours. It was no accident that Harold Herat, who sought election to Parliament for the first time, won with a majority of 6,499 eclipsing the performance of even Sir Albert Peries (UNP - Nattandiya), who was Speaker of the House of Representatives on more than one occasion. To cite another example, E. L. Senanayake who has contested almost every General Election since 1952 claimed that he had never seen such enthusiasm for the UNP in the Kandy district as in 1977. When J. R. Jayewardene announced that he would launch his General Election campaign from Kandy on May 25th, over 25,000 UNP workers from Mahanuwara, Senkadagala, Hewaheta, Udunuwara, Yatinuwara, Harispattuwa, Pata Dumbara and Kundasale poured into Kandy and its environs and worked two days and one night to prepare for him

---

Notes for foreign readers — \* businessmen of peasant stock.

\*\* young coconut leaves.



the most appropriate atmosphere in which to launch the campaign. Here again it was no coincidence that Mahanuwara, Senkadagala, Hewaheta, Udunuwara, Harispattuwa, Pata Dumbara and Kundasale recorded UNP victories by unprecedented majorities and in Yatinuwara Sunil Abeysondera, despite the handicap of belonging to a minority caste, defeated the powerful Hector Kobbekaduwa. In Moratuwa UNP workers visited every home twice or thrice and the Oxford-educated Tyronne Fernando, on his first attempt to enter Parliament, won by a staggering majority of 14,874.

The UNP electoral network was so well organised in Colombo Central that when R. Premadasa lost his mother every single household received a personal intimation within 24 hours of the death. In the North Western Province which was exceptionally well organised that devastating booklet of cartoons "The Seven Year Scourge" reached every village within a week of publication, even before Wickrema Weerasooriya was arrested. Once again it was no coincidence that Premadasa won the multi-member seat of Colombo Central by 35,156 votes and the UNP won 20 out of 21 seats in the North Western Province, despite the extensive land reforms effected in that Province by the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration.

In direct contrast S. A. Raheem, the UNP candidate for Mannar, who won that seat by 75 votes in 1974 (he lost it by 69 in 1970) refused to learn the new campaigning techniques of the UNP. Despite several warnings he did not enroll even one member on the Re. 1/- Membership Drive\* and had no electoral network comparable with other UNP candidates. The result was that he lost by 2,212 votes to the TULF despite another Tamil contesting as an Independent.

Though there was considerable doubt, even in some well-informed circles, that the UNP could ever shed its affinity to capitalism and reaction and a belief that the unprecedented victory was not so much an expression of confidence in the UNP as a total rejection of the SLFP, there is definite evidence that the new image of the UNP had a significant impact on the masses and contributed to the landslide victory.

---

\* The membership at the national level in July 1977 was over 9,0,000



In 1965 Dudley Senanayake led the UNP to victory and won Dedigama by 3,429 votes. In 1973 two months after the unprecedented display of sorrow upon his demise Rukman Senanayake won Dedigama by 4,508. In 1977, despite several members of the Senanayake family having surreptitiously or otherwise worked against the UNP, Nissanka Wijeyeratne won by 6,532.

Since 1947 Akuressa has been a Communist stronghold and has always returned a candidate of that party or a fellow traveller. Matara was almost similar\*. In 1977 the UNP won Akuressa by 9,303 votes and Matara by 10,637. In both instances the UNP candidate polled more than 5,000 votes in excess of the combined votes of all non-UNP candidates.

Despite all the pioneering work undertaken and the development work done in the Gal Oya valley and in the Polonnaruwa district by successive UNP Administrations, the UNP never won Amparai and never won Polonnaruwa after Independence. Thus lamented Dudley Senanayake. Yet in 1977 the UNP won Amparai by 8,572 votes and Polonnaruwa by 5,015.

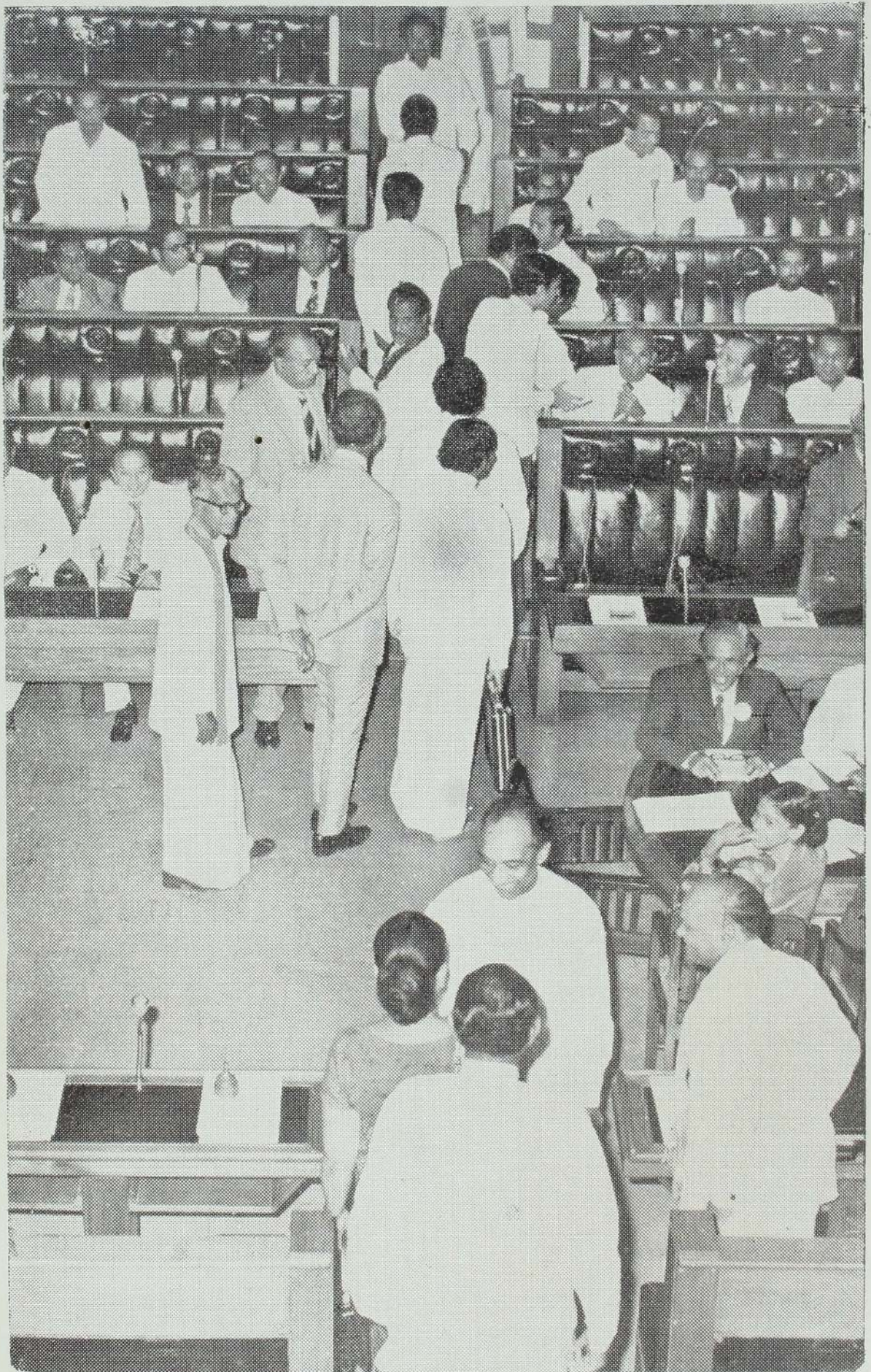
In every General Election held in 1956 and thereafter the Kalutara district voted solidly Left and even in 1965 the UNP won only 1 seat in that district as against 3 of the LSSP and 4 of the SLFP. In 1977 all 8 seats were won by the UNP and even had there been a no-contest pact between the SLFP and the LSSP, on the basis of arithmetic the UNP would still have won all the seats. A mere protest vote could conceivably not have produced a shift in balance of that magnitude in a Left-oriented district.

