# Selected Speeches of the Hon. R. PREMADASA Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

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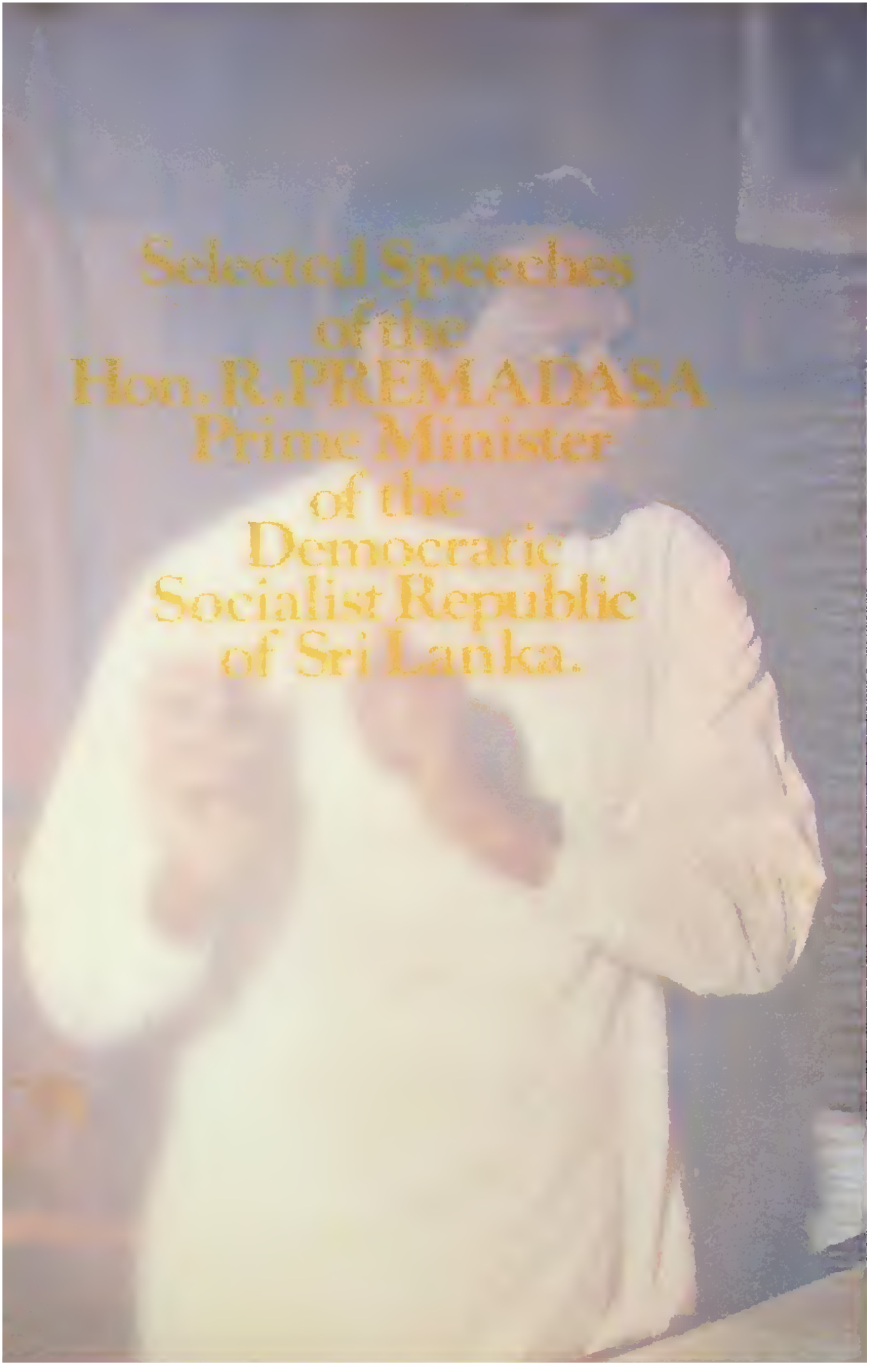

# Selected Speeches of the Hon. R. PREMADASA Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

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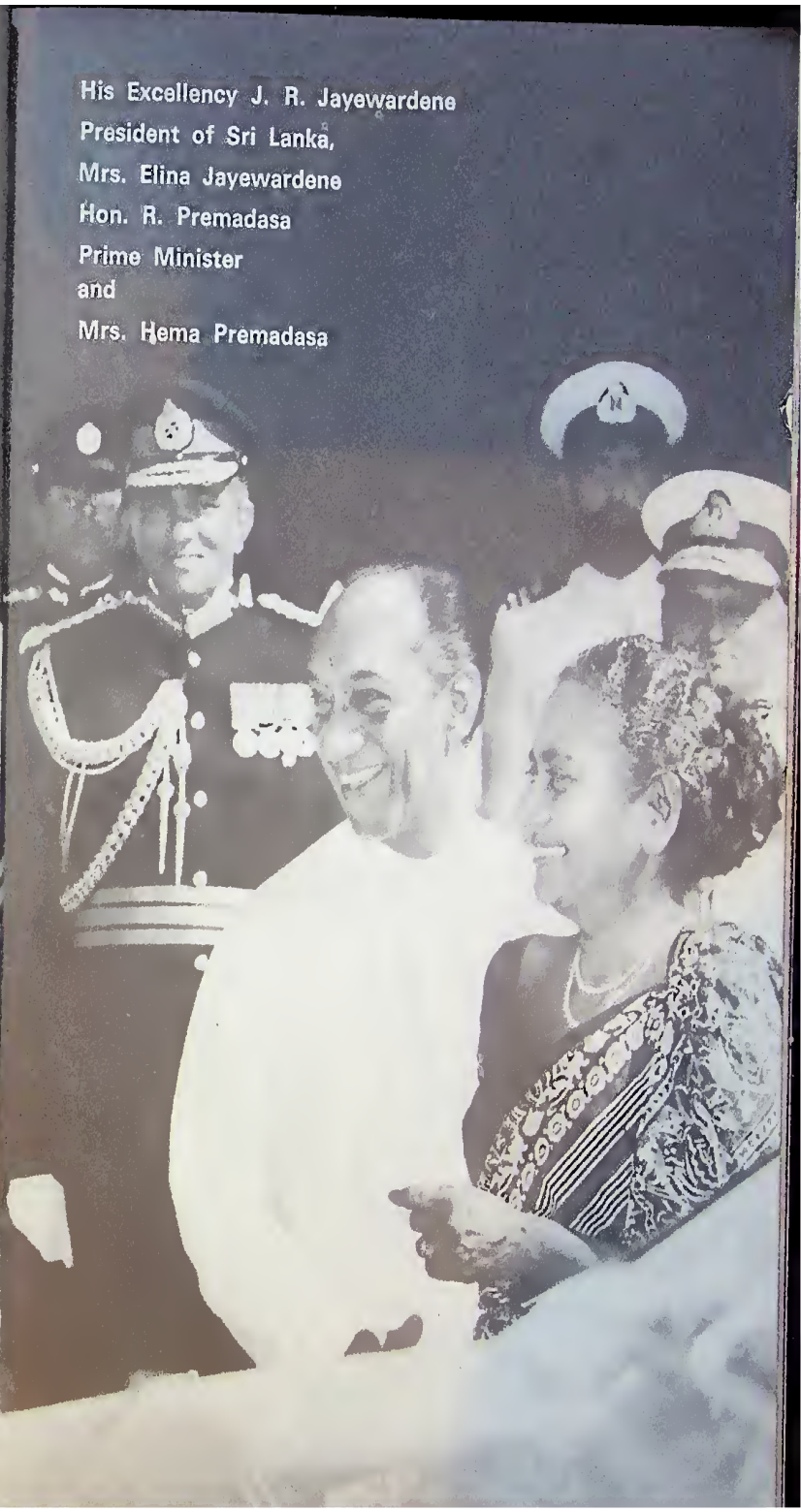


His Excellency J. R. Jayewardene
President of Sri Lanka,
Mrs. Elina Jayewardene
Hon. R. Premadasa
Prime Minister
and
Mrs. Hema Premadasa

# The Prime Minister speaks...

# The making of a just society.

Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to thank you for your kind words of welcome and to say how glad I am to have this opportunity of speaking to a body so representative and eminent as the Royal Commonwealth Society on the broad topic of recent constitutional developments in Sri Lanka. I have chosen as the title for my observations "The Constitution of Sri Lanka and its relevance to our developing society". I shall attempt in the time allotted to me to highlight some of the characteristics of our new Constitution and the manner in which we are translating its ideals into practical policies of benefit to our people.

Under the new Constitution in Sri Lanka, which came into operation on September 7, 1978, sovereignty is in the People and is inalienable. The people are the source of all power and authority. Sovereign power is exercised on behalf of the people by three main organs — the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.

This is the dominant characteristic of the new Constitution and is a departure from the 1972 Constitution which was based more or less on the model we had followed since Independence in 1948. The main objective of the new Constitution is that the People should be made partners in the processes of govern-

ment. The system of government incorporated in the Constitution should be administered for the development, progress and welfare of the People.

With this in mind the Select Committee which drew up the Constitution — I was privileged to chair it after our Leader Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved out on his assumption of office as President — laid down the directive principles of State policy which must guide the Cabinet of Ministers and Parliament in the enactment of laws and the governance of Sri Lanka.

Under these principles, the State is pledged to establish in Sri Lanka a just and free administration, popularly referred to as a Dharmishta Society.

**Directive Principles of State Policy**

The objectives of such a society as stated in the Constitution include :

* The full realisation of the fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons.

* The establishment of a social order in which justice (social, economic and political) shall guide the institutions of national life.

* The realisation by all citizens of an adequate standard of living.

* The rapid development of the country by public and private economic activity.

* The equitable distribution among all citizens of the material resources of the community and the social product, so as best to subserve the common good.

* The establishment of a just social order in which the means of production, distribution and exchange are not concentrated and centralized in the State or in the hands of a privileged few, but are dispersed among and owned by all the people of Sri Lanka. In short the elimination of poverty.

* The raising of the moral and cultural standards of the people and ensuring full development of the human personality.

* The complete eradication of illiteracy and the assurance to all persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels.

The Constitution further ensures the constant participation of the people in government by a process of decentralised administration and a local government network affording the people the opportunity to participate at every level in the national life and in government. While making the people, partners in progress, the State is also pledged to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens and to eliminate economic and social privilege and disparity and the exploitation of man by man or of man by State.

The Constitution sets out as a principle of State policy that:

"The State shall ensure equality of opportunity to citizens so that no citizen shall suffer any disability on the ground of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion or occupation."

## Referendum

The exercise of the sovereignty of the people and their participation in the decision-making process of the government are enhanced by the provisions in the Constitution for a direct expression of their wishes, mainly on national issues, through a Referendum. The people are thereby given an opportunity to take decisions on important questions in an atmosphere, comparatively free from party acrimony which is more pronounced during a general election.

In addition to these matters, the amendment of certain Articles of the Constitution require not only a two-thirds majority in Parliament but the direct approval of the people at a Referendum.

The Articles, the amendment of which require the consent of the people as a whole include the nature of the State, the sovereignty of the people, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, freedom from torture and from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

An important provision of the Constitution is that the term of office of the President or the duration of Parliament itself

cannot be extended without a Referendum. It is not possible to do this, *even by an unanimous vote of Parliament.*

Under the previous Constitution it was possible for Parliament to extend its own life indefinitely by means of a constitutional amendment passed with a two-thirds majority, even against the wishes of the people, (as it did, indeed happen).

Our Government was of the view that a free and just society could not be built except through the recognition of the equal political, social and economic rights of all members of our society. In keeping with this principle, and the popular mandate received at the 1977 General Elections— an unprecedented five-sixths majority — the new Constitution not only enshrined, but made judicially enforceable, the main fundamental rights and freedoms found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights "as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations".

## Fundamental Rights

Among the other rights guaranteed in the Constitution are:

* The freedom of thought, conscience and religion including the freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of a person's choice.

* Freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and punishment and the prohibition of retroactive penal legislation.

* Freedom of speech, assembly, association and movement.

As a further protection, especially for the racial and linguistic minorities, the new Constitution has enshrined and guaranteed the linguistic rights of the people. While Sinhala remains the official language of Sri Lanka, the national languages are declared in the Constitution to be Sinhala and Tamil. There is also an express provision prohibiting discrimination on the ground of language. As regards citizenship we have done away with the distinction that earlier existed between citizens by descent and citizens by registration. Now there is only one status of citizenship, namely, the status of a citizen of Sri Lanka.

The Supreme Court has been given jurisdiction under the Constitution to hear and determine any questions relating to

the infringement of any fundamental right or language right declared and recognized in the Constitution.

### Ombudsman

An important innovation in the Constitution is the establishment of a Parliamentary Commissioner of Administration, the *Ombudsman,* charged with the duty of investigating and reporting on complaints or allegations of violation of fundamental rights and other injustices by officers of the public or local administration. The Commissioner (unlike in some other countries) will have jurisdiction to redress the grievances. The office of the Commissioner has been considered so important that it has been secured in the Constitution itself and the officer made responsible to Parliament.

### Elected Executive President

The office of elected Executive President was created under the new Constitution. He is no formal or ceremonial head. He is directly elected by the people on a national level and has to obtain at least 50 per cent of the total votes cast. He is an Executive President who is ultimately answerable to the people who elected him. The office falls vacant every six years. We felt that in a developing society, a stable Presidency wielding considerable power, authority and prestige would be able to accelerate the processes of development and ensure social justice.

Although the President is vested with considerable powers under the Constitution he can be by no means considered an autocrat or dictator even during his limited term of office.

He can be removed from office, according to the procedure laid down by the Constitution, on being guilty of such offences as intentional violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, misconduct or corruption, involving the abuse of the powers of his office, or any offence under any law involving moral turpitude.

Moreover, in addition to being ultimately responsible to the people for upholding and defending the Constitution, the President is subject to an inbuilt system of constitutional checks and balances devised to prevent an excess or abuse of power.

Unlike the Constitution of the United States our Constitution

does not confer on the President any veto power over legislation. Even in a time of public emergency, unlike those of the French President, his emergency powers are surrounded by the safeguard of Parliamentary control and approval.

Moreover, under our Constitution, Parliament has full control over public finance. Without the money necessary for public expenditure, the Government cannot obviously be carried on for any length of time.

The President cannot, therefore, do without Parliament. Although the President has the power to dissolve Parliament, while it is sitting the rejection by Parliament of the Statement of Government Policy or the Appropriation Bill or the passing of a vote of No-confidence will dissolve the Cabinet.

In actual practice a large amount of co-ordination is obtained because the President works through the Cabinet of Ministers of which he is the Head. Unlike in some other democracies which have Executive Presidents as well as Cabinets of Ministers, under our Constitution the Prime Minister and other Ministers must be appointed by the President, only from among the Members of Parliament.

### The Prime Minister

In order to discharge the responsibility that he owes to Parliament under the Constitution, the President will depend in large measure on the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister in fact is that member of Parliament who in the opinion of the President is the person most likely to command the confidence of Parliament. In the determination of the number of Ministers and in the appointment of Ministers, the President acts in consultation with the Prime Minister, where he considers such consultation to be necessary. All the Ministers, including the Prime Minister are collectively responsible and answerable to Parliament.

Since the sovereign legislative power of the people is, under the Constitution, exercised by their elected representatives in Parliament, there is provision for a more exact system of representation in the Legislature than that which prevailed earlier. The previous system was based on the single-member constituency system, with a relative majority.

