

PEOPLE'S PRESIDENT

RANASINGHE PREMADASA

His vision and mission



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Major Policy Addresses from
Nomination to Inauguration
1988 – 89

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education

New Birth

BY RABINDRANATH TAGORE

New Deliverer—

The new age eagerly looks
To the path of your coming.
What message have you brought
To the world? In the mortal arena

What seat has been prepared for you?
What new form of address

Have you brought to be used
In the worship of God in Man? What song of heaven
Have you heard before coming?

What great weapon for the fighting of evil
Have you placed in the quiver, bound to the waist

Of the young warrior?
Will you, perhaps, where a tide of blood besmirches your path,
Where there is malice and discord,

Construct a dam of peace,
A place of meeting and pilgrimage?
Who can say if there is written on your forehead

The invisible mark
Of the triumph of some great striving?
Today we search for your unwritten name:

You seem to be just off the stage,
Like an imminent star of morning.
Infants bring again and again
A message of reassurance—
They seem to promise deliverance, light, dawn.

SPEECH MADE BY
THE HON. R. PREMADASA
PRIME MINISTER AND THE PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATE OF THE UNITED
NATIONAL PARTY AT THE SPECIAL
SESSIONS OF THE PARTY ON 9TH
OCTOBER 1988 AT THE
SUGATHADASA INDOOR STADIUM

Your Excellency the President and
the Leader of the UNP,
Chairman of the UNP,
Hon. Ministers and Members of
Parliament,
Dear Delegates,

Let me begin by saluting each and
everyone of you assembled here
today. You have come from all parts of
Sri Lanka to this historic UNP
Convention. At this moment my
thoughts go back to my late beloved
mother and my late beloved father.
They gave me life and brought me up.
I am also reminded of my relatives, my
teachers and those near and dear to
me; who cared for me. They are no
more. I pay my respects to all of them.

**I consider it my duty to extend
my gratitude to three great men
who fashioned my political life.
They are the late Labour Leader Mr.
A. E. Goonesinha, who guided me
to serve the deprived and the down
trodden people, the late Prime
Minister Mr. Dudley Senanayake,
who chartered my public life and**

**our Party Leader His Excellency J. R.
Jayewardene, who gave me an
opportunity to serve my people.**

When our President decided not to
stand for re-election for another term, I
made it clear that the Working
Committee, in keeping with our Party
Constitution, should decide on the
candidate by unanimity. I was not
prepared to offer myself for a contest
within the Party. A contest of that
nature would have resulted in
factionalism resulting in dissension and
disunity among ourselves. I made it
known that I would accept the decision
of the Party and do my best to ensure
the victory of the candidate of its
choice. **I took up that position
because I treasure the unity of our
Party more than the personal glory
of high office. I am of the view that
it is only a United Party that can
ensure peace and harmony in our
country.** However, my name was
proposed by our President. The
Working Committee selected me
unanimously. I accepted that decision.

I wish to express my humble gratitude to His Excellency the President, the Working Committee and to this Special Party Convention for selecting me as the UNP candidate for the December Presidential Election. This is a historic Convention. Other Parties do not have this virtue. You all have set an example to others. We have today displayed the unity of our Party. All sections of the people are represented here. This shows that ours is a truly united national party.

Our President created a new era – a new trend in the UNP after 1973. He developed the country. His greatest achievement is the creation of a united team that can lead the country on its onward march. His crowning success is that he was able to transfer the mantle of leadership to a person from the ranks of the ordinary people and not to his kith and kin. He has acted true to his word.

Today you are endorsing a historic decision. You are entrusting the responsibility of leading our country to a person from the common people. Hitherto this responsibility was the exclusive preserve of a few privileged families. But on this day you are handing over that task of guiding the destinies of the people to a man

of the masses. From today, you will be placing this trust and confidence in a person who understands the aspirations of the common people; in a man who values their sweat and toil; in a man who can feel the pulse of the ordinary man and woman in every nook and corner in the country. During the 1982 Presidential Election our President said that he has not groomed his children or grand-children to succeed him and that he would like to pass on that heritage to the people of the country. He has today fulfilled that pledge.

None of us will be able to fill the void created by his retirement. None of us possess his wisdom and strength of character. If so, how do we fill this void? If all of us pool our wisdom and strength of character, together we may be able to fill that gap to some extent. I seek the wisdom and the strength of all of you who unanimously selected me to fill this void. **I appeal to all of you to give me the best of your knowledge, wisdom and strength. Only I know, my weaknesses and shortcomings. They can be rectified only through your capabilities and aptitudes. I feel confident that you will give me those attributes.**

It is Madam Elina Jayewardene who provided the inspiration and encouragement for our President's

private and public life. She is a gracious lady who should be emulated by all Sri Lankan women. She was not elated by any of the high positions that her husband held or is holding. Her humble demeanour will undoubtedly earn her high recognition in the history of the women of Sri Lanka.

How can we express our gratitude to our President? We can do so by building up a united, peaceful and prosperous Sri Lanka. **I have on my part carried out the responsibilities entrusted to me by our President to the best of my ability. I never grumbled saying that I was not given high responsibilities. I assumed responsibilities. I was assigned the functions of the Ministries of Local Government, Housing and Construction and Highways by Gazette Notification. But as Prime Minister no special subjects and functions were assigned. However, I created new functions for myself.**

I am the Chairman of the Tower Hall Theatre Foundation, National Health Council and the Central Cultural Fund by virtue of the provisions of the respective Acts of Parliament. Through them I tried to make an impact for the common good. I did whatever possible through the two Ministries assigned to me. When the former Finance Minister

reduced the housing allocation from Rs. 1000 Million to Rs. 300 Million, I established the Sevana Fund, I revised the housing target upwards. When I started some activity with good intentions, that succeeded. I know how to find the funds. I will even melt those who say they have no money and create the resources. When I get a little opportunity I know how to make use of it. Like the camel that took possession of the whole tent when it was allowed only to step in, I know how to obtain what I want.

My position as the Prime Minister was described by the Leader of the Opposition in Parliament as that of an office peon. In 1984 when our President was out of the Island, leaders of other political parties came to Anuradhapura to meet me and discuss a University issue. Our Minister of Education asked the Leader of the Opposition as to why he did not attend. It was then that he said that he does not meet people who are in the category of peons. What the Leader of the Opposition said is true! But there is another truth which he is ignorant of. What is that truth? In big places big things are done by small peons—not by big bosses. I also did big things in the same way.

I was appointed as the Prime Minister because I commanded the

support of the majority of the Members of Parliament of my Party. His Excellency placed his trust in me. I represented him in Parliament as though he was physically present there. I always safeguarded his interests. I never upset him with complaints against others. I always showed him the good aspects even of those about whom he had some reservations. My policy was not to draw a wedge between each other. I tried to bring them together. **A strong person is never scared of clever people. Such a person knows how to get the best output from clever people. That is how I got things done. I was never perturbed of falsehoods and manoeuvres against me. When I look back I can see one thing clearly. It is obvious that everything said against me and done against me have turned out for my benefit. Whenever our President entrusted me with a task I carried it out to the best of my ability. My thoughts were always centered around our innocent people. I made use of every opportunity to ease the burden of our innocent people. I always considered our common people as my masters. My efforts were to satisfy that master—the common people of my country. Our innocent common people will never**

be ungrateful even though they had not received justice from some quarters.

Whenever I could do something for the common good, I responded to every such call, even from my political enemies. That is why the common people in the country as well as in my Party have placed their implicit trust and confidence in me. We know that we will never be let down by the down-trodden grateful masses. The same may not be correct in respect of some of those who are at the top. "There are no friends at the top", once said Lord Butler. But when he found out this truth it was too late for him. We must realise that the best friends are at the common level.

I think it is an advantage to the people as well as to the country that I am not a highly educated person. My highest qualification is my ability to make use of the knowledge and capacity of others and get them to work for me. I always remember what my beloved father instilled in me from my early days. What did he tell me? "My son, try to learn something good from anyone at anytime in any place. This is an education that you can get easily without any cost. That way you will even save a lot of time." This is what my father taught me. This became my highest academic degree.

When I am elected President by the will of our people, I will need the advice and guidance of all. I will always pray for the advice of the members of the Maha Sangha led by the Venerable Mahanayaka Theras of the Three Nikayas. I will seek the guidance of the Christian, Hindu and Muslim religious dignitaries. I will not hesitate to obtain the advice of the knowledgeable professionals and intellectuals of our country. I will also seek the wise counsel of all party leaders. I will discuss with senior political leaders not only of my party but also of other parties and obtain their views on matters of public interest. It is not correct to say that Parliament has been devalued or down-graded. In my view, the Parliament has been under-utilised. The Presidential system has not reduced the powers of the Parliament. What has happened is that the powers of the Parliament have not been properly realised and utilised.

The Constitution provides the President of the country with two helpful strong arms. One is the Legislature—The Parliament. The other is the Judiciary—The Courts System. I intend to bequeath more powers to the Parliamentary Select and Consultative Committee system and

entrust them with more responsibilities. This way, the Government and the Opposition can get together and be responsible in seeking common solutions to common problems. That way I hope to make the party system a beneficial instrument for our people rather than a cancerous burden. **There is provision in the Constitution to obtain advice from the Judiciary. The President can refer important issues for examination by the Judiciary and obtain advice.** Thus, it is clear that the Legislature and the Judiciary are two strong arms available to the President. I will obtain the maximum use of these important institutions. I will obtain the advice of all those who can give advice. I will obtain the assistance of all those who can provide assistance.

I will implement the basic principles of our Constitution to the letter. I will whole-heartedly protect the provisions of the Constitution with regard to Buddhism, other Religions, Language and Fundamental Rights. King Dharmasoka was able to be fair by all religions, all races and even to all animals, and plants and trees because he acted according to the principles of Buddhism. These examples are found in the Asokan inscriptions. I will attempt to do my very best to introduce those noble

ethics and values into my administrative machinery.