Above all, since 1956 the UNP had never won the 40 seats listed overleaf which in a very real sense had been looked upon as the power bases of the SLFP and the Marxist parties:

---

\* The UNP held it for one month having won in March 1960





The victor and vanquished meet in Parliament







Attanagalla, Amparai, Anutadhapura, Avissawella, Baddegama, Badulla, Balangoda, Bandaragame, Bandarawela, Dambadeniya, Dambulla, Devinuwara, Dehiowita (now Deraniyagala), Dompe, Haputale, Horana, Kalmunai, Katugampola, Kamburupitiya, Kekirawa, Kiriella (now Eheliyagoda) Mahara, Madawachchiya, Mihintale, Matugama, Minneriya, Minuwangoda, Moneragala, Mulkirigala, Niviti-gala, Panadura, Pelmadulla, Polonnaruwa, Rattota, Tissamaharama, Uva Paranagama, Walapane, and Yatiyantota.

In 1977 the UNP won 38 of those seats and in Attanagalla reduced the majority of Sirima Bandaranaike from 21,723 in 1970 to 10,663 and in Madawachchiya reduced that of Maithripala Senanayake from 9,598 to 366. In every one of those 38 seats, except Avissawella where the UNP polled 49.8% of votes, the UNP polled more than the combined votes of all other candidates. The irresistible conclusion is that the UNP made inroads into the preserves of the SLFP and the Marxist parties only because the UNP had changed its policies radically.

As elaborated upon in Chapter I, J. R. Jayewardene was the architect of the new policies and the new electoral network of the UNP. Ironically he himself under-estimated the devastating impact of such reforms. Others did likewise and hence very few predicted the UNP winning more than 120 seats.

Another contributory factor to the avalanche not being predicted was that the large scale abuse of power by the Sirima Bandaranaike Administration produced not an outburst of anger but a conspiracy of silence with many giving meaningful expression to their disgust only inside the polling booth.

Despite the fact that since 1952 every incumbent Government had lost at the General Election it faced and that in 1965 and 1970 Sri Lanka set up world records with



a poll of 82.0% and 85.1% respectively, Sirima Bandaranaike equated her triumph of 1970 to some divine right to embark upon a family dynasty of a magnitude unheard of in Sri Lanka since medieval times.

She and her family set out to control the machinery of State as if it was a family heirloom and surrounded themselves with an assortment of sycophants, courtiers and adventurers. It caused effects which were partly comic and partly tragic.

For instance a senior career diplomat with rank of Ambassador routinely addressed correspondence to her as 'My dear most revered and esteemed Madam'. One of her Service chiefs not only insisted on being her personal pilot but personally supervised the loading and unloading of her baggage into the aircraft. More than one Deputy Inspector-General of Police including some of the Roman Catholic faith referred to Sirima Bandaranaike as 'Our Lady' in a manner identical to their reference to the Virgin Mary. Such levels of sycophancy were looked upon by their underlings as worthy examples to be emulated resulting in Sirima Bandaranaike being systematically surrounded by "loyal" public servants and isolated from the broad masses with whose support the SLFP had been swept into power over and over again.

Moreover Sirima Bandaranaike ushered in an era of unprecedented political victimisation. Those opposed to her Administration, and that included amongst others 37.8% of the population that voted UNP in 1970 as against the 48.9% that voted for the United Front, often lived in fear of losing what they valued. In 1971 some even lived in fear of losing their lives. The Rule of Law was supplanted by the whim and fancy of Sirima Bandaranaike and her family who were oblivious to the fact that in Sri Lanka those who are victims of injustice have sympathy showered on them to the same extent that those who are successful are bedevilled with jealousy. Above all they were impervious to the fact that power resides not in the Prime Minister, nor in her family, but in the people.



The systematic political victimisation at the grass roots level and the steady erosion of personal liberties affected the day-to-day living of hundreds of thousands of people and over the years built up a resistance of undeterminable proportions. Many were frightened to speak, for they were well aware of the wrath visited upon those who gave vent to their feelings. Besides the excesses of the Police and the Military in 1971 caused a traumatic fear which was aroused whenever there was talk of a postponement of the General Election. Nevertheless the masses, though timid, waited for an opportunity to deal with their oppressors. They got that opportunity on July 21st 1977.



## EPILOGUE

Pursuant to his election pledges J. R. Jayewardene has given the highest priority to ushering in a just and free society. He has extended to his defeated foes magnanimity unprecedented in recent times. He has extended the hand of friendship even to those who heaped calumny upon him.

In accordance with the UNP manifesto tangible results have already been shown in bringing the cost of living within tolerable limits. Steps have also been taken to usher in a period of relative prosperity through the liberalisation of imports and the minimising of bureaucratic controls.

After years of misrule meaningful steps have been taken to assure the public servants that their livelihood depends not on political patronage but on performance. After years of neglect the Opposition has been given its rightful place in Parliament.

As this book goes into print anti-social elements are making sinister moves to misdirect the energies of the youth. By the same token the Government is preparing a massive crash program to divert such youthful talent into constructive development along avenues of gainful employment.

Thus has begun a new era in Sri Lanka, under a Colossus that bestrides the contemporary scene.

August 18th 1977  
Colombo, Sri Lanka



## POSTSCRIPT

---

### NOTE BY THE SWASTIKA PRESS

It is our intention to add to future editions a 12 page account of the performance of the J. R. Jayewardene Administration.