## Proportional Representation

That system, under which "the winner takes all" had led in many recent elections to the most inequitable results. Parties which had obtained fewer votes in relation to others at general elections had been able to secure sometimes many more seats in Parliament. Thus at the General Elections of May 1970, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party with 36.9 per cent of the total vote was able to secure the return of 91 of its candidates, that is 60.3 per cent of the total number of Members of Parliament, while the United National Party with 37.9 per cent of the total vote was able to obtain only 17 of its candidates or 11.3 per cent of the seats in the House.

Again, in the July 1977 General Elections, the United National Party obtained 50.9 per cent of the total vote and 140 members or 83.3 per cent of the seats, whereas the Sri Lanka Freedom Party with 29.7 per cent of the total vote secured only 8 seats or 4.8 per cent of the total membership of the House.

Because of the injustices resulting from that electoral system, the new Constitution has incorporated a system of Proportional Representation which would ensure a truer mirror of public opinion in the country. It would secure a more exact representation in Parliament of the voters' preferences, so far as the competing Parties or groups or Independents are concerned.

The particular method adopted under our Constitution for the achievement of proportional representation is what is generally known as the "List System".

Under our system any recognized political party or any group of independent candidates may submit one nomination paper setting out a list of names, in order of priority, of candidates for each particular electoral district. Each voter has one vote. Each party gets a share of seats in Parliament proportionate of its share of the votes.

## People's Participation

These main features of the Constitution have been designed to provide a framework of government appropriate for the advancement of our people in our developing democracy. We believe that there must be not only the freedom of the people to choose their rulers but also the opportunity for the people

to govern themselves. We are as a Government therefore committed to the task of translating the principles on which our new Constitution is based into practical terms which will directly affect the lives of our people. We have sought to effect a diffusion of power from the centre to the periphery through the institution of the new office of District Minister for each of our twenty-four districts who is vested with particular functions and, most significantly, with financial resources through the concept of a decentralised budget. By thus bringing decision making on local problems down to the district level we have sought to involve the people themselves in the process of decision making on the matters that vitally affect their lives.

### Consultative Committees

We are as a Government also committed to the principle of consultation and accommodation to differing points of view which runs like a shining thread through our Constitution. Consultation or obtaining the effective participation of different strands of political power which are represented in Parliament through the Parties in the Opposition is effected through a series of Committees whose functions and powers are clearly defined.

* Consultative Committees for every Ministry composed of Members of Parliament of all Parties which conduct a continuous monitoring of the activities of that Ministry. These committees are enjoined to meet at least once each month.

* A Select Committee composed of all parties which for the first time subjects to review all appointments made by the Government to important official positions including the Chairmanship of State Corporations and of Heads of Foreign Missions.

* A Committee on Public Enterprises which in addition to the Public Accounts Committee provides for an all-Party review of the activities of Public Sector Corporations which today play such an important part in the economic life of the community.

In these various ways we are attempting to breathe life into the framework of the Constitution which I have described in some detail in my talk. We firmly believe that Constitu-

tions are made for the people and not *vice-versa* and that the political institutions we have embodied in our new Constitution will facilitate the establishment in our country of a just society, free from exploitation, oppression and discrimination.

(Text of the speech on "The Constitution of Sri Lanka and its Relevance to our Developing Society" at the Royal Commonwealth Society, London on 24th July 1979)

# Man and his home.

As a newcomer to this august gathering perhaps my presumption in drawing attention to the three related topics of Housing, Urbanisation and Environment and the problems they create may be forgiven. These are no doubt problems that have been with us for many years and they are problems to which all of us have given, and continue to give, our serious consideration. My purpose in bringing out this matter for discussion here is largely to suggest a re-arrangement of our priorities in the various tasks of development we face, to report some of the tentative attempts that we in Sri Lanka have made in addressing these issues, to benefit from the experience of the Commonwealth countries that have made a success of certain aspects of these problems and finally to pose the question whether these problems, and particularly that of housing, cannot be taken up, if not on a global basis, at least within the framework of this unique Association to which we belong — The Commonwealth.

Particularly to us of the developing countries our governments since independence have been pre-occupied with the task of providing the basic human needs such as food, clothing and shelter. We have also been grappling with the problems of unemployment and the high cost of living. Sometimes it has happened that our concern for the rapid solution of these problems has led us to neglect the environment which is so fundamental to our total well being.

It has often been thought that the deterioration and degradation of the environment is a phenomenon peculiar to the

industrialized countries. But there has been, and continues to be, in the developing countries a misuse and indeed a degradation of the physical resources on a scale that is both massive and positively dangerous to our long-term development. In pursuit of what is often thought to be economic progress forests have been felled, areas of traditional cultivation shifted, grazing lands destroyed and sea coasts eroded. To add to this dismal picture there has been uncontrolled urbanisation, the flight of people from the rural areas and a massive backlog in housing needs.

Urban poverty and unemployment, the inadequacy of housing and urban infra-structures, the rapid growth of population resulting in congestion and squalor are problems common to many of the developing countries. These problems may vary in scale and intensity from country to country. But there is a growing awareness of the critical nature of the problems they pose and a commitment on the part of governments to adopt effective strategies to contain, if not to resolve, the threats they pose. We have examples from around the world of cities and countries which have responded satisfactorily to the task of Urban Development and Housing over the past decade or so. In others the position has not been so satisfactory. It would appear that where the response has been vigorous it has primarily been the result of political leadership and the introduction of new legal, administrative and institutional reforms.

The report of The World Bank for the year 1978 tells us that nearly 800 million of the world's population live in "absolute poverty". These people are living at the very margin of existence — with inadequate food, shelter, education and health care. Many of these millions belong to the Developing countries of the Commonwealth.

The experience of past years has served to create a broad consensus about the goals for the future. It is that the development effort should be directed towards the twin objectives of rapid growth and the reduction of the number of people living in absolute poverty as rapidly as possible.

It is now, I believe, generally accepted that the mere increase in the Gross National Product of a country will not by itself ensure the improvement of the human condition of the mass of

the people. The economic theories that are based on the principle of the "Trickle Down" effect whereby economic welfare would seep down gradually to the lowest strata of society is giving way more and more to the acceptance of the idea that specific programmes must be devised to deal with the alleviation of the condition of the poorest of the poor.

It is in this context, that I offer my thought that nothing yields a greater human satisfaction, and that no aspect of human welfare work produces a more satisfactory yield than the provision of the Minimum Basic Facilities which entitle a man to have a house of his own. Not only does it satisfy a fundamental human craving, it also acts as a motivating force to better oneself by self-help and other means. It is, if I may say so, a catalytic agent in economic and social work.

In Sri Lanka, in the rural sphere, we have started what we have termed "The Village Re-awakening Movement". It is an attempt to bring new life to those villages which have missed for various reasons the benefits of progress and remain still in a condition of abject poverty. In selecting villages for rebuilding purposes we select those which are in the worst possible condition, the lowliest and humblest. Here we try to provide all the basic facilities from a house, including electricity and clean water. The houses are built on a self-help and voluntary basis. A school, a health centre and other social requirements including a Temple for worship are all provided. And what is most important, employment or some means of livelihood, farming or a craft.

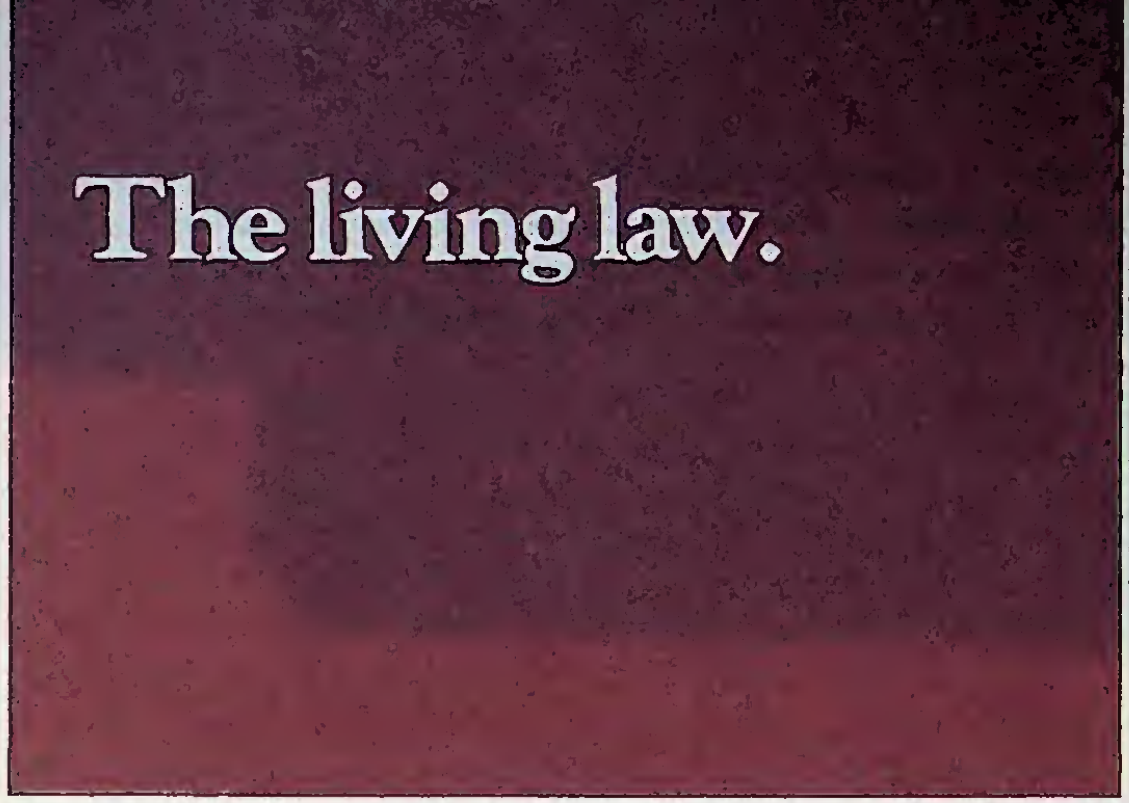
As a scheme to supplement this idea, in the urban sector, we are planning to rebuild the shanty towns that have grown up around the capital city. We do not intend to obliterate the shanty towns and move their occupants elsewhere. We do not consider that would be a final solution to the problem. We intend rather to rebuild in the areas where the shanties exist; to provide the same people with the kind of facilities on which a decent life can be built. Along with such schemes directed at the poorest sections of the population in the towns as well as in village areas we have invested in a large number of projects based on the principle of self-help, the exchange of labour, loan schemes for inputs, housing estates, and so on, to meet as rapidly as possible the massive backlog of housing needs which has built up over the years.

I have attempted in this short presentation to highlight the importance of housing which I consider is closely related to the two other problems I have mentioned; of urbanisation and misuse of the environment. Over the years, at Commonwealth meetings, issues of priority concern have surfaced and subsequently been taken up for action as special programmes. In this manner, we have had the problems of youth, food production, rural development, and so on, being identified and subjected to special treatment. As the primary economic issue, all of our countries have spent great effort and time on addressing the problems of food and nutrition. While I would not go to the extent of saying that this particular problem has been solved, I think we could admit that we are now well on the road to success. The Green Revolution, even if it did not, fulfil all its expectations, has certainly taken root. I submit that it would be time now to turn our thoughts to the problems of man and his home — the crucible where family life begins and where the soul of a nation is forged. I believe that the time has come when we could engage in a dialogue at a political level on the possibilities and potential for co-operation on the basis of our shared experiences and the needs of individual countries of the Commonwealth. We could examine the contribution which our countries can make in addressing these problems within the framework of mutual co-operation, both amongst the developing countries themselves who are faced with these problems, and in the context of the evolving inter-dependence and co-operation between the developed and developing countries.

We should seek to identify the magnitudes of the problem, explore the possibilities for co-operation and draw up a blueprint for action. We could examine how our countries could maximise the use of their indigenous resources through research and development, identify regional centres for such purposes, enhance their capacities with inputs of technological expertise and assistance, including also the possibility of creating a Commonwealth Housing Data Bank. This would necessarily involve studies by the Commonwealth Secretariat which would examine the potential for technical support, the identification of mechanisms to utilize available indigenous resources and an estimate of the required external support for the programmes of action. Could we in the Commonwealth of nations, on the threshold of the

decade of the 80s begin some collective work on the theme "Man And His Home".

(Text of speech on "Housing, Urbanization and Environment - The Tasks ahead" made at the Commonwealth Heads of State Meeting, Lusaka on 1st August 1979)




I am privileged to attend the opening of the 6th Lawasia Conference and I am honoured by the invitation extended to me to address this distinguished gathering of Jurists.

Let me first extend to you all, a warm welcome to Sri Lanka. We in Sri Lanka are honoured that Colombo has been selected as the venue for the 6th Lawasia Conference.

I must say that this Conference is held at a very opportune moment. Sri Lanka has just adopted a new constitution charting her course for future development. We have also adopted new legislation providing for an independent and expeditious judicial system.

The Government of Sri Lanka is pledged to establish a just and free society ensuring the realisation of fundamental rights and freedom to all persons. Our Government is also pledged to the establishment of a social order in which justice — social, economic and political — would be the guiding light in all aspects of national life.

We have endeavoured to preserve the ideals of our ancient civilization, good government and above all, the noble teachings

of Lord Buddha which have been our heritage for over two thousand years. We have unfailingly striven to uphold social justice and the Rule of the Law even as we try to cope with economic problems of unprecedented magnitude.

Jurists here will, no doubt, be interested to know that the Sinhalese are heirs to a legal system which speaks well for the institution of the justice dating back to the time of our ancient kings. An elaborate network of courts has existed in Sri Lanka, from the time of King Pandukabhaya in 425 B.C.

In our ancient system, the king was ragarded as the fountain of justice. Every man had the right to appear before him and to have his case heard. The king decided cases according to the rule of the law. In addition there was a hierarchy of courts with the final right of appeal to the king. These included the Gam-sabhawas (or Village Councils), the Rata Sabhawas (or District Councils), the Sakke Balanda (Coroners Courts), the Courts of Government Officers and the Maha Naduwa or the Great Courts.

The Portuguese, Dutch and British who ruled Sri Lanka fashioned the Sinhala Court System with suitable modifications to meet the needs of the judicial administration they were familiar with.

In the process, the law makers had sometimes overlooked for whom the laws were intended. Until very recently, an accused person in this country could be charged, tried and punished after court proceedings in a language which he was incapable of understanding. After Independence these shortcomings have been rectified.

We, in Sri Lanka, believe therefore that laws are made for the people and not people for the laws. Laws have to be relevant to the needs of the people. They must be capable of amendment and revision with the times. We have an impressive record of legislation in many fields of social welfare including health, education and labour which are well worth a study. We have also repealed repressive legislation introduced by previous governments and guaranteed fundamental rights. We have restructured our courts, placing them above interference from any quarter and creating a strong, sturdy and independent judiciary

It is perhaps relevant to pose the question here: "How many and what body of our people know and understand the basic rights they enjoy under the law and the duties they are enjoined to perform?"

A greater awareness of the law must be cultivated in the ordinary citizen of the land. He should look upon the laws of the land not as a body of rules imposed upon him by the law makers sitting in Parliament. Laws must have the acceptability of the poeple if they are to be upheld and if they are to meet their needs. Laws must have a meaning and purpose to the life of the common man. This is the living law.

Law is not for law makers, lawyers and judges alone. If it were, it will soon become isolated from social needs and lose its relevance. Law is as much a part of a people's culture as history, religion, literature, music and the arts. It is as much a part of tradition and the development process of a people into nationhood.

Your meeting this morning emphasises the need for mutual co-operation amongst countries in this region. Mutual co-operation among the nations now represented in Lawasia would enable us to accomplish the many tasks that face us. Our tasks are many and varied indeed.

