

## CHAPTER IV

### **SRI LANKA AND THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM : THE UNP GOVERNMENTS**

In the system of sovereign states, individual states interact with other states and international organizations to protect and promote their national interests. As the issues and scope of the interests of different classes of states vary, so do the character and patterns of their interactions to preserve and promote them. Unlike the super powers whose national interests encompass the entire sovereign states system, the small states have a relatively limited range of interests as well as a relatively limited sphere of foreign policy activities.

As a small state, Sri Lanka has a relatively small agenda of interests in the international arena and the sphere of its foreign policy activities is quite restricted in comparison to those of the super powers, or regional powers. The sphere of its foreign policy activities can be analytically separated into two levels : those in the South Asian regional system and those in the larger international system.<sup>1</sup> In the South Asian regional system Sri Lanka has to treat India with due caution because of the existence of wide difference in their respective capabilities, yet try to maintain its sovereignty, freedom and integrity. In the international system apart from mitigating the pressures and pulls emanating from the international power structure, Sri Lanka has to promote its national interests to ensure its security, stability and status.

Interactions of Sri Lanka to realize its national interests to a great extent depended upon the perceptions and world views of its ruling elites, which in its case are its heads of governments and their close associates.<sup>2</sup> Although the foreign policy makers have enjoyed considerable freedom in taking initiatives in the making and conduct of foreign policy, their

freedom is subject to the constraints imposed by the domestic and international determinants of its foreign policy. Furthermore, the political party to which the leader belongs has much influence in shaping his foreign policy perceptions. It will not be out of place to state that the world views of the principal foreign policy makers are rooted in the ideology of their parties. Some leaders on a few occasions in the past attempted to pursue foreign policy in deviation to the ideology and world view of their party, but they had to face stiff opposition from their colleagues who prevailed upon them to abide by the dominant opinion of their party.<sup>3</sup>

As has been mentioned previously, the party system of Sri Lanka has altered periodically. To reiterate for the sake of clarity, Sri Lanka had a one party dominant system of government from 1948 to 1956. The UNP was the dominant party. Thereafter political authority altered between the UNP and the SLFP who formed the government either on their own or in alliances with other smaller parties. The 1977 elections marked the end of the two dominant party system of governance and the return to the one party system.<sup>4</sup> In this occasion too, the UNP was the dominant party which had hugely successful performances in the 1979, 1982 and 1989 elections.<sup>5</sup>

The UNP and the SLFP have differences in their ideologies and world views. Because of this, there has been variations and shifts in emphasis in the patterns of Sri Lanka's foreign policy.<sup>6</sup> However, over-riding environmental factors – both domestic and external – have generated consensus in its foreign policy interactions. With the passage of time, foreign policy has been bipartisan, but within the broad bipartisan approach one can discern shifts in emphasis with the UNP veering towards the West, while the SLFP has pursued a more assertive foreign policy.<sup>7</sup>

In this chapter, we will attempt to identify the dominant foreign policy interactional patterns of Sri Lanka at the level of the international system when the UNP wielded power. But before we examine the major patterns in the foreign policy interactions of Sri Lanka during the

governance of the UNP, it will be appropriate to briefly discuss the worldviews and the foreign policy perceptions of the two dominant political parties.

## II

### **Foreign Policy Perceptions of the UNP and the SLFP**

#### **The United National Party (UNP)**

The UNP is right of centre and pro-west in its ideological inclinations. It is committed to the philosophy of free enterprise and favourably disposed towards foreign western capital investments in the island. During its first phase of governance the UNP articulated close affinity towards the West, especially Britain, some of the developed Commonwealth countries and the United States. Simultaneously it was unambiguously critical and also fearful of communism and the communist countries.<sup>8</sup> But during its subsequent terms in office, its hostility towards, and apprehensions of fear from communism and communist countries has mellowed down considerably. It is now less fearful of threats from communist countries and less fearful of the local communists. This change in its perceptions has come about because of the changes in the international relations of the communist countries.<sup>9</sup>

The ideology and world-view of the UNP can be traced to its founders and founding circumstances.<sup>10</sup> Don Stephen Senanayake founded the UNP in 1946 when it had become amply clear that Britain would be withdrawing from the island requiring the need for an organization to fill the void which will be caused by its departure. The Marxist parties namely the LSSP and the CCP were relatively well organized with significant support base among the urban working class and middle class populations, and also among plantation workers. There was all likelihood of the Marxists coming to power if non-communist alternative was not available. Under no

circumstance D.S. Senanayake, an avowed anti-communist and a shrewd politician, would have allowed this to happen. He and his colleagues of the Ceylon National Congress (CNC) united all the major non-Marxist political groups and organizations in the island under the banner of the UNP which because of its aggregating character was nomenclatured as the United National Party.<sup>11</sup>

Until recently, the social base of the UNP rested with the anglicized professionals and wealthy landlords. The leadership of the party hailed from this strata, and a sizable number of the UNP leaders were related to each other either by descent or by marriage. Mostly they belong to the high Goyigama caste. But during the past two to three decades, the UNP has made efforts to water down its elitism and anglicized orientation by making the social composition of its leadership more broad-based. It has tried to win over the support of Sinhala Buddhist masses. J.R. Jayawardene has played a major role in bringing about such changes, especially in promoting individuals of non-Goyigama castes to the rank of leadership. In 1977 when he became the President under the Presidential constitution, he appointed Ranasinghe Premadasa, who belonged to the low Karva caste, as the Prime Minister.

To sum up, the UNP retains its right wing and pro-west ideological inclinations, although it has mellowed down its hostility and antipathy towards communist countries because of the changes in the international relations of the communist countries.

### **The Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)**

The SLFP is left of the centre, which often adopted a nationalist, moderately leftist position on developmental issues and programmes. The SLFP has opposed the domination of foreign western capital in important sectors of the economy such as plantations, banking and

petroleum. It has favoured economic self-reliance and import substitution industrialization in contrast to the dependent capitalist model of development articulated by the UNP.<sup>12</sup>

As opposed to the pro-west bias of the UNP, the SLFP has advocated for a dynamic nonaligned policy and in the process has nurtured a more assertive role in international politics. It has also a favourable perception of the erstwhile Soviet Union, China and former East European communist countries. It has been a vehement critic of western colonialism and imperialism and an ardent supporter of Afro-Asian national liberation struggles and also of the movements to reform the international political and economic order. Although not hostile towards western states, it has not articulated particularly close affinity towards them as has been the case with the UNP.

Like the UNP, the ideology and world-view of the SLFP can be traced to its founders and founding circumstances. The party was founded by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike in 1951 following his resignation from the UNP because of his dispute over claims to leadership and also because of his discomfiture with the right-wing and pro-west ideology of the UNP. Prior to the formation of the UNP, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike led the Sinhala Mahajana Sabha (SMS) which advocated the interests and aspirations of the rural Sinhala Buddhist masses.<sup>13</sup> When the UNP was formed, the SMS joined with it but continued to operate within it as a cohesive group. However, it did not make much head-way within the anglicized UNP as its views and opinions did not find much favour within that party. When S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike left the UNP, other SMS leaders also joined him. The SMS provided the social base upon which the SLFP was founded. The SMS tradition has dominated the SLFP such as its firm espousal of the cause of the Sinhala Buddhist ethno-cultural nationalism. Its support base consists of the rural Sinhala middle classes.<sup>14</sup>

The two dominant parties formed the government alternately between 1956 to 1977. Neither of the two parties could secure absolute majority in Parliament. Consequently they formed coalition governments. The UNP generally formed alliances with the Tamil parties like

Tamil Congress (TC) and the Federal Party (FP) and splinter groups of the SLFP, while the SLFP usually formed alliances with the Marxist parties such as the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and the Communist Party (CP).

The alternate control of the state machinery by the UNP and the SLFP has resulted in distinct trends in the foreign policy interactions of the island. However, environmental factors that is domestic and external determinants have led to areas of convergence in the sense that the governments of the two parties have reflected similar responses on important issues areas. The bipartisan approach which has increased with the passage of time has been dealt in this chapter as well as the next where we examine the foreign policy interactions under the SLFP led governments.

In the remaining parts of this chapter we will examine the foreign policy interactions of Sri Lanka at the international system level when the UNP was in power, to preserve and promote its security, stability and status.

## **Patterns in the Foreign Policy Interactions of Sri Lanka: The UNP Governments**

### **The UNP Governments : 1948-1956**

On 4 February, 1948 Sri Lanka then called Ceylon, after nearly four hundred and fifty years of western domination by a secession of western colonial powers namely the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British, attained independence from Britain against the background of the unfolding of the Cold War between the western capitalist countries led by the United States and the communist countries headed by the Soviet Union. The Cold War was then threatening to

becoming an all pervasive phenomenon sparing no part of the globe. It had become an established fact in Eastern Europe and was in the process of spreading its tentacles into Asia. In China, the communists led by Mao and actively supported ideologically and materially by the Soviet Union were engaged in a civil war with the nationalist democratic forces who were aided by the western bloc particularly the United States. It had more or less a certainty that Mao-led communists would soon capture power in China.<sup>15</sup>

Likewise, the communist and democratic forces were engaged in struggle for power in Indonesia, Myanmar, the Indo-China and Korean peninsula. In these countries the strong western support to non-communists had prevented the success of the communists. The Soviet Union under the leadership of Stalin rigidly adhering to the principles of communist internationalism and class struggle, openly supported the actions of the communist forces in these countries as also elsewhere. Consequently the United States led western bloc made efforts to strengthen the non-communist forces in these countries by providing them with ideological, economic and military assistance.<sup>16</sup>

It is against the backdrop of this international scenario that the UNP under the leadership of Don Stephen Senanayake assumed power from Britain. The UNP formed the government by virtue of its securing a slender majority in Parliament, after a bitter and hard-fought contest with the Marxist parties in the 1947 parliamentary elections.<sup>17</sup> Although the Marxist parties failed to form the government in the island, they gave ample evidence of their potentialities to capture power in future. The Marxist parties, who were particularly strong in urban centres and among plantation workers, had international associations from where they derived ideological and material support. Consequently, the UNP governments were confronted with problem of containing the local communist parties and forces from further expanding their strength in the island as well as checkmating the influence of the communist countries in international relations.