---







## APPENDIX A

### A CONTRAST

#### RESULTS OF THE GENERAL ELECTIONS OF 1977 AND 1970

ELECTORATE	RESULTS	MAJORITY
1. Colombo-North	1977—Vincent Perera (UNP)	15,142
	1970—V. A. Sugathadasa (UNP)	7,147
2. Colombo-Central	1977—R. Premadasa (UNP)	35,156
	Jabir Cader (UNP)	5,196
	Halim Ishak (SLFP)	26,813
	1970—R. Premadasa (UNP)	5,686
	Falil Cafoor (UNP)	5,067
	Pieter Keunaman (CP)	16,841
3. Borella	1977—M. H. Mohamed (UNP)	10,012
	1970—Kusala Abeywardene (LSSP)	592
4. Colombo East*	1977—A. E. Samarawickrema (UNP)	12,043
5. Colombo West*	1977—J. R. Jayewardene (UNP)	17,938
6. Dehiwela	1977—S. De. S. Jayasinghe (UNP)	12,368
	1970—Vivienne Gunawardene (LSSP)	1,967
7. Ratmalana*	1977—Lalith Athulathmudali (UNP)	7,831
8. Wattala	1977—Shelton Jayasinghe (UNP)	11,678
	1970—A. D. J. L. Leo (SLFP)	2,189
9. Negombo	1977—Denzil Fernando (UNP)	14,752
10. Katana	1977—Wijepala Mendis (UNP)	4,212
	1970—K. C. De Silva (SLFP)	10,781

\* New electorate



ELECTORATE	RESULTS	MAJORITY
11. Divulapitiya	1977—Ariyaratne Jayatileke (UNP) 1977—Lakshman Jayakody (SLFP)	2,874 9,171
12. Mirigama	1977—Mahendra Wijeratne (UNP) 1970—Siva Obeysekera (SLFP)	9,797 5,324
13. Minuwangoda	1977—Bennet Gunasekera (UNP) 1970—M. P. De Z. Siriwardene (SLFP)	6,103 6,838
14. Attanagala	1977—Sirima Bandaranaike (SLFP) 1970—Sirima Bandaranaike (SLFP)	10,663 21,723
15. Gampaha	1977—S. D. Bandaranayake (SLFP) 1970—A. T. Basanayake (SLFP)	522 12,211
16. Ja-Ela	1977—Joseph Michael Perera (UNP) 1970—Paris Perera (UNP)	16,252 1,895
17. Mahara	1977—Tudor Gunasekera (UNP) 1970—S. K. K. Suriyaaratchi (SLFP)	2,632 10,796
18. Dompe	1977—Sarathchandra Rajakaruna (UNP) 1970—Felix Dias Bandaranaike (SLFP)	2,397 22,373
19. Biyagama*	1977—Ranil Wickremasinghe (UNP)	6,769
20. Kelaniya	1977—Cyril Mathew (UNP) 1970—R. S. Perera (SLFP)	6,519 8,339
21. Kolonnawa	1977—W. Mallimarachchi (UNP) 1970—T. B. Illangaratne (SLFP)	5,218 8,836
22. Kotte	1977—Anandatissa De Alwis (UNP) 1970—Stanley Tilekaratne (SLFP)	7,874 7,843
23. Kaduwela (formerly Kottawa)	1977—M. D. H. Jayewardene (UNP) 1970—Chandra Gunasekera (LSSP)	11,795 11,495
24. Avissawella	1977—M. D. Premaratne (UNP) 1970—Bonnie Jayasuriya (SLFP)	5,515 2,026



ELECTORATE	RESULTS	MAJORITY
25. Homagama	1977—Gamini Jayasuriya (UNP) 1970—Wilfred Senanayake (LSSP)	14,388 7,259
26. Maharagama*	1977—Premaratne Gunasekera (UNP)	6,717
27. Kesbewa	1977—Dharmasena Attygalle (UNP) 1970—Somawira Chandrasiri (SLFP)	5,600 14,608
28. Moratuwa	1977—Tyronne Fernando (UNP) 1970—Wimalasiri de Mel (LSSP)	14,874 4,414
29. Panadura	1977—Neville Fernando (UNP) 1970—Leslie Gunawardene (LSSP)	11,132 8,596
30. Bandaragama	1977—R. G. Samaranayake (UNP) 1970—H. Wickremasinghe (SLFP)	8,302 11,969
31. Horana	1977—Indradasa Hettiarchchi (UNP) 1970—Ratnasiri Wickremanayake (SLFP)	7,735 6,753
32. Bulathsinhala	1977—O. S. Perera (UNP) 1970—Mangala Munasinghe (LSSP)	4,429 10,795
33. Matugama	1977—R. V. Wijegooneratne (UNP) 1970—Daya T. Pasqual (SLFP)	14,987 10,720
34. Kalutara	1977—V. L. Wijemanne (UNP) 1970—Cholmondley Gunawardene (LSSP)	14,790 6,105
35. Beruwala**	1977—M. A. Bakeer Markar (UNP) R. G. Samaranayake (SLFP) 1970—I. A. Cader (SLFP)	27,672 5,980 3,940
36. Agalawatte	1977—Merril Kariyawasam (UNP) 1970—Colvin R. de Silva (LSSP)	11,376 5,186
37. Dambulla	1977—F. W. R. M. Ekanayake (UNP) 1970—T. B. Tennekoon (SLFP)	11,376 3,887
38. Laggala	1977—J. G. Wijeratne Banda (UNP) 1970—Monty Gopallawa (SLFP)	3,395 3,274

\*\* Beruwela was made in to a multi - member seat in 1976.



