



Selected Speeches
of
His Excellency
R. PREMADASA
President
of the
Democratic
Socialist Republic
of Sri Lanka.

**Selected Speeches
of
His Excellency
R. PREMADASA
President
of the
Democratic
Socialist Republic
of Sri Lanka.**

PRESIDENTIAL SECRETARIAL
LIBRARY

ප්‍රධාන මණ්ඩලය
සහ
සහකාර මණ්ඩල
123456789
මහලය
සහ
සහකාර මණ්ඩල
සහකාර මණ්ඩල
සහකාර මණ්ඩල

පෙ. අංක	6665 6579
මුදල	808.51
දිනය	

Contents

1. Providing Assets to the Assetless
Speech made by His Excellency R. Premadasa, the President at the High Level Official Conference on 'Policy Guidelines on Poverty Alleviation' at Sawsiripaya – 13.02.1989
2. Address to Parliament by the President on 09th March, 1989
3. Should we fight among ourselves and let outside forces override us?
Speech made by the President His Excellency R. Premadasa, at the Pinnacle Unveiling Ceremony at the Chitta Vivekashramaya, Wickremasinghepura, Battaramulla – 1st June, 1989
4. No country or Government in this world has the power to dictate to us
The speech delivered by His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, at the Prize Giving of the 1989 Gam Udawa Anniversary on 3rd July 1989, at Mahiyanganaya
5. Comments on withdrawal of the Indian Peace Keeping Force made by His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, in his Address to the Executive Committee Meeting of the Colombo Central UNP Organisation held on 22nd July, 1989
6. Observation on the Janasaviya Poverty Alleviation Programme by His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, in his Address to the Executive Committee Meeting of the Colombo Central UNP Organisation held on 22nd July, 1989
7. Address to the nation by His Excellency R. Premadasa, the President, on 28th July, 1989
8. Address by His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, on Janasaviya over Sri Lanka Rupavahini – 4th September, 1989
9. Address by His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, to Secretaries, Heads of Departments and Chairmen of Corporations at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute on 6th September, 1989

- 10. Address of His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, at the All Party Conference, 13th September, 1989, BMICH, Colombo
11. Address of His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, at the Convocation of the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, 22nd September, 1989, BMICH
12. Report by His Excellency R. Premadasa, President, to the All Party Conference, 12th October, 1989, at the BMICH, Colombo

SPEECH MADE BY
HIS EXCELLENCY R. PREMADASA,
THE PRESIDENT,
AT THE HIGH LEVEL OFFICIAL
CONFERENCE
ON "POLICY GUIDELINES
ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION"
AT 'SAWSIRIPAYA' - 13.02.1989

I thought of explaining the object of 'Janasaviya' to all of you who are the top level officials, who will be responsible for implementing Government decisions regarding this Programme. The Janasaviya Programme has a vision before it. We should first understand that vision. It is only if that vision is understood, that appropriate policies can be formulated. And, it is only if those policies are properly formulated, that the Programme can be successfully implemented.

In fact, several policy guidelines relating to Janasaviya were detailed by me on 3rd July 1988, which was the last day of the Anamaduwa Gam Udawa. On that occasion the former President, His Excellency J. R. Jayewardene, was with us as the Chief Guest. The speech I delivered that day has been brought out in print. I believe copies of that publication have been issued to you. I would like to invite you to read that speech well. That speech contained a

little of the philosophy behind the Janasaviya Programme.

Let me read out to you a few extracts from that speech - I read from page 8: **"Whatever development we may bring about, should be to the benefit of the poor. Development, in any sense should help people live. It is to help people live that we need irrigation facilities, high-ways, electricity, etc. We need science not for the sake of science, but to help people. We need technology not for technology's sake, but for improving the living conditions of the people. Our Party is aware that there is no meaning in any development that keeps the people in hunger and in malnutrition, leading to death. Our Government is well aware of this. That is why our Government always acts with the welfare of the people in mind. For whose benefit is science meant? For whom is technology? If hunger cannot be eliminated through science, and if it cannot eliminate sickness and physical weakness, we have no**

need for that science. If technology cannot eliminate poverty, unemployment, want, we have no need for that technology. If the scientist and the technologist cannot provide relief to the poor, what need have humanity for such a scientist or technologist! These poor people are served better by buffaloes, draught cattle and pack-bulls. We can imagine how these innocent animals serve humanity without any knowledge of science or technology". This is one excerpt from the speech I made that day.

In another place in the same speech I say this: "Half of our people are today living on Food Stamps. We should save them from the abject poverty they have been reduced to. Ours is a country with a great potential. Although half of our population is poor, our country is rich in natural resources. We have no need to make our country an Europe, an America or an Africa. Let us make it an Asia. Let us make it a Sri Lanka. Through justice, self reliance and eternal values and truth, let us bring this about. As you know if there is any obstruction to this programme, we should change it. That is what is meant by "progressive" attitude."

Let me quote from another place: **"Our efforts should be to remove**

this distinction between haves and have-nots altogether. A distinguished President of the United States stated "if a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." That President was the late John F. Kennedy." If anyone tries to force upon the people what they themselves believe without considering the needs of the people, the result would be waste and displeasure. What we should do is to take each family and find out their needs and help them to overcome their difficulties. That is the need of the day. That is the challenge before us. The poor are suffering in silence. We go to them and ask for their votes. What happens thereafter? A limited crowd hangs around the person who received the vote."

Let me quote two other parts of my speech: **"We should think for a moment whether we pay to our innocent families the same consideration that we pay to a tender tea leaf or to a rubber sapling or to a coconut plant. How great is the concern we show to the tender tea leaf or to a tea bush? How many experts try to find out why a particular tea plant doesn't grow well or what ails it? And also how concerned are these experts about the coconut plant and the rubber**

plant? Hon. Ministers and Members of Parliament here are well aware of the measure of concern we show to our innocent and poor people. I need not tell you how often we feel impelled to look into these problems."

"Thousands of youth who are leaving school and entering society are living in frustration. There are many vicious forces that are trying to exploit them and lead them astray. Therefore, it is our duty to protect our worthy people who in their hundreds of thousands are helping us in programmes of this kind. We would like to tell those who are aiding us that there is nothing wrong in helping programmes that bring results, may be, ten, twelve, fifteen or twenty years later. But the first thing necessary is to help us find a remedy to our immediate problem."

This is only a small part of our vision of future development. As you know, we built the infrastructure needed by our country during the past eleven years. We took action to provide irrigation facilities. The Mahaweli Ganga Scheme is one of them. We provided facilities for provision of more electricity. Under the Mahaweli Scheme we have already constructed five large reservoirs. We generate power from

all these five reservoirs. The benefits of these projects will accrue to everyone of our villages in the next two years. Work on rehabilitation of our highways has been started and is being carried on. We have already liberalized our trade. Conditions have been created to bring about a new growth of small scale and large scale industries. In the next two years we should fully commit ourselves and direct our efforts, to transform half of our population who now live on Food Stamps, into people with some means and capability. This population, if taken as consisting of families having five members each, would amount to 15 lakhs of families. Those 15 lakhs of families may comprise seventy lakhs or, may be, eighty lakhs of individuals who are now living in utter want. It is to meet this challenge that we should direct our efforts on all fronts – our science, technology and even administration. That is to strengthen our people. I believe that a family of five living on Food Stamps is not receiving more than Rs. 350/- inclusive of even the recent increase. How can that family live on that income? If they have one meal, they will have to skip the next.

They do not have enough clothes to permit a change of clothes. Their children suffer from malnutrition. They do not have a piece of land or

a house to call their own. What we are now trying to do, through Janasaviya, is to strengthen these people. Today, we are investing money on various projects. Hereafter, we are going to invest money on our people. I believe, the most fruitful investment is the investment on people. If it is the people who are going to benefit from our development activities, we should strengthen the people, so that they will be able to help themselves. We should get the people to participate in our development work. It is only through production that a country's wealth can be increased. What we need is people-based production.

This Janasaviya Programme is for that purpose. We want to provide nutritious food for our people. It is then that they become a healthy people. It is such a people who can participate in development work and in production. That is why we are going to give them Rs. 2,500/- per month. There is no need to select anew the people who should receive this Allowance. The category of people who should receive assistance has already been named. They include families receiving Food Stamps and other poor families, who are qualified to receive Food Stamps. So, they need not be selected over again. Nevertheless they have to be

identified. That should be done at village level in the presence of the people themselves. It is not an identification by officials who go from house to house and get a Form filled. The authorities will have to visit those villages for this purpose. We will be setting up a Unit which will comprise of Government officials and village representatives. The whole village should be in the know as to what is happening. The families already receiving Food Stamps as well as other families qualified to receive them, though not issued with them still, should be summoned before the Unit, one by one. When this is done all the villagers will see what is happening. That is how this identification will be done. Our survey will embrace all the 25,000 villages in the country. Of the amount of Rs. 2,500/- given to each family, one part is for consumption and the other for saving. They should be provided with proper guidance in regard to consumption. They could cultivate nutritious food themselves. They should be encouraged to do so. Otherwise this money might be wasted on non-essentials. The Allowance given is not a Charity Allowance. The Allowance is a support provided for the people to get their necessary nutrition, for their physical growth. The Unit, I spoke about, should guide the people in this

regard. The part of the Allowance to be saved should be deposited in a Bank. By the end of the 24 months, the saving will amount to Rs. 25,000/

This saving can be utilised for some enterprise by the family. During the 24 months the Unit should find out the wishes, talents and the abilities of the family, and direct them to some suitable form of trade, or small industry, or cultivation in order to ensure an independent existence to them. Now, these are families that receive Food Stamps or qualify to receive Food Stamps – in other words, the poorest of the poor. Apart from these families, there are others in a village who are not qualified to receive this amount of Rs. 2,500/-. They are people who are fairly well off. The Unit should look into the conditions of these families too, and find out what their weaknesses and shortcomings are, and also where their strength lies and what they have. The Unit should advise them on how best their capacity and strength can be utilised. There are credit systems provided by the State. There are various forms of assistance given. Many of these families are unaware of them. There may be, in these families, members with various talents. Even among the Food Stamp receiving families, there may be individuals with various innate

talents and abilities. All these years, though we have been trying to find out what their weaknesses and shortcomings are, we never worried ourselves to find out what their capabilities and talents are. The other day, I had the opportunity of listening to a set of verses recited by a child of a poor family. Her performance made me wonder what great talent she possessed for recitation and delivery. On further inquiry, I found out that she came from a family living on Food Stamps. On another occasion, I saw a wood carving done by a child. It was a beautiful creation. The wonder was that the child had done it without any guidance or training received from anybody on the art of wood carving. What a clever craftsman he will be, if he is trained in the techniques and the technology of the art! In poor families we come across persons with innate talent and are capable of new creations. But so far we have not bothered ourselves to find out them, and to give any help to them. All this time, if ever we thought of the people, it was to find out whether we could impose new taxes, or in some such other way, add to their burdens, and not to help them.

In colonial times all that our rulers did was to exploit us. Nothing was done to help us to develop and

grow. Our inherent skills were never discovered or sharpened. The slavish mentality of dependence on others, generated by colonial rule, and also, the system of administration of that period are, yet with us. All those who join us in these activities should keep this important point in mind. Our attempt is to be responsive to a large section of people, who still remain neglected, and get their participation for development and production, and thereby, increase our country's resources base. As I stated earlier, please do not consider this monthly grant of Rs. 2,500/- to these poor families, as a Charity Allowance. It is nothing but an investment made to mobilize more resources for our society. The aim of the programme is to look into the needs of, not only families living on Food Stamps, but all others too, so that we can help them to get over their difficulties, and get them to contribute their strength to the effort of social advancement. This programme does not need any new taxation. It does not need cutting anybody's salary. All that is necessary is to direct available resources to this task on a priority basis. In fact, what we are trying to do is to make available to our society a whole mass of resources that we have so far forgotten about and left neglected.

I have also directed that lands that

could be given to our poor be selected, and that arrangements be made to take stock of the quantum of such land available. We believe that every family should have a piece of land large enough to suit its needs. They should have a house of their own. If no land is available in urban areas, we might be able to give them the ownership of the houses they live in now. We might be able to draw such urban families to some form of productive activity. This is the type of concept of development that we have in Janasaviya. If you read my speech made at the Udagam Anniversary on 3rd July 1988 in full, you will be able to understand this concept better. I intend to speak to the Field Officers also about this programme on the coming 25th. I wanted to make a brief explanation of the Janasaviya concept to you who are in Government Ministries, Departments and Corporations, first.

Now, these Units I spoke of, are expected to be established in all the 25,000 villages. They will comprise representatives of the villages, as well as, Government officials. We will be able to get the assistance of village level organisations in this matter. There are various voluntary organisations at village and urban level. Those organisations are now represented in the Gramodaya

Mandalayas. All of them should be drawn into the effort to implement this programme. There are three main Institutions in our country, that now function separately. Firstly, there are the Buddhist, Hindu, Islam and Christian places of worship in the villages. Think for a moment, of the amount of influence these temples, churches and mosques wield today. They cultivate righteous thoughts among the people. The clergy of these places provide an example to the people. Secondly, we have the village schools. These schools too, teach the growing generation the proper way to live in society. Thirdly, there is the Police Station that serves the area. What the Police does, is also, to advise the people and guide them to abide by the country's laws. That is the main task expected of the Police – i.e. to point out to individuals or groups the harm that will be caused to society by breaking the law. It is to do this, that the people are even brought before Courts. When that happens, it is the Courts that decide on the punishment for breaking the law. In fact, basically these three Institutions – the place of worship, the school and the police – serve the same objective, though in different ways. However, we note that these three Institutions work separately without any co-ordination. I would like these three important

Institutions to work with some co-ordination for the welfare of the people of their areas. I have already told the Inspector General of Police to get the officers in-charge-of the various Police Stations to go to the place of worship in the village, not in Uniform, but in normal dress like any other ordinary citizen, and meet and discuss matters with the clergy. If they do it, it will provide an impetus for peace. They should show that they are always ready to work together with others. They should next go to the school and meet the Principal and the Teaching Staff. There are also the senior students with whom they can discuss matters. They should be told that the Police are there to help them to get on in the society, as much as the schools. They can also tell the school children that they are ready to share with them the benefits of the discipline they had got through Police training. Such discipline would come in handy when they leave school and take up employment in the outside world.

Just think of the difference that would be brought about in society, if only, these important Institutions work with such co-ordination. At present they work separately with no contact with each other. One Institution does not know what the other is doing. So, a programme of this nature should

also be included in the Janasaviya.. The Janasaviya is for the welfare of the people, both spiritually and economically. It would be the important means of creating peace, ensuring discipline and achieving prosperity. This vision, this concept, should be understood by all of us. The people of this country appointed me as their President to conduct the administration of this country on these three foundations. Therefore, those of you at top level should take this to heart. Your economic programmes will be prepared in conformity with this programme. We need technology. But that technology should not be something that dominates the people. I can refer to an incident that happened recently, to illustrate my point. All of you know of the tragedy that took place at Ahungalle. The absence of a rail gate resulted in a train-bus collision. Some forty odd innocent persons, including school children, died on the spot. About hundred more were injured. Why did this happen? Because there was no rail gate there to close the road, when the train was on the track. To provide a rail gate, a sum of Rs. 350,000/- or so, has to be spent, normally. There are seven hundred odd such unprotected level-crossings in the country. Now imagine the total sum of money that would have to be spent on all these level-crossings.

Now, I believe, this requirement of a rail-gate at every level-crossing has already been fulfilled, not by spending lakhs of rupees, but a mere sum of Rupees 125/- or so, on each. We made use of human labour. A protection has been provided round the clock. Six persons living on Food Stamps and residing in the area, have received jobs. Each person gets Rs. 1000/- per month. Under Janasaviya that person's family will be getting Rs. 1,500/- being the balance from the Allowance due to him. We told them to raise at least a bamboo across the road when a train is on line. Within a week that task was completed. You can imagine now how a job for which about three to four thousand lakhs of rupees were to have been spent, has now been completed for almost a song, and with extreme ease. In other areas too, we should learn to find solutions to problems thinking on the same lines.

In most offices we only fatten our office files. We can cut down on documentation to a large extent. We can reduce Form filling. Office staff should develop the habit of discussing among them matters relating to the subjects they handle. The large tables in offices are like beds. You can make two tables out of each table that you are using now. Besides, a large table only clutters up space. It also calls for

unnecessary buildings, furniture as well as equipment such as telephones. I have ordered the Treasury to look into this matter. When some money is allocated for a project, a large part of the fund was for the organising of the project. In 1977, when I told my officers that a particular project had to be started, I was told that a building of such and such a size would be required with so many officials, and so many telephones, and various furniture. Ultimately it was found out that 3/4 ths of the money meant for the project went for the establishment. So we should now think of re-organising these offices. The larger the office, the greater the inconvenience in keeping the place tidy and clean. There is no use working seated at these tables, dressed nicely, if we do not worry ourselves to find out whether the work is being done properly, without leaving room for inordinate waste. At present, in almost every office, there is waste of funds taking place, which can very well be prevented by a little bit of thinking and planning. For example, in most of the offices, nobody looks around after closing time to see whether the fans are still working or the taps remain running. If we avoid this sort of waste we would be in a position and would have enough funds, to implement not one Janasaviya, but several of them,

without having to find additional money. I earnestly invite you to think about these things seriously, after your going back to your work places. If you do so, you would undoubtedly be able to think up new ideas and tell me how to implement this scheme even in a better way than we contemplate now. I would be very happy to receive guidance from those who think about this and make their suggestions for improvement.

I leave it to you to effect a complete re-organisation in the existing administration on these lines. Please reduce waste as much as possible. We must effect economy as far as possible in the use of equipment and vehicles. Very often several officers go to the same place, in separate vehicles, when a single vehicle would have been sufficient for the transport of all of them. Recently, I came to know of an instance, where a lorry had been sent from Colombo to Galle, taking only an almairah as its load. An empty lorry too had been sent to Galle, from the same office, to bring down certain articles which awaited despatch from Galle. Strange though it was, this arrangement had been made in the same office. The amazing thing about the matter is, that the two clerks who deployed the two vehicles, sit opposite each other

looking at the faces of each other, throughout the day. The two men talk a lot about everything under the sun, except the duties they attend to. It is said that a subject they discussed with particular relish is horse racing and betting. When I heard of this incident, I had inquiries made, and the person who made investigations reported, that even at the moment he went to the place, the two officers had been engrossed in talk about racing.