Let us dedicate ourselves for a fair and clean Presidential Election. Let us obey all election laws to the letter. We must not pollute our election campaign with threats, intimidation or defamation. The vote means the choice of the people. We must not do things that the people do not like. We must not resort to falsehood and false charges. We must not be perturbed over any defamatory or false statements against us. I have got several lakhs of rupees as compensation from those who made false allegations and defamatory statements against me. They have even apologised to me in Court for having made such statements.

The best way you could help me is by not violating any election laws and by not making any defamatory statements against our opponents and by explaining to the people the facts and the truth. An election must not have any adverse effect on our friendship. We must conduct our election campaign in such a way that we can remain as friends even with those who work against us during an election. We will be able to get more votes if we conduct ourselves in such

an exemplary way. Trying to win an election by assaulting, stabbing, bombing, shooting, killing and thereby preventing people from voting – all that will amount to a defeat. This type of illegal acts lead to the destruction of democracy. I am certain that our Party Members will set an example by their good conduct.

I have a series of objectives for this motherland of ours. They are the objectives of the UNP to create a united nation of Sri Lanka. The inspiration to these objectives came from the founder of our Party the Late Rt. Honourable D. S. Senanayake.

I have a new vision for our motherland. I have a new deal for our people based on my new vision. My new vision is for:

- (1) The restoration of peace**
- (2) The enforcement of discipline and**
- (3) The eradication of poverty.**

What is the new deal? It is to achieve my vision through the following processes and by personal example. My new deal is to bring about peace through consultation, compromise and consensus. Discipline will be enforced through the strict application of the rule of law, the restoration of moral values

and the introduction of a code of ethics for all those holding public office. Poverty eradication would entail the restructuring of the political, economic, social and administrative machinery.

I have formulated an effective procedure to eradicate bribery and corruption. This will include the compulsory declaration of assets of all those who hold office, allow any citizen to inspect those declarations and make it possible for any citizen to challenge in the Courts of Law any false declarations. Heavy penalties will be imposed for any offences. I will change all unfair practices and procedures to bring about greater social justice.

I dedicate myself to do everything possible to eradicate poverty. Half of our population is living on food stamps. A family of 5 people today get only about Rs. 200 or so worth of food stamps. Can anyone maintain a family with such a meagre amount? If half of our population is living in this manner, can we eradicate unrest among the people?

The base of our country is the common people. If half of that base is in dire poverty and degradation, doesn't that amount to the sinking of half the foundation of the building? Is there any meaning in renovating the

walls of such a building? Isn't it a surprise that those walls are cracking when the foundation is sinking? Isn't it what has happened to our country? Therefore, what we should do is to strengthen the base. In other words we must help our poor people to live. We must assist them to participate in making this country prosperous.

I will implement a planned programme for this purpose. I will take immediate steps to initiate this as soon as I assume the Office of President. I like to explain briefly the programme I hope to implement. It is an investment in the people. An investment to eradicate poverty. There is no other investment that can be as fruitful as this. That is because poverty affects human quality. Poverty destroys our most creative asset – the human resource. **What we must do is to strengthen our human resource base. That is the foundation of our society. We can awaken millions of people who are weak, cornered and disillusioned by making available the basic resources. They need to live and work. There are three main components in this investment for the strengthening of the human resource base. These are:**

- (1) **Family**
- (2) **Investment of resources**
- (3) **Period of investment.**

The investment for a family is Rs. 2,500 per month. Out of this Rs.1042 will be for capital investment through savings. Thus within two years the investment capital available for a family will be Rs. 25,000. It will be possible to find avenues of self-employment and self-development from these investments. The balance Rs. 1,458 is for living expenses of the family. Because of this scheme it will not be necessary to give food stamps. This money will be available for a family for two years. This programme will be implemented in every village through the Special Advisory Services.

Self-employment opportunities will be determined according to each person's choice. Avenues of income will also be found according to their choice. In this programme everyone will have a role to play. This will be implemented in all Pradesheeya Sabha areas and in all Districts simultaneously. This scheme will be made operational in a phased out manner starting with the poorest of the poor.

The people will have the choice of saving from the Rs. 1,458 ear-marked for consumption and investing that as well. For its success the scheme will need a well planned programme. We will have to reorganise the whole administration to implement a

programme of this nature. The reorganisation at the village level has to be carried out in two ways. Firstly, a programme where families are brought together to work out projects. Secondly, the village level officials are brought to the forefront of development. This programme will be co-ordinated with other sub-programmes.

The sub-programmes include training in skills, extension services like agriculture and technological services, permanent grants for land, loan facilities, housing, nutrition, primary health care, child care and other allied services. **All these services will be introduced in the villages as an integrated development programme. In view of this programme an opportunity to increase production in the villages hitherto unprecedented, will be created. With this effort we will be able to defeat the twin enemies of inflation and unemployment. We will also be able to overcome malnutrition. This historic programme which will end poverty in Sri Lanka will be fully implemented within one year of my Government being elected in December.**

In addition to this the Agency Bank system will be implemented islandwide.

We will be appointing 14,000 Bank Agents covering every village. Through this process people in the villages will be able to get loans at a much lower interest rate than that given at present by money-lenders. No guarantors are required to obtain these loans. Thus, there will be more capital for investment to boost production islandwide.

It is my intention as well as the endeavour of the Government I would form, to give the common masses of this country stable income levels commensurate with the prevalent cost of living. We could achieve this by providing every family the initial support they need for their existence. What we should do is to lay a sound foundation for the edifice we are going to build. It is not a case of putting temporary plaster to the cracked walls of a building. When the foundation is sinking the temporary plasters will try to run away for plastering others! The foundation of our country is our common masses. It is our aim to strengthen that foundation – the common masses. That is the difference between punditry shown by some and my pragmatic approach.

How can we stabilise the prices of foodstuffs, drugs, textiles and other goods essential for the day to day living? If we try to force a price

reduction of locally produced goods it would be a disincentive. The producer will abandon his productive ventures. The local textile producers will do likewise. They will also then fall into the lot of the unemployed. What we should do is not to put the local producer into difficulties. We must strengthen the consumer. We must provide avenues of income to the consumer and give him the strength to meet the prices of consumer goods.

We should ensure good prices for the local producers of up-country vegetables and fruits, the farmers in the dry zone producing vegetables, fruits, onions, chillies, plantains, potatoes as well as the farmers in the North. The consumer who purchases these items should be freed from poverty and brought to a position of earning an income capacity to purchase these goods. This is the way we propose to tackle the cost of living problem.

It is for this purpose that we propose to give investment capital to strengthen the living conditions of seven million people – or fourteen lakhs of families – who are today living on food stamps. The Opposition is now asking from where we hope to get the money. Our former Finance Minister too has asked that question. I would like to ask

him how he got Rs. 50 Billion which was spent on defence since 1983. If that money had been made available to tackle poverty we could have given Rs. 25,000 to each family not only to the 14 lakhs of families living on food stamps but even to a larger number. We could then have brought them up to a level of being able to make ends meet from a position of want.

Some economic experts will say that when we give investment capital for the poor families it would result in inflation. But I would like to emphasise that we are investing this Rs. 25,000 in each family not to be wasted on unnecessary consumption. What we are trying to achieve through this exercise is to increase production with the participation of the poor masses. This will be for production by the masses. The poor masses who are living in poverty and have nothing to do are today cursing those who have the means to live. These poor masses are compelled to treat the society as their enemy. They are calling for its destruction.

If these poor families are helped in this manner, they will produce:

Foodstuffs
Textiles
Commercial items

Milk
Fish
Cottage Industry products
Building Materials and
Construct small scale Irrigation
Works and Water Schemes

These are products and schemes which reduce both inflation, and unemployment. We hope to launch an accelerated programme to boost production. I hope to utilize the monies that went to the industry of death—in the industry of life. Instead of spending on firearms and bullets I want to invest to make human-beings live.

Production will be increased through the utilization of manpower rather than heavy machinery. To launch gigantic projects you will need big machinery, big finances and big people. What we need is many small projects in the villages and urban areas launched by the common people for which small finances are needed. When we build up the people in this manner the country will develop. It will also put an end to the use of guns—T56 rifles, grenades, hand-bombs and the like. Our weapons will then be items like

the mammothies, axes, ploughs, plyers and mason's tools. I dedicate myself today to be the instrument of the people to make the people live and develop the country.

Who is better? Is it Premadasa who dedicates himself to make the people live by eliminating poverty and developing the country? Or is it the prophets of doom who would just sit comfortably saying that there is no money and that the World Bank would not give money? That is what the people have to decide today. I have never gone back on a promise given to the people or left the people in the lurch. The entire nation knows that I will do what I say and honour the promises I give. The biggest wealth I have earned is the trust and confidence of the people. I vow that I will safeguard this confidence and trust as my life.

It is apt to recall here the words of the President of the World Bank Mr. Barber B Conable expressed at the Meeting of the Board of Governors of the World Bank held in West Berlin on September 27th. **Mr. Conable said that the energies of the World Bank**

are now directed towards the elimination of poverty and meting out social justice. I am also saying the same thing. I hope that those who disregard Premadasa would at least accept what the President of the World Bank says. I would like to make a request to all of you to go back to your areas and explain these matters to the people. I have no doubt that the MPs, Ministers and Officers who will work with me would dedicate themselves to achieve these aims.

Whatever the present budgetary provisions are, I will present and get approval for a new budget as soon as I am elected President for the implementation of the poverty alleviation programme and the other schemes presented by me. **I will be making provision in the Budget for another six year programme of Housing Development from 1989. As you all know, we have reached nearly 800,000 families and in 1989 we will accomplish the One Million Houses target. To meet the housing needs of all the homeless families, we have to construct another 1.5 million houses.** Some in the Opposition have pronounced conflicting

figures regarding my housing accomplishment. They are compelled to hide the truth because of their great disappointment that I have broken their own record of 400 odd houses during their regime of 7 years. In addition, I will completely reorganise and restructure the political, economic and social institutions and the administrative system to enable the successful implementation of our programmes. Such a reorganisation will meet the aspirations of the people.