<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>	<i>MAJORITY</i>
39. Matale	1977—Alick Aluvihare (UNP) 1970—Richard Udugama (SLFP)	12,906 650
40. Rattota	1977—P. B. Kaviratne (UNP) 1970—S. B. Yalegama (SLFP)	12,035 4,503
41. Galagedera	1977—W. M. G. T. Banda (UNP) 1970—Tamara Illangaratne (SLFP)	5,873 2,560
42. Harispattuwa (formerly Akurana)	1977—A. C. S. Hameed (UNP) R. P. Wijeriri (Ind) 1970—A. C. S. Hameed (UNP) D. G. H. Siriseña (SLFP)	25,230 272 119 19,518
43. Pata Dumbara (formerly Wattegama)	1977—T. B. Werapitiya (UNP) 1970—A. Fernhndo (SLFP)	10,497 1,981
44. Udadumbara (formerly Minipe)	1976—R. B. Attanayake (UNP) 1970—H. M. Navaratna (SLFP)	2,402 2,328
45. Teldeniya	1977—Gamini Rajapaksa (UNP) 1970—Raja Kulatileka (SLFP)	1,136 3,419
46. Kundasale	1977—D. M. Chandrapala (UNP) 1970—U. P. Y. Jinadasa (SLFP)	7,186 2,109
47. Hewaheta	1977—Anura Daniel (UNP) 1970—Piyasena Tennakoon (SLFP)	6,750 2,617
48. Senkadagala	1977—Shelton Ranaraja (UNP) 1970—Noel Wimalasena (SLFP)	5,591 325
49. Mahanuwara	1977—E. L. Senanayake (UNP) 1970—E. L. Senanayake (UNP)	7,111 1,029
50. Yatinuwara	1977—Sunil Abeyesundara (UNP) 1970—Hector Kobbekaduwa (SLFP)	2,592 5,493
51. Udunuwara	1977—D. B. Wijetunge (UNP) 1970—T. B. Jayasundara (SLFP)	10,753 1,089
52. Gampola	1977—W. P. B. Dissanayake (UNP) 1970—D. M. Jayratna (SLFP)	6,221 1,246



<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>	<i>MAJORITY</i>
53. Nawalapitiya	1977—Chandra Karunaratne (UNP) 1970—M. S. Aluthgamage (SLFP)	9,207 3,102
54. Nuwara Eliya- Maskeliya*	1977—Gamini Dissanayake (UNP) Anura Bandaranaike (SLFP) S. Thondaman (CWC)	17,127 13,033 32,717
55. Kotmale	1977—Ananda Dassanayake (SLFP) 1977—J. D. Weerasekera (SLFP)	3,865 1,168
56. Hanguranketa	1977—George Abeygoonesekera (UNP) 1970—P. B. Unentenne (SLFP)	7,000 2,308
57. Walapane	1977—Renuka Herath (UNP) 1970—T. B. M. Herath (SLFP)	3,916 3,484
58. Balapitiya	1977—Norman Waidyaratne (UNP) 1970—Weerasinghe De Silve (LSSP)	8,942 8,228
59. Ambalangoda	1977—Ryter Tilakasekera (UNP) 1970—L. C. De Silva (LSSP)	7,175 10,628
60. Karandiniya *	1977—B. H. Senadheera (UNP)	6,908
61. Bentara-Elpitiya	1977—Rupa Karunatilake (UNP) 1970—Albert Kariyawasm (SLFP)	11,854 7,902
62. Hiniduma	1977—M. S. Amarasiri (UNP) 1970—Hendry Dissanayake (SLFP)	11,029 5,687
63. Baddegama	1977—E. D. Wickrematilake (UNP) 1970—Neale de Alwis (LSSP)	5,497 5,886
64. Ratgama	1977—Edwin Tilakaratne (UNP) 1970—M. G. Medis (CP)	6,752 11,627
65. Galle	1977—Albert de Silva (UNP) 1970—W. Dahanayake (UNP)	5,009 3,802



<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>	<i>MAJORITY</i>
66. Akmeemana	1977—Sumanadasa Abeywickrama (UNP)	6,114
	1970—Senapala Samarasekera (SLFP)	7,361
67. Habaraduwa	1977—P. Sumathiratna (UNP)	4,499
	1970—Prins Gunasekera (UNP)	9,672
68. Deniyaya	1977—Keerthi Abeywickrama (UNP)	4,333
	1970—Sumanapala Dahanayake (SLFP)	6,684
69. Hakmana	1977—Harshanath Wanigasekera (UNP)	7,506
	1970—Roy Rajapakse (SLFP)	9,473
70. Akuressa	1977—Dayananda Wickremasinghe (UNP)	9,303
	1970—S. A. Wickremasinghe (CP)	5,541
71. Kamburupitiya	1977—D. E. Malawarachchi (UNP)	9,676
	1970—Aelian Nanayakkara (CP)	9,246
72. Devinuwara	1977—Ronnie De Mel (UNP)	9,439
	1970—Ronnie de Mel (SLFP)	6,051
73. Matara	1977—S. K. Piyadasa (UNP)	10,637
	1970—B. Y. Tudawe (CP)	6,184
74. Weligama	1977—Montague Jayawickrema (UNP)	9,097
	1970—Pani Illangakoon (SLFP)	6,411
75. Mulkirigala	1977—T. D. Fransisko (UNP)	4,938
	1970—George Rajapakse (SLFP)	5,926
76. Beliatta	1977—Ranjith Atapattu (UNP)	6,393
	1970—Mahinda Rajapakse (SLFP)	6,626
77. Tangalla*	1977—Jinadasa Weerasinghe (UNP)	11,783
78. Tissamaharama	1977—P. M. B. Cyril (UNP)	7,770
	1970—Tennyson Edirisuriya (SLFP)	5,455



ELECTORATE	RESULTS	MAJORITY
79. Kayts	1977—K. P. Ratnam (TULF) 1970—K. P. Ratnam (FP)	3,967 8,066
80. Vaddukoddai	1977—T. Thirunvukarsu (TULF) 1970—A. Thiagaraja (TC)	18,208 725
81. Kankesanturai	1977—A. Amirthalingam (TULF) 1970—S. J. V. Chelvanayakam (FP)	25,833 5,356
82. Manipay (formerly Uduvil)	1977—V. Dharmalingom (TULF) 1970—V. Dharmalingam (FP)	24,250 2,464
83. Kopay	1977—S. Kathiravelupillai (TULF) 1978—S. Kathiravelupillai (FP)	22,353 5,140
84. Udupidy	1977—T. Rasalingam (TULF) 1970—M. Jeyakody (FP)	14,747 1,256
85. Point Pedro	1977—K. Thurairatnum (TULF) 1970—K. Thurairatnum (FP)	6,570 315
86. Chavakchcheri	1977—V. N. Navaratnam (TULF) 1970—V. N. Navaratnam (FP)	9,218 2,552
87. Nallur	1977—M. Sivasithamparam (TULF) 1970—C. Arulampalam (TC)	28,137 608
88. Jaffna	1977—V. Yogeswaran (TULF) 1970—C. X. Martyn (FP)	9,291 56
89. Killinochchi	1977—V. Anandasangari (TULF) 1970—V. Anandasangari (FP)	11,601 657
90. Mannar	1977—P. S. Soosaitasan (TULF) 1970—V. A. Alagakone (FP)	2,212 69
91. Mullaitivu*	1977—X. M. Sellathambu (TULF)	2,629
92. Vavuniya	1977—T. Sivasithamparam (TULF) 1970—S. Sellathampoe (FP)	4,377 273