If one of these officers happened to tell the friend sitting opposite, that he was sending a lorry to Galle for the purpose he had in mind, the other man, most probably, would have been reminded of his need and made use of the same vehicle for it too. When questioned about the matter the officers had said that they were expected only to minute in files about their work, and not to discuss with others. Both had minuted in their respective files, but neither one had the opportunity of knowing what his colleague had written. They had handled two different subjects and the files had gone to two superior

officers for orders who mutually did not know what the other man did. A little bit of co-ordination of work among officers would have avoided this duplication of work and waste of funds.

I must tell you that it is not necessary for the Ministry of Public Administration to send down Circulars to correct this sort of thing taking place in offices. If you think on the lines, I just mentioned, you will be able to bring about the radical re-organisation that is necessary to remedy the situation. I earnestly request you to do so and make a success of the Janasaviya effort. Janasaviya is actually an effort to help the people, and in turn, to secure their participation and assistance to do an immense good to the country and society. Janasaviya need not become a burden on anybody. It will generate the strength necessary for its own existence and progress. Those of you who implement the programme will, undoubtedly derive much satisfaction from the good results which would be beneficial to all.

ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT BY
THE PRESIDENT OF
THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC
OF SRI LANKA ON THE OCCASION OF
THE CEREMONIAL OPENING OF
THE FIRST SESSION OF THE SECOND
PARLIAMENT ON 9TH MARCH, 1989

Hon. Members,

On behalf of the people of Sri Lanka, I welcome you to the First Session of the Second Parliament. Parliament is meeting today as a consequence of the General Election held on 15th February, 1989.

I salute the people who have convincingly, effectively and non-violently defeated the bullet and enthroned the ballot. Our people have courageously demonstrated their unfailing dedication to the highest principles of democracy. Our people have given their verdict in a clear and positive manner. They have chosen their Head of State, their Government and their representatives in the Opposition.

The electoral process helps in realizing the aspirations of our society. It reconciles conflicting perceptions of such aspirations and needs. It acts as a catalyst in defining national goals and priorities. It is also a medium

through which policies and programmes are placed before the people for their judgement and choice. In their wisdom the people of Sri Lanka have selected you to be their representatives.

Hon. Members will recall that on the day of my inauguration as the President of Sri Lanka, I addressed the nation from the hallowed precincts of the Temple of the Sacred Tooth Relic in Kandy. On that day I dedicated myself to four fundamental courses of action.

I repeat:

"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."

It is from this vision that the fundamental policies of my Government will flow. It is from this vision that the spirit of the legislative proposals that are to be considered by this Parliament will flow. I call upon all of you, irrespective of race, religion, language, community or political affiliation to join me in this dedication.

The decision to pursue this new vision was taken when I placed the United National Party Manifesto before the people at the Presidential Election on the 19th of December, 1988. The new vision that I hold out and the new deal I promise are irrevocable commitments to our people. The task before us is to keep faith with the large mass of the people who made this Parliament possible. The task before us is to banish all divisive forces and unite our people under one banner. The task before us is to win back all those who have been alienated for one reason or the other.

I assumed the Office of President on the 2nd of January, 1989. Since then, my Government has relentlessly pursued a course of action to defuse tension, eliminate dissension and bring about national reconciliation. I have repeatedly invited the dissidents to enter the social and political

mainstream of our country. The lifting of the Emergency and the releasing of a large number of persons under detention were intended to create a climate of mutual trust and understanding.

I firmly subscribe to the principle that example is better than precept. Discipline must begin with self-discipline. In this spirit action has been taken to introduce a code of ethics for Parliamentarians and those holding high public office.

I have set in motion the machinery for political, economic, social and administrative restructuring. I have begun this process with the rationalisation of the allocation of subjects and functions. I have introduced criteria for the review of performance of all the senior executive personnel. A series of steps have been taken to eliminate waste and corruption. I have removed some of the divisive and contentious issues from our educational and administrative systems.

I have guaranteed justice and fair-play to every citizen. I do not want the rule of law to be violated. I do not want any violation of the basic human rights. Our Constitution must be safeguarded. The fundamental rights and liberties of the citizen must

be defended. This will be the tone and the theme of my administration. This will enable my government to ensure economic prosperity through political and social stability.

The three corner stones on which all the programmes of this Government meant for the common good will be mounted, are:-

Firstly,

Peace through consultation, compromise, consensus and reconciliation;

Secondly,

Discipline through the strict application of the rule of law, restoration of moral values and the enforcement of a Code of Ethics for the holders of public office;

Thirdly,

Poverty Alleviation through the restructuring of the political, economic, social and administrative machinery.

In my vision for the future of Sri Lanka, I see that our greatest resource which we have in abundance, is our people. Therefore, the fundamental principle of the Government that I am

privileged to lead is to invest in our people. Let all the forces both in the Government and in the Opposition join together to enhance the dignity and the self respect of our people. Let all of us join together to strengthen and recognise the identity of the individual. In this manner let us marshal into effective fulfilment the energies of the 16 million people into a new deal. The people are not the objects of the policies and programmes of Government. Nor are they mere subjects and actors. There can be no design or strategy for the development of Sri Lanka without the effective participation of the people.

Peace is one of the three means which will lead us to prosperity. In a country as politically conscious and mobilised as ours, there can be no imposed peace. No imposed peace anywhere can be durable. Peace can come only if we commit ourselves to the great task of national reconciliation and socio-economic reconstruction. Peace can only come through consultation, compromise and consensus. Peace will be enduring only if economic progress is set on a self-sustained path. In our search for peace we have been pursuing a path of non-violence and tolerance. In His great wisdom, Lord Buddha, taught us that 'Hatred does not cease by hatred but by love

alone.' Therefore, let us try to achieve peace only through peaceful means. At the same time let those who disturb the peace understand that the patience of our people is not unlimited.

Discipline is another of the means to progress and prosperity. Indiscipline among those who occupy positions of trust and responsibility removes the motive and rationale for discipline in society at large. Discipline necessarily implies codes of conduct. It implies example more than precept. It requires respect for law and order on the part of every individual. General indiscipline must give way to absolute respect for law. In the matter of discipline, Parliament should not only set an example, it must also set the standards. Parliament represents the most sacred and the highest forum of the people. Therefore, Parliament should proceed with its business with great distinction and a high degree of decorum. I am confident that this legislature will uphold and maintain the highest traditions of Parliamentary practice in the conduct of its business.

Poverty Alleviation is our third objective. We must recognise the harsh reality of abject poverty and serious deprivation in our society. Around half our population live below

the poverty line. A large number of them are on the margins of existence. The unprecedented growth and development of the past decade, should be channelled to reach the poorest of the poor. Now that the elections are over, let every member of this assembly, irrespective of Party or ideology work towards the realisation of the objective of poverty alleviation. All elements of the poverty alleviation programme will commence with immediate effect. No efforts will be spared in ensuring that this programme is carried through without disruption or delay.

The Manifesto of the United National Party contains this new vision and this new deal. I am tabling a copy of our Manifesto so that it will appear in the Hansard. It is a statement of the policies and programmes that my Government will follow during its term of office. Legislation will be introduced to translate the intentions of my Government into programmes of action. The Budget that will be presented shortly will provide for the implementation of these programmes.

I commend these tasks to you. It is important that you discuss and debate them. Your insights, your suggestions and your criticisms will add constructively to the development and refinement of our strategies. And,

as you contribute constructively to these tasks there will develop a less divisive relationship between the Government and the Opposition than has been the past pattern. The people expect a new attitude and a new approach to national concerns.

They expect this from both sides—the Government and the Opposition. Let us live up to those expectations.

May the blessings of the Triple-Gem be upon you.

**SPEECH MADE BY THE PRESIDENT
HIS EXCELLENCY R. PREMADASA,
AT THE
PINNACLE UNVEILING CEREMONY
AT THE
CHITTAVIVEKASHRAMAYA
WICKREMASINGHEPURA,
BATTARAMULLA 1ST JUNE 1989**

Most Reverend Maha Nayake Theras,
Reverend Sirs and Friends;

Today is the first day of the month of June or the month of Poson. Today is a very important day for all of us who are Sri Lankans. It was in the month of Poson that Sri Lankans became a civilized nation. We were able to learn and practice Buddha Dhamma because of Arahant Mahinda who arrived in Sri Lanka with the concurrence of King Dharmasoka. On the Poson Day we not only came to know about Buddhism but also we gave up weapons we had in our hands. King Devanampiyatissa on his way to the jungle for hunting deer, met Arahant Mahinda, listened to his sermon and came to know the noble doctrine of Lord Buddha after which the King dedicated himself to the principles of Avihimsa (non-violence) giving up Himsa (violence) on a Poya Day. Today is the beginning of that memorable month of Poson. Further, I saw the Leela calendar today.

Important events of each day are mentioned in this calendar under the respective days. What is mentioned there for today is the bringing of the branch of the Sri Maha Bodhi by the Nun Sanghamitta in 247 B.C. during the reign of King Devanampiyatissa. This too adds to the importance.

Also, Gam-Udawa '89 is being inaugurated today at Mahiyangana. At the Mahiyangana Raja Maha Vihara, where the famous Mahiyangana Dagoba stands, a pirith ceremony takes place tonight. Therefore, it is a great pleasure for all of us to have participated in a meritorious activity of this nature on this important day at this Chittavivekashramaya built by the Sri Sucharita Movement. Today is the day on which we can start paying homage to this Dagoba. Its pinnacle was laid by our Most Venerable Agga Maha Panditha Balangoda Ananda Maithreya Maha Nayaka Thera.

In a little while by opening this pinnacle our Mahanayake Thera will

make it possible for all of us to worship it. This Chittavivekashramaya was established by Sri Sucharita Viyaparaya, to provide peace of mind to our people. We found that a place like this was necessary for us to get rid of various violent feelings, bad feelings, wrong feelings from our minds. We saw a place like this in England. That is the Amarawathi Temple. It was Agga Maha Panditha Balangoda Ananda Maithreya Thero who gave advice on establishing this Temple. We thought while the Maha Thero is going from country to country preaching, teaching and practising meditation, there should be a place in Sri Lanka also to get his advice like this Chitta Vivekashramaya.

We established this Vivekashramaya on his advice and approval in this land of 16 acres. The Chairman of Nawaloka Group, Deshabandu H. K. Dharmadasa, Mrs. Dharmadasa and their family helped us in this venture. When I requested him, he agreed to do everything possible towards the endeavour. All these including the Sanghavasa, Dharmasalawa and this Chaitya were financed by him. Other members of the Sucharita Movement also helped in all possible ways. While appreciating all their good work, I confer merit on all of them.

You will see that this Chaitya is decorated with the six-coloured Buddhist flag. I saw a similar decoration about six months back at the Thuparamaya Chaitya. It was done on the instructions and advice of the late Maho Sumedha Thero. We are happy that we were able to decorate this Chaitya today with the coloured Buddhist flag in this manner. Large number of people helped us in this venture. Especially, a number of people from Moratuwa and Panadura helped us with this decoration. This is a decorative draping for the Chaitya. It can be removed when necessary. We got this Buddhist flag due to the efforts of Maha Upasaka Henry Olcott who came from America. He was the creator of this six-coloured Buddhist flag accepted by the whole world. This symbolises 'Budu Ras' emanating from the Lord Buddha. Therefore, we can think that 'Budu Ras' is coming out of the Chaitya.

We all try very hard in various ways to obtain peace of mind. We work, earn and do all these to have peace of mind. This is a period where there is no peace, not only in our country, but also in various other countries in the world. It is a period we all lack peace of mind. When we think of the various violent incidents happening today in our country, it is difficult to have any peace of mind.

But it is only at a time like this we really need the peace of mind. Lord Buddha taught us how to control our mind. He has taught us how to control our thoughts and feelings.

It is at a time like this that we can get the guidance, advice and assistance from the Dhamma taught by the Lord Buddha. We need such guidance and advice specially at a time when we face disturbances and violence. The unity of the people was disrupted due to various incidents. Fear and doubt crept into the minds of the people. The situation continues without any change. Everyone is praying and hoping that peace and tranquility would be restored in the country.

Buddha Dhamma teaches us that we cannot achieve peace by resorting to arms. Lord Buddha has taught us that peace and kindness cannot be achieved by wars, creating violence and disturbances. He has shown us through example of incidents which took place during his time how we can achieve peace. Lord Buddha has taught us to achieve peace not through arms but by understanding that comes through kindness, compassion, forbearance, consultation and compromise.

Many sections of our society were

pitched into many disputes and conflicts because they failed to solve various disputes and conflicts through discussion and exchange of views among themselves. This situation took a serious turn when certain sections took a hasty decision to resort to violence to solve their problems.

What was the result? Our country was engulfed in conflicts. The people were gripped by fear and doubt. When the country is wrought with conflicts and the people gripped with fear it would result in the disruption of peace and unity. It will also, pose a threat to the independence, sovereignty and unitary character of the country. When we ourselves do not have the strength to solve our problems, when we harm ourselves by injuring and killing each other with arms, outside forces could easily override us. We are a nation which had been under colonial rule for four hundred and fifty years. We were able to regain independence shedding colonial rule because all sections of the people were united, irrespective of race and religion.

If we divide ourselves, fight among ourselves, armed with weapons, and kill our own people, our freedom will disappear and we will again become a subject nation. We must remember this.

These days many people ask me when the Indian Peace-Keeping Force will leave our country. We must reflect on the reasons that made the Indian Peace-Keeping Force to come here. One reason was that we took up arms to fight among ourselves to solve our problems. I like to state at this moment that the Indian Peace-Keeping Force has started moving out. This commenced when I became the President. You may remember that I told you during the Presidential Election campaign that when I become the President I will take steps to send the Indian Peace-Keeping Force out of the country.

I like to state that even before I made this request, Indian Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi started pulling them out. His High Commissioner met me and told me that they knew the promise I had made and that it should be kept. He told me that they are prepared to fall in line. He further told me that they will take them back in stages. India responded even before I requested them. I was very happy about it. I was grateful to Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and the Indian Government for making arrangements to take the Indian Army back. Already between 7000 to 8000 soldiers have left Sri Lanka. Now what is required is to expedite this process and send

them back early. All of us must assist in this process.

At a time when the foreign force which came here is moving out from our motherland, we must work with patience. We must not become violent. Having a foreign force in an independent country is a slur on its self-respect. It devalues the freedom of the country. At this moment we must work peacefully and patiently. We must expedite their departure. I will inform India about it in a day or two.

India sent this Peace-Keeping Force to restore peace in the North and East at the request of our former President. We all know that India has repeatedly assured us that anytime the President of Sri Lanka were to make a request they will take their forces back. They started pulling them back even before I told them. I intend to ask India to take their forces back. It has become a necessity now. Even recently Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi has said that they will be pulling out the Peace-Keeping Force from Sri Lanka. Indian Government has assured us that they will do so at any time we want.

We must remember an important incident that happened during the recent past. We must not forget that

a number of Groups who were directing an armed struggle have come into the democratic process. In July the Indian Peace-Keeping Force will be completing two years in our country. In fact the IPKF which came to restore peace had to engage in fighting. We all know that a large number of Indian soldiers also died as a result. Some suffered serious injuries. Their kith and kin have become orphans.

It is not only the soldiers of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force who died. Many of the soldiers of the Sri Lanka Army as well as Police Officers who proceeded to the Northern and Eastern Provinces to restore peace in those provinces had to sacrifice their lives. Their families and children have become orphans and are really suffering. A large number of persons who served in the Sri Lanka Army and the Police are injured, disabled or deformed. They have been reduced to this plight in view of their commitment to preserve the unity and the integrity of our country. We are taking action to provide necessary assistance and relief to such orphaned families.

We know that children and the other members of these families are absolutely innocent persons who are in no way involved in any of these

activities. They include members of all ethnic groups – Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers. Waves of crimes have swept across the country causing destruction, death and suffering to many. We are indebted to these brave servicemen. We should all pay our respects to them. Our Government is taking every possible action to grant relief and assistance to the affected families.

Now I would like to ask you the previous question again. What made the Indian Peace-Keeping Force to come to this land? Every one of us should ask this question ourselves. What made our soldiers and members of the public to pay with their lives? It is our own conscience only that can answer this question. We did not think of solving our internal problems peacefully and with mutual understanding. Failure to do so on our part has brought us to this plight. Therefore, we should ask ourselves whether we should allow ethnic, racial and parochial conflicts to continue further paving the path for external forces to intervene in the sovereignty of our motherland. Everyone of us should pay our attention to this aspect of the problem.

Why can't we come to a settlement through mutual discussions and negotiations? On a day like

today it is quite appropriate to make such a firm resolution. Today marks the dawn of Poson month. It is the month in which this Country received the noble gift of the doctrine of non-violence. On this great day we are gathered here to participate in this supreme religious ceremony.

If we are determined we could make this entire month free from violence and pave the way to discuss our problems. I am prepared to discuss with anyone about these problems. If there is any matter to be attended to by the Government, I will myself direct negotiations on this matter. If what you want is a cessation of hostilities and laying down of arms before coming to the negotiation table. I am prepared to accede to that too. They could even keep the arms during such discussions but not use them. This sacred month of Poson is the best time for such a move. It is our duty to act boldly to solve our problems ourselves. If we don't, our future generations will undoubtedly condemn us and brand us as traitors.

We are bringing disrepute to ourselves and our independence if we continue to keep a foreign army within our country because of conflicts among ourselves. It will also be an act of treachery perpetrated on

our country. Therefore, I intend, as I stated earlier, to expedite the withdrawal of the IPKF. I hope to make such a request soon to Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and to the Indian Government. The Indian Government and the Indian Prime Minister are awaiting a request from me and the Government to carry out such a troop withdrawal. We are thankful to the Indian Government for starting the withdrawal of the IPKF troops even before we had requested them to do so. What I would be requesting now would be to expedite the withdrawal of the IPKF.