Our foreign policy based on national prosperity, international peace and peaceful co-existence will be further strengthened. We will establish friendly relations with any country upholding our sovereignty, our territorial integrity and our unitary character. We were partners in formulating the policy of peaceful co-existence and we shall continue to safeguard it.

The Indo-Sri Lanka Accord is an Accord reached between our President and the Prime Minister of India. The President elected by the people of the whole country is empowered to reach such an agreement. A President elected by the people has also the power to

abrogate any such agreement. Even if a President enters into such an agreement, legislation for the implementation of its terms and conditions have to be in accordance with our Constitution. If the Supreme Court decides that a Referendum is required, then it should be placed before the people. **The Provincial Councils Act was passed by the Parliament as the Supreme Court decided that a Referendum was not necessary.**

I had reservations on the Accord not because I did not like the strengthening of friendship between Sri Lanka and India. The timing of the Accord was inopportune in my view. It was at a time when all sorts of suspicions and speculations could have surfaced. Suspicions are bound to be created in every mind when the signing of such an Agreement takes place only a few days after India had violated our territorial sovereignty and air space. I thought that this opportunity would be exploited by those who were seeking to attack and criticise our Party. I proposed to the President that it is advisable to delay the signing of this Agreement until the Local Government

Elections scheduled for the 15th of August are held. That opportunity would have helped us to get a mandate. The President agreed. India was not prepared to delay. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi came here and signed the Accord. The Prime Minister of India stated that the war in North and East will be over in 24 hours. Our President wanted peace. Therefore, he agreed and signed the Accord. But you know what happened afterwards. The whole country erupted with trouble. The situation in the North and the East worsened. Indian Forces entered our country.

Those who were opposed to the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord said that they will tear and destroy the Accord within 24 hours after they come to power. They said that Indian forces will be sent away immediately. What are they saying now? They say that the Agreement cannot be abrogated immediately. They say that the Indian Forces will not be sent off in 24 hours. They say that they will discuss with Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. When I spoke of the attitude of India then, I was severely criticised by them. I hope to replace the Accord with a Friendship Treaty

having greater reciprocity and in keeping with the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the unitary character of our motherland. If we accede or give anything to India we must get a similar thing in return. This is called reciprocity. If there is no reciprocity our country gets devalued. Our sovereignty will get devalued. **The presence of a foreign force in any country is an irritant. The Indian Peace Keeping Force came here at the invitation of our President. India confirms that the Peace Keeping Force will leave our shores at any time the President requests them to do so.** They have come to Sri Lanka, to bring about normalcy and peace in the North and East which is the responsibility of India according to the Accord. I am aware that sometimes in this Peace Keeping task the desired results are not very complementary. It is on such occasions that the people of the North and East have spoken of Sri Lankan security forces with appreciation. I understand that India is keen to withdraw the Indian Peace Keeping Force. It is reported that the Peace Keeping Force is staying in Sri Lanka until the Provincial Council elections in the North and East are completed.

One thing is clear. Everyone, every community, and every shade of opinion in Sri Lanka is agreed in their opposition to the continued presence of the Indian Peace Keeping Force in our motherland. Even certain people in the North and the East who extended a thunderous welcome to the Indian Forces by garlanding them and lighting crackers are now opposed to the continued presence of the IPKF. This is one issue on which all are in agreement unreservedly and unconditionally. If by the time I am elected President the Indian Forces have not left, I shall ensure that they are withdrawn. In fact, India too is anxious to withdraw the IPKF at the earliest possible date or at the request of the President.

Withdrawal of the IPKF alone will not solve the problems of the North and East. It is absolutely essential to restore peace so that we may re-examine the issues involved with a view to settling this problem once and for all. The responsibility for this rests in the hands of the people and the various groups and organisations in the North and East.

On my part, I am prepared to enter into a dialogue.

Therefore, the cessation of hostilities and putting an end to violence is an essential pre-condition to the restoration of law and order in these areas. I seek a strong mandate from all our people including those in the North and East to resolve this problem through consultation, compromise and consensus while upholding the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the unitary character of Sri Lanka.

There is no sense in my becoming President if I am to surrender the independence of my motherland or if I am to allow it to be divided into pieces. For the sake of remaining as President or for the sake of personal gain I shall not betray my motherland. I have not inherited such treacherous qualities. I have no intention of passing down such a shameful reputation to my descendants either.

The Northern and Eastern provinces have now been merged. You may remember that in my speech in Parliament I prayed that this should not happen. That was my wish. However, the two Provinces have been temporarily merged. The people of the

Eastern Province will be provided with an opportunity to decide whether their province should be separated from the Northern Province or not. This verdict will be given by the people of the Eastern Province at a poll to be held within an year. When I am elected President I will extend this opportunity to the people of the Eastern Province as early as possible. I am personally opposed to this merger, as the ratio of Tamil, Muslim and Sinhala people in the Eastern Province is almost equal.

We have to protect and safeguard not only the Tamil people but also the Muslim population of our country as well. All communities who have made Sri Lanka their motherland should receive just and equal treatment. They seek separation when there are injustices. 75 percent of our population is Sinhala Buddhist. 25 percent is Tamil, Muslim, Hindu and Christian. Therefore, to have 100 percent unity the 75 percent as well as the 25 percent have to be considered and justice meted out to all. **I will ensure that no community will be subjected to any injustices under my administration. Everyone will be accorded his place in society according to his merit and competence. For those with equal qualifications employment opportunities will be provided according to the population ratio.**

Such a procedure will not displace those presently employed. This way we hope to provide justice and equal opportunity to all communities.

During the Portuguese, Dutch and British occupation the coastal areas, the wet zone, the hill country and the dry zone became degraded and deteriorated. The villages in the up-country became impoverished. The local people became helpless. The Kandyan Peasantry Rehabilitation Programme initiated by the late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, provided many benefits to those people. But there is yet a lot to be done to resurrect the up-country villages and the villagers.

Much has been done to resurrect the Dry Zone. This was the granary of the East in the past. But, much more has to be done to make our Dry Zone farmer to stand on his feet. During the last few years the fishermen along our coasts were subjected to encouragement and awakening. But much more relief and assistance has to be provided to them. **I am determined to launch and implement several integrated projects simultaneously to reawaken the up-country and the Wet Zone to bring prosperity to the Dry Zone and a new lease of life to the coastal areas.**

We have to inculcate in our children moral values and national pride. In doing so subjects like History and Literature should be reintroduced. Texts like Loweda Sangarawa and The Sirith Maldama have disappeared from our schools. Over and above the learning of books vocational and skills development should be made compulsory. Our children should also be taught morality and social responsibility in addition to providing them education and knowledge. In this regard the Buddhist Temple, the Christian Church, the Hindu Kovil and the Muslim Mosque should be made the centres for imparting religious knowledge and training.

We will be implementing a well-orchestrated programme for the training of amateur artistes, while eliminating the numerous difficulties encountered by the professional artistes. Assistance must be granted to them in numerous ways so as to embrace all areas of the Arts such as Literature, Poetry, Fiction, Journalism, Painting, Sculpture, Film, Drama, Dance, Song, and Music. I will be directing the Ministers concerned to enter into a dialogue with the artistes belonging to the different fields of activity and their organisations to prepare a programme of action. The main features of such a

programme will be to ensure the dignity and the independence of the artistes. As such assistance should be provided impartially and an Independent Foundation will be established with financial assistance from the State and the necessary legal backing. Such a legal and institutional framework would enable us to expand further the limited activities hitherto undertaken by the Tower Hall Theatre Foundation and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

I will also ensure that every student within six months of his leaving the school or the university will be provided with the knowledge, technical training and the opportunity for earning a living. Action will be taken to provide a Teacher to every 35 students in all Schools. Action has already been initiated on this. 10,000 Teachers are to be appointed this year. A further 12,000 Teachers will be appointed in 1989.

Who provided security of tenure to 243,389 families through the Swarnabhumi Grants? Isn't it the UNP? Who accelerated the Mahaweli Development Programme? Isn't it the UNP? Who settled 520,055 families under that programme? 311,667 acres have been developed for agriculture under Mahaweli. Action is being taken to settle a further 534,070 families. Who did all this? Isn't it the UNP?

Isn't it the UNP that extended and expanded the rural electrification programme? Who increased the electricity consumers up to 900,000? Who accordingly extended electricity to 5,650 villages? Isn't it the UNP?

Who constructed 153,000 houses under the 100,000 Houses Programme and who has already reached almost 800,000 families under the Million Houses Programme? Isn't it the UNP? Who enabled the balance housing loans obtained by the poor food stamps holder families to be absorbed by the "Sevana" Fund? Who is providing non-recoverable grants of Rs. 5,000/-, Rs. 7,000/- and Rs. 10,000/- to the poorest and helpless families for the provision of shelter? Isn't it the UNP?

26 percent of the population was unemployed in 1977. Who developed the country and reduced the unemployment figure to 11 percent in 1983? Although employment opportunities have been somewhat reduced since 1983 due to the slowing down of development by the acceleration of violence who is arranging to provide 115,000 jobs within the next 3 months, 428,250 jobs in 1989 and a further 472,500 jobs in 1990? Isn't it the UNP?

Who provided assistance to poor university students through the Maha Pola Scholarships Scheme to the tune of 16,614 students up to now? Who increased this assistance to Rs. 500/- per month? Isn't it the UNP?

Who restored the pension rights of the Public Servants which was taken away by the SLFP regime? Who increased the salaries of Public Servants, Local Government Employees and Corporation Employees on three occasions? Who exempted the Public Servants from Income Tax? Isn't it the UNP? Who brought the status of Local Government Employees on par with State Employees? Isn't it the UNP? Who gave special allowances to Government, Local Government and Corporation Employees and also increased them from time to time? Isn't it the UNP? Isn't that the reason why most Government Employees cast their postal votes always to the UNP?