ELECTORATE	RESULTS	MAJORITY
93. Seruwila*	1977—H. D. L. Leelaratna (UNP)	4,359
94. Trincomalee	1977—R. Sampanthan (TULF) 1970—B. Neminathan (FP)	3,321 4,049
95. Mutur (formerly a multi-member seat)	1977—M. E. H. Maharooof (UNP) 1970—A. L. Abdul Majeed (SLFP) A. Thangathurai (FP)	4,730 2,940 109
96. Kalkudah	1977—K. W. Devanayagam (UNP) 1970—K. W. Devanayagam (UNP)	545 2,785
97. Batticaloa	1977—C. Rajadurai (TULF) M. L. Ahamed Fareed (UNP) 1970—C. Rajadurai (FP) P. R. Selvanayagam (IND)	1,303 2,902 4,579 6,077
98. Paddiruppu	1977—P. Ganeshalingam (TLUF) 1970—S. U. Thambirasa (UNP)	10,244 647
99. Amparai	1977—P. Dayaratne (UNP) 1977—Senarath Somaratne (SLFP)	8,572 4,376
100. Sammanthurai (formerly Nintavur)	1977—M. A. Abdul Majeed (UNP) 1970—M. M. Mustapha (UNP)	5,027 75
101. Kalmunai	1977—A. R. M. Mansoor (UNP) 1970—M. C. Ahmed (SLFP)	5,543 952
102. Pottuvil	1977—bye-election 1970—M. A. Abdul Majeed (UNP)	— 1,275
103. Puttalam	1977—M. H. M. Naina Marikar (UNP) 1970—Hasan Kudoos (SLFP)	9,158 103
104. Anamaduwa*	1977—Tissa Wadigamanagawa (SLFP)	1,083
105. Chilaw	1977—Harin Corea (UNP) 1970—S. D. R. Jayaratne (SLFP)	5,807 4,784



	<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>	<i>MAJORITY</i>
106.	Nattandiya	1977—Harold Herath (UNP) 1970—Protus Tissera (SLFP)	6,449 1,450
107.	Wennappuwa	1977—Festus Perera (UNP) 1970—Augstinu Feonseka (SLFP)	11,248 3,342
108.	Galgamuwa*	1977—H. M. A. Lokubanda (UNP)	5,004
109.	Nikaweratiya	1977—H. B. Wanninayake (UNP) 1970—Mudiyanse Tennekoon (IND)	7,904 6,272
110.	Yapahuwa	1977—H. R. Abeyratne (UNP) 1970—Tissa Ballale (SLFP)	5,810 3,931
111.	Hiriyala	1977—S. B. Herath (UNP) 1970—S. B. Herath (UNP)	11,282 7,961
112.	Wariyapola	1977—Amara Ratnayake (UNP) 1970—M. A. J. Wijesinghe (SLFP)	4,090 7,618
113.	Panduwasnuwara*	1977—R. M. K. B. Ratnayake (UNP)	4,185
114.	Bingiriya	1977—J. L. Sirisena (UNP) 1970—L. B. Jayasena (SLFP)	3,387 8,546
115.	Katugampola	1977—Jayawickrema Perera (UNP) 1970—T. B. Subasinghe (SLFP)	9,020 5,825
116.	Kuliyapitiya	1977—Lionel Jayatilake (UNP) 1970—G. W. Samarasinghe (SLFP)	9,073 1,908
117.	Dambadeniya	1977—U. B. Wijekoon (UNP) 1970—P. B. Wittana (SLFP)	7,857 6,514
118.	Polgahawela	1977—Sunil Jayakody (UNP) 1970—Maithripala Herat (SLFP)	4,521 4,885
119.	Kurunegala	1977—D. B. Welagedera (UNP) 1970—Piyadasa Wijesinghe (SLFP)	7,455 2,664
120.	Mawatagama	1977—G. M. Premachandra (UNP) 1970—D. P. Wickremasinhge (SLFP)	4,784 4,496



<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>	<i>MAJORITY</i>
121. Dodangaslanda	1977—S. W. Alawathuwela (UNP) 1970—Samarapala Wijewardene (SLFP)	4,600 4,496
122. Medawachchiya	1977—Maithripala Senanayake (SLFP) 1970—Maithripala Senanayake (SLFP)	366 9,598
123. Horowpatana	1977—E.L. B. Hurulle (UNP) 1970—T. B. Herat (SLFP)	4,182 2,572
124. Anuradhapura * (East)	1977—Yasapala Herath (UNP)	1,882
125. Anuradhapura * (West)	1977—K. D. M. C. Bandara (UNP)	2,815
126. Kalawana	1977 A. M. S. Adikari (UNP) 1970—R. B. Ratnamalala (SLFP)	2,643 2,858
127. Mihintale	1977—Daya Walagambahu (UNP) 1970—Pathiraja Tennekoon (SLFP)	2,832 3,442
128. Kekirawa	1977—G. D. Mahindasoma (UNP) 1970—A. M. Jinadasa (SLFP)	5,453 2,016
129. Minneriya	1977—Merill de Silva (UNP) 1970—Deshapriya Senanayake (SLFP)	4,583 2,548
130. Medirigiriya *	1977—A. D. B. Ekanayake (UNP)	4,396
131. Polonnaruwa	1977—H. G. P. Nelson (UNP) 1970—Lee'aratne Wijesinghe (SLFP)	5,015 1,125
132. Mahiyangana	1977—C. P. J. Seneviratne (UNP) 1970—Edwin Wickremaratne (SLFP)	8,801 2,556
133. Wiyaluwa *	1977—Samaraweera Weerawanni (UNP)	1,131
134. Passara	1977—W. M. Karunaratne (UNP) 1970—Somaratne Seneviratne (SLFP)	4,457 2,584
135. Badulla	1977—Vincent Dias (UNP) 1970—B. H. Bandara (SLFP)	3,706 3,588