We have to secure proper markets for our produce. We have to have access to supplies of fuel and industrial products. We have to carry out mutually advantageous exploitation of the seas in our region. We have to guard against the pollution of our waters and our environment. These are all matters which demonstrate the inter-dependence of the countries in the Lawasia region. It also underlines the great potential for mutual and beneficial co-operation. It is against this background that the efforts of Lawasia are particularly commendable.

I see from the Conference schedules that Lawasia will hold sessions on Human Rights, on the protection of Industrial and Intellectual property, on defence procedures in Criminal Law, on the Law of the Sea, and finally, on the important question of co-operation in Legal Education.

These subjects cover all aspects of mutual welfare of the countries in the Lawasia region. I am confident that the delibe-

rations of this Conference, embracing nations from Iran to Japan, from Nepal to New Zealand, and representing a vast and varied segment of humanity, will not only provide for an exchange of views but will come forward with guidelines for inter-regional co-operation in the legal sphere. I am also certain that these practical guidelines will serve as a necessary adjunct to co-operation in the cultural, economic and commercial fields of activity among the nations of Lawasia.

My colleagues in the Cabinet of the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and I welcome all the conference participants, to Sri Lanka. It is our wish that your stay amongst us will be pleasant and that you will carry with you happy memories of our country and our people.

(Text of speech at the 6th Lawasia Conference on 27th August 1979)

# Population issues and the people



When the Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities proposed the idea of holding an international conference of Parliamentarians to consider the world population situation, Sri Lanka readily agreed to serve as the host country. There were two chief reasons for this. Apart from the traditional sense of hospitality in which our people take considerable pride, we believe as the Executive Director does, that population is indeed the problem of problems and should be given a central place in the planning and implementation of all development efforts.

For many years the question of the increase of human numbers and their distribution was regarded as a specialised concern of social scientists, the medical profession and a few courageous and well-intentioned unofficial organisations and individuals. They had realised the dimensions and the nature of the problems.

As long ago as the early Fifties, they were able to foresee

the impact of rapid population growth on the standard of living of people in the developing world. However, they found it extremely difficult to persuade the governments of the time to generate the political will needed to recognise openly the seriousness of the problem. The urgent need to find the human balance between people and resources still remains.

In our country in the Forties and the Fifties the social scientists saw the population problem almost exclusively as a question of health. A number of people were dying from poor nutrition which made the weakest sections of our society — the children and the ageing vulnerable to epidemic diseases, particularly malaria.

In 1946, when the malaria mosquito was brought under effective control by DDT (alas ! temporarily as it turned out to be) the death rate fell by 40 per cent within a year. But all such successes are achieved at a price. The result, of course, was that in the Sixties when our development programmes were getting into gear, we found that in agriculture and in small industry, whatever economic gains we were making could not keep pace with the growth of population.

Government intervention was clearly needed and in the latter part of that decade, a policy of regulating population growth was accepted in development planning. In the Seventies that policy was given substance through family planning programmes officially initiated and supported by Government. Here I should acknowledge the efforts of the successive administrations of Sri Lanka that took family planning into the rural areas where most of our people live, and succeeded in achieving a higher level of active public response.

This Government intends to follow that example and help people to go along that path by all modern means which are necessary so long as they are in accordance with the values which have determined and shaped the evolution of our culture.

Allow me to reflect a while on certain relevant aspects of what such a value-conscious policy implies. First and foremost, it means that while we recognise the necessity of keeping our population growth within rationally acceptable levels, there will be no question at any time of compulsion, of imposing the authority and power of the State on the autonomy of individual

couples to decide the number and spacing of their children.

Secondly, it means that while we recognise the need to balance numbers with accessible resources, we do not regard a new-born Sri Lankan merely as an extra mouth to feed but as an extra pair of hands and an extra brain to serve our country. And, although we are still a poor country in material terms, seriously trying to develop our industrial and agricultural resources, we have a long acquaintance with the wisdom of the Buddha who taught us that human development consists in *being* more rather than *having* more. We believe that there is no reason to indulge in the kind of crisis mentality which makes some economists feel that the world will soon run out of food.

We do not have to take stringent and panicky measures, regardless of the cost in human terms and humane values, to find a workable balance between population and resources. We are more inclined to believe in Mahatma Gandhi's observation that there are enough resources on this planet and enough human ingenuity to supply man's need, though not his greed.

Thirdly, it means that we regard family planning and the technology that goes with it, not as an end but as one of the means of serving the wish of the people to improve the quality of their lives and that of their families.

In the State of the World Population Report issued by the Executive Director a couple of months ago he offered the encouraging confirmation that the world population growth rate had begun to slow down. This trend has also been evident in Sri Lanka where the birth rate has declined from 39.7 per cent in 1950 to 29.4 per cent in 1970. Many reasons may be suggested to explain this trend but, surely, the most obvious is that people, for whatever reason, evidently want to have smaller families than was the norm even as recently as 20 or 30 years ago.

Our social scientists have identified the raising of the average age of marriage from 18 to 23 as one of the principal contributory causes. Another cause suggested is the sharp drop in the number of children dying in infancy. This has helped parents to feel less inclined to have large families in order to ensure the survival of at least some children.

There may be other causes. It was once an article of faith that only in an industrialised society would a steep fall in fertility occur as it did in Europe and North America following the Industrial Revolution. We in this country have achieved a decline in fertility although we are still largely an agrarian nation.

How has this happened? What is the most significant factor which has made people prefer smaller families? In my opinion it is education that has been the predominant factor which has brought about this change. Our education system has given us a literacy rate of nearly 90 per cent — second only to Japan's in this Asian region. This has given our young people access to information and made them responsive to new ideas. These clarify their understanding of the relationship between personal conduct and human aspirations and national obligations.

Education has also given equity to our young women who make up 50 per cent of the population. They have been given an equal opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes at the national as well as the domestic level. Education has given our people new employment perspectives. Though the creation of new jobs is one of the most complex tasks we face, widespread education has played the role here which industrialisation did to bring about a fertility transition in the West.

All this amounts to an appreciation on the part of our Government of where the emphasis needs to be placed in our development programmes. At the World Population Conference of 1974 it was agreed by 137 nations that population is a central and integral factor in the process of economic and social development. We are happy to tell this assembly that our Government has not relegated this principle to the shelf on which good intentions are often laid to gather dust and die of neglect.

The question of population growth and spatial distribution is indeed a central element in our development planning. Our Council of Development Secretaries monitors the progress of population programmes as studiously, regularly and relentlessly as they deal with food production, health, or any other matter directly affecting the quality of life of our people.

We have received sensitive co-operation and substantial support in this work from the UNFPA and we wish to thank

them for the ready response they have made to our expression of needs. Special mention may be made of the prompt grant we received from the Fund to help us cope with the ravages of the storm which devastated our East coast last year. The UNFPA has long recognised the complex and varied nature of the population question and the need for an appropriately varied and dynamic response from an international organisation dealing with what we have referred to as this problem of problems.

We congratulate the Executive Director whose watchword appears to be intelligent innovation, on this initiative of calling a conference of Parliamentarians to discuss a global issue. This is the first time in the history of the United Nations of a Conference of this nature.

The Inter-Parliamentary Union also should be complimented on co-sponsoring this meeting thereby acknowledging the need for legislators, who work at the grass-roots and kerb-stones of their countries, to brief themselves about the population question to enable them to influence their governments in their own response to the needs of the developing world.

We would also like to thank those individuals and organisations who with foresight drew attention to population issues long before governments accepted responsibility for dealing with these issues. Their pioneering efforts deserve recognition.

Once more we offer you a warm welcome from the warm hearts of a warm country. We hope that you will have a useful meeting of minds on a question that touches all our lives and that of our children.

(Text of speech at the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development on 28th August 1979)

# Village re-awakening.

What I wanted to explain to those state officials who are involved in the Udagama or the Village Awakening project are the aims and aspirations and ideals which inspired us to launch this project. In some areas we found that some state officials had not understood our ideas. To them this was yet another project. And wherever they thought thus there was unnecessary wastage of men, material and labour. They never thought that there was something new in this project of ours. It is now one year and three months since the inauguration of this project, and it is time to look at what we have achieved so far. For we have to correct our mistakes if there are any. By discussion and listening to criticism we must correct our mistakes.

I would, first of all like to state the ideals which are behind this project of ours. There is no question that poor helpless citizens should be given a chance to lead a better life. To achieve this we need houses, water schemes and means of livelihood for them. But those are not the only ideals we have. We had a deeper ideal shining before us when we launched this project. This ideal dawned, nurtured and grew inside us for some time past. Especially during the seven years when we were in the opposition we thought about this ideal. We wondered how we could have prosperity, spiritual advancement and human liberties of our people ensured in one package deal. During the General Elections under the Leadership of His Excellency the President, we went round the country and told the people that our intention was to build a righteous society where political freedom,

economic prosperity and moral upliftment all co-existed in equal measure. At that time many people thought that we were using these concepts as political slogans. Even after we got political power a number of state officials thought thus: "There is nothing new; we will go on as we did. If we are asked to build a road we will build a road. If we are asked to build a house we will build a house. If we are given the money we will do whatever we are asked to do. When the higher ups come we will garland them and receive them. We will get some children together to sing a song of praise. We'll salute them not once but twelve times. Let them come. We will go our own sweet way". This is the tradition.

We don't want all these. You as state officials receive a salary. I don't think that when one considers the responsibilities which have been heaped upon you that you could be adequately compensated by a salary. Your responsibility is too great to be measured by a salary. We give you a subsistence allowance which cannot and does not measure the enormity and magnificence of the tasks which are before you. We can measure your service by your dedication to duty. What we want is to make the next generation a morally better generation than the present one. There is no point in talking about it. The time for action has come. And we can realise our goals.

With what high ideals were the old colonization schemes started? Everything was provided by the state, paddy fields and high land were given, houses were given. Cattle and livestock were given. And after all these were provided people were allowed to settle in their new homesteads. But when one little tile on one of their roof broke they wrote to the State demanding its replacement. This is a slavish mentality. There is no belief in one's own capabilities. There is no belief in self-help. One lives in a way that somebody else wants. A long time has elapsed since Independence, but this slavish mentality, this mental and physical laziness is still with a large number of us. Somebody must help us. The State must help us. We do not realise that we — all of us — are the Government. We see the faults in others; we do not see the faults in ourselves. We do not want to see our faults even if we have any. Shall we think of ourselves a little? Before trying to mould society shall we first try to mould ourselves? I firmly believe that if we correct ourselves

then Society's ills will correct themselves automatically. People constitute a Society. When I say people the term includes me too. Therefore, I must strive to correct myself, reform myself. Only I can correct myself. Before we go to sleep every night shall we for a moment go through what we did during the day? What lies did I say today? What wrongful deeds did I perform? Did I act according to my conscience? By such self-criticism we must develop moral values inside us. And the country too will benefit as a result.

If there is any organisation in Sri Lanka which is motivated not by the profit motive but by a motive of deep commitment it is the Sarvodaya Movement. I say this honestly. We have to take a lesson from the Sarvodaya Movement.

If we desire to accomplish any given task, if we set our goals clearly there is nothing that we cannot achieve in this world. It is no use talking. We have to act. We have to be a model to others. We have to be truthful. We have to behave so that others will believe in us. In order that others may believe us we must first believe in ourselves. If we think in this fashion then it is easy to rebuild the nation. The strength in us and the resources we have are adequate to rebuild our nation.

We can get our country and our people to stand proud and erect on their own feet once again, without going on bended knees before other people. But we must rid ourselves of the slavish mentality which I spoke of earlier. We say there are no jeeps, no machines, no facilities. We always think of ways of not doing a thing. We never think of ways of how to do a thing. This is slavishness in thinking. We never think independently. With defeatist ideas in our minds how can we go forward? We have to change our attitudes. We started our model village project not merely to give better houses to people. We wanted to restore to our people the self-confidence, the sense of dedication the moral values which have slipped away from them and to drive away from them slavish attitudes.

If something is being done by the State no one should feel that the State is doing it. It should be done as a people's job, an attempt to satisfy a want of the people. There is no need for the Government official to show off as being in the front line of a movement. The will of the people, the participation of the

people, must come first. We think that these people are ignorant; that we must do this or that for them. It is true we can do all these for them. But if we do so, we could be perpetuating the slavish mentality which is afflicting our people. If we do these things ourselves then how can we cultivate in the minds of the people, belief in themselves in self-help, in their own worth? In affairs of the State can we not try to stay away from traditional modes? Can we not commit ourselves, dedicate ourselves to this noble task? At least in launching the village awakening project can we not behave in exemplary fashion? Shall we do this as a service to the nation? We must do this service to the nation. We must act so that those who see us doing our work will believe in us and in the work we do. Our people are very good. They are as good as gold. If they find that something is being done properly then they will learn a lesson from us. They will take an example from us. The people hate to see lies and corruption. When one says one thing and does another who will believe in one?

We started the Udagama movement from the Badalgama village in Yapahuwa. Because it was difficult to get the people to participate in this movement at the start we built them the houses and supplied them with other facilities. Most of the villagers lived by begging; we gave them some rural industry which helped them to give up begging. At first they wanted to go on begging. But after days and months of persuasion they took to basket weaving. That was one leap forward. Now they are happy. On the average one person earns over one thousand rupees a month. Some earn even more. Does a Graduate earn as much? Some Attorneys go to Courts everyday and return briefless. But the people of Udagama are earning much more than them. Basket weaving had been traditionally their means of livelihood. The Cottage Industry Department thought that establishing a Weaving Centre here would be useless. Yes, it was partly true. They had got used to turning the 'rabana' and begging. But we were not easily discouraged. Today they earn so much that they gave a part of their profits to us, which we returned to them. Today they live in clean houses, beautifully kept.

Now from the point of view of economic stability these model villages can stand on their own feet. Now we have to bring in the moral element into the village. All the villagers must

get together and form their own small State with their own President, Prime Minister, Cabinet and Parliament. They must solve their problems by themselves. They must realise their emancipation through their own collective efforts, through their own sense of dedication. Loving kindness, compassion must enter their lives and their actions. A prosperous and righteous society. This is my dream. It can be realised. We can. We will try!

Wherever everybody worked for each other's well being, prosperity is to be seen. That is why I thought that we should turn back and see what mistakes we have committed, correct them, where possible and then go forward. The entire State machinery must participate in this movement. Water Resources Boards, Health Authorities, Electricity Boards, all must participate. That is why I have specially invited the Hon. Ministers of Highways and Power and all District Ministers to take part in this dialogue. We can through the District Ministers enthuse the local members of Parliament with this idea. I have invited the officials in charge of this project in order to participate in this act of dedication.

We were in bondage for long years. We fell into bondage not merely because we lost our freedom. We lost our moral values. We began to whine and beg. Our Golden Age was the age when we lived and behaved and acted like free upright people. Even now in far away villages these feelings persist. They lack only the economic strength to stand up on their own. But when a roof has to be repaired everybody takes part. When a field has to be harvested everybody joins in. When somebody falls ill, the village doctor comes of his own accord, and everybody rushes about in search of herbs. And the patient feels better even before he takes the medicine because the whole village is behind him. But what about the town? There was once a very sick patient in a hospital unable even to breathe. A friend came running with a parcel of oranges. "You know there are old oranges and they are costly. There are blackmarketeers." The patient can't speak; can't move. But the chattering goes on; "I will go now. If I don't go now I will miss the train." He keeps the oranges near the sick bed and rushes away. Another wily person comes and quietly removes the oranges away. This is how most of us act and behave. Do we act and behave according to the dictates of our conscience? Work according to our

conscience? If we don't do so the result is less than nothing. We can't wait and watch money being wasted. What could be done by one machine is being done by three machines. If something goes wrong we say "What can I do..... He is responsible. It does not belong to my department." I thought I should bring the officials here and explain things to them.