The end of July 1989 will mark two years since the IPKF came to Sri Lanka. Therefore, I will request the Indian Government to try as far as possible to complete the withdrawal of the entirety of the IPKF troops by the end of July. I would like to see the last of the IPKF troops leave Sri Lanka by the end of July. Today there are about 45,000 IPKF troops in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is not possible to withdraw them in a day or two.

They have to leave by ship. Therefore, I believe that if the troops withdrawal is expedited it would be possible to complete the withdrawal by end of July. We will never forget the assistance and help given by the

Indian Government to Sri Lanka. Even the Buddha Dhamma was a gift from India. It was Emperor Dharmasoka who took steps to establish Buddhism in Sri Lanka.

While it was a great help to have sent the Peace Keeping Force to this country at the request of our former President, recalling the Peace-Keeping Force back to India will also help us greatly at this moment. India's action to call back the Peace-Keeping Force during the next two months will be considered as a favour. I have no doubt that India will do so. I hope to make a friendly request to that effect shortly.

There is another reason as to why the Peace-Keeping Force should be taken out of this country. Last year's SAARC Conference—was scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka. However, as you are already aware it could not be held here owing to the uncertainties that prevailed in this country at the time. Hence the Conference was held in Pakistan. This year's Conference has to be held in Sri Lanka. It is our duty to do so and we have assumed this responsibility and we must fulfil it. This regional association has been formed by India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka; the seven independent South-Asian countries. We must strengthen

our regional co-operation. Leaders of Governments of these countries will arrive in Sri Lanka in November this year. We must hold this conference at high level. It would help the strengthening of friendship among neighbouring countries. It is the duty of our country to strengthen activities of SAARC.

My Government is already in the process of making arrangements for the event. We must accord a cordial and honourable welcome to the Leaders of the Governments of the South-Asian region. They are all our friendly countries. These countries are bound together culturally. Our people are eagerly waiting to welcome these leaders. We hope to accord a cordial and rousing welcome to all the Heads of State and the Heads of Government including Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi. Can Sri Lanka host such a Summit with self-respect when a foreign army is operating in the country? This time it is also not possible to do away with it. We must hold this Conference as an independent and sovereign country.

It is also because of this reason that I thought that it is extremely essential that the entirety of the IPKF be withdrawn by the end of July. We as an independent country must have the self-confidence to play our role as

equal partners and work unitedly with other brother nations. You will admit that it is difficult for us to host and participate in such a Summit Conference while keeping a foreign army in our country.

At a time when we are working to send back the IPKF troops to India I would appeal to all not to say anything or act in a manner which will obstruct this move. Everyone who wishes to safeguard the sovereignty of the country should assist to make this programme a success by desisting from violence and provocative action.

You are aware that it is because to our own faults, disputes amongst us, our own provocative actions and our own militant actions that resulted in a foreign army coming to our country. But this is what people of all communities, Sinhala, Tamil, Muslim and Burgher say now:- "We might well be grateful to India for sending this Army to help us. The Army which came to keep the peace had to wage a war itself. As a result, a large number of its members too lost their lives. But the problem is very much still with us. Now we have had enough of this peace-keeping by the IPKF. Now let us sort out our problems ourselves. Let us do everything possible to help the early withdrawal of the IPKF."

You will realise the type of confusion that will prevail if we escalate violence and disturbances. I am confident that everyone who honestly wishes to see that the IPKF troops are withdrawn will see to it that they do not indulge in violence or provocative actions.

I would appeal to all to make a firm resolution to act with patience and desist from violence during these two months. Let us be determined to send back the IPKF troops, maintain our self-respect and host the forthcoming SAARC Summit with self-respect and dignity as a free and sovereign state. It is our duty on a day like this to resolve to desist from violence and provocative actions. As I stated earlier, this month of Poson marks the defeat of violence and the triumph of non-violence. I consider it as an act of Providence that I was able to participate in such a meritorious act on the day of the dawn of the month of Poson.

You are all aware that our Agga Maha Panditha, Most Venerable Balangoda Ananda Maitreya Maha Nayake Thero is a world reputed scholar and a self-disciplined Bhikkhu. He has devoted his entire life to the upliftment of the Buddha Sasana.

On the strength of the merit

acquired by the Maha Nayake Thero, I appeal to every ethnic group of this country to give up differences of all kinds and to pave the way for the dawn of a peaceful era. With that appeal I most respectfully invite our Maha Nayake Thero to uncover the pinnacle and provide us with the opportunity of paying homage to this Dagoba.

I wish to conclude by paying my tribute once again to Deshabandhu H. K. Dharmadasa, Mrs. Dharmadasa and their children who generously contributed to have this Dagoba constructed and to all others including the Sucharita Movement who helped in no small way to make this venture a success.

THE SPEECH DELIVERED BY HIS
EXCELLENCY R. PREMADASA PRESIDENT
AT THE PRIZE GIVING OF THE 1989 GAM
UDAWA ANNIVERSARY ON 3RD JULY 1989
AT MAHIYANGANAYA

I must first of all extend to you our grateful thanks for inviting us to be present at this prize giving connected with the Gam Udawa Anniversary.

We hold the Gam Udawa commemoration annually. This is the eleventh occasion. It is because of the unstinted support we received from all of you that we were able to hold this anniversary in the Uva Province.

In this effort we received the fullest support from all Ministers and Ministries, Ministers of State, Members of Parliament, Chief Ministers and Ministers of Provincial Councils. Similarly our efforts were supported by organisations such as Gramodaya Mandalayas, Local Authorities including Urban Councils and Municipalities. I must also gratefully acknowledge the assistance received from State Officers, Government Departments, Private Sector Organisations, the Armed Services, the Police and Voluntary Organisations. We recall the

assistance received from them with a deep sense of gratitude.

The ordinary folk, in particular, worked with singular dedication to make this event a success. This was done in the face of great difficulties, especially in the midst of severe transport problems.

Lakhs and lakhs of people converged on Miyugunagama in Mahiyanganaya to participate in this Eleventh Anniversary of the Gam Udawa Movement. Today, you can see an unprecedented crowd present here. On our way here, we saw people lined up for miles on end to enter the exhibition grounds. Other than our Ven. Members of the Maha Sangha and other religious dignitaries and school children in groups, all others had to pay Rs. 5 to enter the exhibition grounds. Even the very poor people paid this fee to gain entry. They come walking many miles. They travel from distant places in tractors, bicycles, trailers, lorries and vans, incurring much expenditure.

During the last ten days we had the opportunity of meeting these people. We also had the opportunity of talking to people who had met these ordinary people. This gave us an opportunity of getting to know the views of the people at first hand. The Gam Udawa Anniversary affords me the opportunity of ascertaining the views of the ordinary people.

Last year what I learnt at Anamaduwa I expressed in public at the Gam Udawa Anniversary on July 3rd that year, in the presence of the former President. On that occasion, I told you that Science and Technology must be harnessed for the good of the common people. At this exhibition you may have seen how our Scientists and Technologists have transformed those ideas into programmes and projects for the welfare of the poor people. Last year, I said that at least the people who are living on food stamps should be given Rs. 2,500 for a period of two years to strengthen them physically so that they will be equipped for production. These deprived people should be strengthened to enable them to live with dignity without having to beg from others.

Now we have got the opportunity to implement these ideas. The inspiration for these ideas comes from

the people. If we want to know what public opinion is, we must participate in occasions like this. It is on occasions like this that we can really feel the pulse of the people; know their feelings. People who could afford to go abroad two or three times a year and go to see international exhibitions thought that it was an exclusive privilege of theirs. They could go to countries like America and Japan and witness shows like Disneyland. They derive that enjoyment expending a lot of our valuable foreign exchange. When we make available similar entertainment to our village folk in different areas in rural Sri Lanka, it is only natural that they should feel a little jealous about it. There is nothing surprising in that. If you only talk to the poor villagers who gather together in the Gam Udawa Exhibitions, you will understand how greatly this effort contributes for their material upliftment; how it suggests ways and means to improve their living conditions and to increase their incomes; and also to improve their knowledge and give them healthy entertainment.

If you only talk to our poor rural people who come many miles amidst great difficulty and enter the exhibition grounds paying a fee of Rs. 5, you will know the great benefit they derive from this exercise.

Countless numbers have visited this exhibition from 2 p.m. to 12 midnight, these days. Many of them told me that some people had received letters, and posters had been put up holding out death-threats to anyone who comes to visit the exhibition. They had been threatened that if they visited the Gam Udawa they would not be allowed to come back alive. In the villages those who owned vehicles have been threatened with death if they transported people to Gam Udawa. These people numbering lakhs have come to see the exhibition braving all this. I asked one person why he came here all the way in the midst of all these threats, from his distant home, spending a considerable amount of money to see the exhibition. He gave a very important reply, "We have only one thing to lose, that is our life. It could be lost anywhere, anytime. It did not matter to me if I lost it after seeing Gam Udawa." Almost all these people are very poor people. Therefore, brothers and sisters, we offer them our highest regard and esteem.

This year the Minister of Housing and Construction could find the time to organise the Gam Udawa Anniversary activities only after March. I am sure your Chief Minister, Mr. Percy Samaraweera will tell you what doubts and fears assailed the

minds of some people when we cut the first sod in August last year. At that time many people entertained doubts of our ability to hold the Anniversary celebrations in this manner. Your Member of Parliament and State Minister, Mr. Lakshman Seneviratne told me that at that time some people had said with much confidence that even though we were building these houses, it was they who would be distributing them. Whatever misgivings people had, we were not daunted. Our duty is to engage in work that would be beneficial to everyone.

These days, the TV telecasts daily, a feature which attracts every one's attention. When we were attending school as little children we were told the story quite often by our teachers. An old grandfather goes and plants a mango seed in the garden. A child comes up to him and questions—"Grandpa, why are you planting this mango seed?" The Grandfather replies "My son, this mango seed will sprout and in due time grow into a big tree which will bear fruits." This is what he says. Then the child asks "Grandpa, will you live to eat these mangoes?" The grandfather says "My dear child! I plant this seed now for you to eat mangoes when you grow up". We

are implementing this Gam Udawa Programme also with a similar concept and object in mind. It doesn't matter who comes into power. We do all this for the general good of the people. You will understand that when things are done in that manner there is no possibility of failure. Mr. Percy Samaraweera the Chief Minister made a prediction of this when he cut the first sod on that day. Therefore, you all can see that this Gam Udawa movement is a programme which gives encouragement and strength to those people who strive to uplift society.

Brothers and sisters, we want to achieve several objectives within the coming six years. One is to have peace in this country. The other is to achieve discipline. The third objective is prosperity for the country. We hope to achieve peace not by arms, threats or violence but by discussion, compromise and consensus.

There may be certain sections which do not accept this way of thinking. But we should not be discouraged. We must try our best. Peace can never be achieved through violence. You know that while we constantly talk of peace a small group talks through weapons. They kill people in cold blood; they kill servicemen; they kill policemen; they

kill politicians; they kill the common people; they kill children and infants. They spread fear and terror throughout the country. Today, services have been stopped. It is not for a just cause, nor is it for the purpose of setting right an injustice. They have done this by force of arms and by death threats. You know that today, the whole transport system is at a standstill. The employees in these services have informed us that they are keeping away from work not because they have suffered any injustice but because of death threats. Already hundreds in the transport sector have been killed mercilessly.

Perhaps, these threats may be made in the other sectors too. What happens if all the services in the country are stopped in this manner? Those who stall these services may be thinking that only others suffer thereby. But this is not so. They themselves will have to suffer.

Today ships bringing our essential food-stuffs, textiles and medicines, arrive daily at the harbour. If these items are not unloaded they cannot be distributed. If those goods are not transported the people in the various provinces will not receive these goods. When food, clothing and medicine are in short supply who suffers? Not one or two but all will have to face difficulties. The very

people who disrupt these things by death threats will have to face difficulties.

If the employees cannot get to their places of work what will happen? Those who get salaries won't be able to obtain their salaries. The pensioners will not be able to get their pensions. Then, who will suffer? All will suffer. When you think on these lines you will see that these things will affect all. Even those people who cause these things will have to face the consequences. What is the purpose of this? There is no use for anyone. You elected our government through a Presidential Election and the General Election. At those two elections, also just like today, the common man was subjected to various harrassments and terrors. But the people, just like today; without being discouraged went and performed their duty.

See what has happened today. Even before the commencement of the Gam Udawa Anniversary there were threats, suppression, disruption of transport and such other things. But the common man did not get discouraged by those things and responded in a big way. It is such great response that they showed at both the elections. They used their universal franchise to have a

government. That government was for the purpose of achieving three objectives. To achieve peace through peaceful means; to achieve discipline by example; and to achieve prosperity through production. These things were to be effected not by the force of weapons and guns. Peace was to be achieved by discussion and the co-operation of all. Discipline is to be achieved through example. Prosperity is to be achieved and poverty is to be alleviated through production. That is the mandate we got. That is why I am trying and my Government is trying, to get the sections who have not yet joined the democratic process to do so.

Today the Parliament has come to represent various shades of opinion that it didn't earlier. That is a thing which makes me happy. It has happened so due to your system of proportional representation. If, by any chance, the old system had been there, I would have, and our party would have, got a majority of more than 5/6 again. It may be a thing which makes us happy, but in no way can we be satisfied. Then they will say it is an unbalanced Parliament. You know that the way the people in this country used their vote both at the Presidential Election and the General Election giving me a mandate, is very surprising. We got a

resounding victory. But due to the system of proportional representation which had been introduced by our own Government, Parliament did not get weighted to one side. We have got a Parliament where diverse opinion can be expressed and where various communities are represented. The Parliament consists of persons of various political views. I am very happy about this. Although I do not have a 2/3rds majority, I am happy about a Parliament of this type. What I am trying to do is to get those people who have not yet entered the democratic process to enter that path. That is why I appeal to every person in this manner.

I have no doubt that you all will be very glad to hear that we have been able to persuade the LTTE to enter into a dialogue with us for the solution of problems by peaceful means. Till recently hardly any body thought that they would come for talks. How did we achieve that success? It is not with guns or bombs that we did it, nor with threats or boastful talk. It is through the strength of our genuine and sincere desire to resolve problems on the basis of justice and fair play that we could get them down for talks. What is LTTE? It is undoubtedly a very powerful militant group. It has power not only in our Northern and Eastern Provinces.

It has organisations which give it strong support in many countries in the world. The LTTE has money, weapons and also very dedicated supporters. A great effort was made to suppress them through various means, but it could not be done. But today it has not only come forward for talks giving ear to our appeal and will stop their conflicts and inimical action with not only various groups of the Northern and Eastern Provinces, but with all communities and groups throughout the country.

You all know what great massacres of people took place over the past two years in the country. These groups have come to talk with us for the solution of problems through peaceful means. We earnestly hope to find solutions to our problems through discussion. Now this group is very eager to enter the democratic process. This is a victory for all. Just recall what a great loss of human lives and wealth took place over the years because of the violence that prevailed. Now that situation is changing. And, that is why I am appealing to all other groups which have not yet entered the democratic process to do so.

That is why I am trying to get them into the administrative and political machinery, into Parliament and to

other elected bodies of the people. We must afford an opportunity for all groups to express their views. May be that we have big differences. But we can discuss them. Instead of engaging in an armed clash we can arrive at solutions through discussion. We must afford the fullest opportunity for this. When I was chosen by the United National Party as its Presidential Candidate I formulated this policy.

I would like to state that the United National Party with all its experience is now transformed into a new party with a new policy and a new programme. That is why a militant group like the LTTE reposed confidence in us. Our Party has a new Manifesto. That is why I appeal to all groups and communities in this country to eschew violence and express their views freely. That is why we strengthened our Parliament with better representation of all shades of opinion. It is with the intention of facilitating the process of solving problems through discussion, consultation and consensus, that we brought this improvement in Parliament.

Even well before the elections, I said that Parliament would be given more responsibility. The Speaker has been requested by me to amend the Standing Orders necessary for this

process. Parliament is a very important institution. Therefore, every section of our population should be given representation in that body. We must do everything possible to get every shade of opinion represented in Parliament. I am always prepared to resolve problems through discussion and exchange of views, and I sincerely believe that it is possible to do so. Our newest experience in this regard is the process of dialogue that is now going on between our Government and the LTTE. Just see what a great achievement this is. All this time we fought with each other. Thousands died from each side. We brought foreign armies to suppress this group leaving aside our own Army. But we could not do it. But what triumphed ultimately? It is the process of establishing peace through discussion.

It is because of this that I appeal to all to tell us what their problems are and what they really want before resorting to a course of action which will result in great hardship to the people. We can discuss that. This is a country which belongs to all. These problems affect all. Any stoppage of work or a breakdown in services or any inconvenience caused to the public will affect not one or two but everyone. All have to suffer the consequences of such actions.

Wasn't it because of the confidence people had in our programme that they voted our Party into power at both elections. I have no doubt that it is because of the confidence that the ordinary people have in our programme and policies that 19 to 20 lakhs of people patronised our Gam Udawa Anniversary celebrations during the last 10 to 11 days. It is because they believe in our programme that every day from 2 p.m. to 12 midnight lakhs of people visited our exhibition paying a fee of Rs. 5. Some people thought transport difficulties would dampen the Gam Udawa celebrations. Some others thought that threats would succeed in preventing people from coming to see the exhibition. But now you can see the difference. Now, you can see what the public opinion is.

We also have a good Constitution. There are three factors underlying the legislative function. Under this Constitution, there are certain things that can be enacted by a simple majority. Then it specifies things which can be enacted by a 2/3rd majority. There are however, certain specified matters which we cannot do by a simple majority or even a 2/3rd majority in Parliament. What are these

specified matters? They concern the sovereignty, the territorial integrity and the unitary character of the Constitution. We have to consult the people regarding these issues through a referendum.