I will take necessary steps to formulate a national wages policy and thereby remove all anomalies with regard to salaries and conditions of service of State, Local Government, Corporation and Co-operative Employees. I will establish a Council consisting of representatives of the respective groups of employees to make recommendations on these

matters to me. This Council will have to make their recommendations within three months.

It is suggested that a new institutional structure of Settlement Councils be considered to perform the function of examining demands for relief and grievances for redress emanating from any organised group of persons in society, whether large or small. The proposal aims at settling issues through consultative and consensual action, without letting them escalate into confrontation, disrupt social life and waste scarce resources. The Settlement Councils would be ad hoc issue-related institutions, set up when and where there is an issue for resolution. They will be manned by respected and knowledgeable people in public and professional bodies and the grieved parties themselves could be obtained. I hope to get this proposal examined by a Select Committee of Parliament, with representation from every political party, to further consider it, and if found useful, to formulate a scheme for setting up such an institutional structure.

The concept of the People's Sector which was accepted by the people in our 1977 Election Manifesto was not

established, and therefore remains non-functional. **The concept of the People's Sector is that of a partnership of the private, the public and the co-operative sectors.** In the course of development, occasions arise when the three sectors should join together to manage enterprises. Such a use of the People's Sector is especially needed when an enterprise managed by either the public or co-operative sector, is found to be unsustainable. Before a public enterprise is to be handed over to the private sector, the feasibility of using the People's Sector should be examined as a necessary precondition. Where such an examination reveals that the People's Sector cannot meet the challenge and therefore must be privatised, then it must be handed over to the private sector only on condition that it takes over all assets and liabilities, and that any employees likely to be retrenched, be fully compensated for their loss of service. Retrenchment should be used only as a final option. Where the retrenchment option has to be used, all retrenched must be paid their full compensation and other allowances on the basis that they have worked up to retiring age. I want to make this policy very clear in view of the misunderstanding prevailing due to the so called "Privatisation".

Who increased the employment opportunities by allowing the operation of private bus services? Isn't it the UNP? When it was not possible to get even a bicycle tyre leave alone a bicycle, during the SLFP Government, we made it possible for people to purchase scooters, three-wheelers, vans, etc. During the period of our Government over 350,000 vehicles consisting of lorries, buses, vans, cars, three-wheelers, etc., have been imported to the country. Hasn't this provided direct and indirect employment to about 1 Million people? Isn't the UNP responsible for this too?

The liberalisation of the import of vehicles has not only created employment opportunities for drivers, conductors, cleaners and motor mechanics but also provided employment in transport related fields for thousands of others. Who did this? Isn't it the UNP?

Who got rid of the bread queues, rice queues, sugar queues, chillie queues, textile queues and queues for milk food? Who made it possible to buy not only 8 pounds of cereals but any amount of it from any retail outlet? Isn't it the UNP? People have not forgotten the dark period when they were compelled to eat rice only on

Tuesdays and Fridays. Who made it possible to eat rice every day? Who developed agriculture to such an extent that we now get 110 Million bushels of Paddy for both Yala and Maha Seasons? Isn't it the UNP?

Who would like to go back to that dark era when to buy a saree for a wedding one had to produce the notice of marriage. Who produced good quality textiles within the country? Isn't it the UNP? Although some people may have forgotten these, the grateful common people know about it better. That is why some interested parties are creating fear among the people to prevent them from exercising their right to vote. People are now questioning as to what will happen if the very people who are trying to deprive the basic rights of the people through a fear campaign are returned to power.

It has become necessary to take steps to protect our people from food and drinks that dehumanise human beings. Also they should be protected against certain vices which are detrimental to their health and well being. I will develop our culture not only for the sake of culture but also to develop the personality of our younger generation through indigenous

thinking. I will also develop every aspect of sports for our younger generation to obtain physical and mental fitness. Not only that, I will make arrangements for them to earn a living through cultural and sports activities. The Sugathadasa Stadium Management Board has already formulated a programme to provide funds for training of amateurs through the various Boards of Control for Sports. I would like to state that I will grant financial support from the Government for this Programme.

I hope to provide a free mid-day meal to all school children throughout the country. Our aim is to build up future generations which are strong both in body and mind. The mental nourishment provided by the inauguration of the free distribution of books by His Excellency the President will be continued into the area of physical development with the addition of the free mid-day meal scheme. Those who found fault with us for starting this programme in Colombo did not even think at all about the children of the ordinary people of this country during their time.

Who made it possible for the common people to go abroad to do a job? This was restricted to a few privileged families in the SLFP days.

However, since we came into office about 238,000 Sri Lankans have been able to earn foreign exchange and get over their poverty. The foreign exchange earned by them is more than Rs. 10,243 Million. Isn't it the UNP Government which gave them this privilege? **I am aware that there are many more qualified to go abroad but unable to do so because they cannot afford to purchase their air tickets. I will take steps to provide the air fare for them also to proceed abroad for employment. For this purpose a special fund will be set up.** Those who are provided with this assistance can reimburse the cost of their tickets after they have earned enough through employment abroad.

After assuming the Office of President through the people's mandate, I hope to announce the date for the dissolution of Parliament to enable the holding of the Parliamentary Elections. Then the people will be able to elect their representatives and our younger generation will get a chance to participate in Government.

Some matters not mentioned by me today are included in our Election Manifesto. I am not mentioning all of them in order to save time.

There is a special aspect in the Presidential System of our country.

The Presidential candidate who seeks election as the candidate of a political party, once elected has to consider the whole country and all the people as belonging to his Party. After that he becomes the only hope of all the people. The credit and honour go to the Party that nominated him as the candidate. I like to mention that I will get this credit and honour to the UNP. I have no doubt that I will receive your whole-hearted support and co-operation. Peace can be achieved only through peace. There is no peace which can be achieved through arms. Arms will only lead to the piling up of the debris of destruction. Therefore, the peace that I am hoping to bring about has to be achieved through peace alone.

Finally, I would like to mention one other point. If I can become the voice of the voiceless millions, and become the main instrument that will take them out of their misery, I will consider that alone as my greatest achievement. What type of a Government am I going to establish with your mandate at the election next December? It will definitely not be a Government of

arrogance, which will wield its powers to harass the poor and the innocent people. I will ensure that it will be a Government of the non-violent common people who follow democratic principles. I expect the endorsement of the people for such a Government. I am confident that I will receive this endorsement.

Why am I confident? I am confident because people are aware that I am a humble servant of the common man. Every mother and every father can treat me as her or his son. Every citizen can treat me as his or her brother. Every child can think of me as a father and receive my affection. Every citizen in Sri Lanka—Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim or Burgher can accept me as their obedient servant. This is possible because from my birth I have inherited this humility. I have the ability to serve all irrespective of their political affiliations. I promise that I will serve all sections of the people with dedication and responsibility.

May the blessings of the Triple Gem be with you all!

SPEECH MADE BY THE UNITED
NATIONAL PARTY PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATE, MR. R. PREMADASA
AT THE COLOMBO TOWN HALL
ON 20th DECEMBER 1988
UPON BEING DECLARED ELECTED
PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA

This is a great victory for the ballot. The ballots of the people have triumphed over the bullets of brutality. This is a victory for all those individuals and parties who are dedicated to the ballot. The ballot is the vehicle of all those who are committed to democracy. We are all relieved that sanity has prevailed over terror.

Today, not only the winner but also those who did not win can share this victory for democracy in Sri Lanka. The Presidential Election is over; the verdict of the people is clear. Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike and Mr. Ossie Abeygunasekera are no longer my rivals. I consider them as two contestants who presented alternative policies to the people. Let us join together to eliminate post-election bitterness. The strength of our victory lies in our ability to protect those who opposed us. I appeal to everyone to refrain from engaging in provocative activities:

We fought hard. Together, let us now fight harder to defeat fear and poverty. At this moment, on behalf of all my countrymen, I have an appeal to make to those who have still to join the democratic process. Please make up your mind soon. You have another chance of doing so at the forthcoming Parliamentary Elections. I am available for any consultation with a view to arriving at a practicable solution. Your participation will enable us to eradicate fear and poverty with greater speed.

This Election has given us many messages from the people. It indicates the appreciation of the people for eliminating scarcities. It endorses the path of development pursued by the United National Party Government. It also approves the policies I intend implementing to alleviate poverty. I am also fully aware of the many liabilities with which my campaign was burdened. Our success will be truly meaningful **only** if we appreciate the concerns of the people, correct errors and provide an effective government.

The politics of terror has no place in the temple of democracy. Party supporters have faced frightful threats and attacks. This must and this will end. Let us make no false claims in victory or excuses in defeat. The people have spoken; their voice is clear; our mandate is nationwide, our cause is just, our purpose is welcome. I have always believed that we must learn from the wisdom of the masses. This is the primary truth that democracy recognises. May this always be so in Sri Lanka.

Let me thank the Commissioner of Elections and all those who assisted him in conducting this critical Presidential Election. They have ensured the victory of the ballot. I also express my gratitude to all those who voted for me and to all those who worked for me.

We are deeply indebted to the peace – loving and brave people of Sri Lanka. They demonstrated their

commitment to the process of democracy. They did so at the risk of their lives. We bow our heads to all those who sacrificed their lives or sustained injuries and suffered hardships to protect our liberty. It is only by doing everything to preserve this victory of democracy that we can truly honour them.

I will protect our constitution. I will eradicate fear and suspicion. I will restore law and order. I will fulfil all my commitments as presented in the Manifesto of the United National Party. I will serve all people alike without fear or favour.

As transitions require time, reflection and preparation, I will be assuming the office of President on Monday the 2nd of January 1989. This will take place at the historic Octagon at the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy.