When Mahatma Gandhi talked of Gamraj and Swaraj people laughed. He said. "Let us live in the villages, conduct our village businesses in the villages." People laughed at him. But now in the Middle East the oil wells are running dry. When oil dries up the mechanized lives become humanized once again. And reason enters the mind. Now people are talking of livestock and cattle. We are now talking of conservation of forests. Mahatma Gandhi once said that we need machines to serve man and not to ride rough shod over man. Today, even the soils have lost their natural vigour. Tractors do the work of draught cattle today. All the cattle have been eaten up! One does not hear even the crowing of a cock. Even it has been killed and eaten. We don't hear an old folk song but the obscenities uttered by a drunkard. But the oil crisis has helped to clear our minds a bit. This is a challenge even though belated. If we live peacefully in our village according to our traditional methods then the oil Sheikhs cannot threaten us. I did not think of these today or yesterday. I wrote of these things when I was in the Opposition.

The economic development of Sri Lanka should start in the village and with the village. Today we are over urbanised. Our productive enterprises are in the cities and the villages supply the raw materials. The villagers have to come to the city to buy their needs. There is no production in the village. The village should in fact be the focus of all productive activity and the town, the sales centres only. But because of what has happened people are deserting the village and are coming to the towns and, in the towns spring up slums and shanties. The sickness of the city is taken to the villages. Everywhere there is sickness. Everywhere corruption rules. The reason is that we have allowed society to grow without any control, without any ideals, without any goals.

Therefore, all of us must now discuss among ourselves and map our strategy, our road, our path. We intend to achieve our goals through the Village Awakening Movement. If the start

here is right then we can spread the message across into other fields. For this task we have to harness the energies of the common man and of our officials. The officials must have a clear idea as to what our objectives are. We cannot hope to live the life styles we are used to for long. Even in developed countries they are finding beauty in simplicity, out of necessity. We cannot walk four feet. We need a bus or a car. But the villager walks fifteen to twenty miles a day and he is fit and healthier. We have to set an example. People see us. They are looking at us — at you and me.

To rebuild our people to give them a good example to emulate, we must think afresh and work afresh. I see four stages in the Udagama Plan. First is the planning stage. It has to be done carefully. By siting a school here and a community centre there the problem will not be solved. We must talk with the villagers. We are trying to fulfil their expectations. We must give preference to their wishes. The second stage is the building of the village. Here collective feeling, effort, self-reliance, belief in oneself must be generated and come into play. We cannot expect only the villagers to show self-reliance and community feeling. The officials also must participate. If there is no dedication on the part of the officials and the politicians there will be no dedications on the part of the people. The people who are selected to live in the houses must feel that this house is mine. I am building it. We must only help him in the task. We must build self-confidence in himself. The third stage is that of the ceremonial opening of the village where a new enthusiasm, a new feeling, a new determination must enter the hearts of the people. The fourth stage comes last. With economic emancipation must come moral regeneration. This is a very difficult stage and has to be handled carefully. The experience of one village may differ from another. It must generate new ideas, new feelings and give strength and vigour to a glorious cultural heritage. We cannot type-plan model villages. Each model village must be unique.

In China there is no complete Marxist system in vogue. When I visited China recently I found it for myself. Marxism contains a solution to the problems of the economic depression which hit Europe over a hundred years ago. Though Mao Tse Tung embraced Marxism he did not blindly use Marxist prescriptions in guiding the Chinese people. He put into effect a policy

of standing on one's own feet, of walking with one's own two legs, of self-reliance. He and his followers first set an example, by dedicating themselves to the tasks of the nation, without regard for personal profit. They lived simple lives and in a way lived the life of monks. The leaders often enjoyed lesser rights than the people. There was no division into a personal life and a political life. And because the Chinese leaders were honest and good and humble the people believed in them and followed them so much that they took the words of their leaders to be as if they were Gospel truths.

This belief must arise in our people. In order that it may arise all of us have to be honest, disciplined and must be motivated by a spirit of service and dedication and not by the profit motive.

(Text of speech made at the Sarvodaya Damsak Medura, Moratuwa on 8th October 1979)


Today is a significant day in the annals of our Country. The large and distinguished gathering that is present here today and the enthusiasm that has been shown throughout our Country for this event are sufficient testimony to this fact. Today, we formally enter into an Agreement with our well-wishers throughout the World to work out a plan in respect of the protection, preservation, restoration and presentation of the outstanding monuments and sites in the "Cultural Triangle" in Sri Lanka.

"All our past proclaims our future", said the poet. The connection between a Country's past and its present and future is so intimate and fragile that one is hardly separable from the other. It is our duty to recognize and study our past as well as preserve it. The past should act not merely as an object for reverie and satisfaction but as a spur to the future.

As far as ancient monuments and archaeological sites are concerned we, in Sri Lanka, have not been negligent. We have been alert to our obligations. We have tried to preserve our past heritage to the best of our ability. In this connection, one has to pay a tribute to a long line of patriots, who even as we lay under colonial rule, brought to the attention of the authorities, the need to restore and maintain the monuments of our past. The names of Anagarika Dharmapala, Walisinghe Harischandra and the like are remembered with gratitude today. They were fired with visionary zeal and their endeavour was to inspire the people through a recall of their past inheritance. We also remember on this occasion, the painstaking work of pioneer British officials

who began the scientific and systematic preservation of our ancient sites and monuments. They have been followed by our own officials who have been equally able and dedicated. This work, on a limited scale, has been going on from year to year and is being carried out even today as the routine task of a Government Department.

There are, however sites and monuments of such vast and extensive proportions that we in Sri Lanka, with our slender resources, are not in a position to preserve and re-present them on the scale and manner that they richly deserve. We are a developing nation. Our priorities are hard choices and we have to divert the major part of our resources and capabilities to ameliorating the social and economic condition of our people. The funds we have for the undoubtedly important task of gathering, garnering and preserving our past heritage is limited. We have, therefore, to look around for help.

It was in these circumstances that we were able to negotiate the agreement that we sign today an agreement which we are confident will yield the happiest results. UNESCO is not an organization that is new to offering this type of generous and magnanimous assistance. Wherever man's achievements were in danger of decay or disappearance, UNESCO has gone to the rescue. UNESCO's work in this connection can be seen in almost every continent of our planet. And they are now appealing, on our behalf, to the generosity of other countries and foreign foundations and philanthropists to help what they themselves feel is the deserving case of Sri Lanka.

We are all deeply grateful to the World Organization for the timely and generous assistance that it is proposing to give us. And I wish to take this opportunity to convey our grateful thanks to its representative here today, His Excellency Dr. Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, the Director-General of UNESCO. We are all debtors of UNESCO in this matter.

I wish to make an appeal too to the people of our country. A World body is making an appeal for funds to carry out this work in our country. The appeal is being made throughout the World. Let us see that our part of the contributions matches that of the rest of the world. In my opinion it is not surprising that the World is ready to contribute to the preservation and maintenance

of ancient monuments in our country as it has done in other individual countries. This, as I said, is not unusual. For things such as these do not belong to us, to individual countries, alone. They belong to the common heritage of Mankind. It is our hope and prayer that when this noble task is successfully accomplished, the peoples of the World will come to Sri Lanka to enjoy its sights and proudly feel that these achievements of man belong to them as well.

(Excerpts of a speech made at the Inaugural Ceremony of the UNESCO - Sri Lanka Cultural Triangle International Campaign in Kandy on 25th August 1980)

# Parliamentary government, basic to our society.

I am very glad to have this opportunity of participating in the inaguration of this very important Seminar on "The Parliamentary Process in Sri Lanka". I am grateful to the Marga Institute and the Sri Lanka Branch of the Inter-Parliamentary Union for their joint work in organizing this Seminar which has naturally evoked a great deal of interest. I have no doubt that the international reputation that the Marga Institute has achieved in conducting Public Seminars of this kind will be further enhanced by the present discussion and that as usual a comprehensive and balanced analysis of the relevant issues will take place.

I have been requested by the organizers to make a short Address and I have been set a time limit of about 10 minutes. This is at all times a difficult task for a Politician. However, in view of the fact that His Escellency the President is to deliver the Inaugural Address, I shall try to limit myself to some observations on a few issues which I consider relevant to any discussion on "The Parliamentary Process in Sri Lanka".

Firstly, and this I consider of fundamental importance, is the fact that the Parliamentary System of Government has been successfully established and has come to be accepted by the vast majority of our people. All Political Parties too accept this position. We have only to look around the World to realize that the Parliamentary from of Government does not take root naturally everywhere. In fact in almost all the countries of Asia and Africa, barring India, that were once colonies of Western Imperial Powers

and achieved independence in the last three decades, elements of authoritarianism, and in some instances one party Governments, have emerged and eroded the very basis of the Parliamentary System. Our adherence to the Parliamentary form of Government through out the last three decades coupled with the peaceful manner in which Governments have been changed by the ballot at almost every election, must indeed be unique.

Perhaps the investments we made in Education for many years and the high level of literacy of our people are some of the reasons that make Sri Lanka stand apart. It is also doubtless true that the cultural traditions of our people, and the long history of self governing institutions, dating back to the ancient Gamsabha, have had something to do with our near-total acceptance of the Parliamentary Process.

I have also no doubt that this Seminar will necessarily look at the dynamic changes which have occured in the Parliamentary System of Government over the years. Through the first Republican Constitution of 1972 and the second Republic ushered in through the Constitutional Changes in 1978, important new directions have been set which have helped to further refine the Process of Parliamentary Democracy in Sri Lanka.

It is an accepted fact that any institution, if it is to live, must be adaptable and responsive to the needs of the people. So it has been with our Parliamentary System, where without violence but through discussion, we have attempted to adapt our Constitutional forms to a changing environment and the needs of the times. In the Constitution of 1978, the analysis of which will certainly occupy much of the time of this Seminar, we made a radical change from the earlier Westminister type or model which we had been following since independence. We have replaced a system whereby executive power was vested in a Prime Minister and Cabinet dependent on a Parliamentary majority, with an Executive President, who has a fixed term of office and is elected directly by the people. Obviously this would have an important bearing on the role of the Legislature thereafter.

I believe too that the role of the Opposition in Parliament may also evolve on different lines from the previously accepted conception of what the Opposition is supposed to do. In fact

there has been in this country, discussion for quite some time on the role of the Opposition and indeed as to the very use of the term "Opposition" itself. Recently Ven. Dr. Walpola Rahula who has a deep knowledge of the culture and traditions of this country made the observation to me that the word "Opposition" itself connotes division and breeds enmity and is not an appropriate term for the Party or Parties which put forward an alternative point of view before the people. Ven. Dr. Rahula particularly referred to the Sinhala word "Virudda Pakshaya" which he said gave a totally wrong impression of what the alternative Government should stand for.

I am aware that Political Scientists too have been drawing attention to the distinction between institutional forms which promote **confrontation** (which may be more appropriate in the Western tradition), as against those which lead to **consensus** which are more part of the Eastern cultural tradition. Since I thought Ven. Dr. Rahula's suggestion was a timely one, I have taken this matter up with the Leaders of Parties in Parliament and they are now giving consideration to the question as to whether the term "Opposition Party" that we now use, might be replaced by a more suitable word like "Counter Party" which in Sinhala may be termed "Prathi Pakshaya".

Perhaps another issue which would be relevant in a discussion on the Parliamentary Process in Sri Lanka, would be the need to so adapt our institutions in order that the tasks which confront a developing country can be speedily and effectively met. I believe that some of the forms which have emerged, and the practices which have evolved, in our system, reflect this need to attune ourselves, and the structure and functioning of our institutions, to the over-riding concerns of development.

Another relevant question would be the function of the Legislature in a situation where the role of the State in economic activity gets reduced on account of a conscious Government Policy towards more peoples participation, liberalisation and an open economy. There is no doubt that a change in the style of Government action, from Public Sector ownership to what has been termed the Liberal Economy, would have consequences for the type and variety of the questions which receive articulation in Parliament.

I note from the Programme of the Seminar that the Representational System will also be a Subject for Discussion. Here it would be pertinent to observe that although the present Government obtained a 5/6th majority of Parliamentary Seats through the pluralistic system of Election, we have ourselves decided that to avoid such a massive majority of one Party in the future, a more equitable system, which would ensure representation of Parties more in accord with the popular support they have gained, be in operation in the future. We certainly believe that a lively and effective "Opposition" call it by whatever term you will, is an essential element in a proper Parliamentary System of Government.

The 1978 Republican Constitution enlarged the role of Parliament through the provision it made for Consultative Committees and Select Committees composed of Members of both sides of the House. The Select Committee on Appointments is a welcome mechanism giving Parliament the opportunity to examine the suitability of candidates to high office under the State. In an age when Public Corporations exercise considerable control over the economic life of the country, the emergence of COPE (the Committee on Public Enterprises) with its powers of continuous review of corporate policies and actions has opened up new dimensions in Parliament's traditional role of being a watchdog of public expenditures.

At the same time, I would say that Parliament's responsibilities regarding public expenditures and the workings of the State's bureaucracy would need to be examined bearing in mind the context of the changing socio-economic environment and the imperative and insistent demands of development. In these two areas particularly of public finance and administration, there will be the purists who will question whether present practice does not differ from what might be an ideal situation. I think all we can ask for here is for a sense of realism. Those entrusted with the task of governing have necessarily to govern and will of course do so within the framework of the Law and the Constitution. Forms and practices which are not appropriate to a given age and time must necessarily give way to more adaptable usages and that I would contend, is what we are talking about when we refer to the "Processes" of Government.

I am afraid I have exceeded my time. But these are very important matters that this Seminar is discussing and I feel that

some positive observations by me would be helpful to you as a backdrop to your discussions.

I thank you all and I wish your Seminar every success.

(Text of speech at the Seminar on "The Parliamentary Process in Sri Lanka" on 11th July 1980)

# Education– its meaning today.

I am happy to be associated with the inauguration of the Eighth Commonwealth Education Conference. We should all be grateful to the Commonwealth Secretariat for the initiative taken in organizing this series of conferences. They help in pooling and sharing our experiences in the common endeavour to deal with many critical issues. I also wish to extend, on behalf of the people of Sri Lanka, a warm welcome to the representatives of the Commonwealth Countries who have come to work out plans for the partial or complete solution of problems facing our countries.

Nations differ in their development goals. They also differ in the paths taken to reach these goals. Yet, the experience of other nations often provide clues which indicate possible approaches to similar problems. International conferences provide a forum for the exchange of experiences. They help in the analysis of issues in an atmosphere which is relatively free from the individual biases of nations. When nations meet, they tend to produce what may be called a collective ego. They develop a collective insight. This collective insight helps us to place issues in their proper perspective as we search for answers to such questions as: Are we moving in the right direction ? Have we made mistakes ? What should be the approach or approaches to the problems we face? Are we sacrificing long-term objectives for short-term results? The answers to the questions raised should confirm or modify our behavioural modes. We can then march forward with a clearer vision.

I feel that we have rather over-emphasised schooling and formal education. Education has a wider scope than schooling, both in time and space. It cannot be confined to a particular period in a person's life nor to a particular place or situation. It is a life-long process. School is only one of the mediators in the learning process. Influences, both within and without school, intervene to change the behaviour of an individual. The tendency on the part of some to equate education with schooling is, I think, the result of a fundamental failure to discern the wider scope of education. Education, I believe is primarily a method of conversion from one state of consciousness to another, from one state of being to another. As the very origin of the word indicates it is a "leading", from one way of life to another. Just as we can be educated for strife and conflict we can also be educated for peace and co-existence. It is the same idea that is contained in the Vedic Prayer, "From the Unreal lead me to the Real; from Darkness lead me to the Light; from Death lead me to Immortality".