The UNP experienced three different persons as Prime Minister during its governance from 1948 to 1956. D.S. Senanayake became the first Prime Minister of independent Sri Lanka, and occupied the coveted chair till his untimely death on 22 March, 1952. He belonged to a very affluent anglicized Buddhist Goyigama family of the low country region, having a very large kinship network which had proved to be an asset to the Senanayakes as well as their kinsmen in their public life. Like the Senanayakes several of their kinsmen were wealthy and had acquired position of notability in the low country social set up such as the Kotelawalas, the Jayawardenes and the Wijewardenes.<sup>18</sup> After the untimely death of D.S. Senanayake, his son Dudley Senanayake succeeded him. Dudley called for fresh elections to Parliament in July 1952. He carried the UNP and its allies to victory over a formidable array of opponents such as the Trotskyite LSSP, the CP and the newly formed SLFP of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. Dudley Senanayake did not remain in office for long. He resigned from the coveted chair in October, 1953 in response to the untoward events which resulted from the general strike – “hartal” – called by the Marxist parties to protest against the decision of his government to reduce the quantity of subsidized rice provided to the people. The strike was a big success even proving beyond the expectations of the organizers. To defuse the strike, the government deployed police force. But this proved counter-productive in the sense the strike gained further momentum consequent to large number of people suffering from casualties and some even succumbing to injuries as a result of police action. As a gesture of accepting responsibility for the unhappy incidents, Dudley resigned from the government.<sup>19</sup> He was succeeded by Sir John Kotelawala, his cousin who was a flamboyant and colourful personality. Sir John remained in office till 1956 electoral verdict which overwhelmingly voted in favour of the SLFP led coalition – The Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP) – headed by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. Accepting full responsibility for the poor show of the UNP at the polls, Sir John Kotelawala retired from the party and also from politics, whereby paving the way for Dudley Senanayake to once again return to lead the UNP.<sup>20</sup>

The three aforementioned Prime Minister that is D.S. Senanayake (1948-52), Dudley Senanayake (1952-53) and Sir John Kotelawala (1953-56) did not have clearly defined conceptions of independent Sri Lanka’s foreign policy. Barring S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike who was

then in the UNP, none of the other stalwarts of the government had given any thought to this aspect of statecraft. This was unlike the situation in India where the Congress leaders of the freedom struggle had developed a coherent framework of the foreign policy of independent India. Sri Lanka's foreign policy was pulled in several directions some of which were essentially incompatible.<sup>21</sup> The three successive UNP leaders claimed that Sri Lanka during their respective tenure as Prime Minister followed the policy of "middle path" in international relations, but in reality the island during their tenures was unambiguously favourably inclined towards the West.<sup>22</sup> During this period the pro-west and vehement anti-communist predilections and prejudices determined the foreign policy interactions of Sri Lanka to ensure its security, stability and status.

The UNP leaders perceived that the geopolitical location of Sri Lanka in the Indian Oceans and the strategic advantages it offers to a dominant power for influencing the politics and security especially of the South and Southeast Asian countries to be an added attraction for the Soviet Union and other communist countries to have interest in the island. This perception was explicitly expressed by Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake, "We are in a especially dangerous position because we are in one of the strategic highways of the world. The country which captures Ceylon would dominate the Indian Ocean."<sup>23</sup> As the Soviet Union led communist movement was attempting to capture power in several of the Indian Ocean littoral and hinterland countries, it was quite inevitable for the UNP leaders to entertain the apprehension that the communist giant would like to ensure its presence in Sri Lanka in order to protect and promote communism in the Indian Ocean region.

D.S. Senanayake and his successors also had apprehension of India's domineering presence in the region and saw it as a threat at least to the autonomy and identity of the island if not to its security. As a result the leadership of the island could not afford to antagonize India, yet resorted to strategies which would obviate India's domineering presence.<sup>24</sup>

As against the fears and apprehension from the Soviet Union and the communist world, the UNP leaders highly appreciated the western liberal democracies especially that of Britain because of their own ideological persuasions and commitments. Moreover, the liberal disposition of the British colonial administration, like its willingness to devolve power to Sri Lankans without much asking and struggle, and its experience of leaving lasting impressions of admiration for the British political traditions, culture, and institution in minds of the dominant political elite of Sri Lanka who were keen to emulate the British system in Sri Lanka, created bonds of affinity between the UNP leaders and their erstwhile colonial ruler. Given the existence of such facilitating factors, it was natural for the UNP leaders to pursue a pro-west policy.<sup>25</sup>

Alongwith the Act of Independence by the British Parliament which granted dominion status to Sri Lanka, D.S. Senanayake signed the Defence and External Affairs Agreements with Britain which provided that Britain would retain her naval base in Trincomalee and air base in Katunayake for the purpose of the defense of the territories and interests of the two signatories and Sri Lanka could use the British diplomatic missions in countries where it did not have its own missions for conducting its diplomatic activities. The Defence Agreement enabled Britain to protect her economic and politico-strategic interests in South and Southeast Asia, while from the point of view of Sri Lanka this agreement helped to fortify the island from any designs by the communists from within as well as abroad and also act as a counter-weight to the domineering presence of India.<sup>26</sup> The Defence Agreement left the initiative to terminate the agreement with the signatories, that is Sri Lanka had the right to ask Britain to leave the two bases when it did not require her military support.<sup>27</sup> The agreement also did not require Sri Lanka to honour British military policies and actions; an enemy of Britain did not automatically become an enemy of Sri Lanka. Furthermore, Sri Lanka had the autonomy to refuse permission to Britain to use the military bases against countries with whom Colombo had friendly relations.<sup>28</sup>

The opposition especially the left parties were critical and opposed the agreements especially the Defence Agreement. But D.S. Senanayake defended the Defence Pact with Britain, “I would like to keep any connections with Britain.... As far as I am concerned I cannot think of

a better and safer friend for Ceylon than Britain. I would ask my friends to look around the world and see for themselves whether there is anyone else who can be of better use to us and of greater help to us than Britain.”<sup>29</sup>

D.S. Senanayake also attempted to foster close relations with other developed Commonwealth countries such as Australia, Canada and New Zealand for gaining confidence and acquiring assurance for the protection of the security and independence of the island from communist threats and designs. He took initiative to convene a meeting of the Commonwealth Foreign Ministers in Colombo in January, 1950. In this conference, Sri Lanka highlighted the danger faced by the countries of South and Southeast Asia after the capture of power by communists in China and argued that the antidote to communism in these countries was improved economic living conditions which would make communism unattractive to the people. Sri Lanka called upon the developed Commonwealth countries to assist the less developed countries to improve their living condition and stabilize the liberal democratic system in these countries. Sri Lanka’s assessment of the situation was accepted by Australia, Britain, Canada and New Zealand. Eventually this effort evolved in what is popularly known as the Colombo Plan which provided for economic and technical cooperation between the developed Commonwealth countries and developing Commonwealth countries for improving the socio-economic conditions and living standards of the people in the developing Commonwealth countries. D.S. Senanayake’s commitment to the Commonwealth was also adhered to by his successors.<sup>30</sup> In fact, Sir John Kotelawala made efforts to further strengthen the bonds with the Commonwealth.<sup>31</sup>

D.S. Senanayake made efforts to promote cordial relations with the U.S. His government allowed the Voice of America to share external broadcast of Radio Ceylon in exchange for the loan of one transmitting set.<sup>32</sup> Furthermore he allowed the distribution of anti-Soviet and anti-communist literature of the US through government offices of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lankan government did not consider it to be an interference by a foreign power in its internal affairs.<sup>33</sup>

The UNP leadership also cooperated with the western bloc to contain the spread of communism in the Southeast Asian region because the success of communism there would have threatened their own dominance in the island. Hence in 1950, D.S. Senanayake permitted port facilities to an American flotilla enroute to Korea to check the advancement of communism there,<sup>34</sup> and in 1954, Sir John allowed refueling facilities to American planes carrying French troops to fight communist forces in the Indo-China region.<sup>35</sup> In fact at one time Prime Minister Kotelawala was considering the idea of joining the SEATO but had to give it up because of adverse domestic and international pressure.<sup>36</sup>

The acuteness of threat perception of the UNP leadership from communism and communist states is clear from the fact that during this period Sri Lanka virtually kept away from the Soviet Union and China. It did not establish any diplomatic ties with them.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, the UNP governments denied the visas to delegates from communist countries. For example, in 1950, D.S. Senanayake did not grant visas to the delegates from the Soviet Union, China and foreign communist parties to attend the tenth anniversary celebration of the Marxist controlled Ceylon Trade Union Federation.<sup>38</sup> Likewise in 1951, his government refused visa to J.G. Crowther, a British Peace activist and member of the British Communist Party, who had been invited to Sri Lanka by a communist led peace organization in the island.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, Sir John Kotelawala's government did not sanction visas to scientists from the Soviet Union to visit Sri Lanka to observe the solar eclipse, though permissions were granted to scientists from non-communist countries such as the US, the UK, France, Canada, Japan and India.<sup>40</sup> Both Dudley Senanayake and Sir John Kotelawala turned down the repeated requests of Communist China for permission to send goodwill mission to Sri Lanka to explore areas in which the two countries could cooperate for their mutual economic and technical benefits.<sup>41</sup> During the tenure of Sir John, ban was imposed on the import of communist literature and films to the island because he considered them to be detrimental to the democratic system of Sri Lanka.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to the pro-west and anti-communist patterns of foreign policy interactions, Sri Lanka during this period also tried to identify with the growing spirit of Afro-Asianism marked

by the Bandung Conference of 1955. It expressed its opposition to colonialism and imperialism. D.S. Senanayake refused to grant facilities to the Dutch to use its airports and harbours in their military operation against the Indonesians who were fighting for their national independence.<sup>43</sup> Although Sri Lanka championed the cause of Afro-Asian peoples and countries, her bias was clearly towards the west. Commenting on the role of Sir John Kotelawala at the Bandung conference, the Economist (London) remarked:

“...he stood up to Mr. Nehru on the relative dangers from colonialism and communism and in doing so, catapulted himself into American hearts, a dangerous action for an Asian leader with an election in offing.”<sup>44</sup>

While the security concerns of the island were attained through the Defence Agreement with Britain, the maintenance of relations with other developed western democracies belonging to the Commonwealth, and the fostering of close politico-strategic interaction with the US and the refusal to have any dealings with the communist countries, the UNP governments pursued the stability motivation with a similar pro-west bias. Being impeded by its own social background and also by its ideological foundation which prevented it from effectuating major structural changes in the economy, the UNP favoured foreign capital investments to improve the economic conditions in the island. To attract foreign private capital, the successive UNP governments assured the potential investors that there was no restriction in the remittance of profits and dividends abroad.<sup>45</sup> In spite of such assurances, foreign private capital did not flow in significant amount to the island because of the lack of profitable opportunities there in comparison to several other countries. Despite the absence of significant amount of new foreign private investments, the British private capital still continued to play a prominent role in the economy of Sri Lanka.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, Sri Lanka's major trading activities were with the sterling area countries, and London was the major centre for the marketing of tea.<sup>47</sup>

Although Sri Lanka failed to attract substantial amount of foreign investments, it did not face dearth of foreign capital liquidity. It had accumulated huge sterling balance through war time activities especially due to the boom in the prices of its exports such as tea and rubber.<sup>48</sup> It

also received assistance from Britain and other developed Commonwealth countries under the programmes of the Colombo Plan. It also availed assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) (World Bank). Besides upto 1952 the island received aid and assistance from the United States under the Four Point Programme of President Truman.<sup>49</sup>

Between 1950 to 1951, it is reported that Sri Lanka received nearly \$ 1,000,000 from the United States. However in 1952, the US suspended aid to Sri Lanka after the island in violation of the UN resolution entered into a barter agreement with China to provide Beijing rubber in exchange of receiving rice from it.<sup>50</sup> The US invoked the Battle Act enacted by the American Congress in October, 1951 imposing embargo on export of strategic materials which included rubber to China and North Korea.<sup>51</sup> Dudley Senanayake and his successor Sir John Kotelawala did not allow the suspension of American aid to the island to adversely affect the politico-strategic relations between the two countries.