May the blessings of the Noble Triple-Gem be bestowed on our motherland and on all of us.

NEW YEAR MESSAGE – 1989
OF THE HON. R. PREMADASA,
PRIME MINISTER,
AND PRESIDENT-ELECT

At the dawn of 1989, allow me to wish all Sri Lankans, at home and abroad, a peaceful and prosperous New Year. May you enjoy the goodness of life, in its fullest, during the year ahead.

The past year has been one of trial and hope. The destruction of people and property has brought great sadness to our motherland. Our sympathy embraces all those who have suffered from violence. Their afflictions, so bravely endured, are sacrifices we can never forget. Yet, in the midst of so much tragedy, there is much hope for the future.

In several elections, culminating in the Presidential Election on December 19th, Sri Lankans affirmed their commitment to democracy. By the triumph of the ballot over the bullet, our people convincingly proclaimed that they wish to live as a free people in a free land. The desire for law and order over terror, for development over destruction, was loudly and clearly expressed.

Now the contest is over and the test begins. The year ahead will challenge our resolution and our character. With determination and conviction, we can overcome the scourge of poverty and restore peace and harmony to Sri Lanka.

Tomorrow, after eleven years as your Prime Minister, I take the oath of office as your President. You have given me your mandate and your confidence. I will need your continued support and understanding as we face the future. It is my earnest hope that Sri Lankans of **all** communities and faiths will join together to bring about a new era in the New Year—an era of harmony and prosperity, an era free from poverty and strife. Let us make 1989 a year of reconciliation, rebuilding and renewal.

May the blessing of the noble Triple Gem shine on our motherland and on all Sri Lankans in 1989.

30th December, 1988.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION BY HIS
EXCELLENCY RANASINGHE PREMADASA
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS
INAUGURATION AS THE PRESIDENT OF
SRI LANKA ON 2nd JANUARY 1989
DELIVERED FROM THE
HISTORIC OCTAGON OF THE
SRI DALADA MALIGAWA
IN KANDY

The Most Ven. Maha Nayake Theros
and
Members of the Maha Sangha.

Ven. Clergy of the Hindu, Islam and
Christian Faiths,
My fellow countrymen,

We are gathered here in these
venerated precincts of the Temple of
the Sacred Tooth Relic for a noble
and enlightened purpose. We are
here today to perform a historic task
– to lay the foundation for the
economic and spiritual advancement
of all our people. This is the mandate
given to me at the Presidential
Election. We have just received the
blessings of the Triple-Gem: Buddha,
Dhamma, Sangha. In order to ensure
the well-being of our people let us
dedicate ourselves to wisdom, truth
and discipline.

At the Presidential Election the
people of Sri Lanka expressed a deep
commitment to the democratic

process. This signals an endorsement
of both freedom and discipline.
Freedom to exercise the liberties that
our Constitution defines; discipline to
nurture our society in a new era of
nation-building.

My government will provide
conditions in which liberty will flourish
and discipline will prevail. Benefits
must be earned. Rewards must be
merited. I ask each and every citizen
to participate and contribute fully in
the restructuring of a free society, in
the restructuring of a peaceful
society, in the restructuring of a
prosperous society.

Participation is encouraged when
people feel that government is
humane, close and caring. Full
democracy requires decentralised
administration. Responsive
government must reach the people
where they are. It must answer their
needs on the spot. This is one way in
which we can involve young men and
women in public life. We must

engage their energies and enthusiasm in positive patriotic activities.

Democracy needs both dynamic government and healthy opposition. I welcome constructive criticism. Many years of my own political life have been spent in opposition. I know the pain of defeat at the polls. However, this frustration is not a license to make mischief. It is not a license to issue menacing threats. It is not a license to disseminate misinformation and disinformation. The safety of our country must not be held hostage to the ambitions of those who fail to win the confidence of the people.

Once again, I call upon all those who have still to join the democratic process to do so. I am available for any discussion in order to arrive at constructive solutions. I will provide all the protection and security necessary for this purpose. Further delay will enable certain elements to destroy many more innocent lives and damage much more public property and attribute them to others. This destruction must end. Democracy can no longer tolerate it.

For the first time in recent elections the victors have not rejoiced by inflicting injury of mind or body on the vanquished. They have conquered the anger and hatred that

is usual in post election periods. To me this is a greater victory than my own victory at the Presidential Election. However, this restraint must not be abused by the vanquished to harm the victors.

We must transfer our efforts and expenditure from weapons to work. We must reallocate resources from defence to development. Development is not a choice for us. It is a necessity. If development is to have any value, it must be based on human values. As we implement our anti-poverty policies, the family and the home will be at the core of our efforts. It is only by strengthening the family that we can bring a true spirit of community to our society. If we cannot help those who are deprived, we certainly cannot protect those who are privileged. Sri Lanka will not be a country where a few will always benefit and many will always suffer.

In recent years, the unity of our country has fractured. Yet, not so long ago, Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers lived together peacefully. They joined together purposefully in national endeavours. When I went to school, I shared a class bench with students of all four communities. What an enriching co-existence that was. Since those

days, irresponsible elements have created deep divisions. Let us restructure the education system purposefully. Let us inculcate in our children moral values and an appreciation of unity amidst diversity.

Self-help is the best help. We must create our own resources. We must build with our own resources. Depending needlessly on foreign assistance is to mortgage both our independence and our future. The independence of our foreign policy must be maintained. Relationships with friendly countries must be strengthened on the principles of equality, mutual respect for sovereignty and non-interference in the affairs of each other.

To sustain these principles let us settle our differences and disputes among ourselves through a process of consultation, compromise and consensus. We should not and will not create situations that provoke or invite intervention. Our own affairs must be conducted in a manner that makes foreign intrusions unnecessary. Whatever the cost, I will not surrender an inch of Sri Lankan territory. Whatever the cost I will not surrender a shred of our sovereignty.

My objective is not the defeat of anyone. My objective is to ensure

victory for everyone. Inflicting defeat is easy; ensuring victory is not so easy. We have been weakened by dissension and disunity. We have been weakened by tension and turmoil. We have been weakened by intrigue and disharmony. We have been weakened by disorder and indiscipline. If we are to be true to our great history and noble traditions all this must change.

My mission is to lift our people out of this abyss of weakness and defeatism. I dedicate myself to lead my people to unity and amity. I dedicate myself to lead my people to calmness and sanity. I dedicate myself to lead my people to peace and harmony. I dedicate myself to lead my people to order and discipline. This is the only victory worth winning—the conquest of disunity, the conquest of deprivation and the conquest of despair. Today, we enter a golden dawn. Each will help all and all will share in the wellbeing of each other.

The government that I will be leading from today shall abide by these aims and objectives. It will tread a truly democratic path. It will be a government that will give voice and hope to the silent and the non-violent masses. I accept with humility and gratitude the historic mandate which

you have given me. Together, we will
move forward from hope to reality. In
this noble task we can be guided by
the wisdom of Lord Buddha:

"Let us conquer anger by love
Let us conquer evil by good

Let us conquer greed by
benevolence
Let us conquer falsehood by truth."

May the blessings of the
Triple-Gem always shine upon our
motherland and on all of us.

PRESIDENT PREMADASA

Ranasinghe Premadasa, the sixty-four-year-old President of Sri Lanka, who climbed from grass roots to the tree tops of political power on December 19, was not born socially great. Nor did he have greatness thrust upon him as did most of the political luminaries of this age in the developing world.

Equally true, is it that there was nothing spectacular or dramatic about his craggy climb to the Summit. The comets did not blaze forth, as tradition had it, the birth of this twentieth century prince of the people.

Ranasinghe Premadasa, truly and simply, achieved greatness. He did it with a centuries old prescription, still piously practised by those who hail from humble homes—blood, sweat and tears. This time-tested formula which has unerringly steered its practitioners from the shadows of struggle into the sunlight of success is ardently preached to every schoolboy and often vigorously flicked away.

Not by Premadasa though. He realized that although his parental patronage showered him with an abundance of love, their material resources were limited. It could never match their affection which made them keep and mould their son at home for seven years not for want of finances but to guarantee parental influence. So he plunged neck deep into studies, burning the midnight oil in the process. He scorned delights and lived laborious days.

Premadasa was born to solid middle-class parents, Richard Ranasinghe and Jayasinghe Arachchige Ensina Hamine, who both in their carriage and conduct generated the stability of the conservative middle class of the nineteen twenties.

Parental conservatism and high moral values fashioned young Premadasa's formative years. So ingrained in him is that ethical code that he is still

steadfastly tied to it even today, unfurling it in the day to day public life of the nation.

As deeply infused in his mind is the poverty and the pain of want that afflicted the neighbourhood encircling his parental Kehelwatte home, where his parents kept and tutored him during his tender years. They felt that his academic future should be built on a strong foundation of parental love and values.

So they kept him home and shepherded him along the Eight Fold Path of the Buddha while teaching him reading, writing and arithmetic. In this they were aided by the Venerable Welitara Sri Pannananda Nayake Thero, the incumbent of the nearby Poorvarama Temple who fed him with the Dhammapada, the Holy Book of Buddhism.

This religious grooming by parent and priest armed the young boy with an inner self-confidence as was evidenced in his pre-entrance interview to St. Joseph's College, the premier Catholic institution, with its Rector the scholarly Rev. Fr. M. Le Goc.

The French academic asked young Premadasa what his ambition was. The solemn faced lad replied without batting an eye-lid, "Prime Minister of

Ceylon (as it then was), Sir". The perceptive Rector beamed and waved young Premadasa into the portals of that August institution.

Fr. Le Goc did not live long enough to glow in the post-College deeds of his protege, who toiled determinedly along stony political pathways; hurdled social road-blocks; vaulted over vicious prejudices, without wail or whimper to fulfil his ambition of being Prime Minister.