Sri Lanka has a high literacy rate and a relatively high participation rate in education. Yet some of our children never go to school. Many children who attend school drop out prematurely. The formal system can offer little to the early school leavers, and nothing to the disadvantaged who never go to school. We need a system of Education to benefit all our citizens, a system where age or position in society is no barrier. Such a system can be produced by bringing formal and non-formal education into a parallel relationship. This could take the form of a flexible arrangement of entry and exit points into the Education System. It would permit a flow of clients between the formal and non-formal components. It would also provide a linkage between the world of work and the parallel components of the system.

With the inauguration of the Open University in June, 1980, we added a new dimension to higher education in this country. The traditional university as you know, draws its clients almost wholly from within the formal system of which it is a part. I feel that we should de-emphasise this mode of selection of candidates for admission to universities. Universities should have both formal and non-formal programmes, in a parallel relationship, permitting a flow of students between the parallel components in either direction. We should strive, I believe, to produce a significant part of the required high level manpower through non-formal programmes.

I am deeply interested in the question of the relevance of education to the needs of the country and the needs of individuals. Class-room instruction alone is not sufficient to provide our pupils with the experience and training needed for living in different situations and changing circumstances. A student should be given the opportunity to spend a part of his time in real life situations to gain work experience. Further, the school curriculum should provide for the development of manual skills through instruction in technical subjects. The purpose of providing work experience or instruction in technical subjects is not to prepare a pupil for a particular vocation. The purpose is to enrich the experience of the pupil and foster the development of desirable attitudes. If the content of education has a predominantly academic orientation, pupils are likely to acquire a contempt for manual work. If, on the other hand, the curriculum is biased against academic disciplines, mental development is likely to be deprived of intellectual stimulation. Therefore, we should have a balance between the two which should play a complementary role in the education of our children.

While we strive to build an educational system which is sensitive to socio-economic needs, let us not forget the crucial role that education has to play in character formation. Inculcation of values is as important as acquisition of knowledge and skills. The ordered behaviour, or discipline, which is externally visible is but the manifestation of an inner discipline. Discipline, there must be: in schools, in work places, in holiday resorts, in all places where human beings come together. Without discipline we cannot hope to achieve any meaningful progress. In the absence of discipline, there can be only chaos.

When we think of education we also think, in the first instance, of the child. It is the child, the future citizen of the world, who should be properly guided, who should be our prime concern. And what are the qualities with which we should like to see him imbued to face Life's great challenges? I think, it was spelled out movingly in a prayer General Douglas MacArthur wrote on behalf of his son on the battlefields of Bataan —

"Build me a son, O Lord, he said, who will be strong enough to know when he is weak, brave enough to face himself when he is afraid....Build me a son whose wishes will not take the place of deeds..... whose heart will be clear, whose goal will be high,

a son who will master himself before he seeks to master other men; one who will reach into the future, yet never forget the past. Give him humility, the simplicity of true greatness, the open mind of true wisdom and the meekness of true strength."

I venture to hope that our present discussions and the exertions we make in the name of Education are to build for our societies such men and women. May I conclude by wishing you all success in the fulfilment of all the laudable objectives of this important Conference. And may I wish all of you, our distinguished visitors, a happy and fruitful sojourn in Sri Lanka.

I thank you.

(Text of speech at the Eighth Commonwealth Education Ministers' Conference in Sri Lanka, 11th August 1980)

# Blessed is the peace-maker.

It is with pleasure that I join in commemorating U.N. Day once again.

U.N. Day has a simple aim. The purpose, as the Resolution of the United Nations states, is "to make known to the peoples of the world the aims and achievements of the United Nations".

This, I consider to be of fundamental importance. Unless the people know what the United Nations stands for, and unless they wish to support its programmes, the United Nations, as an institution and an idea, will die. The preamble to the United Nations charter commences with the words, "We, the peoples of the United Nations". Therefore, from the inception, the U.N. idea was permeated with the desire to have the people participate in it.

Today the programmes undertaken by the United Nations, and all the Specialized Agencies which make up the big family called the United Nations system have made the U.N. a part of a man's daily life. This is a tremendous achievement. Despite all that is said about the shortcomings and failures of the United Nations, this is a positive achievement.

The failures and shortcomings of the U.N. are our own failures. It is the member nations that make up the U.N. U.N. does not have, and should not have, an existence apart from being the collective conscience of the community of nations. Of course, there is the U.N. Secretary-General and his vast Secretariat in whom we have placed our confidence. This is for the

daily execution of our policies and to prepare us for taking decisions. But in a real sense it is we, the individual nations that make up this body, who are responsible for its failures as well as its successes.

When I said that the U.N. represents the collective will of all of us, what I wanted to emphasize was the tremendous task that we have, namely, to reach decisions that are acceptable to us all. This is the art of consensus making, and it has its influence on the entire approach to international harmony. On U.N. Day we need to remind ourselves that the planet earth is the common heritage of all its inhabitants. It is not the real estate of a few.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, in this year's report to the General Assembly, has stated that the primary objective of the United Nations must remain the survival of the human race. That and the preservation of the earth's best possible conditions. I agree. And I think it is not mere survival that should prompt us to act together, but the more positive goal of a better future for all mankind. And here again, as the Secretary-General reminds us, excessive parochialism can be a "dangerous and a wasteful force in international as well as national affairs." This reminder is timely. The parochial view leads us to make the best we can for ourselves. There is little or no consideration for the others whose interests are equally important to them. We need to work towards finding that method which will create in us the habit of working together.

One of our greatest set-backs, both national and international, is the absence of an inspired work ethic. The international work ethic can come only if we consider the U.N. idea to be a working, day-to-day matter. The Institutions of the U.N., like for example the United Nations Development Programme which spends so much money every year on development programmes, must be business-like. They should not merely serve as show cases for international charity. Such a situation in the long run perpetuates a rich donor and poor recipient relationship. It results in the end in the waste of resources.

If we develop this ethic and are conscious of it, then meetings such as these, and U.N. Day Commemorations will have greater meaning. These would not be merely occasions

for flag-raising and speech making, full of pageant and sound, but signifying very little.

Mankind today in collective action is pre-occupied with two facts of a universal problem — peace-keeping and peace-making. I think all of us are familiar with the peace-keeping efforts of the United Nations. The more universal the membership of the U.N. the greater our tasks at peace-keeping. The U.N. soldier today is a familiar figure — in the newspapers and on film. He represents both our ideals and our failures. I salute him and call upon you all to remember with gratitude the U.N. soldier who has sacrificed his life on behalf of us all. There could possibiy be no greater honour than this.

This loss of life should force us with even a greater sense of urgency, to grapple with the task of peace-making. We should devote our energies to creating the conditions that maintain peace and harmony. We should prevent tensions and the outbreak of hostilities that threaten international peace and security.

(Text of speech at the U.N. Day Celebrations on 24th October 1979)

# Facing the world economic crisis.

We have already had the benefit of a comprehensive discussion on the global economic situation. What is the conclusion that emerges from all that has been said here? It is that the world economy is currently facing a most serious crisis.

I shall not attempt to go into any deep analysis of how this situation came about. I think that has been adequately documented for all of us by the previous speakers. Particularly by the Prime Ministers of Australia, Jamaica, Britain and New Zealand. I shall confine my remarks to two broad areas which reflect our most immediate concerns. We are a developing country engaged in the massive task of development. To us Development simply means improving the quality of life of our people. It is possible that much of what I have to say would be relevant to many of the developing countries of Asia, Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean.

The first matter I wish to refer to is the problem of the transfer of resources to the developing world. A crisis is now upon us. The economic instability which presently characterises the developed world has inevitably cast its shadow on us. The developed countries today are facing, as has been stated here, almost intractable problems of Inflation, Recession and high levels of Unemployment. As Prime Minister Thatcher indicated, the energy crisis demonstrated the extent to which the economies of the industrialised world are vulnerable. At the recent Tokyo

Economic Summit, she said, measures have been advocated to cope with the situation. On Thursday afternoon the Prime Minister of New Zealand indicated the extent to which his country would be affected by the anticipated price increases in oil.

It is not only the developed countries that have suffered by the energy crisis. If we take my own country as an example, we too are spending more and more of our total export earnings on the import of petroleum products. In 1970, we spent 3% of total export earnings on petroleum imports. In 1979, the estimates are that we will spend 31% to import our minimum requirements. I have no doubt that the position is similar in very many of the other non-oil producing developing countries.

In addition to the problems that we have to face domestically as a result of oil price increases, the afflictions that now assail the developed world compounds the problem still further for us. As a result of your inflation – and here, I hope, you will pardon me for making the distinction between the rich and the poor, who are gathered here – the prices of our imports go up. The terms of trade fall further against us. Even the possibilities of aid flows from you to us are threatened. As Prime Minister Muldoon foresaw, the rich are still getting richer, the poor poorer.

This is in short the critical position we are faced with today. This is happening at a time when our countries are crying out for more resources to build the kind of society in which our people can lead a decent life. Not a life of affluence, but, as President Nyerere so poignantly pointed out, one in which the basic necessities of life — food, education, a job and adequate health services may be provided for all. What is more, we are trying to do so within the framework of a democratic society. In a society where one man has one vote; where people know their rights; where they will not be long denied those rights. We value democracy and human rights. Economic growth alone at the cost of democracy would be too high a price to pay. In the face of the constraints that operate today our task becomes a herculean one. If we do not succeed, our hard-won political stability may be lost. We must not, we cannot leave room for our people to lose faith in democracy.

It is in this background that we support very strongly the search for new international economic policies. Policies which would address simultaneously the problems of world poverty and that of recession. There has been talk of a new programme. A new Marshall Plan, at least in imagination and conception, if not in design. A Plan which proposes the transfer of resources to developing countries on a much larger scale than today.

In Tea there are several Commonwealth countries involved; Tea being almost synonymous with the Commonwealth. Most of us either produce it or consume it. The question of stabilisation of Tea prices has been in the air for many years. We are still a long way away from an agreement. Much headway has been made in UNCTAD and several studies done, but there is still a long way to go. On the demand side of the demand/supply equation, some progress has been made. The Commonwealth tea producers–India, Kenya, Bangladesh, Malawi, Tanzania, the Mauritius and Sri Lanka – have got together on the matter of Promotion. We have recently established the International Tea Promotion Association (ITPA). This was the result of a Commonwealth initiative. The initial movement for the formation of ITPA came through a Meeting in London which was supported by the Commonwealth Secretariat. ITPA, we feel, will help in increasing consumption.

On the supply side however problems have arisen. Here, if World Bank and FAO predictions are true, a long-term over-supply trend is seen. A decline of prices is forecast. The mechanism by which over-supply is to be met under the Commodity Agreement is the Buffer Stock. In the long-term, of course, structural changes would have to be introduced within the industry itself. The Buffer Stock too would need to be supported by supplementary measures. On occasions this may mean export quotas or cut back on production. Problems have inevitably arisen here. So it was with the question of financing the Buffer Stock. Most of us hoped that the Common Fund could help. Hence the relevance to us of the recent decisions on the Fund. We are also concerned with the prospects for Second Window Financing. Any re-structuring of the Tea Industries of our countries, in the long-term, would need readily available sources of finance. The early completion of pledges to the

Second Window is therefore something we should wish to commend.

What can we do within the Commonwealth to hasten the process of finalising the Agreement. The majority of Tea producers are in the Commonwealth. So is the largest consumer, Britain. Is it beyond our ingenuity to work out the modalities of an agreement to which all countries could subscribe? Prime Minister Manley referred to the need for caucusing in international negotiations and the need for developing realistic positions that have been carefully prepared. My experience of the Tea negotiations is that there is little attempt at caucusing by the producers. The consumers, however, seem to have the benefit of the expertise within the E.E.C. to help them arrive at common positions. The experience of the Rubber Agreement now nearing finality is of relevance here. It appears to bear out the point that a common strategy and continuing dialogue amongst producers assist in expediting action. The Association of National Rubber-Producing Countries (ANRPC) with four ASEAN members and a common spokesman, Malaysia, undoubtedly assisted in the quick progress made on Rubber. It is not possible, within the framework of the Commonwealth – perhaps utilising its Secretariat – to devise the mechanisms for consultation and a continuing dialogue amongst producers? Could this not happen for other commodities too in which Commonwealth countries have a common interest?

(Text of speech made at the Commonwealth Heads of State Meeting, Lusaka)

# Among young people.

It is a pleasure to be among young people; it is refreshing to discuss with them common problems; it is always rewarding to ascertain their solutions to the challenges of the era; it is also encouraging to savour the ebullient energy of youth.

Being among young people is an inspiring experience. To share their ideals is a privilege. No task seems difficult to accomplish, no hopes for the future appears a distant or impossible dream. The promise of achievement is in the young people of today. I have great faith in them.

May I at the very outset thank the organisers of this forum who have made this meeting of minds possible. I take this opportunity to extend a hearty and sincere welcome to the large number of visitors to our land among the audience here today. You have come here as delegates to this Seminar. It is our wish that your stay among us would be both pleasant and fruitful. I hope that you will take the opportunity to learn something of our ways and our attitudes to life. We shall endeavour to learn something from you as well.

This is an assembly of Asian and Pacific Youth. I am told there are 150 delegates from seventeen countries who have come here to participate in this Forum. There are in addition 250 young people from Sri Lanka. Together, you form a highly representative and important section of the life of Asia and the Pacific. Your deliberations here are therefore of the utmost value to this part of the world.

Whilst on the subject of the region represented here at this forum I should like to draw attention to a significant fact. We, the people of Asia and the Pacific region, are heirs to great civilisations, great cultures and traditions. There is an underlying unity of spirit and purpose amongst all the people living in this region. There are common ties that make us distinct from those of other regions. However, we are mindful of the fact that we belong to the same world.

This meeting of this Asia-Pacific region is, in my opinion an important event. To whom else could we entrust the future of this region than to the young people who come from this very area?

The common identity of our peoples must be emphasised at every turn and at every opportunity. It is my wish that there will, in the future, be greater communication and understanding amongst ourselves. The News Agency Service that is now being organised by the Third World countries will without doubt, contribute to this understanding.

We must acquaint ourselves with each other's problems. We must get to know each other in order that we may help each other. Meetings such as this, where the young people of our countries are given an opportunity to get together, talk to each other, understand mutual problems are heaven-sent occasions to be taken full advantage of.

I should like to say here a word about the organisation that is sponsoring this forum of Asian and Pacific Youth — the Organisation for Industrial, Spiritual and Cultural Advancement. It may be that some are a little intrigued by the name of the organisation, the juxtaposition of the words "Industry" with "Spiritual and Cultural Advancement". Industrial development is hardly something that one, in the modern world, associates with spiritual or cultural advancement! Yet, in a sense, how true it is that we should try to bring about such an association and such a combination of forces. For as Mahatma Gandhi said, Science without humanity is meaningless; actually Gandhiji termed science without humanity as one of the Seven Great Sins. And how profoundly true it is that, at a proper high level, we can indeed bring about such a reconciliation.

You have come together on an important mission. It is to discuss noble ideals and sacred principles and to see how they could be made to serve a practical and useful purpose in our living world. How best could this be achieved? I believe that the youth of today should have before them a vision of the new era which they wish to usher in — a vision based upon on the one hand the needs of the new generation they represent and on the other the goal they are striving to achieve. Amongst the representatives of the youth assembled here before me, you may hold different views as to what this vision should represent, coming as you do from varying historical, cultural and geographic backgrounds. But one thing above all will remain common and constant at all times — this vision should represent and reflect the new re-awakening within each individual. Necessarily, such re-awakening should start within one's own self. Thereafter one may proceed to create a re-awakening within others largely fashioned by one's own precepts and actions.