	<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>	<i>MAJORITY</i>
136.	Hali-Ela	1977—R. M. Abeykoon (UNP) 1970—K. M. Wijeratne Banda (SLFP)	4,605 3,306
137.	Uva Paranagama	1977—R. M. Karunaratne (UNP) 1970—S. B. Delungahawatte (SLFP)	4,974 1,715
138.	Welimada	1977—Percy Samaraweera (UNP) 1970—R. M. Bandara (SLFP)	7,681 uncontested
139.	Bandarawela	1977—R. M. Appuhamy (UNP) ** 1970—R. M. Appuhamy (SLFP) **	4,577 2,940
140.	Haputale	1977—W. M. J. Lokubandara (UNP) 1970—W. P. G. Ariyadasa (SLFP)	3,372 1,443
141.	Bibile	1977—R. M. Dharmadasa Banda (UNP) 1970—M. J. Attanayake (SLFP)	6,360 2,943
142.	Moneragala	1977—R. M. Punchi Bandara (UNP) 1970—Raja Welegama (SLFP)	1,945 6,907
143.	Wellawaya *	1977—J. M. Kumaradasa	1,793
144.	Dedigama	1977—Nissanka Wijeyeratne (UNP) 1970—Dudley Senanayake (UNP)	6,732 1,067
145.	Galigamuwa	1977—Wimala Kannangara (UNP) 1970—P. B. Balasuriya (SLFP)	3,755 4,688
146.	Kegalla	1977—N. A. Seneviratne (UNP) 1970—P. B. G. Kalugalle (SLFP)	2,064 9,032
147.	Rambukkana	1977—Asoka Karunaratne (UNP) 1970—Ananda Sirisena (SLFP)	5,982 4,199
148.	Mawanella	1977—C. R. Belligamma (UNP) 1970—P. R. Ratnayke (SLFP)	6,579 4,738
149.	Aranayake*	1977—Wasantha Udayaratne (UNP)	6,180
150.	Yatiantota	1977—K. Vincent Perera (UNP) 1970—N. M. Perera (LSSP)	2,517 3,989

\*\* Two different candidates



<i>ELECTORATE</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>	<i>MAJORITY</i>
151. Ruanwella	1977—P. C. Imbulana (UNP) 1970—Athauda Seneviratne (LSSP)	4,067 2,936
152. Deraniyagala (formerly Dehiowita)	1977—A. K. D. Wanigaratne (UNP) 1970—Dhanapala Weerasekera (LSSP)	10,240 4,209
153. Eheliyagoda	1977—Mervyn Kularatne (UNP) 1970—Vasudeva Nanayakkara (LSSP)	6,972 6,183
154. Ratnapura	1977—G. V. Punchi Nilame (UNP) 1970—Nanda Ellawala (SLFP)	7,523 10,631
155. Pelmadulla	1977—Chandra Gankande (UNP) 1970—Dharmadasa Wanniaratchi (UNP)	2,557 5,973
156. Balangoda	1977—M. L. M. Aboosally (UNP) 1970—Mallika Ratwatte (SLFP)	3,673 7,189
157. Rakwana	1977—Harold Kularatne (UNP) 1970—V. T. G. Karunaratne (SLFP)	6,878 3,168
158. Nivitigala	1977—Gamini Atukorale (UNP) 1970—Piyadasa Harischandra (SLFP)	1,655 3,185
159. Kalawana	1977—A. H. B. Pilapitiya (UNP) 1970—Sarath Muttetuwegama (CP)	1,662 4,795
160. Kolonne	1977—Nanda Mathew (UNP) 1970—P. O. Wimalanga (LSSP)	7,475 7,108



## APPENDIX B

### THE ROLE OF J. R. JAYEWARDENE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

The thinking of J. R. Jayewardene on matters pertaining to Foreign affairs has always been on a utility basis as opposed to the furtherance of vague theories and abstruse philosophies. With the advent of Independence to Sri Lanka and other countries of South-East Asia, by 1950 J. R. Jayewardene contended that taking into account the prevailing mood in the affluent nations, it would be feasible to set up a consortium to accelerate economic development over and above the progress achieved through commercial investments. The Marshall Plan financed by the United States had greatly enhanced the rate of rehabilitation in war-torn Europe, initially through generous contributions of food, shelter, clothing and medicine and later through provision of capital. However J. R. Jayewardene was of the opinion that there was no country in the world that would be interested in providing capital for the development of South-East Asia as the Marshall Plan itself provided capital not for development as such but for rehabilitation.

He therefore figured that on a realistic basis the critical inputs of foreign origin into newly independent countries were expertise, equipment and training facilities abroad all geared to combat the recurrent problem of low productivity. Being well aware of the stubborn fact that national interests dominate international relations, J. R. Jayewardene mapped out a strategy whereby the affluent nations of the Commonwealth would make available the services of experts gratis, donate equipment and award fellowships to train personnel in their countries. Such a programme he shrewdly assessed would entail much benefit to the recipient nation and also some benefit to the donor



nation, in the way of new markets and new horizons when viewed against the favourable climate which then prevailed. Accordingly he made his proposals at the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference held in Colombo in January 1950.

The influential "London Times" claimed that J. R. Jayewardene made this proposal "at a time when the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers' Conference held in Colombo was wallowing in words with no practical decisions reached. The proposals fired the imagination of all delegates because it is so immense in conception and is vital to the future stability of the Commonwealth".

Such a proposal necessarily involved an unequal relationship between the donor and the recipient. The initial enthusiasm amongst the donor nations was from Australia. After World War II Australia looked upon itself no longer as an isolated entity, but as a close neighbour of South-East Asia from where Japan had mounted her attack on Drawin. The consensus of opinion in Australia was that had the battle at Coral Sea not been so decisive, she herself would have come under Japanese occupation. Hence Australia had courted Indonesia ever since she became a sovereign nation in 1945, as any military attack on Australia in a future war could conceivably be only through Indonesia, due to considerations of geographical proximity.

Sir Percy Spender stated that Australia believed in helping South-East Asian countries to help themselves, alluded to Australian technical assistance to Indonesia and suggested that all Governments represented at the Conference jointly discuss the proposal of J. R. Jayewardene within a framework of reality. The discussions proved to be fruitful and the Conference ended on the following note:

"Executive decisions are not taken at Commonwealth meetings of this kind, but as a result of a valuable exchange of views which has taken place, recommendations will be submitted to Commonwealth Governments for the furtherance of economic development in South



and South-East Asia. These included a proposal for the establishment of a Consultative Committee representing the Commonwealth Governments interested in this area. It is contemplated that this Committee would hold its first meeting in Australia”.

J. R. Jayewardene led the Sri Lanka delegation to the Conference held in Sydney in May 1950. Sir Percy Spender in his opening address said inter alia, “Australia strives to support the national sovereignty of our neighbouring states to enable them to establish themselves in the comity of nations and to help them to achieve economic security and to solve their internal problems. Our help is offered in the belief that political stability should be founded not merely on just and equitable Government, but also on economic prosperity.”

These sentiments were endorsed by the spokesmen for Britain, Canada and New Zealand among nations which could afford to be donors.\* It was also decided to invite the United States to join the list of donor nations thereby taking the original proposal of J. R. Jayewardene beyond the ambit of the Commonwealth. The consensus of opinion was that a blueprint be prepared assessing the capacity of the donor nations for an initial development cycle of six years and J. R. Jayewardene wound up the Conference on the strain, “We are now proceeding from the arena of words to the arena of deeds”.