When Sir Edmund Hilary and his loyal Sherpa Tensing clawed their way to Mt. Everest atop the Himalayas their fierce but only foes were the elements—whipping winds, gale force storms, the bite of sharp cold, rolling rocks. But Ranasinghe Premadasa had to combat much, much more-faceless and treacherous adversaries, social prejudices that mined his pathway, cut-throat friends who double-crossed him at every turn, because they charged he was not their social equal.

Premadasa was, however, unruffled, even serene at the most crucial moments. He seemed to command a pool of patience which, never ebbed.

Political comrades of his who apparently marched shoulder to shoulder with him in the national

movement trained their guns on him as he neared his goal of success.

From his early years Premadasa had grieved at the misery of that half of the world that "sweated and groaned living below the poverty line". His heart went out to those unfortunates who lived in the slumland within sight of his Kehelwatte home.

Then as now, he did not merely brood about misfortune. He rolled up his sleeves and swung into action. He organized the "haves" in his community to look after the "have nots".

The main item on his agenda was education. He realized the permanency of education as against the transitory value of material help. And soon night schools and Sunday schools bloomed in Kehelwatte but not before the pioneer Premadasa and his schools provoked salvos of stones from the cussed.

He mobilized the willing helpers into a volunteer work squad: Thus began the Sucharita Movement, now in its forty sixth year. Hundreds of hapless children who lacked the means to educate themselves found a haven in this neat compact building skirting Hultsdorf Courts.

Sucharita turned out, to be Premadasa's power base for his political career. His Good Samaritanship, his transparent concern for the needy, his dynamism reaped for him a rich harvest of loyalists, followers and sympathizers.

They would gather at Sucharita, a motley crowd of slum youth, a sprinkling of the well-to-do middle class, all dedicated to a noble cause, all devoted to this apostle of the poor, the young but sincere son of Kehelwatte.

Even while in his teens he savoured squalor at first hand, his crusading zeal was increasingly aflame. His determination to help his less fortunate fellowmen took shape and form in the Gandhian mould, with its concept of ahimsa, satyagraha and a hark back to rural life.

Gandhi it was who yanked the untouchables in India from behind the curtains of obscurity where they languished at the crack of so-called high caste whips, in serfdom if not in servility.

The Gandhian saga stirred the soul of Premadasa. And he set out to achieve the self-same goals that the Mahathma had achieved in India. He charted a blue-print of action. He pursued it relentlessly, step by step.

Politics was by this time the high-road to national achievement. Premadasa's peers, his friends and much more his parents realized that if young Premadasa was to fulfil his dreams he had to trek the political road.

And so in 1950 he took the first step that was to launch him on the rough, rugged, rutty road that he trod for thirty nine years before he became President of Sri Lanka. It was a small beginning but it portended a great future. He swept all opposition aside to win the St. Sebastians Municipal Ward which he had nursed and nourished from his slender years. So popular was his victory that he was presented with a black Morris Minor car EN 1952. Dudley Senanayake then Prime Minister presented the car on behalf of the Colombo Central voters.

Voters who presented the car compared Ranasinghe Premadasa's qualities to those of the Morris Minor. He, they said, was as reliable as this solid British product. Both were compact, without any flash or flourish. The Morris Minor covered as much mileage on a gallon as the young Municipal Councillor in a hour. Both were durable and dependable.

Premadasa made his mark in the Municipal Council pretty fast and was

duly elected Deputy Mayor within five years. There was no looking back, thereafter.

His early political stewardship was at the feet of Mr. A. E. Goonasinghe, who lorded the Labour Movement. Premadasa learned under him that politics was not a bed of roses but a muddy acre of earth. His apprenticeship under the Labour leader opened his eyes to the grim realities of politics.

Meanwhile his talents as a politician were noticed by Dudley Senanayake, the UNP leader who wooed and won him to the UNP in 1955.

The rout of the UNP by the SLFP in 1956 brought out the organizational genius of Premadasa who helped J. R. Jayewardene re-vamp the UNP and set it on course again. He was duly rewarded in July 1960 when he was elected M.P. for Colombo Central, his unassailable political fortress ever since.

All his welled-up concern for his fellowmen now flowed into realization. A prize day quotation of his from John Ruskin was virtually his motto, "Concern for fellow human beings is the corner stone of civilization".

The demonstration of that concern has engrossed his whole political life.

He really moved into purposeful action after his marriage, to Hema Wickrematunge, a bright-eyed Bandarawela lass who proved an ideal help-mate to the dynamic Premadasa. They have two children, Dulanjali and Sajith. Four years later he was appointed Minister of Local Government.

No politician of recent times, during the last half century was known to be such an ardent workaholic as Ranasinghe Premadasa. Rising at four a.m., while the rest of the world slumbered happily, Premadasa would devote half an hour to meditation and prayer, then half an hour to jogging and Yoga exercise, then settle down at his Sucharita sanctum for his morning work session.

All the newspapers would not be merely read but scrutinized, side-lined and under-lined, and ready for post-mortem. But five a.m., key officials involved in the news items would be telephoned to and quizzed.

By nine a.m., the snow-white Swadeshi clad Premadasa would be at his Ministry desk. But before that he would himself drive his jeep through his constituency taking a hard look at its state.

Amazingly, though a work glutton, he was a voracious reader specializing in the works of Mahatma Gandhi, Saravapalli Radha-Krishna, Tagore, John Ruskin, Prof. C. E. M. Joad and other philosophic heavy weights.

A little known aspect of Ranasinghe Premadasa is that he is a prolific writer. His first endeavour was, "Facts as they are" in 1955. Among his other writings are "Lord, Gems and Pearls" in 1975, "Sweetheart" in 1976, "Pleasant Thoughts" in 1976 and "Early Signs" and "Tears of Life".

During his student days, Premadasa took time off to read at will. He also delighted in playing football organizing teams among the school kids and the waifs in his neighbourhood, many of whom were street sweepers. He was quite an adept the game and in 1984 he led a Parliamentary Eleven to victory against a Municipal Council Eleven scoring the winning goal in the dying minutes the game.

An ardent exponent of "a sound mind in a sound body" theory he sought to achieve the Aristotle goal, "the greatest good for the greatest number". Premadasa's Sucharita experiment had to be carried beyond urban frontiers, to the millions, hungry for shelter, for education, for industries, art and drama.

The bud of the village awakening concept was Gandhian but its flowering was under the Premadasa touch. Over 300 such villages have been opened throughout the land from the sandy stretches of the turbulent north, to the troubled terrain of the South, from the wilds of the Veddah country to the lush green of the hills.

Those cluster of villages where homeless thousands have found shelter, houses and gardens are an eternal tribute to the vision of a poor man with a rich heart, a man whose happiness consists in giving others happiness.

While motoring down from the hills to the Holy Shrine of Kataragama, Premadasa and his family braked at a shady nook whereby stood a dilapidated cadjan hut to have lunch. Premadasa walked inside the house to obtain clean water when he was greeted by two cheerful kids in tattered clothes. All agog with excitement the little ones sought to meet the visitors every need. They

even spread their mothers spotless saree on the ground, so that it could be used it as a table cloth.

Overwhelmed by the hospitality of the two kids, the Premadasa family waited for the arrival of the children's parents who were chena cultivators. The Prime Minister – which he then was – talked to the cultivators, realized their poverty and arranged for a house to be built on the spot. And so began the 1 million houses programme, a programme which won Mr. Premadasa a global award for the man who did most to boost Housing.

When Mr. Ranasinghe Premadasa was enthroned as President with the minimum of ostentation and the maximum of religious ritual, he signalled both the twilight of social elitism in Sri Lankan politics and the dawn of people's power; the sunset of family feudalism and the emergence of the Common Man.

R. L. MICHAEL

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION – 1988

FINAL ALL ISLAND DISTRICT RESULTS

<i>Dist. Electoral No. District</i>	<i>Regis- tered Voters</i>	<i>S.L.M.P.</i>	<i>S.L.F.P.</i>	<i>U.N.P.</i>	<i>Valid Votes</i>	<i>Rejected Votes</i>	<i>Total Polled</i>
1. Colombo	1088780	34020 4.63%	339958 46.23%	361337 49.14%	735315	11295 1.51%	746610 68.57%
2. Gampaha	969735	22467 3.09%	355553 48.83%	350092 48.08%	728112	10054 1.36%	738166 76.12%
3. Kalutara	570118	13375 3.69%	177961 49.57%	169510 46.74%	362646	6537 1.77%	369183 64.76%
4. Mahanuwara	628240	6266 1.47%	186187 43.65%	234124 54.88%	426577	6167 1.43%	432744 68.88%
5. Matale	214938	1135 1.77%	25825 40.37%	37007 57.85%	63967	1110 1.71%	65077 30.28%
6. Nuwara-Eliya	229769	3371 1.87%	64907 35.98%	112135 62.15%	180413	3320 1.81%	183733 79.96%
7. Galle	571303	6417 2.29%	148615 53.09%	124912 44.62%	279944	4461 1.57%	284405 49.78%
8. Matara	451934	2922 2.76%	57424 54.30%	45399 42.93%	105745	2003 1.86%	107748 23.84%
9. Hambantota	295180	2478 2.98%	39343 47.39%	41198 49.62%	83019	3855 4.44%	86874 29.43%
10. Jaffna	591782	42198 35.15%	44197 36.82%	33650 28.03%	120045	8517 6.62%	128562 21.72%
11. Vanni	142723	3500 18.45%	4889 25.77%	10580 55.78%	18969	708 3.60%	19677 13.79%
12. Batticaloa	215585	38243 31.63%	21018 17.38%	61657 50.99%	120918	5163 4.09%	126081 58.48%
13. Digamadulla	265768	10352 5.45%	83137 43.78%	96420 50.77%	189909	3802 1.96%	193711 72.89%
14. Trincomalee	152289	14103 17.49%	29679 36.81%	36841 45.70%	80623	1326 1.62%	81949 53.81%
15. Kurunegala	784989	7717 1.99%	182223 46.89%	198662 51.12%	388602	4281 1.09%	392883 50.05%
16. Puttalam	319003	4093 1.83%	94823 42.28%	125339 55.89%	224255	2965 1.30%	227220 71.23%
17. Anuradhapura	334074	2529 1.91%	73154 55.15%	56951 42.94%	132634	2207 1.64%	134841 40.36%
18. Polonnaruwa	163741	957 2.01%	20173 42.45%	26392 55.54%	47522	1157 2.38%	48679 29.73%
19. Badulla	329462	3440 2.56%	50223 37.36%	80779 60.08%	134442	3276 2.38%	137718 41.80%
20. Moneragala	161927	697 2.61%	9123 34.18%	16872 63.21%	26692	851 3.09%	27543 17.01%
21. Ratnapura	457224	8516 2.44%	159879 45.81%	180622 51.75%	349017	4113 1.16%	353130 77.23%
22. Kegalle	437178	6923 2.34%	119769 40.54%	168720 57.11%	295412	4277 1.43%	299689 68.55%
Total	9375742	235719 4.63%	2289860 44.95%	2569199 50.43%	5094778	91445 1.76%	5186223 55.32%

Time: 16:59:00
Date: 20/12/88

FELICITATIONS
FROM
WORLD LEADERS

FROM THE QUEEN OF ENGLAND

I wish to convey to you my warmest congratulations on your election as President of The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. I wish you and the Sri Lankan people peace and prosperity during your term as President.