I believe that today the world is not so much afflicted by an economic crisis as much as a moral crisis. True such an economic crisis exists but has it not been exaggerated beyond proportion? And do we not tend to relate many of our ills today to economic factors? The re-awakening within ourselves will in no small measure help to combat the moral crisis that humanity is called on to face.

I should like to pose another allied question before you. I dare say it is a question which has agitated our minds from time to time. I will leave it behind with you for you to ponder upon during your deliberations here and also after you leave the shores of Sri Lanka. Humanity today, as I see it, is at the cross-roads — a situation which has virtually brought it to the verge of destruction. The question is simply this — Is man who was responsible for the invention of the machine and who is entrusted with the task of utilising the resources of the machine for the greater good of mankind, now being made a slave to it? Is material advancement, as we have witnessed in the world of today, the only criterion in our progress towards the betterment of the quality of life? Have we lost track of the greater values and lessons taught to us by the renowned religious leaders and sages of the past? Are we not slowly but inevitably, and I add — regrettably moving away from nature itself? Where does all this

lead us to? It is not difficult to see — it leads us to hatred and enmity, hostility and conflict. It starts at a very elementary level between ordinary people and develops into strained relationships between neighbours, grows into hostilities between communities, and very soon envelopes countries locked in armed conflict. As Jayaprakash Narayan said in 1958 writing about a 'New Society' — "Science has shrunk the whole world into a neighbourhood but man has created a civilisation that has turned even neighbours into strangers.....such a society cannot be a home for brothers to live together as brothers."

Eventually does not this shatter completely the social fabric which binds peoples and warp and make one-sided the development of modern man? I believe therefore, that it is up to each one of us, big or small, young or old, to give a new direction to the way of life. Let us start each in our own small way to set examples by living our own lives correctly, eschewing all that is false and evil, devoid of hatred and envy and follow a life which will project to the world at large, the inherent inner goodness of man.

No service is more worthwhile than service to the community in which one lives. Here again, I should like to point out how we are trying to make use of such ideas in a modern way. In Sri Lanka we have started a Village Re-awakening Movement by building a large number of model villages. We are trying to make the villages once again the hub of activity, the centres where life is lived. Here in the villages ingredients like cement, sand, rubble are being used daily to fortify, strengthen and construct new houses. All this is being done by the people for the people. To my mind, much more important and more fundamental than cement and sand in this exercise is the oneness of the people, this active participation towards a common goal. These to me are more vital than the mortar which binds and holds together the bricks and stones.

Have we ever paused awhile to wonder where all this talk of oil scarcity and crisis will lead us to, and how and why it looms so large in today's context. Is it not almost unbelievable that the development of most Third World countries and even the so-called developed and affluent countries is being threatened by the scarcity of this commodity. In this context how many have paused to think of our own determined efforts, our own

honest endeavours and the great results that we could bring about? Could not the sweat each human brow produces in sincere and dedicated toil be utilised to match up even in a small way to this wonder called oil? These are few of my thoughts which I would like to leave behind with you.

My young friends, I am grateful to the organisers of this forum for having given me the opportunity to address this youthful and distinguished audience. It is my belief that no task given to the young is given in vain, no opportunity squandered away. We are living in momentous times. The foundations for a new society are being laid. It calls for great dedication, determination and sacrifice from all of you.

Let me wish that when the time comes for you to look back on the work you have done as young men you could recall in the words of the poet.

*"Bliss was it then in that Dawn to be alive*
*But to be young was very heaven."*

Thank you.

(Text of speech at the Seventh Asia Pacific Youth Forum on 5th January 1980)

# Nutrition... an urgent imperative.

I am glad to be present here this morning. It is a pleasure to declare open this Workshop on food and Nutrition Planning, Programming, Implementation and Evaluation. You are a body of experts engaged in a very important task. You are engaged in the critical work of transforming thought to action. For it will be your function to provide practical guide lines, based on your experience, as to what planners and nutritionists in our countries expect. What are they likely to find most useful from external co-operation. Your proposals will end in some form of action. And that is what we need today.

I cannot conceive of any section in our community to be alien to myself. We are all members of one another. If one part of the population is not as affluent as the other, then the whole community suffers. A community cannot live in water-tight compartments, one unmindful of the rest. Today, even in the international sphere, we have begun to realize this.

We are all therefore happy that the U.N. has been able to focus attention on the world problem of malnutrition. A new institution, the Sub-Committee on Nutrition, along with an Advisory Group on Nutrition, has been established. The purpose of this set-up is to give appropriate attention to nutritional programmes on a bilateral basis. It is under the auspices of the U.N. that we have all met here today.

Feeding people adequately has been a concern of all governments from very early times. But now with the energy crisis and

the growth of population the problem has reached tremendous dimension. There have, of course, been break-throughs in the productive capacity of agriculture. There have been scientific advances on other lines too. But these have all still failed to have their desired effect. Why? The search for an answer, I think, must be made in the failure to bridge the gap between research, planning and implementation.

The situation regarding nutritional status in Sri Lanka, though not so desperate as in some of the other developing countries, is certainly far from satisfactory. As in many other countries it is the young people, consisting of infants, pre-school, and school-going children, who are most susceptible to malnutrition. The positions regarding the other vulnerable sections of the population, such as pregnant mothers, the poor bread-winners, are equally disquieting.

As far as Sri Lanka is concerned we have not been idle in this field. All our national development, environmental, health, educational and family welfare programmes have helped considerably in reducing the problems of the backward and ill-nourished sections of the population. The present gigantic Mahaweli and other multi-purpose river basin projects will enhance living conditions in our traditional agricultural sector. These schemes will increase food production and absorb people from over-populated areas into new urban and rural communities. In fact such communities are already springing up in development areas of the Mahaweli.

In Sri Lanka specific food policies have been formulated from the thirties. From that time we have had universal franchise and a substantial degree of popular control over the government. The late Mr. D. S. Senanayake, the first elected Minister of Agriculture, laid the foundation of this agricultural policy. It was designed to take the country towards the goal of self-sufficiency. Since then attempts have been made to increase productivity through a series of measures that have helped the cultivator. These include inorganic fertilizers, new improved seeds and better cultural practices. This fact, however, should not lead to complacency; for still large extents of land in our country have low productivity that weigh down our cropping averages. Rice, it is said, provides the people of Sri Lanka with anything from half to two-thirds of their calorie

input. The balance is met by yams, tubers, coconut and sugar. And now, under the Mahaweli programme, greater attention is being paid to the cultivation of these subsidiary food crops. These include considerable extents of grains, legumes, pulses and industrial crops.

I have referred to the accelerated Mahaweli Development programme and the other trans-basin river development plans. I should also like to briefly refer to our Housing programme. Beginning with the Colombo Metropolitan Area we have launched an urban development programme which consists of the provision of new residential, commercial and industrial accommodation, the reclamation of land, urban renewal and rehousing, and town and country planning. One particular programme, which is likely to interest those of you concerned with malnutrition, is our community housing scheme. This is being developed under what we refer to as the "Village Awakening" Programme. Here, our main aim is to provide widespread benefits to the depressed, indigent and deprived village communities that are scattered throughout the country. Considering the significance of water as one of the important basic needs, we are also launching a programme to supply both the small town and the country areas with deep well-water.

An important objective of this workshop is, I believe, to bring nutritionists and development planners together, to make them share their information and experiences. You have common tasks and it should be your endeavour to search for ways jointly to advance the goal of national development.

Whilst on the subject of national development and nutrition, I should like to refer to two factors that have made the experience of Sri Lanka exceptional in this field. In all our development programmes we have striven for the total development of the human person, not merely for an increase in economic output alone. Nutritional and health considerations have been part of almost all our development plans. Indeed, several countries and institutions have been critical of this attitude on our part. But we have held to our views, and now, I think, we have been justified.

The second factor that makes our experience unusual for the developing world is the fact that for several decades a

system of subsidised food distribution has been in force in our country. This has helped the poorer sections of our population from the ill-effects of extreme poverty. The harsh concept of the "poverty line" is rather difficult to draw in Sri Lanka.

To return to the subject in hand and the tasks that lie ahead of you. One of your problems will be to make planners, and others in authority, to realise the importance of nutritional and environmental factors in policy decisions. You will have to evaluate all our present on-going programmes in this field, and to see to what extent they need modification. It will be necessary to find out what impact some of these programmes are having on our people. It may be necessary, as far as Sri Lanka is concerned, to set up an organisation to gather all the relevant data in this field, so that it could feed the planning authorities. Again, it will probably be useful to find out what new intervention strategies have been found useful in other developing countries, and to see whether they could not, with modifications, be applied here. Finally, the whole question of whether experts on nutrition, environment and other related studies should not find places in the high policy making bodies of the country should also be considered.

These are all important matters and I am sure you will be giving them your earnest consideration. As for myself I am happy that the U.N. Sub-Committee on Nutrition has accepted Sri Lanka's invitation to act as informal host for this workshop. The time, too, from our point of view appears opportune. For the Government has already recognised the need for Food and Nutrition Policy Planning to be a subject within the Ministry of Plan Implementation. Sri Lanka should take this opportunity to enhance the competence of its planning and programming organisation.

Let this workshop lay the foundation for a continuing dialogue between nutritionists, planners, and development administrators. A better understanding of the problems of nutrition and development is one of the most urgent imperatives of today.

(Text of speech at the Opening Ceremony of the U.N. Workshop on Food and Nutrition Planning, Programming, Implementation and Evaluation on 10th July 1979 at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall)

# Water, basic human need.

I am happy to be associated with the National Workshop on Water Supply and Sanitation, organised by the Ministry of Local Government, Housing & Construction in association with the World Health Organisation. This Workshop is a sequel to the Seminar on Activities for the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade held in New Delhi in November, 1979. The decision of the Ministry of Local Government, Housing & Construction to organise this Workshop on the same lines is a timely initiative as it coincides with the launching of the Water Decade of the World Health Organisation.

Most of us present here today are aware that the problem facing the Water Supply and Sanitation Sector are enormous. This is true of almost all the developing countries of the world. It is my sincere hope that this Workshop would be instrumental in no small measure, in bringing into sharp focus the magnitude of the problems that face us in this sector. It should bring relief in terms of accomplishment and need as well as money and effort if targets set before us for the Decade are to be achieved.

A safe, adequate and a reliable supply of drinking water within easy access of an individual is a basic human necessity. Provision of safe drinking water is therefore a preliminary social objective of the Government in its attempt to improve the quality

of life of the poor who represent the large majority of Population. The economic growth that take place around us, somehow seems to ellude them. As such, as the economy of the country continues to grow, the continuing misery of the poor seems to crave our indulgence more and more.

Many of our efforts in the past have failed to bring about the desired effects. In the recent past, the strategy of provision of basic human needs, appears to gain in acceptance as the most effective method for the improvement of their conditions. Housing and water supply are two such needs that have been neglected for a long time. In my capacity as the Minister in-charge of these functions, I have endeavoured the last two years to bring in a number of major changes in this sector, with a view to bring these services within the reach of a larger percentage of the population.

Resources flowing into water supply and sanitation activities had been poor due to the low priorities assigned to this sector in the past. As a result, until support for the development of the sector increased recently, the performance of the water supply and sanitation activities in the country had been extremely unsatisfactory.

In the rural sector, which represents more than 70% of the population of Sri Lanka, only 5% of the population has access to any form of piped water. The balance 95% obtain their requirements from sources which could be unsafe as well as unreliable. The rural community also lacks acceptable methods of waste disposal systems and it is estimated 42% of the housing units do not have any latrine at all.

The picture in the urban sector is also gloomy. Only 63% of the population in the City of Colombo has piped borne water. In the urban sector as a whole this figure is estimated to be only 45% and 55% of the urban population depend on other sources for their drinking water. Only Colombo city has a pipe borne sewerage system covering a mere 35% of the population. The system itself is old and heavily overloaded. Unless some immediate steps are taken to improve the provision of new facilities almost all other urban centres will have to depend on septic tanks or individual pits for a long time to come.

However, during the past few years, we have taken a number of deliberate measures to develop this sector. The funds made available for these activities from the National Budget have increased from Rs. 20.7 million in 1977 to Rs. 482 million in 1980. Our efforts at home have also been heavily supplemented by a favourable response from international donor agencies, who have actively supported, particularly during the last 2 years, most of the projects in this sector. The external resource flow has increased many folds and, almost all our key projects have been accepted by the multilateral as well as bilateral agencies for financing.

As soon as the present Government assumed office, immediate action was taken to improve and extend the water service in Colombo and the suburbs. World Bank Assistance has been obtained for the implementation of the South West Coastal area supply project, by far the largest drinking water supply project ever to be undertaken in this country. The extension of the sewerage system in Colombo would be undertaken in the near future together with the implementation of the second stage of the above project. A number of water supply schemes using a large number of major urban centres too have been undertaken during this period, with the assistance coming from various bilateral as well as multilateral donor agencies.

A similar programme of development has been initiated in respect of rural areas of the country. Assistance of several donor agencies including UNICEF has been obtained to strengthen these activities.

Every possible effort would also be taken to ensure community participation in the implementation of this programme. In the past plans have often failed due to the failure on the part of those responsible for their implementation to ensure community participation. Therefore it was proposed to ensure the involvement of the community in different stages of these activities through voluntary organisations active in the area.

I am happy to see leading Engineers, Scientists and Adminstrators with long years of experience in this sector, participating in this Workshop. I am of course aware that some of the problems that may confront you in your discussions could sometimes be the kind of problem for which simple solutions may not exist.

However, I am confident that your deliberations during the next 3 days, would help you to address your mind to some of the important issues of the sector and come up with an action plan which is based on a careful assessment and indentification of the problems. I wish to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the World Health Organisation who is sponsoring this Workshop. We are also priviledged to have the representatives of the international agencies who have in the past shown a keen interest in the promotion of activities in this sector.

I also wish to thank the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute for making available to us the facilities available in the Institute for this Workshop. Finally I take this opportunity to congratulate the officials of the Ministry of Local Government, Housing & Construction and the National Water Supply & Drainage Board who spared no pains in making this Workshop a success.

Hon. Ministers, Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen, I take great pleasure in inaugurating this workshop.

(Text of speech at the Seminar on Water Supply and Sanitation on 6th March 1980)

# Knowledge, thinking and conscience.

I consider myself very fortunate — indeed privileged — to be here with you today. It is the 25th Anniversary — the Silver Jubilee year of Aquinas. It is also graduation day for a number of you students of Aquinas.

Twenty-five years is a notable period in the history of any institution. And graduation day is equally important in the life of an individual. You are particularly fortunate in that you will be among the chosen few who would be conferred with a Degree. I must confess that I am not so fortunate. The nearest I came to it was when somebody once wanted to confer on me an Honorary Doctorate. I declined it, because I believe that one must earn one's accolades through self-effort. That you have called me to address you on a day of such significance to you is indeed an honour. I appreciate it very much. And for this I thank you all.

I must also thank the Reverend Father Rector for the kind and generous terms in which he has referred to me in his Welcome Address. In all humility may I say that I shall always endeavour to do the best to be worthy of the trust placed in me by my fellow countrymen.

Reverend Father, you mentioned in your speech that exactly ten years ago there was present here, on a similar occasion, another Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. And you said again that twenty-five years ago this institution was started by a great educationist of Sri Lanka. You referred to the late Mr. Dudley

Senanayake and the late Rev. Father Peter Pillai. It is a heart-warming experience to any citizen of Sri Lanka to recall to memory the services rendered to this country by these two men each in his own respective sphere. One in the field of politics, the other in the field of education and social service. But their love was one and the same. They both loved their fellow men and this land of ours. It should be the aim of all of us, of this generation, to emulate their example. It is my confident hope that of you some at least will be found not unworthy to be compared to them.