As agreed upon in Sydney, the next Conference was held in London in September 1950. With the project receiving the support of the United States, its membership was extended to all countries in South-East Asia and the session in London was represented by 17 nations as against the 7 in Colombo. Following deliberations in Lancaster House, on October 4th 1950 the Colombo Plan was born from the idea conceived in Colombo by J. R. Jayewardene

---

\* The participating nations were Australia, Britain, Canada, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. South Africa which attended the Conference in Colombo did not participate in Sydney.



and nurtured in Australia by Sir Percy Spender. The initial fiscal commitment was £ 1868 million of which Sri Lanka was to receive an allocation of £ 102 million, then amounting to Rs. 1,359 million.

D. S. Senanayake as Prime Minister was Minister for Defence and External Affairs in conformity with the constitution. He was indeed very pleased with the performance of J. R. Jayewardene on the Colombo Plan. Hence in 1951 when the Allied Powers convened a Peace Conference in San Francisco to determine the future role of Japan and the Prime Minister could not represent Sri Lanka due to ill health, he selected J. R. Jayewardene to lead the delegation. In doing so, he gave J. R. Jayewardene preference even over the more senior S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, who in 1949 had led with characteristic brilliance the Sri Lanka delegation to a conference convened in New Delhi to discuss the threat of Dutch mercenaries to the sovereignty of Indonesia.

The Peace Conference in San Francisco was pursuant to the Potsdam Declaration of July 1945 which stipulated that the Armed Forces of the United States occupying Japan would:

1. Eliminate the authority and influence of irresponsible militarism within Japan.
2. Disarm the Armed Forces of Japan.
3. Mete out stern justice to Japanese war criminals.
4. Strengthen the existing democratic tendencies of the Japanese people.

These considerations were met in full by 1951 whereupon President Harry S. Truman initiated the San Francisco Peace Treaty to restore to Japan her dignity and sovereignty. By and large these overtures were well received. However, a few notable exceptions were that China was not represented due to the conflict between the interests of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan, which the United States then recognized as China; Burma refused to



attend on the grounds of inadequate reparations; India declined the invitation for technical reasons; Indonesia and the Phillipines were participants but were not in favour of signing the Treaty as the horrors of the Japanese occupation of their countries had left scars which had still not healed.

Against the background of the prevailing Cold War the Soviet Union exploited these misgivings to embarrass the United States. Although one of the three signatories to the Potsdam Declaration, the other two being the United States and Britain, the Soviet Union did not fire one shell nor lose one life in the war with Japan which she entered on August 8th 1945, two days after the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and one day before the next atom bomb descended on Nagasaki causing Japan to surrender unconditionally. The polemics of the Cold War being what they were the Soviet strategy was to embarrass the United States by filibustering and to strike a hard bargain with Japan over the return of the Kurile and Sakhalin islands which Russia ceded to Japan following her defeat in the Russo-Japanese war in 1904.

The atmosphere was still tense and uncertain when J. R. Jayewardene addressed the Conference on September 9th, 1951, as follows:

“Mr Chairman, I consider it a great privilege to be afforded the opportunity of placing before this Assembly of fifty-one nations the views of the Government of Ceylon on the draft Treaty of Peace which we have been invited to approve. My statement will consist of the reasons for our acceptance of this Treaty, and I shall also attempt to meet some of the criticisms that have been levelled against it. It is true that I can speak only on behalf of my Government, but I claim that I can voice the sentiments of the people of Asia in their general attitude towards the future of Japan. I need not deal with the events that led to the formulation of the final draft of the Treaty which we are considering. Mr. John Foster Dulles, the American representative, and Mr. Kenneth Younger, the British representative, have given us a full



and fair account of these events, beginning with the capitulation of Japan in August 1945. It may, however, be mentioned that there was a serious conflict of opinion between the four major powers as to the procedure that should be adopted to draft this Treaty, the Soviet Union insisting that the four major powers alone—that is, the Council of Foreign Ministers of the U. S. A., U. K., China and the U. S. S. R.—should alone undertake it, and that the power of veto would be used by them if any others were admitted for the purpose of drafting the Treaty.

“The United Kingdom insisted that the Dominions should be consulted and the United States of America agreed with her. They also supported consultation with all the countries that took part in the war against Japan.

“Among these countries, too, there was a difference of opinion as to the actual terms of the Treaty by various considerations, some by a fear of the rising of a new militaristic Japan, and others yet unable to forget the damage and the horrors caused by the Japanese invasions.

“I venture to submit that it was at the Colombo Conference of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers held in January, 1950, that for the first time the case for a completely independent Japan was proposed and considered. The Colombo Conference considered Japan not as an isolated case, but as part of the region known as South and South-East Asia, containing a large proportion of the world's wealth and population, and consisting of countries which have only recently regained their Freedom, whose people were still suffering as a result of centuries of neglect. Two ideas emerged from that Conference: one, that of an independent Japan, and the other, the necessity for the economic and social development of the peoples of South and South-East Asia, to ensure which what is now known as the Colombo Plan was launched.

“Mr. Younger has explained how, after that Conference, a Working Committee of Commonwealth High Commissioners



worked on a draft Treaty, and later had consultations with the American representative, Mr. Dulles.

“The Treaty now before us is the result of those consultations and negotiations. It represents some of the views that my Government had, and some of them which it did not have. I claim that at the present moment it represents the largest common measure of agreement that could be attained among the countries that were willing to discuss peace with Japan.

“The main idea that animated the Asian countries, Ceylon, India and Pakistan, in their attitude to Japan was that Japan should be free. I claim that this Treaty embodies the idea in its entirety. There are other matters which are external to the question of Japan's freedom, namely, should that freedom be limited to the main islands of Honshu, Hokkaido, Kyushu and Shikoku or should it extend to several minor islands in the neighbourhood. If not, what should we do with those islands? Should Formosa be returned to China in accordance with the Cairo Declaration of 1943? If so, to which Government of China? Should China be invited to the Peace Treaty Conference? If so, for which Government should reparations be exacted from Japan? If so, the amount. How is Japan to defend herself until she organises her own defence?

“On the main question of the freedom of Japan, we were able to agree ultimately, and the Treaty embodies that agreement. On the other matters, there were sharp differences of opinion, and the Treaty embodies the majority views. My Government would have preferred it if some of those questions were answered in a different way, but the fact that the majority does not agree with us is no reason why we should abstain from signing the Treaty, which contains the central concept of a free and independent Japan.

“We feel that the allied matters I mentioned earlier are not insoluble if Japan is free, that they are insoluble if Japan is not free. A free Japan, through, let us say the United Nations Organization, can discuss these problems



with the other free nations of the world and arrive at early and satisfactory decisions. By signing this Treaty we are enabling Japan to be in a position to do so, to enter into a treaty of friendship with the Government of China which she decides to recognize, and I am happy to state, enabling her to enter into a Treaty of peace and friendship with India. If we do not sign this Treaty, none of those eventualities can take place.