ELIZABETH R.

FROM THE POPE

"On happy occasion of your installation as President of Sri Lanka, I send cordial best wishes and assure you of my prayers as you assume your high office. I invoke the divine blessings of lasting harmony and peace upon all the people of your country."

JOHN PAUL II

FROM EMPEROR OF JAPAN

On the occasion of Your Excellency's assumption to the exalted office of the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, I have great pleasure in sending to you my hearty congratulations and sincere good wishes for your happiness and for the prosperity of your people.

HIROHITO,
Emperor of Japan

CHINA

On behalf of the Chinese Government and People and in my own name, I wish to extend warm congratulations to Your Excellency on your assumption of the office of Presidency of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

China and Sri Lanka are close friends. Our two countries and two peoples have built up over the years genuine friendship and close cooperative relations. I am confident that with the joint efforts of our two Governments and peoples, the amicable relations and cooperation between our two countries and the traditional friendship between our two peoples will grow in strength and develop further during your tenure of office.

May Sri Lanka enjoy prosperity and its people's well-being. I wish Your Excellency success, good health and happiness.

YANG SHANGKUN
President of the People's
Republic of China.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

On the occasion of the National Day of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka I send my own

and the German people's cordial greetings to you and the Sri Lankan people. May I also express the hope that the future holds peace and happiness for your greatly afflicted country.

At the same time I wish you personally, Mr. President, health and success in performing the duties of your new, high office.

RICHARD VON WEIZSACKER
*President of the Federal
Republic of Germany.*

JAPAN

Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and people of Japan, I wish to extend to Your Excellency my warmest congratulations on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I firmly believe that under your outstanding leadership your country will make further progress and that the cooperative relations between our two countries will become closer than ever.

Yours sincerely,
NOBURU TAKESHITA,
Prime Minister of Japan.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

On behalf of the Council of State and the people of the German Democratic Republic I extend to you heartfelt congratulations on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I am convinced, that the traditionally friendly relations existing between the German Democratic Republic and Sri Lanka will also in future develop in the interest of our peoples and will serve peace, disarmament and detente.

Please accept my good wishes for your health and well-being."

ERICH HONECKER
of the German Democratic Republic

General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and Chairman of the Council of State.

INDIA

Your Excellency,

On my own behalf and on behalf of the Government of India, I have great pleasure in extending to you warm and sincere greetings on the Independence Day of Sri Lanka.

I am confident that the friendly ties between our two countries, which have developed over the centuries, will be strengthened further in the years to come. Your election to the helm of affairs in Sri Lanka, will, I am sure, give these further impetus.

Kindly accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your personal health and happiness and for the progress and prosperity of the people of Sri Lanka.

RAJIV GANDHI

Prime Minister of India.

**FROM THE ARCHBISHOP OF
CANTERBURY**

Your Excellency.

I write to send you my warm congratulations on your recent election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The leaders and people of Sri Lanka have been much in my mind and my prayers during the last few months, and I shall continue to pray that peace with justice may be fully restored to your land.

I value very much our meeting together on October 3rd, when I had the honour of presenting you with the World Habitat Award, and I like to

think that there may be further opportunities for our meeting in the future. I am grateful for the splendid gift that you sent me following that occasion. It will serve as a reminder to me of our meeting.

One of my staff, Canon Roger Symon, spent a few days with our two bishops, Bishop Gnanapragasam and Bishop Kumarage, in November, so I feel I have strong personal links with your country at present.

I send you my warmest good wishes for 1989, and pray for God's blessing on your leadership.

Yours Sincerely.

ROBERT RUNCIE

Archbishop of Canterbury

U.S.A.

Dear Mr. President,

Please accept my congratulations on assuming the Presidency of Sri Lanka. We look forward to close cooperation and increased friendship between our two countries in the years to come.

Your wealth of public experience will be much in need as you steer your country's course during these difficult

times. As you embark on your term of office, my best wishes and those of the American people go with you.

Sincerely,
RONALD REAGAN

Dear Mr. President,

Please accept my warm congratulations as Sri Lanka celebrates 41 years of Independence. The occasion is particularly a happy one because of your country's recent affirmation of its commitment to the democratic process—a commitment that has long been an important tie between Sri Lanka and the United States. I look forward to working with you to strengthen our cordial relations and extend to you my own very best wishes and those of the American people.

Sincerely,
GEORGE BUSH
President of USA"

UNITED KINGDOM

Dear Mr. Premadasa,

I send you my warm congratulations on your victory in the presidential election. I remember with pleasure our previous meetings and look forward to

working closely with you. I hope that the years ahead will bring peace and harmony to your country.

With best wishes,

Yours Sincerely,
MARGARET THATCHER
Prime Minister

U.S.S.R.

Please accept sincere congratulations on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

We express hope that your activities in this high post will serve the interest of further development of traditional friendly relations between the USSR and Sri Lanka to the benefit of the peoples of our countries, in the interests of strengthening universal peace and security.

**PRESIDIUM OF THE USSR
SUPREME SOVIET
Moscow, Kremlin**

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and People of the Republic of Korea and on my own I would like to extend to your

Excellency our heartfelt felicitations on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I am confident that under your distinguished leadership, the people of Sri Lanka will continue to make great achievement in the years ahead, and look forward with confidence to further strengthening the friendly and cooperative relations between our two countries.

Please accept, Excellency, my best wishes for your continued good health and happiness and for the progress and prosperity of the people of your great country.

ROH TAE WOO
*President of the
Republic of Korea*

AUSTRALIA

Your Excellency,

On the occasion of your inauguration as the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, I am pleased to extend to you my congratulations and very good wishes for your term of office.

Sri Lanka has recently been through a very difficult and traumatic period. It is

my sincere hope that you will be able to achieve a peaceful solution to your country's problems based on compromise, goodwill and renunciation of violence by all groups party to the conflict.

I am confident that under your leadership, relations between Australia and Sri Lanka will continue to prosper and develop.

NINIAN STEPHEN
Governor-General of Australia

SINGAPORE

Your Excellency,

My warmest congratulations on your election as President.

A clear majority of the electorate of Sri Lanka voted, despite terrorists threats and intimidation. Through their ballots they have demonstrated faith and confidence in the constitutional process. Now you have a mandate to take all measures necessary to restore peace, stability, and orderly progress in Sri Lanka.

Your experience as Prime Minister for about a decade will help you complete the task that President Jayewardene had set out to do, namely to end inter-ethnic conflict and

violence through more provincial autonomy. You have now the opportunity to create a more tolerant multi-ethnic nation, a task made easier by this devolution of autonomy to the North and Eastern provinces.

I wish you success.

LEE QUAN YEW.
Prime Minister.

MALAYSIA

Excellency,

Please accept my warmest felicitations and sincere good wishes on your victory at the recent Presidential Elections.

I am confident that under your able and wise leadership the People of Sri Lanka will enjoy peace and every progress and prosperity.

I hope that the excellent relations and close friendship between us will be further enhanced for the mutual benefit of our peoples and our countries.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and my best wishes for your personal well being and happiness.

DR. MAHATHIR MOHAMAD
Prime Minister

FRANCE

I address to you my congratulations on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I extend to you my heartiest wishes for the full success of your high mission and for the strengthening of the bonds of friendship and co-operation between our two countries.

FRANCOIS MITTERRAND

CANADA

Dear Mr. President,

On the auspicious occasion of your assuming office as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, it is with great pleasure that I extend to you my heartiest congratulations and the good wishes of the Government of Canada.

I am confident that the close and friendly relations which exist between our two countries will be enhanced by our shared ideals and our mutual commitment to development and peace. I particularly look forward to seeing you at CHOGM in Kuala Lumpur in October.

Please accept my best wishes for your good health and happiness, and for the well-being and prosperity of Sri Lanka.

Yours Sincerely,

BRIAN MULRONI,
Prime Minister.

CUBA

On the occasion of your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka it is my pleasure to send you my sincere congratulations.

The opportunity is equally favourable to express our wishes for a continuous development of our bilateral relations for the prosperity of the Sri Lankan people and also for your good health and personal well-being.

With the testimony of my highest consideration.

FIDEL CASTRO RUZ
*President of the Council of State
and of the Government of
the Republic of Cuba*

ITALY

On the occasion of your election of the Presidency of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka I wish to

convey to your Excellency, my fervent felicitations and good wishes, and those of the People of Italy, in the accomplishment of the duties of the high office that you have been called upon to assume.