Sir John Kotelawala after assuming office visited the US. He tried to explain to the American leaders the economic imperatives which led Sri Lanka to enter into the barter agreement with China. It seems he was able convince the American leaders as they lifted the suspension of aid to Sri Lanka but this did not come about during his tenure. It came into effect when the MEP government headed by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was in power.

In this general patterns of foreign policy interactions of Sri Lanka during the UNP governments between 1948 to 1956, there were certain exceptions or one may say deviations because of the islands political and economic constraints. In 1950, Sri Lanka recognized Communist China. This was more in response to the decision of Britain to recognize China; Britain was motivated to recognize China because protection of her interests in the Southeast and East Asia called for the maintenance of good relations with Beijing. As Sri Lanka's foreign policy management was heavily dependent upon Britain, she had little alternative than to follow

suit. But when China in reciprocation gestured for establishment of formal diplomatic relations, D.S. Senanayake found it ‘bit unusual’ and conveyed that his government would use the good office of British diplomatic mission in Beijing.<sup>52</sup> Second exception was the signing of the Rubber-Rice Barter Agreement with China in 1952 under the terms of which China bought Sri Lankan rubber at a price higher than world market and supplied her rice at a lower price. At first this was a short-term agreement but this was soon followed by a long-term agreement between the two countries. According to this pact, the barter agreement was valid for a period of five years and at the end of five years it was open to renewal.<sup>53</sup>

The reason for Chinese generosity was two fold. Following the invocation of the UN resolution and backed by the US Battle Act, she was denied rubber from her traditional suppliers – Malaysia and Singapore. Secondly by promoting economic relations with Sri Lanka she wanted to nullify the international embargo on her. Likewise Sri Lanka was facing huge stockpile of rubber following the decision of the US (which was until then a major consumer of Sri Lankan rubber) to protect her own synthetic rubber industries. Furthermore Sri Lanka was facing severe shortage of rice. To the UNP leaders, the gesture of China was god-send; it helped the island to solve the twin problems of rubber and rice.

### **The UNP Government : March 1960 – July 1960**

On 26 September, 1958 Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike succumbed to the assassin’s bullet of the previous day. On the very same day he was succeeded by W. Dahanayake the senior most member of his cabinet. Dahanayake belonged to the rightist faction of the SLFP. Much to the discomfiture of the rank and file of the SLFP, Dahanayake pursued a rightist programme, as a result the vast majority of the SLFP dissociated themselves from him. He had to quit SLFP. He formed a new party called Lanka Prajatantrawadi Pakshaya which fared very poorly in elections.<sup>54</sup> In the March 1960 elections no party secured absolute majority in Parliament. The UNP which secured more seats than any other party formed a minority

government under the leadership of Dudley Senanayake. The government of Dudley Senanayake was a short-lived one. It was defeated in parliament on 22 April, 1960 by the combined efforts of the SLFP and the left parties. Parliament was again dissolved and another election was scheduled for 20 July, 1960 which returned the SLFP to power under the leadership of Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the widow of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. From the date of his defeat and till the formation of the government by Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Dudley Senanayake led UNP functioned as the care-taker government.<sup>55</sup>

### **The UNP Led National Government : 1965-1970**

In the general elections of March 1965 no party secured an absolute majority in the House of Representatives. The UNP emerged as the largest party in the House by winning 66 seats. It formed a grand coalition government consisting of the Federal Party (FP) which had won 14 seats, the Tamil Congress (TC) which had 3 seats, Sri Lanka Freedom Socialist Party (SLFSP) which had won 5 seats and four independent members. The UNP which was headed by Dudley Senanayake, christened the coalition government as the National Government as it represented all the major ethnic groups and religious communities of the island.<sup>56</sup>

When the UNP-led coalition assumed power there was marked transformation in the domestic and international settings of the island. The Cold War was showing signs of waning consequent to the Cuban Missiles Crisis. The two super powers were engaged in relaxing tensions between them. Furthermore, the Soviet Union under the leadership of Khrushchev had enunciated the doctrine of peaceful co-existence of all nations despite ideological differences. He had also developed the theory of non-capitalist path of development and peaceful transition to socialism through parliamentary means. These two formulations considerably altered the views of liberals and conservatives towards the Soviet Union.<sup>57</sup>

In late fifties the monolithic notion of communism also proved illusory following the breakaway of China from the Soviet camp. By early 1960s the Chinese Communist Party had developed major ideological differences with the Soviet Union on the global situation and also in the role of the Soviet Union as a communist state. It accused the Soviet Union of 'revisionism' because of the two formulations of Khrushchev and also of becoming a social imperialist power. It equated the Soviet Union with the USA which it characterized as a capitalist imperialist power. It saw no differences between the two super powers.<sup>58</sup> Consequently China strove to emerge as a major player in international politics and proclaimed herself to be the champion of the exploited nations and peoples of the world. All these developments led to the appearance of a new cold war – popularly called the Moscow-Peking (Beijing) Anti-thesis.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, China desired to be acknowledged as the leader of the underdog nations and peoples, struggling against imperialist forces, but she found in India an important rival. India enjoyed a position of respectability among underdog countries.<sup>60</sup> In 1962 these two states were engaged in a border conflict which threatened the peace and stability of the sub-continent.

Besides significant changes were marked in the domestic political setting of Sri Lanka. During the tenure of the SLFP led governments under the Bandaranaiques, the state apparatus was used to radicalize the political processes to facilitate the development of state capitalism in the island.<sup>61</sup> Also during this period, Sri Lanka not only recognized a number of communist states but also established diplomatic and economic relations with them. Sri Lanka proclaimed her foreign policy to be nonaligned and actively pursued to promote the NAM.<sup>62</sup> The UNP, in order to remain a political force, had to adjust to these developments which infused a degree of liberalism in its external perceptions and attitudes.

The major concern of the UNP led National Government headed by Dudley Senanayake was to maintain stability in the island. The crisis impeded the economy because of huge population growth and large scale unemployment, rising expectations of the masses coupled with increasing prices of import items and declining prices of export products. Under these

circumstances, Dudley needed to implement the populist programme offered by his party otherwise his fate in Sri Lankan politics would have been a forgone conclusion.<sup>63</sup>

For this purpose, the UNP led government's interactions were more with the western countries.<sup>64</sup> It settled the misunderstanding that had cropped up following Mrs. Bandaranaike's nationalization of the Anglo-American oil companies in 1962 which had resulted in the suspension of American aid to Sri Lanka. The UNP government agreed to pay Rs.55 millions as compensation to the oil companies within a period of five years.<sup>65</sup> Following this settlement, Sri Lanka once again became a recipient of American aid and assistance.<sup>66</sup> Dudley Senanayake also undertook goodwill tours to several western countries to procure aid and assistance for the island. During this period Dudley Senanayake seriously considered the prospects of joining the ASEAN, but the government had to give it up because of severe criticism from the opposition political parties.<sup>67</sup>

In procuring foreign capital Prime Minister Dudley faced the hurdles raised by Mrs. Bandaranaike's government to deter foreign private capital operations in the island. In 1961 she attempted to implement the Ten Year Plan formulated in 1958 to promote economic development and expansion of employment opportunities through regulation and control of industries in the private sector which was then mainly in the hands of foreign capitalists.<sup>68</sup> To attract foreign capital to the island, Dudley assured that his government had no intention of nationalizing the foreign companies, and in case it was prompted to do so in the nation's interest adequate compensation would be paid.<sup>69</sup> Through legislation he also lifted restrictions in the activities of foreign banks. Consequently there was more inflow of western aid to the island than it was during the SLFP government. It is worth mentioning that western assistance was mainly channelized through international development agencies like the World Bank and the IMF. This reflected their new strategy to camouflage the exploitative character of such grants which had become self-evident in country to country transactions leading to articulation of adverse international public opinion. But grants channelized through international agencies were not free from strings tied to them to suit to market and production conditions prevailing in the donor

countries.<sup>70</sup> However, Premier Dudley Senanayake had little hesitation in accepting such help for it enabled him to stabilize the economy, besides countering the penetration of the communist countries as well as upsetting the economic programme of the SLFP.

British banks were the first to respond to the initiatives taken by Dudley. They concluded an agreement with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka under which they offered credit to the tune of £ 4,000,000 and a further £ 2,000,000 as a contingent arrangement to be used in emergency.<sup>71</sup> Also these banks agreed to provide long-term loans to the Development Corporation of Ceylon.<sup>72</sup>

Other than this, the World Bank too favourably responded by organizing an Aid Ceylon Group in 1965 comprising of Australia, Canada, France, Japan, West Germany, the UK and the USA to provide aid to Sri Lanka on planned basis. Through five comprehensive programmes it committed aid to the tune of Rs.2,100 million between 1965 and 1969.<sup>73</sup>

In addition to this, Sri Lanka received individual aid and grants from the USA under PL 480 programme.<sup>74</sup> It also received aid from Britain in its individual capacity and as a member of various other aid organizations such Colombo Plan. In 1965 Britain committed to Sri Lanka an interest free loan to the tune of Rs.21.71 million maturing over a period of 25 years, for the import of British goods such as fertilizers, vehicles, tractors etc. necessary for increasing agricultural productivity in the island.<sup>75</sup> Under the Rome Aid Convention, Britain granted aid of Rs.1 million for the purchase of wheat and other coarse grain other than rice. It also helped in the expansion of telecommunication lines in the island.<sup>76</sup>

Though a pro-West tilt was clearly discernible under the UNP regime, it continued to interact with the communist countries in the pattern set by the Bandaranaiques for rescinding it would have cast doubts over its declarations of being nonaligned. Also these interactions provided Sri Lanka stable markets for her exports and import commodities. The UNP regime

welcomed aid and assistance from them. To this the two communist powers reacted in different ways. While the Soviet Union and its East European allies continued to help Sri Lanka as had been the case during the SLFP period, China for certain conjectural reasons maintained an indifferent posture. The Soviet Union's warm relation could be ascribed to her basic motive to curb the influence of China in the region and having found an opportunity because of China's lukewarm attitude, set to exploit it effectively. The Soviet Union's commitment during the UNP regime of Dudley Senanayake amounted to Rs.142.8 million in grants and credits.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, in response to the not so cordial relation prevailing between them, China only confined her activities to the Rubber-Rice Barter agreement which was annually renewed and reviewed. China also acknowledged other previous commitments. However, there was no new initiatives from the side of China.<sup>78</sup>

The erosion of cordiality with China resulted from the misperceptions of Sri Lankan and Chinese ruling elites. Though the UNP was induced with liberalism in its external relations, it continued to maintain its conservative posture within the country. Besides, it also had to appease the religious groups who had played significant role in its victory. To satisfy these conservative elements it reimposed the ban on import of revolutionary Marxist literature into the island, which had been annulled in 1956.<sup>79</sup> Also, the government requested three communist embassies to reduce their staff to the bare minimum. It refused visas to the delegates of the Indonesian Communist Party to participate in the annual celebration of the communist controlled Sri Lankan Plantation Workers' Union.<sup>80</sup> Visas of two Chinese diplomats were also not renewed.<sup>81</sup> Other than these measures the UNP elites' responses to certain events also underlined their attitude towards China.