The sovereignty, territorial integrity and the unitary character of our country cannot be altered by a simple majority or even by a two-thirds majority. If such a thing is to be done a Referendum should be held. It is only the people of this country who can make any change in the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the unitary character of this country. The division of this country cannot be done by a simple majority. It cannot be done even by a two-thirds majority. If such a thing is to be done you will have to hold a Referendum. In that sense we have a very pragmatic Constitution. Therefore, we have the freedom to discuss anything with anyone if the need arises. We have such an effective Constitution. Therefore I wish to state that whatever I discuss, and any decision I take, will necessarily be a decision conforming to the Constitution. Therefore, we can have discussions with any person and formulate whatever programme we want. We are a sovereign State. We are an Independent country. Therefore I wish to state that no country or

Government in this world, has the power to dictate to us as to with whom we should have discussions and as to what conditions those discussions should be subject to. That sovereignty is vested only in the people of this country. In no way can any other country or Government seek to share it. All of us know that it is a sovereignty vested solely in the people of Sri Lanka.

All of you know that for the last 3 or 4 months we have been doing everything possible to establish peace in the country. We lifted the Emergency. We released those who were in custody. All this was done to restore peace. But if these attempts to have peace are answered with subversive activity we have to take steps to ensure the protection of the majority of the people. That is why we had to reimpose the Emergency. In the same way we have enacted appropriate laws in Parliament to achieve discipline. We are reorganising the administrative machinery. We are going to have a different programme. It will be a complete re-organisation. There are many changes to come. Changes in organisation and changes of persons have to be done, based on experience. It was even before the election that we announced these intentions. We have made drastic

changes. You know that when changes of this nature are made there will be dissatisfaction. But I wish to tell you that the present United National Party is not prepared to sacrifice the welfare of the people, to appease individuals. We will not hesitate to effect these changes.

About an year ago the President of the Soviet Union, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev wrote a book on his programme of restructuring called "Perestroika." Any one reading that book would get inspired. He has stated that he would make a complete re-organisation. I was the first to review that book. He has suggested a restructuring that suits the Soviet Union. Today he is carrying it out amidst various obstacles. A few days ago I heard over the radio that various sections are placing various obstacles in his way and are trying to sabotage his programme. We should not be surprised about these things. At a time like this, when a major restructuring programme is going to be effected in our country it is not a surprise to see various obstacles and impediments being placed in the way. At this time when the UNP is effecting a complete re-organisation, both in policy and in execution, various obstacles may arise. Not only that, when we are working to protect this country's sovereignty, independence,

territorial integrity and the unitary Constitution according to the mandate given to us by you, certain forces who wish to keep us in permanent subjugation will resort to various tactics.

In the past when a country wanted to conquer another they waged a war. But now that method has changed. Today when a country wants to tame, suppress or enslave another country it resorts to different methods. There are intelligence services. The agents of these intelligence services are sent to these countries. They get round people in those countries. By offering various inducements, these agents get these people to work for them. They give bribes to create internal disputes. Those intelligence services get murders committed and cause disruption. They hire people from inside the administration itself to disrupt the administration. They recruit such people and work insidiously through them to wreck the administration. There is such a system in the world today. In the past when burglars wanted to break into a house, what they did was to wait until the occupants of the house were asleep. But later, even the burglars discovered new methods. They get hold of the maid or the man-servant of the house and bribe them to leave

one door unbolted in the night. The burglars simply walk in, tie up the maid or man-servant and walk away with the valuables. Later the servant shares the spoils with the burglars. In the past those who wanted to break into houses did it by making a hole in the wall and creeping in through the hole. Later, even those methods were replaced by new techniques. They get hold of some person inside the house and get his help to break in. Therefore we must not forget that in subjugating countries also new methods have been devised.

If there are internal disputes it is easy for them to get hold of persons who are involved in the dispute, bribe them, help them and get them to create internal troubles and uprisings. You know what happened in the North and the East. From where did our people get that help and assistance to attack our own people? Now they themselves say that certain quarters gave them weapons provided them protection, gave them money and so on. Therefore we must take note of the fact that there are subtle ways that people resort to in matters like this. Some people exploit the minor differences that exist between us to create dissension among us. There are various secret services which are engaged in this disruptive activity. It

may be that some people do this because of an unwillingness to see our countries, especially countries that belong to the Third World prosper. We must be very careful not to fall victim, to these efforts. That is why we should safeguard our discipline. We must resolve any differences we have through our own efforts.

I was listening to what our Speaker said a few minutes back. I endorse what he said. If we had any differences, he said, we should discuss them among ourselves peacefully and come to conclusions regarding remedial measures. If not, our in-fighting can result in making us subservient to foreign powers. We know that for over 400 years we went under the rule of various colonial powers. We therefore, must be careful and solve our problems by discussion amongst us. That is why I am always appealing to all communities in this country to be prepared to resolve our differences through consultation, compromise and consensus. There is no problem which will not yield to a solution on the basis of this policy. I am always prepared to arrive at a solution on the basis of truth and justice. I will not adopt a stubborn attitude and say that I will never give this or that. My Government will never adopt such an uppish attitude and will always be

humble minded and kind. What we want is to get at the truth and justice. Our Government is ready to go to any length to solve our problems on the basis of establishing peace, discipline and prosperity for all in the country.

You will realise that during the last four or five months we launched many programmes to bring about prosperity in this country. Now our poor school children are being given a free mid-day meal. For this programme, we have already allocated a sum of Rs. 2000 million per year generously. Isn't that an indirect salary increase to the parents of those children. Anybody will see that it is also a measure that will contribute to bring down the cost of living. Now we are also commencing the implementation of the Janasaviya Programme. We are going to strengthen Seven Million people during a period of 2 years. This is a programme to alleviate poverty as well as to increase production. Today salaried people find their income inadequate because of the low level of production. They will find their present salaries adequate to meet their cost of living if there is greater production in the country. Isn't it for this purpose that we are implementing the Janasaviya Programme? During the recent past

the ethnic disturbances and conflicts among militant groups resulted in much damage to our buildings and other forms of property. Much reconstruction work has to be done in many parts of the country. A large sum of money will have to be expended for this purpose. This activity also will create much opportunity for new employment. Our friendly countries have given us much money for this reconstruction activity. These monies will have to be spent for the purposes they have been given. But peace must prevail for this to happen. If murder, arson and all types of other violent activities are the order of the day, how can we get down to reconstruction work. We have already prepared plans for rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. Now we are unable to implement these plans because of lack of peace in the country. If people are being killed; if people have to live in fear; if public services are disrupted, if transport services are crippled how can we start any development activity? I therefore would like to draw the attention of everybody to this situation. I urge all sections to refrain from violence and disruptive activity. I want to tell you all bring back peace if you have any love for the people of this country, and if you are really concerned about bringing about their liberation.

In July 1980, there was a sudden stoppage by some sections of workers. Our Government has afforded relief in many ways to those who remained jobless as a result of that stoppage. Ultimately, it was I who afforded them the opportunity to retire from service on the basis that they had been in employment through out this period. Now some people have again gone on a stoppage. Now many people say they can't report at their places of work because there are death threats held out to them. I therefore thought it especially opportune and important to place these matters before you. I think it is a great fortune that we have in our country fair-minded, fearless, selfless people like you. I greatly appreciate the generous assistance and co-operation extended by you for the observance of the Gam Udawa Anniversary inspite of the great odds faced by you.

I again express my willingness to discuss and resolve any problem with any community or section of the people. But I do not think that any outside force has any legitimate right to lay down pre-conditions for such discussion. It is certainly the Government of the country only which has that right. The responsibility of our Government is to find solutions to problems on a basis that

will not harm our freedom, sovereignty, territorial integrity and unitary status of our country. That requires the formulation of solutions on the basis of consultation with all parties, communities and sections of the people. Also it is necessary that any such solution should fit into the framework of our Constitution.

Broadly, our approach to the solution of any problem has to be through the process of consultation, compromise and consensus. I would like to conclude my speech thanking all those who participated in Gam Udawa Anniversary and for the encouragement given to me.

OBSERVATIONS ON THE JANASAVIYA
POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMME BY
HIS EXCELLENCY R. PREMADASA,
PRESIDENT, IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
COLOMBO CENTRAL UNP ORGANISATION
HELD ON 22nd JULY, 1989

Our attention at the moment, remains focussed on two important matters. Both these matters constitute, election promises, we have given to the people. The first is Janasaviya. You will remember that in paragraphs 33 to 44, in our Election Manifesto, we have set out our philosophy about the Janasaviya. In those paragraphs, we have also described in brief, the programme to be implemented based on that vision and the actual process of implementation. I request you to re-read the paragraphs 33 to 44 in the manifesto when you go home and refresh your memory, about the Janasaviya Programme. The Janasaviya policy has been set out in the manifesto, under the heading, "Investing in our Human Base." This is the new vision of development, a new policy and a new programme we put before the people, at the Presidential election and the Parliamentary election. We have decided to implement the Janasaviya Programme, to uplift the living conditions of seven million of

our poor, deprived people, living throughout the country.

Before the Presidential and Parliamentary elections, this policy and programmes were approved by our party convention. We know, that in our country, seven million people live on food stamps. Are we to allow all these people to go on living on food stamps always? By way of food stamps, they actually receive, a very limited assistance for their living. A family of five members does not get even so much as Rs. 300 per month. They hardly receive the necessary level of nutrition from the food they can buy, with this meagre assistance. Nor does it assist in any way, to provide them with any stable means of livelihood. As it is, these seven million people will have to live forever in poverty, with no hope of extricating themselves from its grip. This is about one half of our population. It was after taking into consideration this situation, that the Janasaviya Programme has been

formulated. Before this, no party or government, has ever placed before the people, a programme like this. All this time, political parties have only tried to make political capital of this festering sore of poverty, without offering a remedy to cure it. It is only a matter for political propaganda at elections. Even now, some sections are playing the same old political game. But, they cannot deceive the masses of the people, who are quite intelligent. The people realised our sincerity of purpose and reposed their confidence in our vision, policy and programme.

I want to make this important request to you now—please do your best to propagate among the people, the truth about the Janasaviya Programme, which we have set out under the caption "Investing in our Human Base" in paras 33 to 44 in the manifesto, by imparting a proper understanding of it to the people. We have said in our manifesto, that within one year of our forming a government, we would begin implementing this programme. I took my oaths as President, on 2nd January 1989 and it is in January next year, that I will complete one year, in the office of Presidency.

We established our new government, on the basis of the

results of the Parliamentary election, held on February 15. The new Parliament met on March 9. We could present the budget only thereafter. We however, must begin implementing this programme within the stipulated year. I am happy to announce today, that we are in a position to begin implementing the Janasaviya Programme, even before the completion of one year and that we will begin implementing it, from this September. We are now distributing among people, the Janasaviya entitlement certificates. At the level of AGA divisions, we will commence implementing the programme, throughout Sri Lanka, simultaneously. Those who now have food stamps, will continue to have them, until they receive Janasaviya assistance. This will enable us, to go about systematically implementing the Janasaviya Programme, throughout the country, without causing any dislocation in the present system of assistance. When a person starts receiving Janasaviya assistance, he will get it continuously for 24 months. Out of the full allowance, Rs. 1,458/- will be for consumption. They can buy food, clothing, etc., with this. The balance Rs. 1,042/- will be deposited in a bank account in the recipient's favour. At the completion of 24 months, there will be a saving of over Rs. 25,000/- for the family.

Today we have created a very wide organisation, for the implementation of the Janasaviya Programme. Several Ministries are participants in it. Janasaviya assistance, is a more meaningful and systematic assistance than the food stamps. When our poor families begin to have adequate nutrition and thereby gain better health and physical strength, a programme will be commenced, to provide them also with a stable means of income. The relevant Ministries are already in the process of preparing the programme. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Co-operatives is in charge of the nutrition improvement programme and Hon. Athulathmudali, the Minister is heading the preparation of that programme. Hon. G. M. Premachandra as Minister of State is co-ordinating the activities. Almost all Ministries are getting linked in some way with this programme. For what purpose are they joining hands like this? It is to provide, a stable and lasting means of livelihood, to the helpless families, who are now in the grip of poverty—to make the poor and the weak today, people with some assets and strength.

In order to make all details of the programme and organisational work known to you, we have appointed a committee headed by Hon. A. J.

Ranasinghe, Minister of State for Information. In time to come, these details and information will be placed before you, through the mass media. Especially, the people receiving the food stamps, will be made to realise, that there is going to be the dawn of a new life for them. Our Ministers and officials will explain to you, how the poor families, who have been all this time ignored and left out in the background, are being brought to the fore and made participants in the process of national production.

The other day, when visiting the electorate of our Chief Guest today, Hon. P. Dayaratne, Minister of Lands, Irrigation and Mahaweli Development, to hold the Presidential Mobile Service, we were afforded the opportunity, of seeing an exhibition, organised by the Ministry of Trade and Shipping. Several other Ministries such as the Ministry of Rural Industrial Development too, had participated in it, to make it a success. It was an extremely interesting exhibition and there we found, demonstrated very effectively, how the weak and the poor, could be transformed, into people with considerable assets and strength. It was demonstrated, how tools and implements, funds and other things necessary for the implementation of the Janasaviya Programme, could be found, through

effective advertising. When the Janasaviya Programme gets going in coming September, you will be able to witness such a transformation and revolution taking place, in the lives of our people. The basic unit, for the implementation of the Janasaviya Programme, is the AGA area. On this basis, in due time, the implementation process will embrace the whole island. When the Janasaviya Programme is thus implemented, on a wide scale, throughout the country, there will come into being in this country, a people physically strong and healthy and who will energetically

engage in various economic activities, which will earn them a good income. Such a people will not have the need, to stretch out their palm to others for assistance and without doubt, they will be able to lead a dignified life, as citizens of this country. Some people express surprise, that we have included this programme in our election manifesto, with so much detail. But I think, there is no reason for surprise, as it only shows that we have thought out an effective programme, for the welfare of the people, quite in advance.

COMMENTS ON THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE
INDIAN PEACE KEEPING FORCE MADE BY
HIS EXCELLENCY R. PREMADASA,
PRESIDENT IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE
COLOMBO CENTRAL UNP ORGANISATION
HELD ON 22ND JULY, 1989

Our election manifesto also makes reference to the existence of the Indian Peace Keeping Force on the soil of Sri Lanka. You know that during the election campaigns, this matter engaged the intense attention and concern of our people. Various charges were levelled against the rulers, in connection with the presence of the IPKF in our country. Some sections charged that the government had brought a foreign army into our country and handed over to them the administration of the North and East of the Island. They charged that this foreign army would not leave our country and it will remain forever. You know very well, the position I took, as the Presidential Candidate of the UNP, on this matter. I said, that after our victory, we would enter into an agreement with India, similar to the friendship treaty that exists between India and the Soviet Union, in place of the present Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. You will note that, the salient feature of that Friendship Treaty is, reciprocity and it fully respects the sovereignty

and independence of the countries, that are parties to the treaty.

I also said that, if by the time we came into power, the Indian Peace Keeping Force happens to be still in Sri Lanka, we would take speedy action to send it back. That implied the hope that, the Indian Peace Keeping Force would have left Sri Lanka by the time we came into power and formed the government. Even without a formal request from us, the Indian Prime Minister was good enough, to withdraw a contingent of the IPKF. For that gesture, I expressed deep gratitude to the Indian Prime Minister.

On 2nd of July, I completed six months in the office of Presidency. As many began to inquire from me, when the IPKF would leave Sri Lanka, on June 1st I made an announcement to the country, that I would request the Indian Prime Minister, to withdraw the IPKF by the end of July. I pointed out that the IPKF would be completing two years in Sri Lanka by

that time and requested that all efforts be made, to have that force withdrawn by the end of July. The country is now fully aware of the correspondence exchanged between me and the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi on this matter. As such, I only wish to speak to you on the present situation regarding the matter.

Asking the Indian Army to withdraw from the country, is not a decision arrived at by me alone. It is a request for which a mandate has been given by 95 per cent of the people of this country. What I am doing now is, implementing that mandate. Opposing such a move, is not something personally directed against me. It is an act of treachery, perpetrated on Sri Lanka and the people of Sri Lanka. It amounts to a devaluation of the sovereignty of the country.

Whatever stand the Indian Government takes, the people of India, the intellectuals of India and the Indian Media are raising a strong voice to help safeguard Sri Lanka's sovereignty. I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to those fair minded people of India. By asking for the withdrawal of the Indian Army, we are helping India to safeguard the policy of Non-Alignment – the principle of

Panchaseela –which India says she is following.

It is a violation of the principles of Panchaseela to interfere in the affairs of another country, without the consent of that country. India's first Prime Minister, the late Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, was the architect of the principle of Panchaseela. This year marks his 100th birth anniversary. Is it a fitting commemoration then, to destroy the very principles he stood for, in this year of commemoration? Does it not amount to forgetting him? We have given the Indian Government a fine opportunity to show her honesty.

Is it to safeguard the people of North and East, that the Indian Government compelled us to sign the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord? If so, why is it that attacks on the LTTE Group have been intensified, despite the LTTE announcing a ceasefire? Do we work to achieve peace, by destroying those who say they are ready for peace? Why entertain hard feelings, when a group which could not be controlled by use of arms for two years, had been veered towards peace through consultations? Does this not reveal the position that the Indian Army's hopes of remaining in the country forever, by giving LTTE as the excuse, have been dashed?

Is it not unilaterally that the Indian Government decided, to withdraw the Indian Army, soon after I was elected and before I took oaths as President? Therefore, when I asked to expedite the withdrawal, is it correct to accuse me of taking a unilateral decision? Conditions are now being put forward, that the Indian Forces would be withdrawn, after devolution of powers to the Provincial Councils is completed and the security of Tamils is guaranteed. But, when I stated soon after I was elected, about getting the Indian Forces withdrawn, there were no such conditions mentioned. Why was it? Is it not correct that this was done because it was never thought that the LTTE would come to peace with the Sri Lankan Government?

There was a period of two years, during which, the LTTE could have been brought into the peace process. The devolution of power is a continuing process. By saying that they would not go until devolution was done; does it mean that they would stay here forever? By saying that they would not go until violence in the country ceases; does it mean that they would not ever go?