Reverend Father Rector, you have referred to the circumstances under which this institution was founded. You have also referred to the hopes and aspirations of its founders and later benefactors. May I say this. We are all proud of this institution. We are proud of the services it has rendered, and is rendering to the people of this country. They are people coming from every part of this country, and you have treated them equally, irrespective of race, caste or creed.

We are proud of the part this institution is playing in the higher education and adult education programme of this country. It is our wish and hope that it will continue to do so in the future. You have worked unselfishly on a nation-wide scale and national recognition is therefore bound to come. It is my conviction that no honest work goes unrecognized in the end.

Yours is an institution dedicated to education. Your aim is to produce young men and women who are truly educated. What do we mean when we say a person is truly educated? I think it means more than mere competence in a particular subject area. It cannot mean only that one has acquired enough information to pass an examination. I believe that it must manifest itself much more deeply. Education must in a sense train one to test his thinking with his "inner voice" which is latent in all human beings. Call it the "spark of the divine"; Call it the "voice of conscience"; Call it the "athmaya" or perhaps the "hardaya sakshiya". They all mean the same. I believe that true education should give all pupils the ability to check their thinking with this latent force before they act on their thoughts. As teachers then that becomes your great task. To those of you who learn to receive such a training must be your endeavour.

The passing of an examination alone, or the obtaining of a Degree may not qualify one to be regarded as an educated person. It is rather one who is capable of utilising his knowledge and thinking according to the dictates of his conscience, who could be called truly educated. Indeed, if this were not so, one could use his knowledge and thinking, not only for his own destruction, but also of the destruction of others. I believe that all human beings are gifted with this force called the "inner voice" or "conscience". But one should learn and train himself to recognise and follow it. I think that in our education this training is now lacking. And the real teacher is one who can inspire and train his pupils to acquire this capability.

The great Chinese Sage Confucius has said that education without idealism was fruitless; while idealism bereft of education could itself be destructive. Perhaps we could extend this idea further to say that education which lacks the training to act according to one's "inner voice" or "conscience" which I referred to earlier, is both fruitless and destructive. With education, one should become more human; more kind and compassionate; more and more selfless.

I am reminded of what Dr. E. W. Adikaram, one of our respected educationists, and now Chancellor of the Jayewardenepura University has recently said on a similar theme. He was referring to the debilitating effects on a child's mind, and a child's sense of love and compassion for living things, which can come from the constant practice of dissections. This is part of the standard training for a student of Biology. Dr. Adikaram in his thought-provoking analysis draws attention to the desensitising effects that this could have on the child's inborn tendencies to love and feel sympathy for the sufferings of others.

I am personally of the view that there is much food for thought here as we examine the content of our education in the light of our goal of producing young men and women who are truly educated to uphold values.

The alumni of Aquinas have been noted for their capacity for hard work and their powers of endurance. As the Rector has stated things have not always been easy for the students who come here. The University portals were not open to some of you. Some had to make sacrifices — for the sake of a parent,

a sister or a brother. Many have to study whilst working at a job. So things have not been easy for you always. But you have all had determination — the will to succeed. The courage never to say die. You have had the confidence that hard, and sincere work will have its reward. Young though many of you may be, you have yet been tried in the crucible of life — and you have not been found wanting.

Now, I believe that these are precious gifts, these characteristics. These are qualities which we, a developing nation, are in great need of. During my recent trip abroad, I was able to see the people of other countries, in Europe, in Africa and Asia —at work. It seemed to me that the commitment of these people to work — particularly those in the forefront as successful ones— was total.

The immediate goals and targets of every small area or region, of every little social group, were clearly identified. Everyone was clear as to what he or she was aiming at and what the country as a whole was striving to achieve.

I think we the people of Sri Lanka, must emulate the fine example of these peoples. We too must set ourselves goals and targets. We too must take up the challenge. There must be, on the part of all of us, a total commitment to hard work. We must clearly recognize that hard work brings rewards. And in order to make people believe this we must see that this is a reality in our country. Those who toil shall and must be rewarded. We must see that there is no place in our society for the shirker and the saboteur.

Work, labour, toil — whatever you may call it — there is no nobler task to which one can dedicate oneself. Work for one's self, for one's country, work for others — they are rewarding as well as elevating. As human beings work is our lot. We, in Sri Lanka, have earned a much-deserved reputation for intelligence and ingenuity. Let us now strive to gain the same reputation for hard and sustained work as well. You, students of Aquinas, can set an example.

And once we are committed ourselves to hard work, let us see that we make a good job of it. The labourer must be worthy of his hire.

One of our failings is to plan on a grand scale. We tend to wait for everything to be perfect before we actually start work. We must give up such practices. We must learn to "make do" with what is available.

In China, for instance they do not despise energy from whatever quarter, and in whatever quantity it comes from. They do not stop prospecting for oil because that particular field is not sufficiently large to ponder to their vanity.

All hands are at work and all contributions however small, are welcome. If I may say so that is the spirit in which we must undertake our work.

Under the wise and inspiring leadership of His Excellency the President — there has been a new birth in this country. Our shackles have been removed. The people have been set free. Now there is no excuse for anyone to say that hard, honest work, will not bring in its reward. Now that is as certain as night follows the day. It is, I believe, the duty and the responsibility of the Government of the day to set the stage so that the people can work. We believe not only in economic prosperity but also in spiritual progress. If we are not prepared to care for others and share with others, economic development by itself will be meaningless to our people. This the present Government has done. It is up to the people, the younger generation in particular, to do the rest.

Let us therefore call upon the young people of this country to look upon this challenge as a splendid opportunity. Let us work and toil, labour and sweat and strive. But whilst we do so let us also not forget our moral principles and our high ideals. Let our feet, whilst we work, be planted firmly on the good Earth, and whilst we toil with our hands, let our eyes and our faces, and our hopes be turned upwards, looking towards the eternal stars.

(Text of speech made at the Aquinas Silver Jubilee Year Graduation Ceremony on 29th October 1979)

# The message of Hijra.

I must thank the Chairman and members of the National Hijra Committee for inviting me to be present on this occasion here today. Although I am not a co-religionist, you have yet thought it fit to invite me to be with you today. I am conscious of the singular honour you have done me and once again I thank you all for it.

This is a momentous day in the lives of all Muslims. Indeed, today's celebrations mark one of the most important events that occurred in the recorded history of mankind. It commemorates the departure of the Holy Prophet and his Companions from Mecca to Yathrib, the City which came to be known as Medina. Islam, a religion forbidden and persecuted by the feudal families of Mecca from that day set on its course to become a World religion. Hijra, as you all know, marks the beginning of the Islamic year.

When I see the large numbers present here today — and think of the millions more of your faith in other parts of Sri Lanka and the World over who will gather together to commemorate this event — I am overwhelmed by this sober thought. What stupendous results can follow from what at the time appear to be small beginnings.

I am made to think of similar situations in the religious history of the human race. More than 2,500 years ago in the Deer Park at Benares, the Buddha set the Wheel turning. The Dhamma he preached has spread, in peace and with compassion,

throughout the World. Nearly 2,000 years ago, unrecognized by the great ones of the Roman Empire, Jesus Christ preached and died on the Cross. At that moment it made no apparent mark. Yet that religion has spread to every corner of the World. At an even earlier time than this, silently and unobtrusively, the great teachings of the Hindu rishis in the Himalayas came to be recorded in the Vedas and the Upanishads. Now they are known to us as the "Breath of the Eternal". Is it also not true that the common core of all religions is the same? The religion of Buddha does not differ from the religion of Christ; The religion of Christ does not differ from the religion of Krishna; The religion of Krishna does not differ from the religion of Prophet Muhammad. But, the religion about Buddha may differ from the religion about Christ; The religion about Christ may differ from the religion about Krishna; and the religion about Krishna may differ from the religion about Prophet Muhammad. And isn't this a result of our human frailty, of our need to categorise and compartmentalise and of our inability to think in universal terms of the Eternal Truths and of our common humanity? After all what is religion? Is it merely a belief? No. It is a way of thinking; it is a way of behaviour, it is a way of living. It teaches how to develop a heart to give; it teaches how to develop a heart to love; it teaches how to develop a heart to serve.

For if we look deeply at the religions we profess, as an occasion such as this impels us to, we can see the great similarities that all religions have. Islam is a religion which while it lays emphasis on the development of the individual personality, at the same time calls for social responsiveness. The concept of brotherhood is aimed essentially against any system of feudal stratification. All men are equal in the eyes of the Creator. Only those who do good are given a superior status. Birth does not elevate one, only conduct does.

"INNA AKRAMAKUM INDALLAHI ATHKAKUM"

(A1 Quran)

Allah honours those who are righteous.

How close this is to the Buddha's teaching:

*"NA JACCA VASALO HOTI*
*NA JACCA HOTI BRAHMANO*
*KAMMANA VASALO HOTI*
*KAMMANA HOTI BRAHMANO" (Vasala Sutta)*

Not by birth is one an outcast;
Not by birth is one a brahmin;
By deed one becomes an outcast;
By deed one becomes a brahmin.

In Buddhism, as in Islam, this concept has given to the religion its greatest strength and contributed largely to its achievements.

I believe that it is right and fitting that we remember and celebrate such occasions as this in a suitable manner. For in a real sense these are the important things of life. They lead to a renewal of faith, to a cleansing of our hearts — a new beginning.

Today, the adherents of your faith live in almost every quarter of the globe. In Africa, in Asia, in Europe, and even in America, they are counted in millions. And in everyone of these places, I am sure, this great occasion will be celebrated today.

Islam, as I have stated, has spread to every part of the World. It is a living, vital force in the lives of its adherents in all these countries. Along with its missionary religious faith has gone also the cultural and social traditions of the Arab race. There has been a mingling of the Arab culture with the social traditions of various indigenous societies to produce new, rich national syntheses. In art and architecture, in medicine and surgery, in mathematics and astronomy, in philosophy and law and in all these qualities that elevate the mind, the Moslem people have been among the great benefactors of mankind. And so are they today.

The tide of trade and commerce brought some of your ancestors to our shores. They found a welcome place in this country and merged gracefully into its social fabric. Today, you hold an important permanent place among the peoples of Sri Lanka. The great services you have performed individually and as a community for the welfare of this country are recalled with pride by us all.

I am particularly happy that the Government of Sri Lanka has authorised the holding of the Hijra Festival on a national level with official patronage. In this connection, I am especially happy that the Hijra Committees that have been formed in the villages and in the districts are to be converted into permanent bodies. In addition to propagating the ideals of Islam, these

Committees will develop social and economic activities in their areas. The local Committees will be affiliated to the National Hijra Committee which will bring them all under one organization. This is all for the good.

My friends, this is a joyful day for all of us and I have been privileged to share it with you. For this I am ever grateful to you. I am sure that the sentiments I have expressed on this occasion today are shared by each and everyone of us who calls Sri Lanka his home.

I wish you all the best!

(Text of speech made at the Inaugural Ceremony of the 15th Century Hijra Celebrations on 22nd November 1979)

# Tito, Lanka's special friend.

I move "that this Parliament desires to communicate to the President and the Members of the Federal Assembly of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, an expression of the profound sorrow felt by the Parliament and the people of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, at the loss of their distinguished President, the late Marshal Josip Broz Tito".

It is with profound regret that I stand before this House today to move a Vote of Condolence on the death of an International Leader, Josip Broz Tito, late President of Yugoslavia — a man whose life and work has left an indelible impression on the history of our times.

Josip Broz Tito was born to a poor peasant family in his country, 88 years ago. He served in the First World War in the capacity of a Sergeant when he was severely wounded. From thence on, he devoted the rest of his life to the moulding of the soverign State of Yugoslavia. He was responsible for bringing about prosperity and unity amongst people, who came from diverse cultures and backgrounds.

The late President Tito will be best remembered by the World, and in particular by us, in Sri Lanka, as a pragmatist and realist. He was uncommitted to ideologies, or to the many political dogmas prevalent in his time. He decided to evolve for his people, an economic and political system, best suited to the

conditions of his country and to the genius of his people. The political and economic system which evolved in Yugoslavia, under his personal guidance, remains therefore unique. It is something which has won for his country world-wide renown. One of the best known of this principles, is that of worker-management in enterprises. Through involving the worker in management, he further ensured the democratisation of his society. President Tito's endeavours in social management has won our admiration. In keeping with our own government policy on the question, our personnel are now in Yugoslavia training themselves in self-management and worker participation in management.

President Tito was known to all of us as one of the founder members of the Non-Aligned Movement. His intense nationalism and independence, combined with geo-political factors, led him to seek a path which would ensure sovereignty, terrirorial integrity and independence for Yugoslavia. The Bandung Conference, which sowed the seeds for the growth of the Non-Aligned Movement, was followed by President Tito with keen interest. In 1958, he undertook an extensive tour of the Middle East and Asia, when he also visited Sri Lanka. He hosted the First Meeting of the Non-Aligned Heads of States and Governments in Belgrade in 1961. Since then, until his death, he has been one of the foremost proponents of Non-Alignment. His untiring efforts to ensure that the fundamental objectives of the Non-Aligned Movement, were safeguarded and not subverted, has won him profound regard and respect throughout the World. As we all know, the Movement of which we too are leading members, has rapidly expanded. It has been possible for a common approach to be made by all its members to international political and economic issues, That the voice of the united Third World. now has its rightful place in all international forums, is largely due to the personal interest that the late President took in making this possible. During his life-time, President Tito visited over 50 countries in his quest for a lasting solution to Third World Economic and political problems.

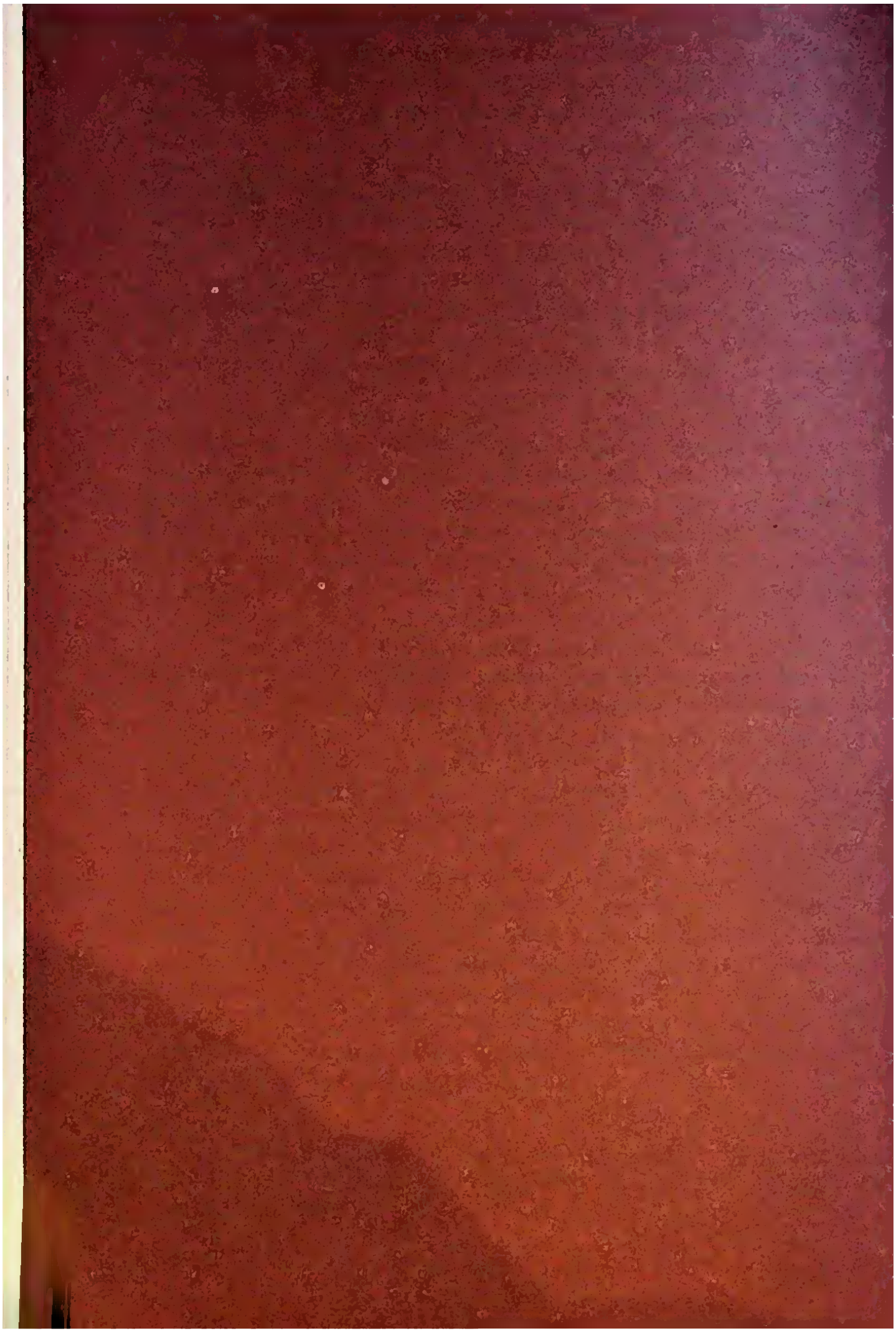
In the North-South dialogue, he championed the cause of developing countries for a better share of world resources for their development.