The UNP's attitude towards China started crystallizing as early as 1959 when she annexed Tibet which had raised much anxiety among local Buddhist ecclesiastics.<sup>82</sup> In 1962 China was involved in a border clash with India which had its repercussions on Sri Lankan politics. The local Tamil population was sympathetic towards India and castigated China as the

aggressor.<sup>83</sup> On both these occasions the UNP then in opposition had supported the popular feelings as the then ruling SLFP had refused to take position in the two issues.

Relations between Sri Lanka and Communist China further deteriorated with news reports in Sri Lanka about the harassment and persecution of Buddhist and Muslims in China by the Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution. In November, 1966 Sri Lankan media reported the formation of a special cells, the 'Revolutionary Struggle Group for the Abolition of Islam' in China.<sup>84</sup> Sri Lankan 'Buddhists gave a call for a global campaign against the persecution of Buddhist in China. Similarly Sri Lankan Muslims led by M.H. Mohammed, the Labour and Housing Minister in the cabinet of Dudley Senanayake, went in a delegation to the Chinese embassy to submit a protest note protesting the alleged atrocities against Chinese Muslims.<sup>85</sup>

In response the Chinese government reacted vehemently towards Mohammed's actions and protested to the Ministry of External Affairs of Sri Lanka demanding that the Government of Sri Lanka "should bear unshrinking responsibility for Mr. Mohammed's activities as he is a minister."<sup>86</sup> Refusing to be cowed down, the Sri Lankan government averred that M.H. Mohammed had protested against the atrocities against Muslims in China in his individual capacity and as the leader of the island's Muslim community.<sup>87</sup>

The downward trend in Sino-Sri Lanka relations did not end with this and several other diplomatic disputes occurred between the two countries. In February, 1967 China lodged a protest over the alleged disparaging reference to Chairman Mao in a broadcast by Ceylon Broadcasting Corporation and warned that repetition of such unfriendly act would adversely impinge on the diplomatic relations between the two countries.<sup>88</sup> In a dispute between China and the Soviet Union regarding a correspondence from the Chinese embassy characterizing the Soviet Premier distastefully 'as a filthy swine;' the Soviet mission brought the matter to the attention of the Government of Sri Lanka. In keeping with good diplomatic decorum, the latter warned the Chinese embassy against offending a country with which it had friendly relations.<sup>89</sup>

Acrimony between the two countries touched a new high in August, 1967. The Chinese Embassy alleged pilferage and destruction of diplomatic goods by 'vicious elements' in connivance with the Sri Lankan government. The Chinese Embassy cited the forcible examinations of goods meant for the use of the embassy by the custom officials of Sri Lanka during the past two years in support of its accusations. The External Affairs Ministry of Sri Lanka dismissed the charges as 'frivolous' and 'absurd.'<sup>90</sup>

China, however, took the accusations in all seriousness. A group of Red Guards staged a four-hour long demonstration in front of the Sri Lankan Embassy in Beijing denouncing the reactionaries in Sri Lanka attempting to destroy the good relations between the two countries. The Beijing Review under the caption 'Ceylon must stop anti-China provocations' underlined the impossibility of maintaining normal trade relations in the circumstances, and held the UNP Government responsible for all consequences arising thereof.<sup>91</sup>

Mutual exchanges between Sri Lanka and Taiwan in the areas of culture and sports was yet another source of hostility between China and Sri Lanka. Invitations to the Taiwanese came from organizations like the Ceylon Lawn Tennis Association, World Maha Sangha Conference and other such cultural bodies. A Taiwanese delegation also visited Sri Lanka to study the Sri Lankan tea industry, while some Sri Lankans visited Taiwan to participate in the Asian Confederations of Chambers of Commerce Conference, and some other non-official delegations visited Taiwan including a delegation of technical persons to study scientific methods of paddy cultivation there. Overly sensitive to and perturbed by these interactions China made exaggerated accusations against Sri Lanka blaming it for promoting the two China theory. China's protests submitted in writing to the Sri Lankan Ministry of External Affairs in August, 1967 used extremely intemperate language.<sup>92</sup>

Refuting Chinese accusations, Dudley Senanayake clarified that in the democratic political system of Sri Lanka institutions and organizations enjoyed considerable autonomy. He also emphasized that his government supported the entry of China to the United Nations. Given this, the Chinese accusation that his government supported the two China theory was baseless.<sup>93</sup> Dudley Senanayake took strong objection to the intemperate content and language of Chinese protest and announced in Parliament, “we want to be in the best of terms with China. But be it China, the USA and the USSR or any other power, we will not be bullied or badgered by anyone.”<sup>94</sup>

Near the eve of the expiry of the Third Rubber-Rice barter agreement, another row erupted between the two countries over the confiscation of 300 Mao badges by the Sri Lankan customs authorities. The Chinese Embassy demanded the return of the badges and government clearance for an additional 500 Mao badges, claiming that the presentation of these badges to friendly Sri Lankan people was in complete accord with international diplomatic etiquette. Sri Lanka on the contrary viewed this as unauthorized disposal of imported articles by a foreign mission that impinged on the internal affairs of the island. Therefore it refused to give in.<sup>95</sup>

The cumulative impact of such disputes created apprehension among Sri Lankan leadership about Beijing not renewing the Rubber-Rice agreement again. This was reinforced by the fact that China which had been the major aid donor to the previous SLFP led governments had not sanctioned any development aid to Sri Lanka since the UNP assumed power. Chinese leaders both in Beijing and in their Embassy in Colombo had threatened to suspend trade with Sri Lanka if it joined the ASEAN which Dudley Senanayake at this moment was keen to join. Wise counsel prevailed upon Dudley who desisted from pursuing his desire of Sri Lanka joining the ASEAN.<sup>96</sup>

Fortuitously the wheel of fortune was in favour of the UNP led government. Notwithstanding the rancour between the two countries, in November, 1967 the two countries

signed the fourth-five year Rubber-Rice Barter Agreement. Thus the UNP led government was saved from the consequences of a possible national food crisis for which it would have been held responsible. Despite bickering, the trade relations between the two countries progressed on the whole. China did not revise the benevolent trading terms on which it had so far supplied Sri Lanka with rice at a price lower than of the international market, and procuring Sri Lankan rubber at a premium.<sup>97</sup>

There was one exception to the foreign policy pronouncements of Dudley Senanayake. As leader of the opposition, he had been highly critical of the Maritime Agreements that Sirimavo Bandaranaike had signed with the Soviet Union and China. During his election campaign Dudley had pledged that he would abrogate the two agreements if he was elected to power. However, on coming to power he continued with the agreements in flagrant violation of his election pledges.<sup>98</sup> Abrogation of the agreement would have adversely affected Sri Lanka's relations with the communist countries. In addition to casting aspersions on his pronouncement of pursuing 'real nonalignment' in international politics, the abrogation of the agreements would have denied Sri Lanka of stable source of aid and also market for its exports. With the economy in doldrums, Dudley Senanayake could not afford to take such risks.

To sum up, the patterns of Sri Lanka's external relation during the period of the UNP-led National Government was a strong bias towards the West as in the past, but at the same time it did not project the strong anti-communist bias characteristic of the past. Nor did it show any marked cordiality towards the latter. The structural changes in the international system as well as in the international relations of Sri Lanka when the UNP was out of power influenced the mellowing of the anti-communist attitude of the UNP under the leadership of Dudley Senanayake. Furthermore, the imperatives of Sri Lanka's social formation and political economy led the UNP to compromise with its ideological pledges and policies; despite a critical stance towards the Maritime Agreements, Dudley Senanayake did not act accordingly because this would have ended trade with the Soviet Union and China endangering the economy of the island that would have worked to his own and his government's detriment.

### **The UNP Government (1977-88) : The J.R. Jayewardene Era**

The UNP with overwhelming popular support returned to power in 1977 under the leadership of J.R. Jayewardene. The UNP won 139 seats out of the total 168 seats which gave it 83% of the seats in the Assembly. The SLFP won only 8 seats and the LSPP and CP both failed to win a single seat. For the first time in the parliamentary history of Sri Lanka the former ruling party was so decimated that it did not even become the largest party in the opposition. The TULF secured 18 seats to become the largest party in opposition.<sup>99</sup>

The reason for the UNP spectacular show in the elections was because of the popular resentment of the SLFP governance. In addition to the extension of the parliament by two years that is instead of the normal five year period, there were other issues such as high cost of living, worsening unemployment, corruption, inefficiency, abuse of power, family patronage, creation of a new ‘mudadalali’ capitalist class which alienated the voters from the party.<sup>100</sup> J.R. Jayewardene, the veteran campaigner of so many elections, who had taken over the leadership of the UNP, realized the public mood. He quickly pledged that he would usher in what he described as a ‘dharmista’ (just and righteous) government if voted in to power.<sup>101</sup> The UNP pledged that it will set right the political, social and economic systems right under the rubric of democratic socialism. The Manifesto of the UNP said, “In implementing socialism, we do not intend to fit the government into the place of the private capitalist. We do not intend to concentrate and centralize production, distribution and financial power in the hands of government, a privileged class or a few families.... We emphasize the fact that our policy is not socialism alone but democratic socialism.”<sup>102</sup> The UNP’s victory in 1977 thus was both a reaction against the political excesses and arbitrary exercise of power by the SLFP Government as well as an expression of hope the UNP would save the people from the worsening socio-economic situation in the country.