FRANCESCO COSSIGA
President

EGYPT

"It is with immense pleasure that I extend to your excellency most sincere and heartfelt congratulations for the great confidence entrusted to you by the friendly People of Sri Lanka through your election as President of the Republic.

Such confidence is a true reflection of the firm determination of your people to proceed with their drive on the path to progress, development and constructive modern advancement. It is my conviction that the People of Sri Lanka who have always proved their great ability to withstand all conspiracies and challenges for shattering their integration are truly capable of providing the most favourable conditions for establishing peace all over the Island under your wise leadership.

This can only be achieved in the context of national unity and social

peace so as to further enhance the great positive neutrality movement.

With all best wishes for your constant success in performing your sublime mission in service of your people and country."

MOHAMED HOSNI MUBARAK
President

BURMA

On the occasion of assumption of the high office of the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the People of the Union of Burma join me to convey to you our warm congratulations and goodwill.

I am convinced that, as a National Leader of Sri Lanka, your excellency will be able to enhance the existing traditional relations between our two countries during your tenure of office.

May I also extend my best wishes for your personal well-being and success and for peace, progress and prosperity of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

GENERAL SAW MAUNG CHAIRMAN
*State Law and Order Restoration
Council of Burma*

ROMANIA

On the occasion of your election as President of the Socialist Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka, I am greatly pleased to extend to you my warm congratulations and sincere wishes for your personal good health and happiness, for the peace and prosperity of the friendly People of Sri Lanka.

I express my confidence that the relations of friendship and cooperation established between our two countries will continue taking an upward path in various fields to the mutual benefit of the Peoples of Romania and Sri Lanka, in the interest of international peace of understanding and collaboration.

NICOLAE CEAUSESCU
President

MALDIVES

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Maldives, and on my own behalf, it gives me great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency sincere congratulations and best wishes on your assumption of the high office of the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Your Excellency's election as the new Leader of Sri Lanka was indeed a clear manifestation of the high trust and confidence the People of Sri Lanka have in your esteemed leadership. It also signifies a victory to your people for whose welfare and progress you have dedicated so much energy and time and have ensured such meaningful and far-reaching benefits. This mandate will no doubt enable you to implement with more vigour and purpose the important development policies that you wish to carry out to alleviate poverty and to improve the living conditions of your people, and indeed for the overall progress of your nation. I have every hope that Sri Lanka will witness an era of rapid social and economic development under your able and wise leadership.

I am very happy that the Maldives and Sri Lanka have always enjoyed very close bilateral relations consolidated by longstanding traditional, cultural and trade links that have existed between our two countries for many centuries. It is a matter of personal satisfaction to me that these ties have developed into a very special relationship of friendship and cooperation during the past ten years of my Government in the Maldives and the UNP administration in Sri Lanka.

I am confident that this special relationship will be further strengthened and enriched in the years ahead.

My wife and I take this opportunity to wish you and Madam Premadasa a very Happy New Year and to express our sincere good wishes for Your Excellency's and Madam's good health and happiness and for the continued progress and prosperity of the People of Sri Lanka.

Yours sincerely,

MAUMOON ABDUL GAYOOM

President

IRAN

Excellency,

I would like to congratulate Your Excellency's election as the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I hope that we will witness the expansion of relations between Iran and Sri Lanka during Your Excellency's term of Office.

I wish your Excellency every success.

SEYED ALI KHAMENEI,
*President of the Islamic
Republic of Iran.*

IRAQ

Your Excellency,

On the occasion of your election as the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, it is my pleasure to extend to Your Excellency my best wishes for your personal well-being and happiness and for the progress and prosperity of your country and the Sri.Lankan people.

SADDAM HUSSEIN
*President of the
Republic of Iraq"*

BHUTAN

Excellency,

On behalf of the Government and People of Bhutan, and on my own behalf, I have great pleasure in sending my warm congratulations to Your Excellency on your Election as President of Sri Lanka. We hope that under Your Excellency's wise and able leadership, Sri Lanka will once again enjoy peace, progress and prosperity. We are also confident that the cordial and friendly relations between our two countries at present will be still further strengthened in the years ahead."

JIGME SINGYE WANGCHUCK,
King of Bhutan.

THAILAND

Excellency,

Upon your assumption of the high office of President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, it gives me great pleasure to extend to Your Excellency, on behalf of the Government and people of Thailand, our sincere congratulations and best wishes.

I am confident that with your vast experience and able leadership, Sri Lanka will move towards greater peace and prosperity. It is also my hope that the happily existing good and cordial relations between the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and Thailand will be further strengthened to the mutual benefits of our two peoples.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

GENERAL CHATICHAI CHOONHAVAN
Prime Minister of Thailand.

ZAMBIA

Comrade President,

I have received the pleasant news of your victory on the 19th December Presidential Elections and to convey on

behalf of the party, the Government and the People of Zambia and indeed on my own behalf, our sincere and heartfelt congratulations. The decision of the People of Sri Lanka in electing you to the highest office of head of state is a clear demonstration of the trust and confidence they have in your wise and dedicated leadership which you showed in your capacity as Prime Minister. We are confident that given your energy and wealth of experience you will continue to exert yourself in advancing the cause of progress and prosperity for your country and people. May the almighty God continue to bless your efforts.

KENNETH D. KAUNDA
President of the Republic of Zambia

**THE CZECHOSLOVAK
SOCIALIST REPUBLIC**

Your Excellency,

Accept my sincere congratulations on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. I trust Czechoslovak-Sri Lanka relations will develop to mutual benefit and in the interests of strengthening peace and friendship throughout the world.

GUSTAV HUSAK
*President of the
Czechoslovak Socialist Republic*

**THE COMMISSION OF
THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES**

On the occasion of your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, I would like on my own behalf and on behalf of my colleagues of the Commission of the European Communities to convey to you our warmest congratulations and to the Sri Lankan people our best wishes for a peaceful and prosperous future."

JACQUES DELORS
*President of the Commission
of the European Communities*

F.A.O.

As mankind prepares to begin another year with its opportunities for hope and renewal, I have the honour to extend my sincere congratulations on the occasion of your Excellency's election to your nation's highest office. May the new year bring peace and well being to yourself and to the people of Sri Lanka.

Highest consideration

EDOUARD SAOUMA
*Director-General
Food and Agriculture Organization of
the United Nations, Foodagri Rome.*

INDONESIA

On behalf of the Government and the People of Indonesia as well as on my own, I would like to extend warm congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of Your Excellency's election as President of the Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I am confident that under your able guidance cordial relations and mutually beneficial cooperation between our two countries and people will be further enhanced in the years to come.

Please accept my best wishes for your personal health and well-being as well as success in the discharge of your Excellency's noble task.

SOEHARTO

President of the Republic of Indonesia.

P.L.O.

Revolutionary Greetings

I have received the pleasant news of your election as President of the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka, and I would like to convey on behalf of the Arab Palestinian People, my brother Members of the Executive Committee of the P.L.O. and in my own name, our sincere and heartfelt congratulations. Your election as

President expresses the trust and confidence the Sri Lanka people have in your wise and dedicated Leadership.

At the same time I would like to express to Your Excellency, our deep appreciation for the constant position of support which the friendly people of Sri Lanka adopted on the side of our just Palestinian cause and the struggle of our people for the Liberation of their Homeland and the regaining of their inalienable National Rights including their right to return, to self-determination and to establish their Independent Palestinian State.

On this occasion, I reiterate Brother Excellency, my warm congratulations and sincere wishes for your personal good health and happiness, for the peace and prosperity of the friendly people of Sri Lanka. I express my confidence that the relations of friendship and cooperation established between our two countries will continue taking the upward path to the mutual benefit of the peoples of Palestine and Sri Lanka, in the interest of International Peace of understanding and collaboration.

Revolution until Victory!

YASSER ARAFAT

Chairman of the Executive Committee of the P.L.O.

C-in-C of the Forces of the Palestine

Revolution.

ZIMBABWE

On behalf of the Government and People of Zimbabwe and on my own behalf I have the honour and pleasure to convey to Your Excellency sincere and joyous congratulations upon Your Excellency's election and subsequent installation as your country's President.

Your Excellency, I wish to take this opportunity to express my satisfaction and appreciation for the excellent relations that continue to exist between our two countries and people. I am confident that these relations will continue to grow deeper in the future. I also look forward to the continued cooperation between our two governments in all international fora such as the Non-Aligned Movement and the United Nations Organisation for the mutual benefit of our people.

We in Zimbabwe note with appreciation your efforts to bring peace to your country and also enhance the national development of Sri Lanka.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and best wishes for your personal health and happiness.

ROBERT GABRIEL MUGABE
President of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

LIBYA

Your Excellency,

It is my pleasure to send to Your Excellency my personal congratulations and the good wishes of the people of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Great Jamahiriya on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

I also convey my best wishes for Your Excellency's personal good health and happiness and for the friendly people of Sri Lanka peace, progress and prosperity.

COLONEL MUAMMAR AL-QATHAFI

KENYA

On behalf of the Government and the People of Kenya and on my own behalf, I wish to extend to your Excellency hearty felicitations on your election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

By electing you, the People of Sri Lanka have clearly demonstrated the confidence reposed in you and the ruling United National Party.

My government looks forward with confidence to working closely with

your government to enhance the cordial and friendly relations that exist between our two countries for the mutual benefit of our two countries and peoples.

DANIEL T. ARAP MOI
President

PHILLIPPINES

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the entire Filipino People join me in conveying our sincere felicitations on your recent election as President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Your personal triumph, as well as that of the United National Party, is a

manifestation of the trust which your people have placed in you and a clear mandate for you to lead and guide your country towards democracy. We wish you success in overcoming the challenges which you face.

I am confident that under your leadership the bilateral relations which so happily exist between our two nations shall be further strengthened.

Please accept, Excellency, the Assurances of my highest esteem.

CORAZON C. AQUINO
President of the Republic of the Philippines.

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