In which country has crime and violence ceased completely? Is this the position in India today? Does not

crime and violence take place in India everyday? Were not bombs thrown? Are there no killings? If this is the case, should not a foreign army be stationed in India too forever? Is it because of the absence of a foreign army in India that the precious life of Mrs. Indira Gandhi was lost, while she was being guarded by India's own security force? These are the questions the people raise. These questions are also being raised by the fair and just minded people of India.

I wish to draw your attention to the fact that India has an excellent record of refraining from keeping her armed forces in other countries any longer than actually necessary under agreements. In this connection I would like to refer you to a comment made by a well known Indian writer in an article published in the Hindustan Times.

Following is in effect what he has stated in the article:

"India has a proud record of not allowing her armies to stay for any longer period than necessary in other countries. In 1972 Mrs. Indira Gandhi gave a fine example to the world. In that year Mrs. Indira Gandhi unilaterally decided to effect a complete withdrawal of her Army from Bangladesh. She did

so despite a request made by the then President of Bangladesh Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to keep the Indian Forces for a few more days. The world was taken by surprise by this act. Mr. Rajiv Gandhi too reduced the presence of the Indian Forces to the barest minimum in the Maldiv Islands after the realisation of the objectives for which the Army was sent there. Internationally too, India has always upheld the principle that foreign troops stationed in countries should be withdrawn as early as possible. India has specially contributed to the view that such foreign forces should be withdrawn forthwith, when the mandate for their stay expires. That mandate is nothing, but the consent of the country that invited them."

You will remember, how in 1972, Russian Forces were withdrawn from Egypt. When the late Anwar Sadat requested that Soviet Forces be withdrawn, the Soviets withdrew them completely without any hesitation. Everybody knows that from the 1960s, Russia was the chief guarantor of the security of Egypt. There were agreements between Egypt and Soviet Russia, regarding the stationing of Russian troops in Egypt. While some of those agreements were open ones, others were secret

ones. But when Sadat requested Brezhnev to withdraw all Russian troops, Soviet Russia could not but agree and act accordingly. Within just one week, all Russian troops were withdrawn from Egyptian soil.

When the IPKF came to Sri Lanka, didn't India say that her forces would be under the command of the President of Sri Lanka; the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Sri Lanka? Now, if the IPKF disregards the command of that Supreme Commander, what does that indicate? Does not that show, that the Indian forces have come, not with the intention of going back, but with the hope of staying here forever? The first step of my approach to restore peace in the North and East is to have a dialogue with the LTTE, in order to bring them over to the democratic process. This effort of mine, has now succeeded to a great extent. I will also further broaden understanding with other groups such as EPRLF, TULF, EROS, TELO and PLOTE which have already opted to take the democratic path. We will have discussions with them too. We have a programme, a time-table for that. Not only that. We will draw in all other political parties too into this process. We will draw in the SLFP, MEP, USA, LSSP, CP, Muslim Congress, CWC, DWC, Muslim

League, Liberal Party, ELJP, JVP and all other registered political parties to this process of dialogue and consultation.

If I have not mentioned the name of any political party or organisation, that does not mean, that, that party or organisation is left out. The participation of all communities and religious groups will be obtained for this peace process. In the present context, the assassination of Tamil leaders representing various sections of the Tamil people, will only prove an obstruction to the peace talks, that the government is carrying on today. Who is doing all this ? Or who is getting these things done ? We must go to the very bottom of these disruptive acts and expose the miscreants. Please consider who will be worst hit by violent acts—Is it the people who try to perpetuate the presence of the Indian forces or the government which is trying to send back the Indian forces ? If any foreign army stays on in Sri Lanka, without the permission of Sri Lanka and by force, does not that amount to an invasion of the country ? I find it difficult to persuade myself to believe, that India will drag herself into such a predicament. Especially in this Sri Nehru Year, India should not get herself into such a position.

Why cannot India today live upto

the declaration she made in 1987, that the IPKF, as long as it remains in Sri Lanka, will be under the command of the President of Sri Lanka ? Why does she not prove her declaration with practical action today ? Why did she stop withdrawing her forces from January/February this year ? Why do they attack the LTTE with added enthusiasm, after the LTTE started talks with us ? Why are young men and women in the North and East, drafted for military action by force ? Why has it become necessary for them to flee from their homes to Colombo ? These are questions that many people ask today.

In Sri Lanka today, every political party and group has found it necessary to arm itself. It is therefore, not realistic to ask any one political party or group to lay down arms. The need now is for all political parties and groups, to talk in good faith and agree to disarm themselves voluntarily. That can be done, only through a process, where all organisations concerned, come forward to discuss peacefully and determine to iron out differences and restore peace without a surrender of good principles they uphold. I am trying my best to give that opportunity, to all sections concerned: I now clearly see, that

some sections interested in intruding,
are trying to obstruct this effort. All of
us must be vigilant about this effort,
to further exacerbate differences

between us, destroy our sovereignty
and make us lose our independence,
which we have won at much cost.

ADDRESS TO THE NATION
BY HIS
EXCELLENCY - R. PREMADASA - THE
PRESIDENT ON 28TH JULY, 1989

The withdrawal of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force from Sri Lanka will recommence tomorrow the 29th of July, 1989. There is no doubt that everyone will be happy at this turn of events. All communities in Sri Lanka the Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers as well as the world community who value the independence of our country will be quite overjoyed and relieved. We should be grateful to the Government of India for agreeing to recall the Indian Army with effect from 29th of July, acceding to my request. Thereby our neighbouring State of India has acknowledged and reconfirmed the acceptance of the independence and the sovereignty of Sri Lanka. You may recall the speech made by me at the Pinnacle Laying Ceremony of the Chittavivekashramaya at Battaramulla on the 1st of June, 1989. I will now quote to you some extracts from that speech to refresh your memory.

(a) These days many people ask me when the Indian Peace-Keeping Force will leave our

country. We must reflect on the reasons that made the Indian Peace-Keeping Force to come here. One reason was that we took up arms to fight among ourselves to solve our problems.

(b) We are bringing disrepute to ourselves and our independence if we continue to keep a foreign army within our country because of conflicts among ourselves. It will also be an act of treachery perpetrated on our country. Therefore, I intend, as I stated earlier, to expedite the withdrawal of the IPKF. I hope to make such a request soon to Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi and to the Indian Government.

(c) The end of July 1989, will mark two years since the IPKF came to Sri Lanka. Therefore, I will request the Indian Government to try as far as possible to complete the withdrawal of the entirety of the IPKF by the end

of July. I would like to see the last of the IPKF troops leave Sri Lanka by the end of July. Today there are about 45,000 IPKF troops in Sri Lanka. Therefore, it is not possible to withdraw them in a day or two.

They have to leave by ship. Therefore, I believe that if the troops withdrawal is expedited it would be possible to complete the withdrawal by end of July.

The Indian Government has always declared that the IPKF was sent to Sri Lanka at the request of the Executive President of Sri Lanka. Similarly, everyone will remember that India repeatedly stated that it will withdraw its army at any time the Executive President of Sri Lanka requests. It is an exemplary action on the part of India to have responded to the request made by us. It is also a course of action which deserve our appreciation. The Executive President of Sri Lanka is elected by the people of Sri Lanka. This power is vested in the people of this country. In accordance with the Constitution of Sri Lanka the Executive President is pledged to safeguard the sovereignty and the independence of the people of the country and he made this pledge under oath. This is why the

Executive President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, elected by the people is also under Article 30(1) of the Constitution, the ex-officio Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Accordingly, the President of Sri Lanka is bound to constantly uphold and safeguard the sovereignty and the independence of the people of Sri Lanka. He also has the legal author^{ty} to do so.

The withdrawal of the Indian Army will recommence tomorrow the 29th of July, 1989. Concurrently, the talks will resume between the Sri Lanka and the Indian Governments. For what purpose? These discussions are resumed to prepare a time frame for the complete withdrawal of the Indian Army to ensure the cessation of offensive military operations and for reviewing of the implementation of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord. The steps that will be initiated by Sri Lanka to ensure the security of all communities in the North and the East will be revealed at the discussions between the representatives of the two countries. Therefore my Government will be taking action to bring about a lasting peace in the North and the East by enlisting the participation of all communities, political parties and groups. No community or group will be left out of this process. Why? Because of the necessity to involve

everyone in this process. Peace will not be possible without the participation of all concerned. I have no doubt that the co-operation of all will be forthcoming. The fears and the doubts that the Indian Army will never leave Sri Lanka were in the minds of many people from the very beginning. We all must be happy that an opportunity has arisen to dispel such fears and doubts.

People of our country worked with great dedication to bring about this situation. Many parties and groups and religious sections assisted greatly. The people including our media and the media of India and other countries gave us great encouragement. I offer them all the gratitude of the country, the people and myself.

Let us resolve by ourselves amicably the problems confronting different sections of our people. Let us not forget that otherwise we will be subjugated by outside forces. With the resolution of the problem of the Indian Peace-Keeping Force we

should endeavour to promote a massive peace effort to achieve unity, discipline and prosperity amongst all communities that live in our motherland. My Government and myself are determined to do our utmost to achieve this objective.

The protests staged against the continuous of the IPKF in our country can now cease. By resorting to strikes and disruptive activities based on such protests we are causing damage and harm to ourselves. It is our own people who get killed. It is our own people who suffer as a result. It is our country's economy that suffers. This will cause the cost of living to go up further. Trade and industry will come to a halt and sources of income will be closed. Instead of increasing jobs the available jobs too will be lost. I would therefore kindly appeal to everyone of you to work from now on to bring the country and the society back to normalcy and to restore peace and order.

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

ADDRESS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY R. PREMADASA
PRESIDENT ON JANASAVIYA
OVER SRI LANKA RUPAVAHINI,
4th SEPTEMBER 1989

All arrangements have now been made to commence the Janasaviya Programme. You will remember that Janasaviya is a very important priority programme that the UNP put before the people both at the Presidential Election and the Parliamentary Election. Janasaviya is essentially a programme formulated to strengthen the people. It is not a system of handing out doles. Janasaviya means a programme aimed at directing and assisting people to get down to production and self sustenance. It is a laudable and a meritorious programme aimed at transforming the weak and the poor into those with strength and means.

I have with me right now the Election Manifesto of our Party. I would like to draw your attention to paragraph 44 on page 17 of the Manifesto, which reads ; "This historic programme which will address the poverty issue in Sri Lanka head on, will begin country-wide implementation within one year of

our Government being elected in December 1988". This is the promise we gave the people. This is a struggle against poverty in this country. It is intended to address the poverty issue head on. You know that one half of our population is made up of very poor people. Now they subsist on food stamps. Under the food stamps system, how much does a family – a family consisting of five members – get for a whole month ? The maximum that they will get is Rs. 300 or Rs. 350. Everybody knows that this type of assistance is not capable of extricating the poor and the deprived from the grip of poverty. If the food stamps system continues, the poor will also continue to remain in the depths of poverty. That is why, we thought of implementing this programme to alleviate poverty.

Poverty alleviation means making the weak and the poor strong and capable. Even though poor, our people have many talents and

capabilities. But they do not have the basic facilities necessary to fully exploit these talents and capabilities. It is to fulfil that need that we are implementing the Janasaviya Programme.

Our poor people are today undernourished and physically weak. When people become physically weak they become enfeebled mentally also. They will then become incapable of standing on their own feet economically or socially. We launched the Janasaviya Programme in order to provide for them the necessary level of nutrition and make them physically strong and mentally energetic so that they could be made active participants in the process of development and production. This will not only help their personal advancement, but also make them useful contributors to national prosperity.

A country can sustain its population only if production is pushed up. There are two ways to do this. One method is to have recourse to the use of machinery. The other method is to secure the wide participation of the people in economic activity. We have any amount of man-power. We must therefore launch a system to get people's participation, make intensive use of human labour to increase

production. Then, on the one hand people will find nourishment and, on the other, the nourished and strengthened people can contribute to increase production. What we really need is not mass-production, but production by the masses. This noble principle was introduced to us by Mahatma Gandhi. We expected to start implementing this programme within one year from the establishment of our Government. But we will not wait till we complete one year to do this. We have made arrangements to start giving Janasaviya assistance from the end of this September.

We have already distributed the Janasaviya Entitlement Certificates. That is, we have given the certificates to all Food Stamp-holder families. But there are other families who are eligible to receive Food Stamps but have not got them. The Programme covering such families will be implemented after all existing food stamp holders have been granted Janasaviya assistance. When the Janasaviya Cards were being distributed nearly 10% of those who held foodstamps did not turn up. On this basis we can look into the question of others who genuinely deserve Janasaviya assistance. The seven million people who now live on Food Stamps consist of about 1.4

million family units. We expect in the first instance to make Janasaviya assistance available to the present seven million people or the 1.4 million families who presently hold Food Stamps. Now the immediate task is to make Janasaviya benefits available to the families who have already received the Janasaviya Entitlement Certificates.

We expect to implement the Janasaviya Programme in all the Districts in the country in eleven rounds. For the first round we have selected one AGA Division from each of the 25 Districts. That means from every District one AGA area will be included in each of the rounds of implementation. In this manner the whole programme will be completed in eleven rounds. For the first round of implementation we select from each District the AGA area with the highest number of holders of Food Stamps on the basis of population ratio. That means, we select the AGA area with the highest number of poor people. For the second round the next AGA area with the second highest number of poor families will be selected. Already AGA areas from all the 25 Districts have been selected for inclusion in the first round. But from certain Districts where poverty is very widespread two AGA areas have been selected for the first

round. Accordingly, the first round of implementation embraces 28 AGA areas. This same process of selection will be repeated for the second round of implementation too. When all the 11 rounds are completed in this manner the Janasaviya Programme would have been implemented in all the AGA areas of the island. By the time the 11 rounds of implementation are completed all the present seven million people holding Food Stamps will be receiving Janasaviya assistance.

Why did we divide the implementation of the programme into 11 rounds? We did so because we want to implement the programme systematically and on a sound footing. When people begin to receive Janasaviya assistance, they will have to go to the village Co-operative Stores in their area to obtain the food items necessary for their nutrition. The Co-operative Stores must be prepared to sell these food items to the people. If the Co-operative Store is to have the food items in sufficient quantity, their production will have to be increased. For the regular provision of food stuffs, textiles and other consumer goods to seven million people it will be necessary to effect a marked increase in their production. This process will necessarily take some

time. Families of food stamp holders in each of the AGA Divisions will receive Janasaviya in turns. Food Stamps will be continued to be made available to every one of the present Food Stamp holder families until each such family gets its turn for Janasaviya assistance. From the date the family gets Janasaviya assistance, it will be continued for 24 months.

Each family will be given a Janasaviya card for the purchase of food items and other consumer goods to the value of Rs. 1,458 for a month. They have to buy these items from the Co-operative Store. The families buying their necessities will find that all these items are produced in our country. Thus, production of local foodstuffs, goods and articles will increase because of Janasaviya. Seven million people will begin to consume more nutritious food in greater quantities. They also will buy other necessities more than ever before. This is why Janasaviya has become a programme which strengthens the people and the country in every respect.

What are the items that a family can buy with the sum of Rs. 1,458 given for consumption? I have a list of them with me. These are the items - rice, sugar, cowpea, greengram, red onions, big onions,

potatoes, vegetables, fruits, coconut, dried fish, Vitamilk, eggs, fish, textiles, exercise books, pencils, agricultural implements, umbrellas, instruments and implements necessary for various crafts, fertilizer, kerosene, pots and pans, chinaware, aluminiumware, mosquito nets, coir and ekel brooms, coir yarn, etc. With the Janasaviya Entitlement a family can buy many essential needs like these. All these are products of this country. There will be a great revolution in the field of production due to Janasaviya.

Under the first round of implementation the consumer needs of 192,000 families have already been estimated. According to this estimate how much will the monthly requirements of various items be?

<i>Consumer items</i>	<i>Total Quantity</i>
Rice	Metric Tons 8,832
Sugar	Metric Tons 480
Cowpea	Metric Tons 384
Greengram	Metric Tons 576
Red onions	Metric Tons 192
Bombay onions	Metric Tons 192
Potatoes	Metric Tons 288
Vegetables	Metric Tons 960
Fruits	Metric Tons 96
Coconuts	nuts-million 1.92
Dried fish	Metric Tons 192
Vitamilk	packets 96,000
Eggs	million 0.96
Fish	Metric Tons 384
Textiles	meters-million 0.576
Exercise books and pencils	units-million 0.432

Agricultural implements	units	30,720
Umbrellas	units	11,520
Instruments and implements required for crafts	units	960
Fertilizer	Metric Tons	2,112
Kerosene	litres-million	0.576
Pots and pans, chinaware, aluminiumware	units	268,800
Mosquito nets	units	1,920
Coir brooms and ekel brooms	units	9,600
Coir yarn	Metric Tons	7.68

This is the requirement for one round. For eleven rounds, eleven times this will be necessary.

To meet this demand an unprecedented increase in production in these items will have to be effected. This production effort will open up employment opportunities for a large number. The Janasaviya assistance recipients themselves would be able to produce food and other consumer items and earn an additional income themselves. This will be possible because of the new expansion of the market.

A Janasaviya assisted family will receive another sum of Rs. 1,042 as the second component of the assistance. This amount is given for investment through savings. It is only when this savings component is also added that the total Janasaviya monthly assistance will add up to

Rs. 2,500. Thus, at the end of the 24 month period of assistance the total saving with the family will be Rs. 25,000. Now you will see that a family which formerly eked out a miserable existence and did not have any saving whatsoever, will in addition to getting a satisfactory level of nutrition also be the proud owner of an investment capital of Rs. 25,000. The family will be able to make use of this asset in many ways for its advancement. Banking facilities too will be made available for the family to obtain a loan offering this financial asset as security. Under the Agency Banks System, credit facilities will be made available to the Janasaviya families at the village level itself. When the implementation of this programme gets underway the Co-operative Societies movement will also get revitalised. The reason is that in the process of providing the Janasaviya assisted families with their needs, these societies will become commercially more viable. Janasaviya assistance recipients can also become shareholders of the Village Co-operatives.