Soon on assuming power, J.R. Jayewardene introduced a bill in the parliament to amend the 1972 constitution and installed a Presidential system of government in the French model. The bill on the new constitution was introduced in Parliament in August 9, 1978 which was passed by 137 voting for and seven against the bill. The former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike and members of her SLFP voted against the bill. While the TULF boycotted the voting on the ground that the new constitution did not redress the grievances of the Tamils, Mr. S. Thondaman the leader of the Ceylon Workers Congress (a constituent of the TULF and sole representative in Parliament of the people of Indian origin) voted with the government. The amendment to the 1972 Constitution was finally approved by the National Assembly on 4 October 1978 and it replaced the existing constitution. The new Presidential form of government which is an amended form of the French model had been advocated by the UNP during its election campaign for the general election held in July 1977.<sup>103</sup>

The new constitution of 1978 marked a complete break from the previous constitution. The President who is Head of the State, Head of the Government and the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces is elected by the people and holds office for a term of six years. J.R. Jayewardene became the first President under the 1978 constitution. The hallmarks of the 1978 Constitution are that the President is elected by the people and the legislature which has power to legislate is also elected by the people. The judiciary has been granted independence and autonomy by the new constitution. The constitution clearly provides that the powers of the judiciary cannot be encroached by either the executive or the legislature. The Executive power is vested in the President. The President is responsible to Parliament for the due execution and performance of his powers. The Cabinet of Ministers of which the President is the head is collectively responsible and answerable to Parliament. Executive power cannot be abused by the President, legislative powers cannot be abused by Parliament. Both the executive power and the legislative power must be exercised within the limits prescribed by the people in their constitution. Judiciary is there to ensure that the constitutional demarcations of power are not over-stepped.<sup>104</sup>

After the July 1977 elections, J.R. Jayewardene as Prime Minister retained the office of Minister of Defence but for the first time appointed a separate Minister of Foreign Affairs, A.C.S. Hameed. This arrangement was unlike the previous era. All of the predecessors of J.R. Jayewardene had kept the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in their hands. When J.R. Jayewardene assumed the position of Presidency under the new constitution, Hameed continued as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Although Jayewardene did not keep the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with him, he was the most decisive actor in this sphere. He imparted initiatives and directives on the formulation and execution of the foreign policy of the island.

The international milieu had witnessed a period of détente consequent to the realization of the two super powers of the dangers involved in the race between them to acquire more and more nuclear weapons. This race posed threats to their very existence. The two super powers recognized that the nuclear balance of terror is precarious. They realized that it was in their common interest for mutual survival to control the arms race. However, the period of détente did not last for long. The blow to détente came with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and symbolized the beginning of the New Cold War.

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was perceived by the then American President, Jimmy Carter, as “Soviet Aggression in Afghanistan - unless checked – confronts the world with the most serious strategic challenge since the cold war began.”<sup>105</sup> The US perceived threats from the Soviet Union to its interests in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean regions. President Carter asserted that the US would use military force to protect its interests in the two regions. The US also shelved its deliberations on the SALT-II as a consequence of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Besides trying to secure military bases in Kenya, Somalia and Oman, the US made Pakistan its frontline state and provided Pakistan with military weapons. It used Pakistan as a base to support forces in Afghanistan who were opposed to the Soviet Union, and the Soviet supported regime there. The US also saw India, Sri Lanka and other states in the Indian Ocean as important actors to secure its interests.<sup>106</sup> All these moves by the US threatened the Soviet Union

and it was forced to detract its cooperative attitude towards the US. The Soviet President, Brezhnev in October 1982 asserted that “Russia declares détente with the USA as dead.”<sup>107</sup>

Since the early 1970s bipolarity was no longer the single defining factor of international politics. Forces other than East-West antagonism began shaping the international system and contributed to the undermining of the bipolar system; economic ties in the international system proliferated and intensified. The emerging new system has been described as Pentagonal International System.<sup>108</sup> Militarily the system remained bipolar. Although Britain, France and China had developed nuclear weapons, their arsenals paled compared to those of the two super powers. The two super powers were only capable to project their power anywhere around the world. However, politically speaking, the international system was tripolar following the split between the Soviet Union and China. China initially competed with the two powers for gaining influence and status in the international system. But with the thaw in the Sino-American relations in the 1970s, China attempted to improve its relation with the US, West European countries and Japan. China and the Soviet Union struggled with each other for regional hegemony in Asia. Economically speaking the international system witnessed the preponderance of these actors namely the United States, Western Europe and Japan. As consequence of these structural changes in the international system, the five power centers – the United States, the Soviet Union, China, Western Europe, and Japan – had emerged as the leading elements of international politics.<sup>109</sup>

J.R. Jayewardene assumed power in the backdrop of the Pentagonal International System. On the domestic front he was confronted with problems of maintaining the stability of the political system which was being threatened by deteriorating economic conditions and protecting the territorial integrity of the island which was being threatened by the Tamil separatist under the leadership of the LTTE demanding the creation of the Tamil state of Eelam. The LTTE resorted to violent means to achieve its goal. Thus J.R. Jayewardene was required to resolve the twin problems.

His attempt to solve the Tamil ethnic problem was to devolve power to the Tamils within the framework of united Sri Lanka. In this regard he made efforts to engage the Tamil separatists in talks to devolve power and at the same time resorted to military action to disarm the LTTE, which was a well-organized militant outfit. As Sri Lanka's armed forces were not equipped in arms and ammunition to tackle the Tamil militant separatists, he appealed to friendly powers for assistance but his efforts in this direction were not very successful.

The economic woes of the island were tackled in the expected lines. As with previous UNP governments, J.R. Jayewardene liberalized foreign exchange control and import restrictions and devalued the rupee and made politico-economic environment friendly for foreign investment. He also undertook development programmes such as the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Scheme, creation of the Free Trade Zone and the Greater Colombo Development Scheme.<sup>110</sup> For the actualization of these programmes as well as improvement of the economic plight of the people foreign investment and aid was imperative.

Under J.R. Jayewardene, the economic content of foreign policy received due recognition. A.C.S. Hameed, the Minister of Foreign Affairs speaking in Parliament in December 1977 openly acknowledged this fact:

“Our Foreign Policy, I must say, is being given a new orientation. We are a poor country, we are struggling for survival. Long economic stagnation has made it impossible for the people of this country to have a fair and square meal. From stagnation to rapid development, it is a difficult process. Therefore, I seek to make our foreign policy an effective instrument of economic development.”<sup>111</sup>

Keeping with the fact that Sri Lanka required capital, technology and markets for her exports, friendship with all countries was essential. Unlike Sirimavo Bandaranaike's foreign policy, Jayewardene was not keen to be involved in international matters as for him the main task ahead was rejuvenation of the Sri Lankan economy. He clearly stated, Sri Lanka should not

involve herself too much in international politics as too much ‘dynamism is harmful,’<sup>112</sup> and could be detrimental to the interest of a poor country like Sri Lanka. He advocated a foreign policy which would be more active with regard to trade and other economic relations.<sup>113</sup> Thus Jayawardene avoided high visibility in international politics and concentrated on the economic dimension of foreign policy quite unlike his predecessor, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who was high profile and dynamic.

The IMF and the World Bank had a decisive say in the formulation of the economic policy of the UNP government. At the behest of the IMF and the World Bank, the UNP government abolished the food subsidy to a great extent, allowed unrestricted imports by private sector and devalued the rupee.<sup>114</sup> Sri Lanka had to abide by the prescriptions because without that aid would not have flowed to the island. Some of prescriptive measures especially the one relating to abolition of food subsidy was not appreciated by the UNP leadership but they had to abide to the IMF and World Bank prescriptions because without that aid would not have been forthcoming from the West. The IMF made available to Sri Lanka a standby credit of Rs.5000 millions<sup>115</sup> and the World Bank followed this by sending its Regional Director for South Asia, Dr. David Hopper in March 1978. Dr. Hopper congratulated the government of J.R. Jayewardene on courageous steps taken by it in its first budget and promised the Bank’s support for the completion of the Accelerated Mahaweli Scheme. He remarked that the Western Powers in Aid Sri Lanka Consortium were “most sympathetic to the government’s efforts to revitalize the economy, to establish a Free Trade Zone, and particularly to harness for agriculture and power the waters of the Mahaweli Ganga.”<sup>116</sup>

The cutting down of food subsidy led Hooper to describe it as ‘courageous’ step but his reference to the Mahaweli project was incomprehensible. The Mahaweli Project had been an ongoing project ever since 1970 and the World Bank could have mobilized additional foreign assistance for it much earlier than 1977 if it was really concerned with the interests of the people of Sri Lanka. Instead it waited for a new pro-west government to come to power which would pursue a rightwing policy.<sup>117</sup>

Needless to mention that the foreign policy of the UNP government headed by J.R. Jayewardene veered towards the West particularly towards the UK and the USA. It sought economic aid and assistance from Britain and America. Britain donated 1000 million pounds to finance the Victoria Dam Project of the Mahaweli Development Scheme. This is the largest British aid given to any developing country.<sup>118</sup> This act on the part of Britain indicated her willingness to enter into closer economic ties with the Jayewardene government.

Following the riots of 1983, Jayewardene expected Britain to come to the rescue of Sri Lanka. Jayewardene referred to the continuing validity of the 1948 Defence Pact between Sri Lanka and Britain. He also visited Britain seeking military assistance to deal with the ethnic crisis but he returned disappointed. Britain was not keen to get involved in the ethnic conflict. Furthermore, during the UK Prime Minister Mrs. Thatcher's visit to Sri Lanka to ceremonially declare the opening of the massive Victoria Dam of the Mahaweli Project, the British Prime Minister expressed concern over the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka and tacitly advised Jayewardene to find a political solution to the problem.<sup>119</sup> She did not favourably respond to the request of Jayewardene to station British troops in the island as Britain had been doing in some parts of Central America.<sup>120</sup>

There could be several reasons for the British non-involvement in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. First and foremost, Britain did not want to offend India as her involvement could not have augured well with India. Secondly, her involvement would have offended Tamils Nadu and it could have generated immense pressure on New Delhi to come to the aid of Sri Lankan Tamils. Thus such actions could have complicated the situation in Sri Lanka and would have not furthered the interests of Britain in South Asia in anyway. However, in some circles, the view that Britain had military engagement in the ethnic conflict prevailed based on the fact that a British mercenaries of the Keenie Meenie Services (KMS) were operating in Sri Lanka training Sri Lankan armed forces. The KMS was a private security organization composed of former British elite commandors and registered in the Channel Island. British government denied its

links with KMS and claimed that it had no control over its activities.<sup>121</sup> Thus Britain was keen to promote economic ties with the government of J.R. Jayewardene, but London had no desire to get involved in the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. It favoured a peaceful political solution to the problem.