His contribution towards total and complete disarmament is also well known, and history will be the final judge of the extent of his service to this goal. It is a fitting tribute to his memory and his service, that during his life-time, a Special UN Session on Disarmament was held.

The late President Tito was a special friend of Sri Lanka. He visited Sri Lanka on more than one occasion. The people of different walks of life in our country, have fond memories of him and held him in high respect and affection. His passing away is an irreparable loss, not only to the international community, but also to us in Sri Lanka, with which his great country, Yugoslavia has such strong bonds of friendship and mutual collaboration.

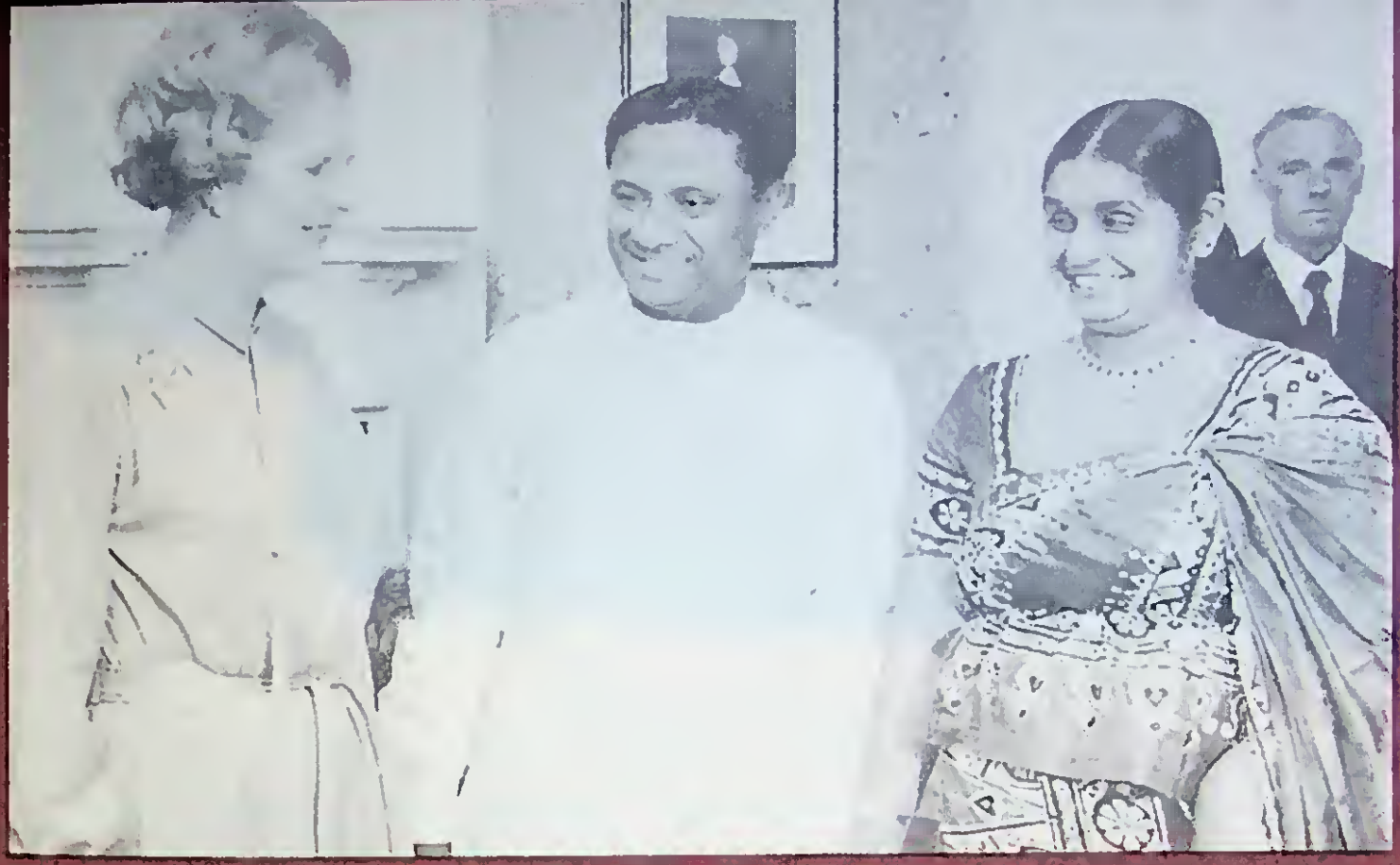
I would request you, Mr. Speaker, to please convey to the family of the late President Tito, to the Supreme Legislature of Yugoslavia, and to the Government and people of that great country, the sentiments that we have expressed today in this House, on behalf of Parliament, the Government and people of Sri Lanka.

(Text of speech in Parliament while moving a vote of Condolence on the late President of Yugoslavia, Marshal Josip Broz Tito on 9th May 1980)



# Hon. R. Premadasa meets World Leaders.

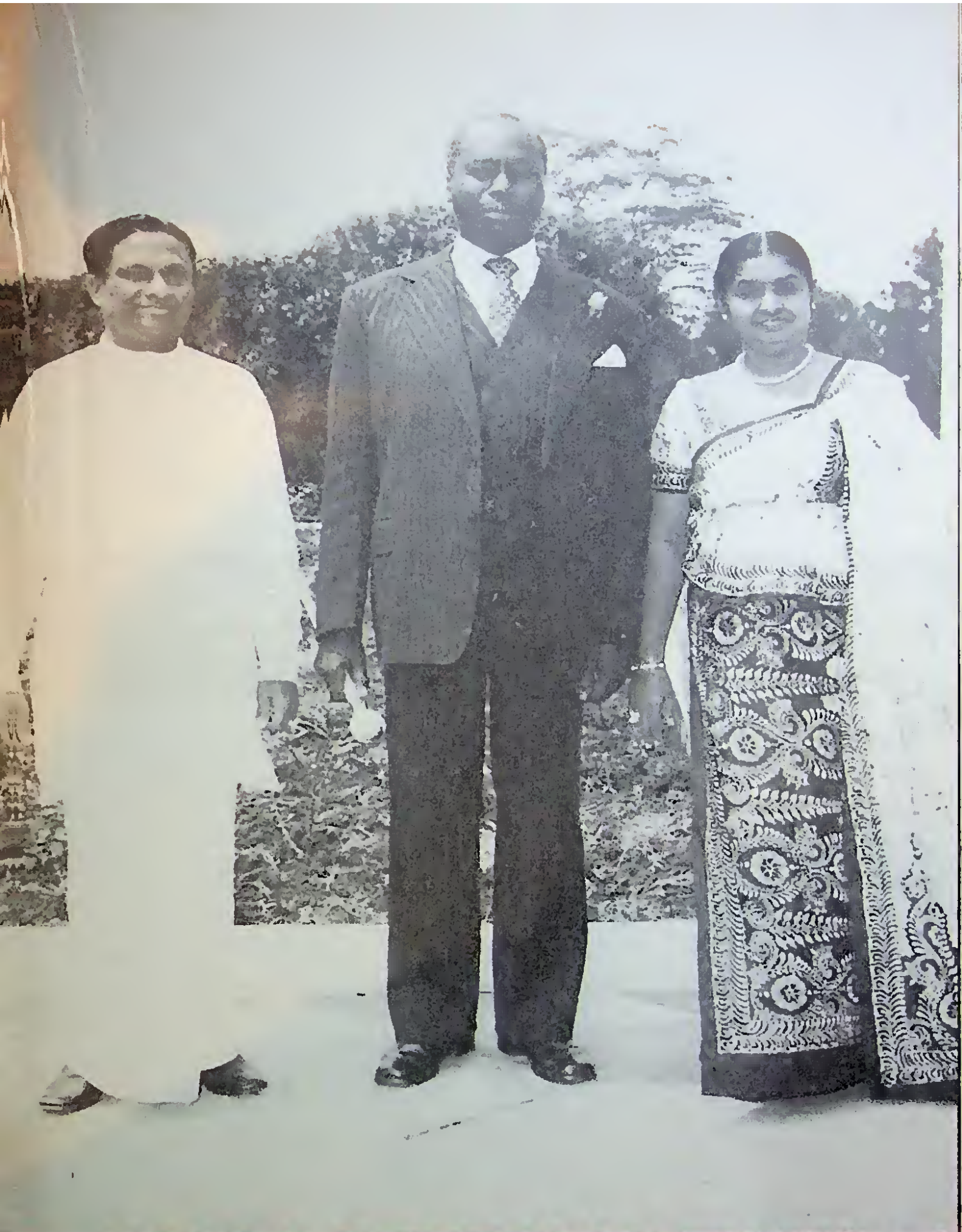
Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. is seen talking to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth at a banquet hosted by her in honour of Heads of Government who attended the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Lusaka in August, 1979. British Prime Minister The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher M.P. and President of Malawi His Excellency



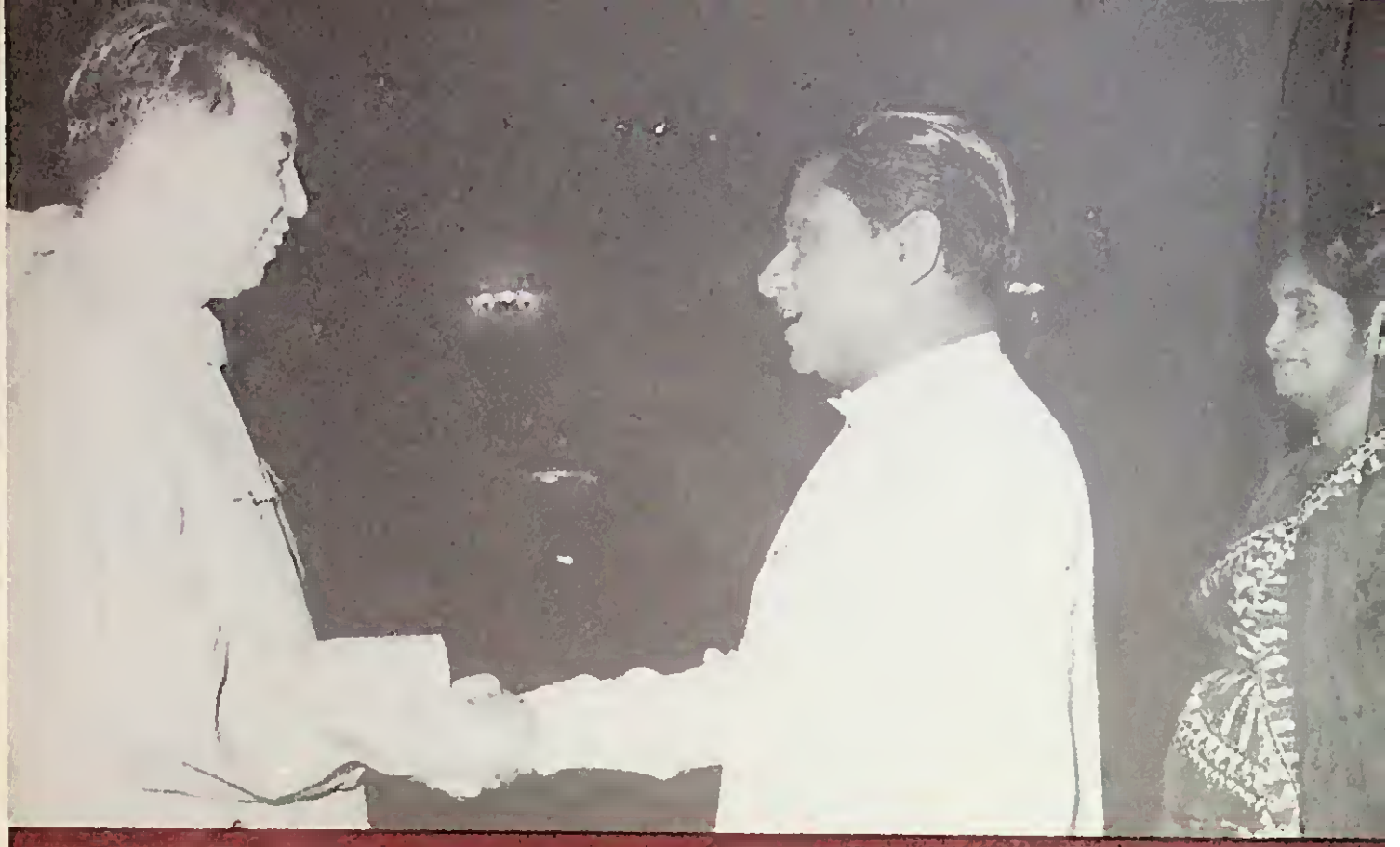
Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. and Mrs. Premadasa with the British Prime Minister The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher on a visit to No. 10, Downing Street,, for talks with British Prime Minister during an official visit to Britain in July, 1979.

Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. is being greeted by His Excellency Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, President of Zambia, on his arrival

Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. leading the Sri Lanka delegation at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Conference in Lusaka in August, 1979. On his right is Hon. Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore.



Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. and Mrs. Premadasa with His Excellency Daniel T. Arap Moi, President of Kenya, at his residence on their arrival for a luncheon hosted by the President in their honour during their state visit to Kenya in August, 1979.



Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. is warmly received by the Prime Minister of People's Republic of China, Hua Guo Feng on his official visit to China in August, 1979. Mrs. Premadasa is also in the picture.

Vice Premier of People's Republic of China Geng Biao warmly greets Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. during his state

Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. with Vice Premier Lixiann of People's Republic of China at a banquet held in his honour at the Great Hall of the People.

His Excellency B. H. Shears, President of Singapore, greeting Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P., when he paid a courtesy call on him at the Istana Villa, during his official visit to Singapore in August 1979.

Hon. Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore greets Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. and Mrs. Premadasa at a dinner given in their honour by the Singapore Prime Minister at the Istana Villa during their official visit to Singapore in August, 1979.

Hon. Dengku Ahamed Rithenddeen Bin Ismail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia, who led his country's delegation at

Hon. Mrs. Birgit Friggebo, Acting Prime Minister and Minister of Housing of Sweden is seen in conversation with Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. on his arrival at Stockholm during their visit to Sweden in August, 1979.

Prime Minister Hon. R. Premadasa M.P. in conversation with Dr. Kurt Waldheim, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

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