In Sri Lanka we have 25 Districts. We also have over 273 AGA areas. Within these AGA areas we expect to establish about 30,000 hamlets. It is in order to obtain best results that we have spread out the implementation

of this programme to 30,000 hamlets. Each of the hamlets may consist of 100 to 110 families. But all these 100 families may not be Janasaviya recipients. There may be among them people of some means. In each of these villages there may be fifty to sixty per cent food stamp holders. In some villages there could be seventy per cent food stamp holders.

Let us take a case where 60 per cent of the people in a village on an average are food stamp holders. The other 40 per cent are non-food stamp holders who have some means of income. But we will not ignore that forty per cent. We will find out in what way these families too could be helped for their well-being through various programmes of the Government. We are setting up support groups to meet and help not only food stamp holder families but also non-food stamp holder families. Government officials will help and encourage these support groups, who will find out what form of assistance each family needs to live with self-reliance. They will specially look into the needs of Janasaviya families. This is imperative because during the 24 month period the poor families receive Janasaviya assistance, we must give them the know-how as well as prepare programmes for them to lead a life of self-reliance. How should this be done ?

Let us take the case of a Janasaviya recipient family. Such a family may consist of five or six members. In what direction and aim should we guide these families for them to rise up to the levels of leading a self-reliant life ? We will look into that aspect. We will ask the families what mode of life they like to lead. Some families will say that they would like to do farming. We should then prepare a programme to accommodate them. There may be a member of this family who would like to do hired labour. We will provide that opportunity to him. There may be youths in the family who are good at studies and would like to pursue their studies. Janasaviya assistance will help them to pursue their education. Some children would like to obtain some technical knowledge or training in some vocation or technology. We will provide for all these. We will draw up programmes to provide for the development of talents and capabilities of members of each family so as to direct them towards a particular vocation and mode of life for them to live with self-reliance.

Every Ministry of the Government has a role to play under this programme. Arrangements have been made to provide members of each family the knowledge, help and guidance be it in the field of

agriculture, small industries, vocational training or on health matters. There may be in a family a child showing promise and talents in artistic fields, like song, dance or drama. There may be others who are good in sports. We will help to sharpen those talents. We will find out their talents. Under this programme we will find out the capabilities of not only the families receiving Janasaviya assistance in a village, but also those who do not receive such assistance. There are many programmes and schemes launched by the State Sector through which such assistance and encouragement could be given. Many poor people living in our towns and villages are unaware of these benefits. They do not know how to set about to get these benefits. No one has told them nor looked into their problems.

Human resources are our biggest asset. This is a time, an era when even the physically disabled are doing great deeds despite their disability. One could visualise what a big change we could bring about in our society, if we guide and give encouragement to able bodied persons with intelligence and sound physique. We should think what benefits would accrue if we adopt such an attitude towards our people.

Let us take the instance of various plantations in our country like tea,

rubber and coconut. If we detect some kind of disease on a tea leaf, in a tea bush we do research to find out why the leaves are dying. We get advice from the Tea Research Institute and provide the necessary treatment and nourishment to the tea bush. Similarly there is the Rubber Research Institute to look into the weakness of a rubber tree and the Coconut Research Institute to look after the coconut tree. Not only nationally, we would do research internationally to find a remedy to the defects.

Consider for a moment whether we do such research and care for our biggest asset – human resources. Whether we give the same care and attention to the human being as we give the tender tea leaves, rubber tree, the coconut tree, or ears of paddy – though it is a human being who produces all these plantation crops? No. We have not treated the human being even as an object – not even to the extent we treat an agricultural product. We have got used to treating the poor as a set of worthless beings.

Through this Janasaviya programme what we attempt to achieve is to bring out the latent strength of our people. However, poor they are, however desperate they are, every family would inherit some skills by birth. We should bring them out and

we must discover them. There is no doubt that according to their intentions, objectives and skills, if we direct them on the correct path they will rise through self-reliance.

Janasaviya does not mean giving out a dole. It involves the identification of the strength of our people and giving strength to those who don't have. It signifies a programme to increase production of the country utilising all these capabilities.

Today, see the burden of the cost of living on wage earners. When there is a shortage of foodstuffs, clothes and other commodities, the prices of these items increase. Now because of this Janasaviya programme, a great benefit will accrue to those who have an income as well as to wage earners. What is that benefit? When the recipients of Janasaviya engage in agricultural and industrial production, the cost of living will come down. When there are ample local foodstuffs, clothes, as well as other goods, the prices of these goods will even out to a level which could be afforded by everyone. When viewed in this light you will realise that Janasaviya is a programme meant both for the poor who live on food stamps and also for those who are employed and who receive an income as wage earners.

Because of Janasaviya a large number of people could get interested in development work. We can involve the people in various rural development programmes at village level. Today, the poor have no strength to get involved in them. They are very weak. We have our Housing Programme. We can easily bring in the Janasaviya recipients into that programme. Today there is a programme to alienate land to those who do not have land. These people too could be brought into that programme.

However much we launch programmes of health and education, however much roads, bridges, culverts, schools and hospitals are constructed, however much programmes are formulated for housing development, if the under privileged cannot rise on their own strength, they will not benefit from these programmes. Even if they are involved they will not be able to achieve any self advancement. This is why we thought of this programme. We thought of this before the Presidential Election and the General Election. We thought of this having studied all the programmes the former Governments implemented for the alleviation of poverty. We were wondering whether we should keep the under privileged in the same state

for ever. Or else, do we give some basic assistance and bring them to a position where they could stand on their own feet ? It is in pursuance of these thoughts, that we decided to implement the Janasaviya programme this way.

The distribution of the Janasaviya entitlement certificates will be completed by the end of September. September 30th is a Saturday. October 1st is a Sunday. It is possible to get the goods from the Co-operative Society on Monday the 2nd October. October 2nd will be a historic day. It is not only because it is

the day on which the Janasaviya programme was launched for the nourishment of the people : but because it is the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi who rendered noble service for the upliftment of the poorest of the poor.

The Ministers of the Cabinet, Ministers of State as well as Heads of Departments will speak to you from time to time on various aspects of the Janasaviya programme.

May the Blessings of the Triple Gem' be on you.

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY,
R. PREMADASA PRESIDENT TO SECRETARIES,
HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS & CHAIRMEN OF
CORPORATIONS - AT THE - SRI - LANKA
FOUNDATION INSTITUTE ON 6TH
SEPTEMBER, 1989

As you know, this Government was elected by the people of this country in February this year. In fact, it was in December last year, that the Presidential Election was held. I took my oaths as President on January 2. After the General Elections of February, it was in March that Parliament was inaugurated. And, it was thereafter that the Budget was passed. One may say, that it is exactly six months since our Government started work.

During this period, I have had occasion to meet Secretaries of Ministries and Secretaries to Honourable State Ministers several times. In addition, Cabinet Ministers in-charge of various Ministries have also met the Heads of different Departments, Corporations and Institutions. These meetings are held to explain to you, who are the pilots of this Administration, the tasks the people have assigned this Government. That is why we thought of meeting you who are in-charge of

Departments, Corporations, Organisations and Institutions. It is our intention to carry the message through you, to your Departments and Organisations, to the country at large. Why do I say so ? The extent to which we can make a success of our programmes depends on the extent to which you, who, as the pilots of our Administration, understand the aims and aspirations of the Government.

I, as the President, and the Prime Minister and the other Ministers, consider our people as our masters. That is the prime characteristic of a democratic administration. What stands to the discredit of a totalitarian administration is, that in such a system, the rulers are the masters - the people become those ruled. Our belief is that the people are the masters under a democratic system.

It is the people who elect a Government in accordance with the Constitution. We conducted the

Presidential Elections amidst various difficulties and numerous problems. Nevertheless, the people exercised their franchise despite many difficulties.

During the Presidential Elections, the people went to the polling stations and cast their votes suffering physical harassment and torment and in some cases even sacrificing their lives. At the Presidential Election around 55% of the population cast their vote. The other day when I mentioned this to a Member of the American Congress, he said that at the American Presidential Elections, only a relatively small number exercised their franchise, that is around 45% to 48%. However, despite all these difficulties 55% of the population came and voted. At the Parliamentary Elections – the General Elections – 63% cast their votes.

They are our masters. We were elected on the strength of the Election Manifesto put forward by us. I have this Manifesto with me. This Manifesto is with me all the time. We placed this Election Manifesto before the people in all three languages. It was on the strength of this Manifesto that the people elected us. Therefore, it is our duty to implement this Manifesto.

We formulated this Manifesto since August 1988. It was not only the views of U.N.P. Organisations that we obtained for the preparation of this Manifesto, but also the views of the common masses and outside Organisations. We placed before the people, both the strong and the weak points of the administration since 1977. This Election Manifesto was prepared after ascertaining the views on its future implementation. The Election Manifesto was formulated on the basis of our knowledge and experience. If there were any theories we held onto tenaciously, these were but a few.

We obtained this mandate from the people as a group which had a proper understanding of the issues and which could adapt itself suitably. The belief which we unswervingly held onto was the sovereignty of Sri Lanka. We will not permit the destruction of our independence. Nor will we betray Sri Lanka's territorial integrity, unity as well as the heritage and human rights of the people. We not only enshrined in our 1978 Constitution these human and fundamental rights of our people, but also ensured, that they are justiciable in the courts of law, if such rights are violated. Those were the strict principles we are prepared to implement – pragmatic programmes of

work after looking into the issues involved from time to time, for the welfare of the people, be it in the field of politics, economic and socio-cultural development.

The world is constantly changing. Man is also in a constant state of change. In an ever changing world, we too have to adapt ourselves. We must understand the current situation and change. New problems require new solutions. Old solutions will not suit new problems. We drafted this Election Manifesto after studying and understanding the true situation. We found out what is required for our economic development. We saw that there were many obstacles. Among them were corruption, waste and administrative lethargy. Problems remained unsolved, while the files piled up in offices. While a file on the digging of a well would expand in size, not even a sod of soil would have been cut to dig that well. We found that this type of administrative problem, waste, corruption and inefficiency were prevalent in our administrative machinery. That is why, soon after we were elected to office, I held a series of meetings with Secretaries of Ministries and Heads of Departments and prevailed upon them, to make use of their experience, to avoid waste and improve efficiency of the services, in order to accelerate the pace of work.

A large majority of our people live in slums and shanties in villages and urban areas. 85% of our people live in the villages. We must work to uplift their living standards. Half our population live on foodstamps. It is these people who trekked to the polling booths early morning to cast their vote, despite facing threats to their lives and bodily harm. It is for this reason that we have always been saying that we must understand the problems of these people and their aspirations. We have been used to the practice. We judge public opinion by the opinion of the upper strata of society because of the limited opportunities we have in meeting the common people after we are appointed as Ministers, Heads of Departments etc.

Several lakhs of our people do not have an opportunity of reading the newspapers. Some do not have the time to listen to the radio. They do not have the economic capacity to own a television. We must understand the thinking and the aspirations of these people. We must not treat as public opinion, the opinion of a few privileged people in the upper strata of society. We must change our attitudes accordingly. Poor people come to a Ministry or a Department with the greatest difficulty to get their work done. We must provide these people every

facility to get their work done. At present, these people have to encounter various delays, take circuitous routes and fill several forms etc. to get their work done. I have at previous discussions with Secretaries and Heads of Departments, prevailed upon them, to reduce as far as possible, the number of forms a person has to fill for a particular item of work. How many files have we got to maintain to keep these forms? We are merely fattening files. Due to various unnecessary procedures, what percentage say of a lakh of rupees voted for a road, would actually go to the construction of the road? Invariably 60% of the monies would be eaten up by corruption and waste. We have always insisted that we must ensure at least 75% of the monies voted are used in a project. Therefore, I will appeal to you to work with dedication and devotion to your work. Let us not forget that we are paid by our masters – the people with funds earned through their sweat and blood. If we receive any salary or perquisite it is through the hard work of the poor innocent people. They have provided our comforts while living on food stamps themselves. It is our duty to look after them. It is also our duty to enable them to get their needs attended to expeditiously without any inconvenience.

We have to increase local production. We have a fertile soil. We have a salubrious climate. We have an able people. Let us make use of these people to nurture our fields of production. Let us use their labour for agricultural and industrial production and get their participation to increase local production. If production does not increase, the salaries and emoluments drawn even by our top level officers, will not be sufficient for them to make ends meet. If one wants to bring down the cost of living and reduce the pace of inflation and pay for consumer goods, the real value of money, then one must increase production. We can produce in our own country 95% of our food, clothing and other requirements. The necessary atmosphere for this purpose has been created by our Government since 1977. We have done an immense amount of work since 1977 in the fields of basic amenities, irrigation facilities, power and energy, roadways, local and foreign markets and large industrial projects. What is now required is to get the participation of the people to speed up the pace of production, especially in regard to the local production of food, textiles and other requirements which we had carried out during that period. It is for this reason that we planned "Janasaviya". It was not

meant as a dole. So long, we have forgotten, we have ignored, the more than 50% of our people who live on food stamps despite their wealth of labour. Our people are our most valuable asset. The fault is that we are not making use of them for any worth-while task. It is to put aright that fault, that Janasaviya was prepared. It aims at getting the people's participation for production.

First, provide the people with the necessary nutrition for their physical well-being. Thereafter, let the people provide the nutrition necessary for increased production. It is only in that way, that the country's economy can be strengthened and the income of the income-earners can be raised and a better standard of living can be assured. As you know, without any production, no amount of salary increases will ever bring down the cost of living. In fact, it will only increase inflation.

This is one of the most important policies of our Government – that is the speeding up of the pace of production. The first thing to be done is, make the State Administration efficient. For that purpose, prevent corruption and waste. Provide for the people to get their needs attended to, without bother. Next, speed up and improve and extend production.

Then, get the people involved in the production process.

If you look at it in this light, you will see what a meaningful Election Manifesto this is. All of you have the freedom to implement those policies. Give your minds to the needs and requirements of each area, according to your own experience and consideration. This can be done only to the extent to which our administration is decentralised. Our system of administration should be decentralised right up to village level. What remains centralised should be extended far more. The people should be able to feel, that if they are truly the masters – the rulers – the administration has come to their very doorstep. It is to make a success of this programme that the concept of 30,000 small villages was included in Janasaviya. According to our Election Manifesto, the Janasaviya was to begin one year after our Government was formed. But, we will not wait that long. We will begin it at the end of this month – September. We intend to implement it throughout Sri Lanka in 11 stages.

In the first stage, we will be selecting one AGA area from every district in this country. They will be the AGA area with the largest number of poor people – the largest number

of food stamp owners. In the next stage, it will be the next AGA division of each District. By the time the eleven stages is over, all AGA Divisions would have come into the scheme.

The people subsisting on food stamps will receive a monthly grant of Rs. 2,500 of which Rs. 1,458 will be for consumption and Rs. 1,042 for saving. During this period these people will be introduced to various fields of production at small village and hamlet level, in accordance with their talents, and inclinations. It may be that their interest lies in trade or agriculture or industry. The budding youths in these families would be provided with a training in various fields, depending on their individual wishes and capabilities. Every Ministry will be involved in this programme. To make this a success, every officer in every Ministry and every Department – in fact all officers throughout the country should understand this concept and remove whatever administrative obstacles that might emerge.

If we succeed in implementing this programme during these first two years, there will be a notable transformation in our country's economy. I now find that many people seem to be scared thinking

that the economy is strained, that it is facing a crisis. This disease has many symptoms. If one were to treat the symptoms, one would have to keep on patching up here and there. We have discovered the root of the disease. It is that, that has to be treated. Production is the treatment, and it should be speeded.

During the past eleven years, we prepared the foundation for it. Now we have to implement that programme with the participation of the people. Its success rests on administrative efficiency, avoidance of waste and prevention of corruption. Every one of us in the Public Service, Corporation Services and Local Government Services who earn a salary, will have to work with utmost dedication. It is only then, that all of us would be able to feel satisfied with the results. However, you will know that there is a situation of terror these days. All kinds of acts of sabotage are taking place. What you have to decide is, whether you are going to succumb to it or whether you are going to overcome it. This too is an administrative skill.

Someone will get a telephone call asking him not to go to work. That person will not only not go to work, but also inform others too not to go to work. But, they also expect to get

paid for days not worked. But who pays them? It is those innocent people who earn for the country through their sweat and toil. They do not come to work because they had received a letter. Please consider this position. All of us should dedicate ourselves to the service of the people. Consider what would happen, if we allow ourselves to be cowed down with this type of fear.

Who will know, when death would come to us? Who will know, whether you will meet with an accident or not? Sometimes your horoscope will predict, that you will meet with a fatal accident while travelling in your car. You will have to then decide, whether you would travel in your car or not. So you have an option. Come what may, you go to work or stay at home. Similarly, you can go to work whatever happens to you. Or you can stay at home. These incidents which you fear may occur, would actually come to pass. Or it may not come to pass at all. That is life. Do we submit to these threats or do we overcome them by united action? This is the challenge before us.

Just think about this. If work is stopped at the point of a gun, the day the gun emerges victoriously and rules the country, you will have no option but to work at the point of a

gun. There would then be no A.R.R., F.R.R., trade union rights, human rights or reasonable demands. At the point of a gun you may have to work not for eight hours, but for 24 hours. There would then be no demonstrations. If we submit to these threats, we are not suited to hold our positions.

There is a vast section in our administrative service, who look up to you for guidance and follow you. Some will say "If the boss does not go to work why should I? Your subordinates will look to you for guidance. You should set an example to them. Even during normal times, the one who goes to office first is the most minor employee. It is he who has been entrusted with the job of closing office and handing over the keys to the police. This is wrong. This pattern should be changed. The Departmental Head should be the first to go to Office. He should give leadership. Such is a person whom one can call a 'Boss'. So the leadership and example you give, counts a lot. It is you who should go to office first. You have the vehicle and other facilities. If you do not go to office, how do you expect your employees who travel by bus or walk long distances to come to work? If you foresee a disruption of transport services you could talk to officers

who have vehicles and arrange to transport some others who could be easily picked up and brought to work. We need that kind of efficiency and thinking, if we are to progress towards prosperity. We do not need advisers from International Agencies to guide us on these matters. There are no better advisers than you. You know how other countries who were poor have developed.