Sri Lanka also developed close links with Canada. In fact, since the inception of the Colombo Plan, Canada had been a constant source of aid to Sri Lanka and had shown interest in the economic and social development of the island. Canadian aid has been mainly to develop the agriculture sector. The most significant development indicating the growing links between Canada and Sri Lanka during this period was the agreement between the two countries to jointly undertake the construction of a major dam on the Maducu Oya as part of the Mahaweli Development Project. The Canadian contribution towards this project was to the tune of Rs.1080 million. Furthermore, Canada was to provide the engineering plans towards the construction of the dam.<sup>122</sup>

As regards the US, the nationalization of oil, banking and insurance sectors of the economy by the previous United Front government of Sirimavo Bandaranaike had touched sensitive areas of American interests. But situation improved after J.R. Jayewardene assumed power. The US was appreciative of the liberal, pro-West economic programme of the UNP government. It was keen to assist Sri Lanka's development programmes and secure the stability of the island. This was evident from the selection of Sri Lanka as one of the 11 states to benefit from the US special assistance to developing countries.<sup>123</sup> Aid from US flowed both through international agencies such as the UNDP and the World Bank as well as bilaterally. In 1981 the US granted \$ 110 million economic aid to assist the development programme of the UNP government.<sup>124</sup> With regard to the Mahaweli Development Project, the US provided Sri Lanka with aid worth Rs.100 million for setting up of five national parks in the project area.<sup>125</sup> In this regard Jean Kirkpatrick, the US ambassador to the UN remarked, "I realize the strong determination of the government and the people of Sri Lanka to force vigorously with their

development programme, particularly those which will enrich and improve the quality of life of the less fortunate in rural areas and the cities.”<sup>126</sup>

Following the 1983 riots, Sri Lanka looked forward towards the USA for military assistance. It was expected that the USA would involve in the ethnic problem in exchange for facilities in Trincomalee. The suspicion arose from the visit of the US Secretary for Defence, Casper Weinberger, to the island in October, 1983.<sup>127</sup> Two months after the visit by Weinberger, the US ambassador at large Vernon Walters came to Sri Lanka.<sup>128</sup> This visit was followed by two more important visits by high ranking American officials. Congressman Joseph Addabbo, Chairman of the House Defence Appropriation Committee came in January 1984, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, Howard B. Shaffer in February, 1984.<sup>129</sup> During the same period Sri Lanka hastened to conclude certain deals with the USA which carried strategic implications. In December 1983, the UNP government leased out to the Bermuda based oil company Oreleum the oil storage complex in the strategic port of Trincomalee.<sup>130</sup> In the same month another agreement was signed between Sri Lanka and the USA which permitted the Voice of America (VOA) to install a transmitter of 2,500 K.W. capacity in Sri Lankan territory making it the largest radio station outside the US.<sup>131</sup> All these developments raised the suspicion that the USA would militarily involve itself in favour of the Sri Lankan government in the ethnic conflict besieging the island. However later developments belied such perceptions.

President Jayewardene visited the USA in June, 1984 amidst speculation that he was going to sign a defence pact with the USA in the pattern of the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1971.<sup>132</sup> In his talks with President Reagan, terrorism figured prominently with particular reference to Tamil terrorism. But no agreement was signed on the issue. Instead an agreement was signed to conduct an oceanographic survey of the coastline of the island and to promote exchange of personnel between the two countries in the field of science and technology. Much to the disappointment of Jayewardene, Reagan administration did not make any commitment on supply of military hardware nor was a defence pact signed.

Moreover, when the UNP government opted for a military solution to the ethnic problem, the USA stand towards Sri Lanka was not favourable. Washington took serious note of the human rights violation and the denial to the Red Cross to study the ethnic situation and distribute relief piqued the USA most.<sup>133</sup> Reagan administration expressed its displeasure and curtailed American assistance for 1986 by 50 per cent.<sup>134</sup> Although America was in favour of a united Sri Lanka and was thus opposed towards the Tamil separatists, it wanted a political solution of the problem, that is it wanted a peaceful resolution. When India air dropped relief in Jaffna, America did not criticize India but felt that Indian action was on humanitarian ground. Furthermore, it also welcomed the Peace Accord signed between Sri Lanka and India calling it an historical landmark and appreciated India's mediatory role.<sup>135</sup>

One remarkable feature of the UNP government of J.R. Jayewardene was that closer relations with the West did not mean strained relations with China. This was because of the dramatic improvement in Sino-American relations since 1971 and especially since 1978. The two countries consulted each other on a wide range of regional and international issues. The USA and China devised coordinated policies on such issues, as Indo-China and Afghanistan. Sino-American relations by the end of seventies amounted if not to an alliance, at least to a reasonably close alignment between Beijing and Washington. In the words of President Carter "they were friends rather than allies."<sup>136</sup> It is not illogical to say according to General A. Haig, the NATO Supreme Commander in Europe, that "China is the 16<sup>th</sup> member of the North Atlantic Alliance."<sup>137</sup> In this favourable environment, Sri Lanka had no difficulty in maintaining cordial relations with both America and China.

The close cooperation of Sri Lanka with China served two purposes. It provided her with much-needed aid and assistance and also a counter-weight to India. Soon after assuming office, the UNP government signed a pact with China renewing the Rice-Rubber Barter agreement for the sixth time in October, 1977.<sup>138</sup> This agreement was signed in Beijing between Sri Lankan Trade Minister and Jayewardene's special envoy L. Athulathmudali and Chinese Minister for Foreign Trade. The latter praised Sri Lanka for its role in international relations and its steadfast

commitment to the policy of nonalignment and anti-imperialism. Likewise Chinese Vice Premier, Geng Biao visited Sri Lanka in June, 1978 and he too appreciated the role played by Sri Lanka in international affairs and also the contribution of Colombo to non-alignment. Geng Biao expressed the support of China to the Sri Lankan proposal to make Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace.<sup>139</sup> Sri Lankan Foreign Minister A.C.S. Hameed responded to the gesture of Biao by declaring that “ties between Sri Lanka and China are as old as the hills” and that it was the UNP government in 1950 that first recognized the People’s Republic of China.<sup>140</sup> Prime Minister Premadasa stated that the government and the people of Sri Lanka firmly believed that a strong China was a necessary stabilizing force in Asia. Premadasa further admitted that in bilateral relations China and Sri Lanka had no differences.

Reciprocating to this visit, Hameed visited China in July 1979 to lay the ground work for the visit of Prime Minister Premadasa in August, 1979. The visit of Premadasa was to further consolidate and expand friendly relations and cooperation between the two countries. In response to Sri Lanka’s policy of nonalignment China agreed to grant an interest free loan of approximately Rs.500 million to Sri Lanka repayable in 20 years. In another agreement concluded in January, 1980, China agreed to provide approximately the same amount for technical and economic cooperation. The Chinese aid was meant to promote development projects in Sri Lanka such as housing, satellite townships, and industrialization.<sup>141</sup> China had further agreed to carry out overhauling, free of costs the gun boats which it had gifted to Sri Lanka in 1972. The cost of the overhauling and spares were estimated to be Rs.15 million.<sup>142</sup>

China had already been a major supplier of arms to Sri Lanka. According to the Daily Mirror, 50 percent of Sri Lanka’s arms and ammunition came from China. After the July riots Jayewardene sent his brother Hector Jayewardene to Beijing to seek China’s help to solve the ethnic crisis. China refused to directly get involved in the crisis as it considered it to be a purely internal matter of Sri Lanka. However, making reference to India, the Chinese Premier Zhao Ziyang remarked that “nations should not utilize others ethnic disputes to accomplish their own ‘aims’ and ‘the big’ should not bully the small.”<sup>143</sup> Although China was reluctant to involve

herself in the Sri Lankan ethnic dispute, she provided arms and ammunition to Sri Lanka to handle the crisis. When the Presidents of the two countries exchanged visits in May 1984, there was discussion on Chinese arms for Sri Lanka. According to Jane's Defence Weekly an agreement was concluded by the end of 1984 for supply of five Shanghai style patrol craft and T-86 assault rifles.<sup>144</sup> Thus although J.R. Jayewardene's government was pro-west in its foreign policy predilections, it did not strain the island's relation with China because of pragmatic policies of both the countries in international relations.

Sri Lanka's relations with the Soviet Union has been cordial since the establishment of diplomatic ties between them in 1956. Although Sri Lanka condemned Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, Moscow did not let this to adversely affect its relations with the island state. The external interaction between the two countries was in the area of trade and commerce. The Soviet Union was one of the major suppliers of industrial products such machinery, equipment, rubber processing machines, lathe machines, cement, window glass, household electric meters, tractors and fertilizer. Furthermore the Soviet Union was one of main importers Sri Lankan rubber, tea and coir. Initially Moscow bought only crepe rubber but now it imports sheet rubber too. The value of trade between Sri Lanka and the Soviet Union in 1983 was around Rs.1160 million.<sup>145</sup> There has been a remarkable increase of Soviet imports from Sri Lanka ranging from Rs.214 million in 1978 to Rs.1070 million in 1983.<sup>146</sup> Besides trade, the Soviet Union provided aid to Sri Lanka for development of various sectors of the island's economy. It proposed to provide capital and technical know-how for the construction of a steel plant and also helped Sri Lanka in the development of its house-building endeavour. Besides, repairing of Soviet ships were also undertaken in Colombo port. In 1987, the Soviet Union gave aid to Sri Lanka for developing the irrigation system A of the Mahaweli project.<sup>147</sup>

During the post 1983 ethnic crisis, there was suspicion in Sri Lanka that the Soviet Union could be involved in helping the Tamil militants. But there was no convincing evidence of Soviet help to the Tamil militants. In fact Uma Maheshwaran, leader of the leftist militant group, People's Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) is on record of complaining that the

Soviet Union was not giving any help to the Tamil revolutionaries.<sup>148</sup> As a matter of fact, Moscow welcomed the Peace Accord between India and Sri Lanka and viewed it as a positive development to bring peace in the island.<sup>149</sup>

During this period Sri Lanka maintained good relations with Israel and Japan. While close relations with Israel was politico-strategic in nature, relationship with Japan was predominantly economic. Sri Lanka had established diplomatic relations with Israel in 1957 and trade relation between the two countries was good.<sup>150</sup> Israel bought traditional Sri Lankan exports. But it was Sri Lankan stand in the issue of Palestine that marred the relationship between the two countries. In the war between Israel and Arab countries in 1967, Dudley Senanayake condemned Israel as the aggressor. In the 1970s Arab countries emerged as an important factor in the economy of Sri Lanka because of oil aid. Subsequently Sri Lanka severed its diplomatic relations with Israel.<sup>151</sup> The need for rapprochement of relations with Israel became imperative as western aid and assistance to tackle the ethnic crisis was not forthcoming. Sri Lanka looked to Israel for the acquisition of arms and also military support. Israel responded favourably to Sri Lanka's desire as it wanted to come out of its diplomatic isolation. The involvement of Israel was multi-dimensional. It supplied Sri Lanka with arms and ammunition. It also trained Sri Lankan military personnel in counter insurgency operation. It provided assistance in the agriculture sector too. In 1984, a Israel Interest Section was opened in Colombo. It was housed in the US embassy. It was reported by the media that Israel's secret service agency, the Mossad was actively involved in training the Special Task Force of Sri Lanka. The media also alleged that Israel sold to Colombo missile equipped gun boats, rockets and other arms and ammunition.<sup>152</sup> Besides military assistance, Israel's trade with Sri Lanka witnessed rapid progress. In 1984, Sri Lanka's export to Israel amounted to \$ 2.26 million which soared to \$ 90 million by 1986. Sri Lanka exported coconut, tea, rubber, gemstones etc. to Israel, while it imported paper products, insecticide, phosphate, etc., besides arms and ammunition.<sup>153</sup>