“Why is it that the peoples of Asia are anxious that Japan should be free? It is because of our age-long connections with her, and because of the high regard the subject peoples of Asia had for Japan when she alone, among the Asian nations, was strong and free and we looked up to her as a guardian and friend. I can recall incidents that occurred during the last war, when the co-prosperity slogan for Asia had its appeal to subject peoples, and some of the leaders of Burma, India and Indonesia joined the Japanese in the hope that thereby their beloved countries may be liberated.

“We in Ceylon were fortunate that we were not invaded, but the damage caused by air raids, by the stationing of enormous armies under the South-East Asia Command, and by the slaughter-tapping of one of our main commodities, rubber, when we were the only producer of natural rubber for the Allies, entitle us to ask that the damage so caused be repaired. We do not intend to do so (pin drop silence) for we believe in the words of the great Teacher whose message has ennobled the lives of countless millions in Asia, that hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love, (Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida of Japan wipes tears.) It is the message of the Buddha, the Great Teacher, the founder of Buddhism, which spread a wave of humanism through South Asia, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Siam, Indonesia and Ceylon, and also northwards through the Himalayas into Tibet, China and finally, Japan, which bound us together for hundreds of years with a common culture and heritage. This common culture still exists, as I found on my visit to Japan last week on my way to attend this Conference; and from the leaders of Japan, Ministers of State as well as private citizens, from their priests in the temples, I gathered the impression that the common people of Japan are still



influenced by the shadow of that great teaching of Peace, and wish to follow it. We must give them that opportunity. (Many high-ranking Japanese wipe tears.)

“That is why I cannot subscribe to the view of the delegate of the Soviet Union when he proposes that the freedom of Japan should be limited. (pin drop silence) The restrictions he wishes to impose, such as the limitation on the right of Japan to maintain such defence forces as a free nation is entitled to, and the other limitations she proposes, will make this Treaty not acceptable, not only to the vast majority of the delegates present here, but even to some of the countries that have not attended this Conference, particularly India, which wishes to go even further than this Treaty visualizes. If again the Soviet Union wishes the islands of Ryukyu and Bonin returned to Japan, contrary to the Cairo and Potsdam Declarations, why should then South Sakilin, as well as Kuriles be also not returned to Japan?

“It is also interesting to note that the amendments of the Soviet Union seek to ensure for the people of Japan the fundamental freedoms of expression, of press and publication, of religious worship, of political opinion and of public meeting – freedoms which the people of the Soviet Union themselves would dearly love to possess and enjoy. (thunderous ovation)

“The reason why, therefore, we cannot agree to the amendments proposed by the Soviet delegate, is because this Treaty proposes to return to Japan sovereignty, equality and dignity and we cannot do so if we give them with qualifications. The purpose of the Treaty then is to make Japan free, to impose no restrictions on Japan's recovery, to see to it that she organizes her own military defence against external aggression and internal subversion, and that until she does so, she invites the aid of a friendly power to protect her and that no reparations be exacted from her that harm her economy.

“This Treaty is as magnanimous as it is just to a defeated foe. We extend to Japan a hand of friendship, and trust that with the closing of this chapter in the history of Man, the last page of which we write today, and with the beginning of the new one, the first page



of which we dictate tomorrow, her people and ours may march together to enjoy the full dignity of human life in peace and prosperity."

According to the San Francisco News "the spokesman from Ceylon concluded amid the largest volume of applause of the session so far. His words touched off a roar of acclamation that shook the windows of the Conference Room." At the luncheon recess J. R. Jayewardene was mobbed by well-wishers who insisted on shaking his hand, men and women of all ages sought his autograph till he was finally rescued by the Police. The following day the New York Times said: "The voice of free Asia, eloquent, melancholy and strong with the lilt of an Oxford accent, dominated the Conference today." The Time magazine commented "The ablest Asian spokesman at the Conference was Ceylon's delegate, Finance Minister J. R. Jayewardene."

The real test of the performance of J. R. Jayewardene in San Francisco was not what the Americans thought of him, but what the Japanese thought. Perhaps the following letters, two of the thousands, which poured in from Japan, speak for themselves:

Tokyo

September 20th 1951

Excellency,

I was so moved by what you had to say at the San Francisco Peace Conference on Asia's aspiration to freedom and the magnanimous stand of the Ceylon Government toward Japan, that I feel I must send you a word of appreciation. Let me assure you that all Japanese have been greatly impressed by your noble utterance.

Now that the Peace Treaty has been signed, it is my earnest hope that Japan will be able to co-operate freely and fully with all her neighbour nations towards the preservation of peace and freedom and the furtherance of stability and progress in all Asia.

Yours sincerely,

Shigeru Yoshida  
Prime Minister.



Tokyo  
September 18th 1951

Dear Sir,

We, Buddhist Japanese, were all deeply impressed and moved to tears by your speech given before the 52-nation gathering which assembled in War Memorial Opera House at San Francisco the other day.

Ceylon is a well-known Buddhist country and you, her Chief Delegate to the San Francisco Peace Treaty Conference, quoted the "Great Teacher"—Buddha—to plead for a merciful peace for Japan, calling on all the skill of the oratory which won you prizes at Ceylon's Royal College.

"Hatred ceases not by hatred, but by love" was the Buddha's message you left with the delegates. 'Hatred ceases only by Love' is 'the eternal law' as was taught by our Lord Buddha in the Dharmapadasutra.

Words fail indeed to express our hearty gratitude for your and your nation's absolute and profound Love of Buddhism shown towards us Japanese.

Both nations, Ceylon and Japan, will surely be firmly combined with each other forever in the spirit of the Buddhist Law and tread the road upward, however thorny, always arm in arm on good terms to realize an ideal Buddha-land of eternal peace on this earth below.

I remain,

Yours truly  
Rousen Takashina,  
Archbishop  
Head of the Japan Centre  
World Fellowships of Buddhists.







T. D. S. A. Dissanayaka was born in 1938 and educated at Royal College, the University of Ceylon and Harvard University. He has worked with the United Nations Organisation for several years, both as a diplomat and as an international civil servant, and has served on all continents

In 1973 while stationed in Rangoon, Burma, he wrote his first book "Cudley Senanayake of Sri Lanka". It became a best-seller and he earned much acceptance for his objective approach and elegant style. In 1975 while based in Hawaii, he wrote "The American Image" a novelized version of what people in Asia think of the United States.

In August 1976 he returned to Sri Lanka on a 12 month assignment to work under J R. Jayewardene. He quickly built up a reputation as a dedicated and outspoken UNP worker and this book is based on his research during that assignment.