There are several officials who have gone abroad for scholarships, training programmes, seminars and so on. I have during the past eleven years, approved the applications of Departmental Heads who went abroad on scholarship. Therefore, I am aware of the number who have gone abroad. They say they are going to attend this conference and that seminar and keep going abroad seven or eight times an year. So I have told the Prime Minister, that if an officer in a department applies to go abroad more than once an year, to approve such an application after consulting me. I will study what the particular officer wants, what he had learned abroad and to what extent he had applied that knowledge for the country's benefit.

What do those who reported for work despite all threats tell me? "This is quite funny Sir. Others draw bigger

salaries to enjoy better privileges, go on foreign trips more and more, but we just break our backs. We have none to lead us in a crisis." I know that you have difficulties. There are times when your families shiver in fear. There have been times when threats have been carried out. Therefore, we have to choose one of the two alternatives. Either we have to come and work or stay at home, afraid. Choose what you want and inform your Minister or the Head of your Department. I know how to fill the resulting vacancies. Do not think for a moment that I have taken this job to run away scared. Let me tell you that I will lift this country out of the plight it has fallen into. I intend to take every step necessary for that purpose.

Take a look at my Election Manifesto. The first thing I refer to is Peace. The second is Discipline. Then comes Prosperity—through Discipline brought about through Peace. How am I going to do it? Not by the gun or the bayonet. But by discussion. By consultation. Please keep in mind that I will do it. There are some who say that this will not do, that one must be firm in meeting firmness. But they are the same people, who do not come for work. There are some people who do not come for work but stay at home and keep on making false

telephone calls on the pretext of working more. Sometimes, they do it in the Department itself, speaking from one corner of the building to another corner of the same building, saying "Don't report for work tomorrow. You will be killed if you come." Several of them have already been caught. So this spreads. False letters arrive spreading the rumour. So, no one comes to work on that day.

The first to keep away from work is the Head of the Office. The next man next. And then the next. Is it for this that they are paid top salaries? Is it for this that you received so many degrees? Is it for this that you were given a training? Choose one of the two alternatives. Decide whether you want to serve the people and be maintained by the people, or whether to remain shivering in fear.

I agreed to come forward as the candidate of our party for the Presidential Elections, not without knowing the difficulties that I had to face. It is with an awareness of these difficulties that I did so. Therefore, I have a duty to perform. What is that duty? It is the mandate given to me by the people of this country, to take them out of the rut that they have fallen into. I have a good programme of work to bring about a remedy. If I

receive your assistance for two years, you will realise what type of change that would be brought about in Sri Lanka. My programme of work would result in a unique transition. It is very easy for one to criticise and to put the blame on the others. Sometimes we do not realise our own mistakes. We do not make an attempt to understand how careless we are. Our habit is always to put the blame on the other person. If someone else does something wrong we ask for his explanation, while we suppress our own faults.

Recently, a group of people came to see me. They said that they had an important subject to discuss with me. They told me that they were facing great threats and difficulties. At the same time they told me something which someone in their own division had done. According to them, someone in their office had signed the attendance register, but had told his superior, that although he signed that attendance register he was unable to perform his duties because he has received threats. Then the superior had told him, that if it was not possible for him to work he would make it a point to note down in the attendance register that, that person did not work. Hearing this, he had agreed to work. The rest of the employees of the organisation too

followed suit. As a result, 75% of the workers in that institution had performed their duties. This is what we called leadership. I also heard of a great example, given by a lady judicial officer. When she went to her place of work, an accident similar to what I related, had taken place there. A certain officer in her courts had said that although he signed the attendance register, he could not work. This lady had been very firm. She had said, that she would not postpone the hearing of cases on any account. This lady had added "whether I die here or on the road or at home, it would be the same to me. I have come to do a job of work. Therefore, I will not hesitate to perform my duties." This is undoubtedly a great example. I have come to learn hundreds of such courageous acts.

Therefore, you must give the leadership. You are either Secretaries, Heads of Departments or Heads of Corporations. If your leadership is not forthcoming at a time like this, at what other time would you give your leadership? If you cannot give that leadership, in the name of God, give the job to some one else and go away. There is no fault in that. It is only reasonable. If one head cannot perform the work, the next in command could be appointed. If not

the second, the third most senior officer. Work must go on. Therefore, perform your duties. This is not what I say but what the people of this country—our masters—would like me to tell you. I am only an instrument in the hands of the people. I have been entrusted with the responsibility of undertaking this duty. I accept that responsibility to convey to you that message and perform my tasks entrusted to me.

We must always keep in mind, that there is a reaction to every action we do. I remember, once a group involved in a strike wrote me a letter. This letter was sent by post. After two weeks, a caller telephoned me and asked whether I had received that letter. I asked, when he had sent that letter. He said that he had sent it two weeks back. I said it could not happen because I am in the habit of replying every letter. In my reply I always state, whether I could accede to the request contained in the letter or not. I then said, that the letter would have got delayed in the post. It was only then, that the caller realised, that they had involved the Postal Department in the strike. I told him, since, they had called the Postal Department in to a sympathy strike, the letter would still be in the mail room. This was a reaction to their

action. I told the caller, that they had to take the responsibility of the consequences.

We must educate the people who work with us. Therefore, I would like to tell you, we should not be afraid to do what is right. We are all dedicated to do what is just. We also should not seek solutions through fear, but we should not be frightened to find solution. Fear and doubt are the two most dangerous diseases, if you allow them to take hold of you. We cannot help it if we face intimidation or difficulties, in discharging our responsibilities.

We are gathered here, suppose this building collapses or a hand grenade is thrown, what would happen? Grenades were thrown at us when we were holding a meeting in Parliament. Our Ministers and MPs were injured. Some of them died. Did we abandon the work as a result? We cannot do that. We have a duty to perform by our people. It is the people who maintain us. Therefore, I wish to inform you, we must work with determination.

The present Government has been given a mandate to implement the election manifesto. The most important aspect of the manifesto is, the Poverty Alleviation Programme, to

reduce poverty or take measures to completely eradicate poverty. The only way to do it is, increase production, which too is stipulated in the manifesto. People must be made participants in this development effort. The basic facilities needed for this effort have been set up by our own Government during the past 11 years. We should completely eradicate waste, corruption and inefficiency if we are to alleviate poverty. We should give an example in this respect.

If a situation of conflict has come about, we must find out the causes for it. That is the responsibility of the Government. We will attempt to do it and will achieve it. We will find the causes of the conflict. That is why I have always asked to work with an open mind and be non-aligned. It is not only the Ministers and MPs who face difficulties. That is why I ask everyone to unite. We have differences of opinion and disagreements amongst us. Even in a family there may be conflicting opinions among its members. But there are matters on which everyone can agree upon. We can therefore put our heart and soul in order to work unitedly, towards achieving what we can agree upon.

You would see that we have started accomplishing most of the

things we had stated in our Election Manifesto. I lifted the Emergency which was in force for well over five years and released over 1,800 persons who were in custody. Why did I do so? It is with a view to resolving our problems through consultation and compromise. Yet, the situation became worse. This resulted in my having to re-impose the Emergency. But, we have not given up our effort to diagnose the root causes for the present crisis and resolve them peacefully.

Today, our armed forces and police are working with great dedication. The Police and Armed Services are there to protect our people. Today, there are arms in the hands of the militants. Representatives of all political parties too are in possession of arms. The Police and Armed Services personnel too have arms. But the poor, ordinary people do not have arms to protect themselves. Police and the Armed Services personnel are there to protect the people. When Emergency is enforced, the Emergency Laws take precedence over the ordinary laws. There may be drawbacks and weaknesses. It can't be helped. The only alternative is, to withdraw the Emergency. Then the Services personnel will withdraw to the barracks and the Police will resume

their normal duties. Police and Army are there to look after the people.

We must understand this position. That is why, I am opposed to the imposition of the Emergency. That is why I withdrew the emergency soon after I became President. I re-imposed the Emergency this time with the greatest reluctance. I lifted the Emergency despite the advice of some, not to lift the Emergency. I always place my trust in the good sense of the people. I try to look at the good side always. I came forward to implement such a policy and vision. I pledged to create at least one million jobs during my six-year period in office. Not casual jobs, but permanent jobs. If we pursue this programme, we can achieve this target. I asked that I be given this opportunity to implement this programme. These opportunities are now being created. Steps have been taken to recruit 25,000 teacher trainees. A large number are being recruited to the Police. We have created job opportunities in various sectors. You will see the attempt we are making to honour the pledges we have given. My policy is to work without any political bias.

My Election Manifesto does not say that jobs will be given only to members of my party. I have ordered

that jobs be given on the basis of qualifications and necessity. One's political leanings is not a qualification or a disqualification. If a person is suited to a particular job he should be chosen. Qualification and need should be the criteria, whether it be in the matter of employment, any government programme, or allocation of lands. The language problem has been solved during the period of our Government. Sinhala and Tamil are Official Languages. English is the link language. The problem of statelessness has also been solved. On the ethnic issue, the policy we have adopted, is the provision of jobs on the population ratio basis. In the distribution of land, priority will be given to people in the areas, where the lands are to be developed. We have formulated solutions to several problems.

I held the view that in order to tackle the problem of malnutrition among the children, we should give a mid-day meal. We commenced that programme. We allocated Rs. 2,000 million to start that programme. I do not think that any other Government had taken such speedy measures, to implement so many programmes outlined in the Election Manifesto, in such a short period of time, as the present Government. We did not forget the pledges we gave, despite

the various difficulties, threats we faced. We did not set them aside. We will continue to carry forward our programme in the future. We must not allow a backtracking of this programme.

It is you who must give the leadership in these programmes. We on our own should find solutions to our own problems. If not, outside forces will override us. It is for this reason that I appealed to the LTTE and JVP repeatedly, to join us. Let us keep our differences of opinion and disputes among ourselves and solve the problems we can agree upon. If not, we will be forced to go under foreign forces. Whoever thought that the LTTE would come for talks with the Government. Now, we not only hold discussions, but have agreed on several matters.

I believe, that we can rise on the basis of self-reliance, if we arrive at a consensus, on which we see eye to eye. I feel that by exchange of views, we can agree on many matters than on issues we disagreed. If not, we can be overrun by foreign forces. We went under the Portuguese, Dutch and the English because we subject ourselves to them. We have a history where we did not solve our problems in a peaceful manner owing to disputes and conflicts amongst us.

We must not allow history to repeat.
Why can't we face reality and agree
to an extent where we can agree and
safeguard our country and our
people.

In conclusion, I would like to
request earnestly from all of you, to
eradicate inefficiency, corruption and
waste in Government Departments
and facilitate to resolve the problems
of the people.

ADDRESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY,
R. PREMADASA, PRESIDENT,
AT THE ALL PARTY CONFERENCE
13TH SEPTEMBER, 1989, BMICH, COLOMBO

We are all gathered here today to participate in this All Party Conference. Let me begin by extending a warm welcome to all of you,

This is indeed a historic occasion. We are all here as representatives of political parties and groups. We are all assembled here for three purposes.

Firstly, to express our common desire and solidarity on a collective search for a viable solution to the problems of violence and unrest that have afflicted all our people and enveloped our motherland. Indeed, our collective meeting here today will send a special signal—a special message to all our people. And what is that? It is that their leaders who belong to different political parties and groups—who belong to different ethnic groups—who come from all corners of Sri Lanka have assembled together, united together, shedding all differences for the restoration of peace and stability. This example will

undoubtedly inspire all our people in towns and hamlets to join together for the cause of peace. We are not here to apportion blame to anyone.

Secondly, to consider and endorse the modalities that have emerged during our informal consultations leading to this meeting today.

Thirdly, to make a determined and concerted effort to bring those that are outside the mainstream of politics into the democratic process, to restore peace, to strengthen the civil administration and the rule of law, to introduce structural reforms and promote stability.

All of us present here today have our own political identities. It is true that we differ in our ideologies, policies and programmes. Yet, we are all agreed on the urgent need for peace and stability. Our endeavour should be to identify the basic principles to which all parties and groups can subscribe without compromising their

respective identities and policies. It is our desire to work with an open mind in our search for a solution. We should strive to identify the root causes of this conflict and remedy them. No purpose will be served in treating the symptoms.

It is clear that we are confronted with a national crisis undermining our way of life, and the very foundations of our society. Our democratic values and institutions have become targets. We could effectively meet these assaults by choosing democratic methods.

We are all meeting today to put our heads together and collectively work out an effective solution. I feel confident that we can overcome this crisis. In our long history we have gone through and surmounted much more critical events and episodes. Our people are deeply religious, peace loving, non violent and democratic. We have a moral obligation to protect them.

As you are aware, this Conference has been convened to consider the many proposals that have been made to resolve the present crisis. Several political parties and groups have made specific proposals. All the political parties and groups who are represented at this meeting, have

placed as their first priority, the cessation of violence and the restoration of peace and normalcy in our country. There is total agreement among all of us on this issue.

I thank you for the several suggestions and proposals you have made in your communications and in your discussions with me. Let us give serious consideration to them. When the dialogue we are launching today is set in motion, more views and more approaches will emerge. We could go into all of them collectively and hopefully, work out a feasible solution.

When I assumed office nine months ago I made a solemn declaration that consultation, compromise and consensus would be articles of faith in my conduct of State affairs. I have reiterated that solemn declaration without reservations. I have consistently sought to apply those principles in the search for solutions to the problems our country is facing. They epitomise the democratic spirit, pluralism of views and the ethic of give-and-take which are so vital to make our democratic system work.

You will recall that I revoked the Emergency as soon as I assumed office and ordered the release of

over 1,800 persons held in custody. It is in the same spirit that I made several other initiatives aimed at bringing back those outside the mainstream and ending bloodshed. As you are aware some have responded and other have not.

It is only after the increase in violence and the disruption of essential services became a sweeping challenge and the danger posed to society became menacing that we were reluctantly compelled to re-introduce the Emergency. Any Government in this situation would have had to use the coercive arm of the State to meet the challenge to peace, law and order.

I abhor violence. I believe in non-violence. I wish to make a special appeal to all those outside the democratic process to return to the mainstream, to join this dialogue to jointly search for solutions to the country's problems. Grievances, sufferings and frustrations cannot be set right by resorting to violence. They must be identified and remedied. The way of democracy is dialogue. I am confident that with today's fresh beginning and your co-operation we could overcome the present crisis and establish national reconciliation.

There is a national consensus which has developed in regard to several current issues of concern. These include the following:-

- * Bringing into the mainstream of politics, those forces that are today outside the democratic process,
- * Preventing violence,
- * Restoring peace and normalcy,
- * Restructuring the political, economic and administrative systems,
- * Ensuring equal rights for all people, regardless of considerations of class, creed or community, and
- * Eliminating the socio-economic disparities that still remain in our country.

So, very broad objectives animate our discussions. It is our hope that this All Party Conference will be a successful forum for the realisation of these objectives leading to reconciliation and unity among all our people. I personally see this All Party Conference as being a collective search for practical and viable solutions to the present crisis.

I am not averse to change if change is to bring forth desired results. I believe that we must search for new solutions for the new problems that we face. Let us all, as we proceed in these deliberations, be not wedded to ideological positions

and policies which we feel compelled to uphold. Let us rather in the spirit which has brought us together search for the solutions through the process of this dialogue. In this exercise we shall not seek political advantage for ourselves but work with sincerity, mutual trust and understanding.

I request all parties to write to me as comprehensively as possible setting out their proposals and recommendations. All proposals will be given wide publicity. I also welcome the entire country participating in the debate around this initiative so that the whole spectrum of issues in focus will be thoroughly discussed. This will help us in the search for a genuine and durable solution.

The programme for such consultations is being worked out and the dialogue will start immediately after this meeting. This would involve

consultations within and among all political parties and groups. I am happy to announce that informal consultations have approved these modalities. I have already set apart 10 days for these consultations. The programme drawn up for these consultations has been placed before you. I propose to re-convene the next meeting of the All Party Conference at 10.00 a.m. on 12th October, 1989.

What I am stating here today are not only my views. I am voicing the collective sentiments of all of us. The task ahead calls for hard work, patience, dedication and commitment. It is indeed the supreme national task of our day. Without compromising on political ideology or on principles we should strive to arrive at a collective decision – a consensus aimed at restoring peace and consolidating democracy.

I thank you.

ADDRESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY
R. PREMADASA PRESIDENT
AT THE CONVOCAATION OF THE
BANDARANAIKE CENTRE FOR
INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
22nd SEPTEMBER, 1989 – BMICH

I thank you for inviting me to preside over this occasion. This is the 8th Convocation of the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies. These occasions remind us of the diligence with which you have pursued the study of international relations. I congratulate you on your record of continuity during your thirteen year history. It is an achievement that few other institutions of higher education in our country can equal.

Until recently, the study of international relations was not recognized as a separate discipline in Sri Lanka. I find that your Centre has pioneered a more modern approach. International relations as a separate field of study, as a distinct discipline of its own, is now becoming more widespread in our higher educational system.

A predominant feature of the modern world is its international character. No Nation – No State can isolate itself any more. In today's

world, which is so inter-dependent, inward looking countries will remain static and isolated. In this global context, foreign policy now assumes a vital importance. An ignorant or an unformed foreign policy can damage the image of the country. What is an enlightened foreign policy? Naturally it has to be a policy which combines national compulsions with international realities.

In the past, foreign policy in Sri Lanka was made by a small group. A few political leaders, a handful of so-called intellectuals, and very few others had a virtual monopoly on policy-making and discussion. Now, thanks to institutions like the B C I S and the rising political consciousness of our people, the interest in foreign policy has broadened. However, this is not enough. We have to widen popular participation in foreign affairs discussions. We have to take foreign policy debates from the clutches of the privileged. We must make it people based. Only then will we have

a truly democratic foreign policy approach.