One of Jayewardene government's significant policy initiatives was directed towards development of a closer relationship with Japan.<sup>154</sup> Jayewardene had always been a popular

figure in Japan because of his stand at the Japanese Peace Treaty Conference, San Francisco, 1951 when he had waived reparations on behalf of Sri Lanka citing the Buddhist text that “hatred ceases not by hatred but by love.”<sup>155</sup> When he visited Japan in September 1979 on his way back from the Havana NAM Summit, the Emperor of Japan himself reminded him of this and declared, “our people were profoundly moved by it at that time and they will never forget it in future. I wish to take this opportunity to convey to him our gratitude for it.”<sup>156</sup> Japan had been a member of Sri Lanka Aid Consortium set up under the auspices of the World Bank since its inception in 1968. Japan provided Sri Lanka bilateral and multilateral aid. Japan’s aid to Sri Lanka increased significantly after the visit of Jayewardene to Japan. Japan’s bilateral commitments were to provide aid for the completion of a television broadcasting station, food production and housing projects, and assistance in constructing a 1001 bed hospital in Jayewardenepura/Kotte the site for the proposed new capital of Sri Lanka.<sup>157</sup> As a member of the Aid Consortium its aid upto 1979 was to the tune of Yen 45.2 billion. Further it provided outright grants, loans and aid. It also provided aid for training of technical personnel. In 1979, the total bilateral loan from Japan amounted to Yen 9 billion almost double the amount it provided in 1978 which was Yen 5.5 billion. Furthermore in 1979 the government of Japan extended a project loan of Yen 1,800 million for the Ingimitiya irrigation dam of the Mahaweli Development Scheme.<sup>158</sup>

Thus foreign policy of J.R. Jayewardene was inward-looking. It was geared to promote economic development and growth. In this context, he liberalized the economy and undertook major projects such as the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme, Free Trade Zone and Greater Colombo Development Scheme. To finance his economic agenda, he looked towards the West like his UNP predecessors. However, his relations with the Soviet Union and China were good because of the changed global strategic environment especially the shedding of revolutionary fervor by the communist states. Although western aid and assistance was forthcoming to rejuvenate the Sri Lankan economy, the West refused to come to the assistance of the UNP government to tackle the ethnic crisis which threatened the stability and integrity of the island.

### **Patterns of Bipartisan Interactions**

Despite dependence on the West, the successive UNP governments pursued the ‘status’ motivation as it helped them to project the identity of the island state in international politics which insured its security and internal stability. It articulated the public opinion in the island which was for the assertion of the independence of the island. It also called for establishment of emotive links with other Afro-Asian people opposing colonialism and imperialism and the cold war. Such identification with Afro-Asian nationalism not only helped the UNP leadership to carry their own masses, but also provided them a larger platform to interact with other states. This minimized their threat perception from the forces operating in the international system. This interaction pattern was also pursued more assertively by the SLFP led governments. We will discuss the SLFP led governments bipartisan interactions in the next chapter. Here we will confine our discussion to the pursuit of ‘status’ motivation of the UNP governments.

D.S. Senanayake declared his foreign policy to be that of ‘middle path.’ The ‘middle path’ policy manifested in his government’s active participation in Asian Relations Conference held in New Delhi in 1947 to mobilize international support for the Indonesian nationalist struggle against Dutch colonial rule. The government of D.S. Senanayake supported the Indonesian nationalists. He refused port facilities to the Dutch warships en-route to Indonesia to suppress the liberation movement.<sup>159</sup> Besides the UNP government expressed its strong desire to be a member of the United Nations but its aspiration was thwarted because it got embroiled in the prevailing cold war politics. Unhappy with this turn of events, the UNP leaders demanded the establishment of an Asian United Nations free from cold war politics, but this did not find much support.<sup>160</sup>

In the pursuit of ‘status’ motivation, Sir John Kotelawala was more outward than his two predecessors, D.S. Senanayake and Dudley Senanayake, because of his own desire to play prominent role in the Afro-Asian movement. He also expressed his desire to make Sri Lanka “the

Switzerland of Asia.” He convened in Colombo in 1954, a conference of five South East Asian Prime Ministers to discuss the problems of the region. In Bandung Conference of 1955 he championed the cause of Afro-Asian community and signed two declarations: (1) to abstain from the use of collective defence arrangements to serve the interests of any two of the super powers and (2) oppose colonialism and imperialism in all its manifestations and bring an early end to it. In the Bandung Conference, he made a distinction between China and the Soviet Union characterizing the latter to be a colonial power because of its role in East Europe.<sup>161</sup> In short, the UNP governments of this period opposed imperialism and colonialism and the cold war in all its manifestations.

Similar trend was exhibited by the UNP in their second term in office under the leadership of Dudley Senanayake. He declared its foreign policy to be one of genuine nonalignment. Dudley asserted that his government could pursue a strict nonaligned policy as opposed to the nonaligned policy of the Bandaranaike which veered towards the communist countries. It is worthwhile to mention that S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike had given concrete shape to the policy of ‘middle path’ of D.S. Senanayake and called his foreign policy to be nonaligned. Dudley adhered to the nonaligned foreign policy of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. Dudley attempted to identify with other weak or oppressed nations. During his tenure as the Prime Minister, he supported China’s quest for membership of the United Nations and expressed concern over the unstable situation in the Middle East and Vietnam. Particularly in the case of Vietnam he took initiatives to bring peace in the area. He proposed a solution for peace which was conveyed to the concerned parties. The North Vietnamese authorities agreed to Prime Minister Dudley’s proposal only on the condition that it should precede a ceasefire in accordance with the Geneva Agreement of 1954. Besides North Vietnam contended that first talks should begin with the National Liberation Front and the South Vietnam government. But such a conference was aborted because of the resumption of incessant bombing on Hanoi by the US.<sup>162</sup>

Premier Dudley Senanayake’s proposal viewed the problem of Vietnam as an internal problem of the Vietnamese people which should be resolved through dialogue and negotiation

between North Vietnam, The National Liberation Front and South Vietnam. The meetings between the three involved parties should be free from external interference. Furthermore, he suggested that if the concerned parties decided that the service of a 'neutral' nation was necessary to facilitate the dialogue process, Sri Lanka was willing to act as the facilitator.<sup>163</sup> Vietnamese were predominantly Buddhists, and Dudley's initiative in this context was to appease the Buddhist population of Sri Lanka by prevailing upon them that he was seriously interested in promoting peace in that region. The UNP Prime Minister too did not approve American bombing and military operations.

The renewal of hostilities between Israel and the Arab countries in June 1967, the third Arab-Israel war since 1948, proved yet another foreign policy crisis. Dudley Senanayake condemned the event without naming Israel as the aggressor and affirmed that the territories gained by Israel through hostilities should be returned immediately. He indicated that the position of the Sri Lankan Government "today is no different from what it was in 1957" but he refused to call Israel as the aggressor.<sup>164</sup>

In 1968, when the Soviet Union and its four East European allies, East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary intervened in Czechoslovakia to suppress popular reaction against the Czech government, Sri Lanka strongly disapproved the act and demanded immediate withdrawal of the troops of the Soviet and its four East European allies and restoration of democratic rights to the Czechs to determine their own government. Needless to mention that though the UNP government disapproved the intervention of the Soviet Union and its four allies, Sri Lanka refused to be dragged into the Cold War politics.<sup>165</sup>

Mr. Dudley Senanayake in various conferences like the Commonwealth and the NAM and in his bilateral discussion with other countries made his position clear of opposition to colonialism, racialism, imperialism and the Cold War. He demanded the withdrawal of colonial powers from Africa and elsewhere. In this context, he criticized the racist government of Ian

Smith in Rhodesia but did not criticize the racist government in South Africa as the latter was a major market for Sri Lanka's exports. He continued with the policies of the previous SLFP government on issues pertaining to world peace and disarmament, and demanded for reform of international economic order to facilitate the development of the Third World countries.

When J.R. Jayewardene became the head of the government of Sri Lanka he continued with the bipartisan approach on foreign policy as had been the case with his predecessors. Since Sri Lanka was the chairman of the Nonaligned Movement (NAM), with the defeat of Mrs. Bandaranaike the position automatically fell on the shoulders of Jayewardene as he was the new head of the state. Although Jayewardene was critical of Sirimavo Bandaranaike's foreign policy, he did not deviate from the role set forth by Sirimavo Bandaranaike. In fact his Foreign Minister A.C.S. Hameed declared in Parliament that "our commitment to Nonalignment is unquestionable and unchallengeable" but the new UNP government hoped to give Sri Lanka's foreign policy a new orientation with a strong economic foundation.<sup>166</sup>

In his inaugural address to the Colombo Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of Non-aligned countries in June 1979, President Jayewardene himself stated categorically:

"Non-alignment runs like a golden thread through the fabric of our country's foreign policy, though changes may take place in the quality, colours and shape of that fabric from time to time. At no stage has our country deviated from that policy."<sup>167</sup>

During the chairmanship of NAM, Jayewardene's government faced many challenges to the movement. But with shrewdness and sagacity, Sri Lanka was able to tide over these challenges and ensure that the integrity of NAM does not become a casualty. The Arab nations had demanded the expulsion of Egypt from NAM because of her rapprochement with Israel. India and several other countries backed Egypt. Sri Lanka was careful not to take any side in this

controversy but worked with India and other moderate countries such as Yugoslavia, and Tanzania and postponed the issue of the expulsion of Egypt.<sup>168</sup>

In Kampuchea, the Heng Samrin regime which came to power with the backing of the Soviet Union and Vietnam by ousting the Pol Pot regime which had the support of the US and China. The issue became critical when both – Heng Samrin and Pol Pot – claimed to represent their country and demanded the right to full membership of and participation in the NAM. Jayewardene refused to recognize the Heng Samrin regime on the ground that it had seized power with support of external forces. In a closed door meeting of prominent NAM members, a consensus was reached to allow the Pol Pot regime to attend the NAM meeting without being permitted to participate in the deliberation as the Heng Semrin region had total control of the state. A final decision on the Kampuchean issue was put off for the Havana Summit.<sup>169</sup>

The UNP government strongly condemned the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan as it violated the principle of non-interference in the domestic jurisdiction of a sovereign state. But it did not support the call of the USA to boycott the Moscow Olympics.<sup>170</sup> Likewise it was very critical of the intervention of the US in Grenada.<sup>171</sup> But on the Falkland crisis where Britain had militarily intervened in the island, Sri Lanka supported Britain claiming that Argentina too had used military force.<sup>172</sup>

Continuity was maintained by the UNP government of J.R. Jayewardene on issues of the demand for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), declaration of Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace (IOZP) and disarmament. Jayewardene government accepted the Action Programme for Economic Cooperation approved at the Colombo Non-aligned Summit under the leadership of Sirimavo Bandaranaike, however, the UNP leadership was disillusioned at the slow progress of NIEO. Expressing his own disillusionment, President Jayewardene on the occasion of his September 1979 visit to Japan declared at a lunch hosted by the Japanese Prime Minister:

“There is (also) widespread disillusionment over the prospects for restructuring international economic relations and bringing about equitable North-South economic relations. Nevertheless it is coming to be recognized that the further dynamic development of the North cannot be dissociated from the further development of the South in an increasingly interdependent world.

It is our earnest hope therefore that the present period of difficulty will not lead to total disillusionment but rather that it will provide an impetus to both North and South to grapple with the problems that affect our own destinies.”<sup>173</sup>

The case for the NIEO was put in even stronger terms by Prime Minister Premadasa in an address to the UN General Assembly in September 1980:

“The exploitation which leads to poverty is endemic in the structure of international economic relations today. That is why we talk of a New International Economic Order. It is an order where human rights are respected; where economic inequalities and poverty are eliminated; where malnutrition and illiteracy are removed.”<sup>174</sup>

As the leader of opposition, J.R. Jayawardene was critical of Mrs. Bandaranaike’s proposal for Indian Ocean as Zone of Peace (IOZP). He described it as “idealistic and impractical.”<sup>175</sup> When he headed the government, as a well known Sri Lankan scholar remarks, “he was notably inarticulate in the IOZP concept.”<sup>176</sup> However, when he came to power, the UNP had accepted the proposal. So he had no choice but to pursue the idea. His Foreign Minister A.C.S. Hameed in an speech in the UN General Assembly on September 29, 1977 remarked:

“Sri Lanka has a special interest in the implementation of IOZP Declaration, in regard to which there has unfortunately been no worthwhile progress since its adoption in 1971.”<sup>177</sup>

In 1980 he reiterated the same statement and his serious disappointment at lack of progress in the implementation of IOZP. Similar statements were echoed in the UN General Assembly. As there was no cooperation from the Big powers, the matter was postponed year after year and the UN declaration did not take off.

While Mrs. Bandaranaike's own special contribution to NAM had been her sponsorship of the proposal to make Indian Ocean a Zone of Peace, J.R. Jayawardene's special emphasis was on disarmament. He made a specific appeal for creating a World Disarmament Authority (WDA) at the February 1978 regional meeting of Commonwealth Heads of States in Sydney. Under Sri Lanka's sponsorship the proposal that a World Disarmament Authority (WDA) be created within the UN framework was adopted by the non-aligned group and later by the UN General Assembly itself. The proposed WDA was to be a single centre of operation and would replace disjointed and sometimes overlapping activities in the field of disarmament.<sup>178</sup> Like IOZP declaration, the WDA remained on paper without making any serious headway because of lack of cooperation from the major powers.

To sum up the successive UNP governments projected a pro-West bias. While in the first phase such bias was explicit, with UNP governments cooperating with the West to suppress communist led nationalist struggles in Vietnam and Korea, such explicit anti-communist activities was not discernible in their subsequent tenures. While opposing racism and other undemocratic practices, the UNP governments occasionally made compromises. For instance, while Dudley Senanayake was critical of the Ian Smith regime in Rhodesia, he was not so vocal on South Africa. Similarly while being critical of Israel, he refused to brand Israel as the aggressor in 1967 Middle East crisis as both South Africa and Israel offered very lucrative markets for Sri Lankan exports. During the tenure of J.R. Jayewardene Sri Lanka did not castigate British in the Falkland crisis, though most of the nonaligned countries condemned British action. Perhaps this attitude of Sri Lanka was to secure British military assistance to tackle its own ethnic crisis, but this proved futile as Britain refrained from getting involved in the

crisis. Barring these omissions, successive UNP governments projected a bipartisan pattern of interaction in the pursuit of the status motivation.

## NOTES

1. In social sciences, especially international relations a problem can be analyzed at various levels. The choice of the levels from which the problem is examined depends upon the methodological and conceptual conviction of the analyst as well as to convenience and analytical clarity of his research project. Of course there are debates on this issue in the discipline. See J.D. Singer, "Levels of Analysis Problem in International Relations," in Klaus Knorr and Sidney Vesba, eds., *The International System : Theoretical Essays* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977). Waltz is an ardent protagonist of the international system-level analysis. See Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1959), and his most recent work, *Theory of International Relations* (Readings, Mass: Addison Wosley, 1979). Atal, Berton, Brecher and several other scholars have highlighted the advantages of the sub-systemic level of analysis as complimentary to systemic level of analysis. The subsystemic level focus of attention is in the subsystemic factors which are often overlooked by the system level analysis. For good exposition of the subsystemic level see Yogesh Atal, "Subordinate State System and the Nation State : Tools of Analysis of External Milieu" in S.P. Verma and K.P. Mishra, eds., *Foreign Policies of South Asia* (Delhi: Vikas, 1969), pp.40-53 and Peter Berton, "International Subsystems : A Submacro Approach to International Studies," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 13, no. 4, 1969, pp. 329-35. In this study Sri Lanka's foreign policy has been analyzed at the systemic and subsystemic levels separately in order to examine and assess the impacts of systemic and subsystemic level factors and forces in shaping the perceptions and responses of its foreign policy.
  
2. For a good analytical overview of the perspectives on leadership and foreign policy behaviour, see Robert Jervis, *Perceptions and Misperception in International Politics*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

3. Sir John abandoned his desire to seek membership for Sri Lanka in the SEATO because of opposition from his own party. Likewise Dahanayake was overthrown from the SLFP when he pursued policies which went against the ideology of the party. These have been discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.
4. For details, see Urmila Phadnis, "Politics of Coalition Government in Sri Lanka" in K.P. Karunakaran, ed., *Coalition Government in India: Problems and Prospects*, (Dehradun: Institute of Advanced Study, 1975); James Jupp, *Sri Lanka : The Third World Democracy*, (London: Frank Cass, 1978); and A. Jeyaratam Wilson, *Politics in Sri Lanka : 1947-1979*, (London: Macmillan, 1979).
5. See W.A. Wiswa Warnapala and L. Dias Hewagame, *Recent Politics in Sri Lanka : The Presidential Election and Referendum of 1982*, (New Delhi: Navrang, 1983).
6. See S.U. Kodikara, *Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka, A Third World Perspective*, (Delhi: Chanakya, 1982).
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. See Calvin W. Woodward, *The Growth of Party System in Ceylon*, (Providence: Brown University Press, 1969).
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.

15. Andreas Wenger and Doran Zimmermann, *International Relations : From the Cold War to the Globalized World*, (New Delhi: Viva Books, 2004), pp.13-51.
16. Ibid.
17. See Satchi Ponnambalam, *Dependent Capitalism in Crisis : The Sri Lanka Economy 1948-1980*, (London: Zed Press, 1981).
18. See Jupp, no. 4, pp. 46-50.
19. Ibid., pp. 46-7.
20. Ibid.
21. This has been documentedly described by H.S.S. Nissanka, *Sri Lanka's Foreign Policy : A Study in Non-alignment*, (New Delhi: Vikas, 1984).
22. Ibid.
23. *Ceylon, House of Representatives, Parliamentary Debates*, 1947, col. 44.
24. See S.U. Kodikara ed., *Dilemmas of Indo-Sri Lanka Relations*, (Colombo: S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike National Memorial Foundation, 1991), pp. 5-33.
25. See Lucy M. Jacob, *Sri Lanka : From Dominion to Republic*, (Delhi: National, 1973), pp.1-21.
26. Ibid., pp. 23-27.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.
29. *Ceylon, House of Representatives, Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. 1, 1947, col. 731.

30. D.M. Prasad, *Ceylon's Foreign Policy Under The Bandaranaiques*, (New Delhi: S. Chand, 1973), p. 14.
31. R. P. Sinha, *Sri Lanka : United States Relations*, (New Delhi: Commonwealth, 1992), pp. 26-27.
32. Ibid., p. 20.
33. Ibid., p. 21.
34. J.R. Jayewardene, "D.S. Senanayake, A Study of His Foreign Policy," *The Ceylon Historical Journal*, Colombo, Vol. 5, 1955, p. 55.
35. Urmila Phadnis, "Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka in the Seventies," *Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis*, Vol. 8, no. 1, 1975, p. 95.
36. Sinha, no. 31, p. 31.
37. Kodikara, no. 6, p. 56.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Prasad, no. 31, p. 17.
44. "New Faces in Ceylon," *The Economist*, (London, Vo. 179, 9/6/1956, p. 1004).

45. Jacob, no. 25, pp. 119-125.
46. Ibid.
47. Ibid.
48. H.N.S. Karunatilake, *Economic Development in Ceylon*, (New York: Praeger, 1971), pp. 27-28.
49. Prasad, no. 31, p. 20.
50. Ibid.
51. Kodikara, no. 6, pp. 94-95.
52. Ibid., pp. 56-60.
53. See Sivananda Patnaik and Sanjeeb K. Haldar, "Sino-Sri Lanka Economic Relations," *China Report*, Vol. 16, no. 6, 1980, pp. 21-22; Vijay Kumar, *India, Sri Lanka – China Relations*, (New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House, 1986), pp. 15-18.
54. Jupp, no. 4, pp. 11-14.
55. Ibid.
56. C.B. Gena, "Political Survey of Ceylon – 1966," *South Asian Studies*, Vol. 12, 1967, p.171.
57. See for detail discussion Andrei Kokoshin, *Soviet Strategic Thought : 1917-1991*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
58. K.N. Ramachandran, *Power and Ideology : Sino-Soviet Dispute*, (New Delhi: South Asia Publishers, 1977).

59. Allen S. Whiting, "Contradictions in Moscow - Peking Axis," *Journal of Politics*, February 1958, pp. 127-61.
60. See Wenger and Zimmermann, no. 15, pp. 127-129.
61. See Ponnambalam, no. 17, pp. 38-51.
62. Nissanka, no. 21, pp. 49-82.
63. See for detail discussion Jupp, no. 4, pp. 6-7.
64. Sinha, no. 31, pp. 95-128.
65. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
67. Ibid.; The opposition parties denounced ASEAN as a secret arm of the SEATO and declared that Sri Lanka's participation in ASEAN would be a compromise of her non-aligned foreign policy.
68. For details see A. Thiagarajah, *The Economic Development of Ceylon with special reference to Industrialization*, (Jaffna: Jaffna University Press, 1969).
69. *Ceylon Today*, Vol. 15, no. 4, 1966, p. 13.
70. Ponnambalam, no. 17, pp. 53-59.
71. Ceylon, House of Representative, Parliamentary Debates, Vol. 79, no. 9, 1968, cols. 1451-2.
72. Ibid.
73. *Ceylon Today*, Vol. 18, no.7-8, July-August, 1969, p. 13.

74. Ibid., Vol. 15, no. 4, April 1965, p. 18.
75. Ibid., Vol. 18, no.1-2, January-February 1969, p. 18.
76. Ibid., Vol. 16, no. 6, June 1967, p. 17.
77. Vijay Kumar, no. 53, pp. 93-95.
78. See Patnaik and Haldar, no. 53.
79. Vijay Kumar, no. 53, p. 97.
80. Ibid.
81. Ibid.
82. Kodikara, no. 6, pp. 118-19.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid., p. 119.
85. Ibid.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.
88. Vijay Kumar, no. 53, p. 99.
89. Ibid.
90. Kodikara, no. 6, p. 121.

91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
93. Ibid.
94. Ibid.
95. Ibid.
96. Sinha, no. 31, p. 110.
97. Patnaik and Haldar, no. 53, pp. 24-25.
98. See Urmila Phadnis, no. 35.
99. See Ponnambalam, no. 17, pp. 142-143.
100. Ibid.
101. Ibid.
102. Ibid.
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