Education is the key to this process. That is why institutions such as the Bandaranaike Centre have an important national purpose. That is why we should encourage the expansion of your activities. That is why we must have more institutions like this throughout the country. International studies must not be confined to Colombo alone ; they must be made available to all our people. They must be available in whatever language they speak. Higher education must not only be available to all but also brought within easy reach of all. Such educational opportunities should be decentralised to the Towns and Villages. For this purpose new constructions are not necessary. During off-school hours, Central School buildings in various parts of the country can be utilised.

When we discuss foreign policy, we must remember one imperative. As I said earlier, foreign policy must be deeply rooted in domestic concerns and compulsions. It must serve the needs of our people and our country. We should not preach abstract virtue to the world, if we do not have it at home. It is worthless and foolish to try to solve the world's problems if we cannot solve our

own. Our best contribution to world affairs is not in proclaiming morality abroad. It is in putting our own house in order with justice. To this end, I must say that our foreign policy is being oriented towards securing the best for our country.

My government is pledged to seek three broad objectives. We seek to :-

First : restore peace through consultation, compromise and consensus.

Second : enforce discipline through the strict application of the rule of law, restoration of moral values and introduction of codes of conduct.

Third : Alleviation of poverty through a programme of restructuring of the political, economic, social and administrative systems.

I am personally pledged to seek these objectives relentlessly. In that quest, foreign relations have a critical part to play. We welcome encouragement, assistance and support from abroad. But we will never compromise our sovereignty or sell our independence to anyone. However far, however close, or

however powerful any nation may be, it has no right to aspire to control other nations. It has no right to dictate our policies or maintain an unwelcome presence on our soil. The blood of Sri Lankans, past and present, has not been shed to subordinate our country.

This is a bi-partisan view in Sri Lankan politics. Mrs. Bandaranaike, herself, delivering the Felix Dias lecture in 1987 said :

“ There will be no benefit to the states of the Indian Ocean if the withdrawal of great international powers were merely to be an opening for exercises of hegemony by a regional power over its neighbours . . . We ourselves (she said) are facing the dangers of regional hegemony. ”

These are sentiments that all patriotic Sri Lankans can share. This is why we have been working so hard to obtain the withdrawal of the IPKF from Sri Lanka. We have succeeded in principle. We cannot rest until we have fully succeeded in fact. Many other considerations – regional co-operation, elements of national development – have to be subordinated to this end. Let no one doubt our determination. Let those

who conspire, at home or abroad, to abridge our national sovereignty beware of the fortitude of the Sri Lankan people. If we follow the Buddhist prescription of right thought and right action we will prevail .

In many ways, our past is a beacon for our future. We have faced many challenges to our sovereignty. Dozens of invasions have taken place. In fact, we may well be one of the most invaded nations in history. We have been occupied for long periods. Yet, the spirit of our people and the essence of our culture has survived.

In the midst of all this tragedy, we built great civilizations. We all know of the vast constructions and engineering feats in old Sri Lanka. Few realize that the social achievements were as great. For example, in the Kandyan Kingdom in the 18th Century, unusual ethnic and religious harmony prevailed. Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and even Europeans lived together in peace. Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity were respected in a spirit of mutual tolerance. High administrative positions were held by people of all communities. The history of Kandy proves that multi-ethnic and multi-religious concord is nothing new in Sri Lanka. We must aim to recapture these elements of our past.

If we are strong in this way, we can meet any challenge. Our small size and material weakness will not matter. We can face those who are big and strong without fear. As the great sage Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore put it :

Be not ashamed, my brothers,
to stand before the proud and
the powerful,
With your white robe of
simplicity,
Let your crown be of humility,
Your freedom, the freedom of
the soul,
For what is huge is not great
And pride is not
everlasting

This is the only spirit and only approach that can sustain us in the future.

Much of that future will depend on the way we conduct our foreign policy. My Government wants friendship with all. We have hostility to none. We believe in the United Nations and the Non-aligned Movement. May be they have their own shortcomings. These we must strive to put right. We do not favour one bloc or another.

Everyone who graduates from this institution knows a basic truth about

international relations. It is that power is never constant. Great powers rise and they fall. This is inevitable. We see it in the world today. When powers fall, it is not strength that matters. What is important then, is the goodwill that a nation enjoys. This is what we in Sri Lanka must develop and cherish.

To do this is not easy. We have gone through a period when too much hatred has spread in our society. It is not enough to enforce change. Change must be change of heart if it is to endure. A good part of the change of heart comes from right understanding. This, in turn, often comes from correct learning and education.

This is why I am particularly glad to be with you today. The work of the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies must fulfil the international vision of the statesman after whom it was named. The late Honourable S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike wanted a world of peace – not a world in pieces.

On this occasion, allow me to introduce a personal recollection. I knew the late Honourable S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike from my school days. In fact, I came to know him long before Mrs. Bandaranaike met him. I still

recall the day I visited his Colombo residence – “Udugaha Walawwa” at Silversmith Street – now Bandaranaike Mawatha in Hulftsdorp.

In my capacity as Secretary of the Sinhala Literary Union of St. Joseph’s College, I invited him to give us a lecture. I told him that we would like him to speak on the topic : “What Contribution can tiny Lanka make to the Mighty World.” (මහ ලොවකට පුංචි ලංකාව දිය යුත්තේ කුමක්ද ?)

The ideas he expressed still echo in my ears. The essence of it is something like this :

A country is considered large or small *not* by its land area or size of population. It is the moral Values that a country contributes which define its significance. The world always faces many challenges. If tiny Lanka can project its values to the world, it can provide the moral strength to overcome these challenges. To the extent it does so, Lanka becomes mighty, the world becomes tiny.

These memorable sentiments illustrate another feature of Mr. Bandaranaike. In my understanding, he constantly adjusted and developed his ideas to keep pace with changing events. In this intellectual adaptability and policy

flexibility are valuable lessons for all of us.

By educating individuals we enlighten them. Enlightened people seek peace. They work for peace. As you engage in these tasks, please remember that your institution must always strive to improve its quality. Your institution must always remain objective and non-political. Only in this way will it reach those high goals to which the late Honourable S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike aspired.

To this end, I urge you to undertake for tasks :

- First :** to continuously upgrade and broadbase your Council of Management ;
- Second :** to supplement your teaching activities with more research ;
- Third :** to consider extending your programmes outside Colombo ;
- Fourth :** to expand the intake and provide for the needs of the under-privileged students.

I am confident that the Council of Management can develop such programmes. They have guided the institution through difficult times. We

all expect more good work from them in the future.

Let me also pay a tribute to the Director of the B C I S, Mr. Ray Forbes. He has contributed significantly to raising the standards of

this Centre. He has enhanced its integrity and its scholarship. The quality of the men and women who graduate today testify to this. I wish them all success.

I thank you.

**REPORT BY HIS EXCELLENCY
R. PREMADASA, PRESIDENT, TO THE ALL
PARTY CONFERENCE 12 OCTOBER, 1989
AT THE BMICH, COLOMBO**

Hon. Prime Minister
Hon. Speaker
Hon. Ministers
Hon. Leader of the Opposition
Hon. Leaders of Parties & Groups
Distinguished Delegates

I take pleasure in re-convening the adjourned meeting of the All Party Conference.

When we last met on 13 September, I indicated that the All Party Conference should be a collective search for practical and viable solutions to the present national crisis. The hard work, patience and dedication that have been shown by all participants during these days, fully support these aspirations.

I said that our endeavour should be to identify the basic principles to which all parties and groups can subscribe without compromising their respective identities and policies. We set out to search for a national

consensus aimed at restoring peace and consolidating democracy.

I wish at the outset to thank all the participants of this Conference for the courage and commitment they have shown. We were confronted with tasks of great importance and gravity. Our dialogue was at all times constructive and courteous. I express my gratitude and appreciation to all of you who participated so effectively in the consultative meetings that were held from 18 September to 6 October. Your proposals received wide publicity. This enabled the entire country to participate in this national search for a consensus.

The getting together of all parties with the objective of restoring peace and normalcy has had an impact on the nation. It has led to a sense of expectation and hope for the future. What do our people most earnestly crave for today? It is to live their lives without fear and to go about their daily avocations without let or hindrance. The All Party Conference is

clearly not a panacea for all our ills. It is not a perfect mechanism. But it is a vital forum where the nation can seek to replace conflict with compromise. In my opinion it must be made use for restoring peace and normalcy. It is helping to bring about the much needed consensus on crucial issues in our society.

My report will attempt to draw together some common strands from the rich variety of proposals put forward by the different delegations at our consultative meetings. I met with almost all parties and groups over this period. The recommendations made by individual groups were enriched and enhanced by the comments made and clarifications sought by the observers. They were present in large numbers at our consultations. To all of them for their contributions, I say thank you on your behalf.

I would like to place before you my perceptions of the emerging consensus. Firstly, there are a set of issues on which there is total unanimity. These are:

- * the goal of restoring peace and normalcy,
- * preventing violence, and
- * bringing into the mainstream of politics those forces which are today outside the democratic process.

There was a consensus which developed around the *means* through which peace and normalcy could be restored and violence prevented. These included,

- * the surrender of arms,
- * the disbanding of illegal para-military forces,
- * lifting the emergency,
- * suspending the Prevention of Terrorism Act, releasing detainees and giving a general amnesty,
- * Redressing of legitimate grievances perceived by various groups.

Many delegations took the position that first peace and normalcy should be restored. They were of the view that those outside must be brought into the mainstream and Parliamentary Elections should be held.

There was an overall consensus on the need for ensuring equal rights for all. There was consensus for reducing socio-economic disparities. There was broad agreement too on the need for re-structuring political, economic, social and administrative systems.

However, several issues surfaced on which alternative or optional courses of action were advocated by different delegations.

1. **The structure of Government**

There was much discussion on both the conceptual and practical benefits and disadvantages of the Presidential system as against the Westminster model.

2. **The Interim Administration**

There was consensus with regard to the restoration of peace and normalcy and the subsequent holding of Parliamentary Elections. This led to the concept of an Interim Administration. Here some divergent views have been expressed. They range from a Provisional Government composed of parties within Parliament to a Caretaker Government composed of all recognized political parties.

3. **Constitutional Reforms**

Several proposals were made with regard to the reform of the Constitution. These included, the franchise, the system of elections, minority representation etc. Changes needed to strengthen the democratic process and enhance fundamental rights and freedom were also emphasized.

4. **Devolution of Power**

There was a view expressed that there be increasing devolution of power and decentralisation. There was a diversity of views with regard to the unit of devolution. Some views were expressed in support of a larger regional unit. Other views brought forward the need for a strengthened grassroots unit within the larger unit. There were some participants who felt that the unit of devolution should be community oriented. Others felt that it should be territorially oriented. This is an area which needs further consultation to evolve compromise which would lead to consensus.

5. **Current Socio-Economic Environment**

Many references were made by participants to the serious effects the continuing violence has had on the economy. They include frequent stoppages of work under fear of intimidation, loss of production in factories and plantations. This has caused loss not only to the State. Hardship and suffering were caused to all, particularly to the weaker segments of our

population. All parties saw a critical need to arrest this trend. They stressed the need to give high priority to the increase of production.

There was also clear unanimity with regard to the need to eliminate whatever social iniquities still remain. Wherever the gap remained of an unequal access to opportunity, be it in education, employment or other welfare services, every effort must be made to fill the gap.

As an immediate step, it is proposed to appoint a commission to inquire into the causes of unrest among youth. This Commission will report with special reference to employment opportunities, education and other related matters. I am happy that Mrs. Bandaranaike, Leader of the Opposition, has made such a proposal.

The fundamental rights of all who live in the country must be promoted and protected. No section of our community must have the perception that they are alienated or marginalised on grounds of political ideology, race, religion, class or sex. All are agreed that this has to be so in a pluralistic, multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual society such as ours.

The validity, relevance and timeliness of the All Party Conference becomes evident when we consider the significant practical steps we have taken. All parties in the All Party Conference made an appeal for a ceasefire. At the meeting I had with the five Opposition Parties in Parliament on 19 September, it was agreed to call upon all armed militant groups to desist from acts of violence and sabotage. Following this, there was an unilateral suspension of military operations by the security forces on 27 September. This was extended for a further 72 hours to provide a further opportunity of coming to a negotiated settlement. These efforts had the fullest support of the parties in the All Party Conference. Unfortunately these steps did not have the desired effect in a positive response from the JVP.

The second measure which we took in cooperation with all parties was the appointment of the Ceasefire Monitoring Committee of three eminent persons – Hon. R. S. Wanasundera, retired Judge of the Supreme Court, Hon. Jaya Pathirana, retired Judge of the Supreme Court and Mr. Sam Wijesinha, Ombudsman with Mr. Lakshman de Mel as Secretary. This Committee had broad Terms of Reference:

1. To observe whether during the period of the ceasefire any member of—

- (a) the security forces conduct any operations otherwise than
 - (i) to prevent an imminent breach of the peace,
 - (ii) in the defence of person or property,
 - (iii) to disarm any person carrying firearms, grenades, explosives or other offensive weapons, without lawful authority,
- (b) any armed militant group engages in any act of violence or sabotage.

2. Where the Monitoring Committee is satisfied after such inquiry as it may deem necessary, that any person or group has been responsible for any act of violence or sabotage or that any member of the security forces, has conducted any operation in breach of the suspension as aforesaid, the Monitoring Committee shall report to His Excellency the President without delay—

- (a) of such violations,

- (b) immediate consequential action taken to counter such violation, and

- (c) the recommendations of the Committee of remedial measures necessary to prevent a recurrence of such violations.

The report of this Committee was presented to me on Tuesday 10 October. I would be making the report available to you in due course. This exercise I submit is a significant indication of our ability to work together in mutual trust and confidence in facing a national problem.

At the final meeting of the consultative sessions last Friday, 6 October when the Sri Lanka Freedom Party delegation represented the other four Parties in the Opposition, a further step forward was taken. After examining the various issues presented at the All Party Conference by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party delegation, it was agreed to consider the following steps, subject to further consultation and ratification by all parties concerned.

1. A Referendum be held once peace and normalcy is restored to decide on the acceptability of the Presidential system,

2. To seek consensus on the means of resolution of the urgent problems facing the country for the restoration of peace and normalcy.
3. To seek agreement on a programme of work for an interim administration, and
4. To constitute an interim administration including all Parties concerned. There was the general understanding that these steps should be taken within a specified time frame.

Action will be pursued on the above proposals.

In addition to the measures we have already taken, I propose to take another step immediately. This will be a further attempt to achieve one of our objectives on which there is complete consensus. That is to bring into the mainstream of politics, those forces that are today outside the democratic process.

The United National Party put forward a proposal which had been recommended by their Working Committee. According to that proposal if all Parties undertake to desist from violence, pledge their commitment to peace, surrender

unlicensed firearms and disband illegal para-military forces, the Emergency should be lifted, the Prevention of Terrorism Act suspended and an amnesty granted. The Government is now prepared to take the following steps as suggested at the All Party Conference:

1. Lift the Emergency,
2. suspend the Prevention of Terrorism Act,
3. grant an amnesty to all persons punished, release all persons detained, stop action against all persons wanted under the Emergency Regulations or the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and
4. redress any legitimate grievance they may have,

if all Parties, including the JVP,

1. pledge their commitment to peace and democracy,
2. renounce and desist from violence and sabotage with immediate effect,
3. surrender all unlicensed firearms in their possession before the specified date, and
4. disband any illegal para-military forces.

As a further step, Government has invited the International Committee of

the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide their traditional humanitarian services in Sri Lanka.

Critics of the All Party Conference, I am told, have tried to give a different construction to the All Party Conference. They have said that it was an attempt by the Government to buy time. Some of them have argued that it was an initiative to tide over the negotiations which the Government was having with aid-giving Agencies. I wish to state quite categorically and emphatically that the All Party Conference had no relevance to these matters. In fact, they are being resolved in negotiations between these International Institutions and the Government. The All Party Conference is a collective search to find solutions to the urgent problems which the country faces today. Especially, to find a way to restore peace and normalcy.

May I summarise the responses that we have collectively been able to arrive at as a result of our consensus.

Firstly, we are all agreed on the urgency of bringing in those forces which are outside the democratic process. We are making an offer to lift the Emergency and take the other related actions if there is a

renunciation of violence and a pledge of commitment to peace by those engaged in violent acts.

Secondly, we are appointing a special Commission of Inquiry to look into the causes of unrest among youth and recommend the remedial steps that should be taken.

Finally, there are several issues which have surfaced in our discussions on which action is needed. These are related to, among others:

- * Devolution of power;
- * Electoral Reforms;
- * The Franchise;
- * The cut-off point in PR;
- * Minority representation;
- * Liberalisation of the media;
- * Effective implementation of the language policy;
- * Education policy;
- * Equality and equity in treatment for all;
- * Formulating a national land policy;
- * Strengthening the democratic process;
- * Safeguarding fundamental rights; and
- * Ensuring security for all in all parts of the country.

These common and national issues have emerged through the process of consultation at the All Party Conference. We must accept the fact that these vital issues must be addressed if we are to re-establish durable unity and amity and strengthen the democratic system. It is now essential that these issues should be examined. For this purpose, there are two essential steps to be taken.

Firstly, to obtain the proposals of the parties and groups who have still not done so. It should be noted that only a few parties and groups have submitted proposals covering all these issues. Informal consultations have shown that it would be necessary to give more time. It would be appreciated if your proposals could reach me by 31 October.

Secondly, when the proposals are received, they would be processed.

Informal consultations have revealed that a representative committee of all parties should be constituted to study these issues and make recommendations.

I propose to reconvene the All Party Conference once the report of this committee is ready.

The All Party Conference, I am sure all of you will agree, has very gradually gained confidence in spite of the divergent philosophies, policies and programmes of each of the participating parties and groups. It is of vital importance that this national endeavour should be steered to positive conclusions. Therefore, all of us inside this hall and those outside, inclusive of the media, must give their fullest support to strengthen this national process which seeks to build a fair and just edifice on which our democratic systems and values can be firmly anchored.

I thank you.