

Colvin R. de Silva

***THE FAILURE OF
COMMUNALIST
POLITICS***

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Extracts from the Hansard — debate on the Address from the throne

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Mr. Deputy-Chairman, I say it in all seriousness that I count it a privilege, even if it makes some difficulties for me personally, to follow upon one of the best thought out and most thoroughly documented speeches that this House has been privileged to hear. If hon. Members, especially in the rearmost benches on the opposite side, found the historical proof of the fact that the M. E. P. consists of a rag bag of odds and ends a little difficult to bear, I trust that the fact that some at least of them are after dinner will help them to digest that speech.

It had originally been intended that I should speak immediately after my good Friend the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food. In a way I am sorry that I had not the opportunity to do that. Even as he spoke, I had it flitting across my mind to say,

After the thunder and the lightning, the gentle rain; after the storms of the night before, the dew

and then to claim that I was the rain and I the gentle dew. But as I listened to him there grew upon me an increasing sense of disappointment. I liked the Hon. Minister when he was my colleague and a revolutionary. I have admired him as a speaker, devastating in his onslaughts upon opponents. I have even held him in high esteem as a tried politician with the greatest capacity for manoeuvre. But when I find that he is trying to blossom at this late stage into the old and discredited model of a statesman, I confess I am sorely disappointed. Nevertheless, there were touches of the old Philip! that Philip who knew even in desperate straits to fight. There were touches of him in his speech.

He referred to the fact that in the four or five days of the end of last May, large numbers of our people, whatever the race they may belong to, shed thousands of years of civilization in a matter of minutes and went back to primitive, nay prehistoric, Neanderthal man. His simile was apt but I cannot congratulate him on his effort to defend Neanderthal man. It was a futile effort. It would appear these are but the inevitable upheavals that must accompany freedom. For 500 years, we in Ceylon have lived without reverting to our underlying Neanderthalism; and then was it as a result of some evil spirit evoking that deep-down primitiveness in us that we suddenly reverted to our Neanderthalism?

He even went into a grossly misleading parallel from across the water in order to illustrate a thesis which is the subtlest defence of Neanderthalism that I have yet met. He said that he had studied the history of India with some closeness from 1922 onwards. Permit me to say that I am not entirely innocent of a similar study. Permit me to state that my study of India goes a little earlier even than 1922. It is easy to endorse the statement that for decades and generations in India there were witnessed upheavals from the depths of society similar to that which we saw late in May last in the form of communal riots.

I have spoken of them here back in June 1956, when hon. Members of this Government, triumphant still in the consciousness of an electoral victory, were forced to throw on this House their Sinhala Only Bill. On that occasion, I related and recited to this House the consequences I had personally seen, known and experienced in the sub-continent of India on such occasions. And let me remind my hon. Friend that one must study history not in order to find apologetics but in order to learn and to apply the lessons in order that we may not repeat mistakes that bigger countries can afford.

Why does he not complete his study of history and his exposition of it in this House by reminding us that out of those repeated communal riots, which the Governments of the day were unable to find the political answer to, there came the splitting of India into two pieces which are today known as India and Pakistan? Must we repeat it? Says he "We will forget it; we can forget five days of Neanderthalism." We may try to forget, but those who came under the fear that attended upon that exhibition of Neanderthalism, will wake up night after night in the future with the terror of that Neanderthalism in their memories, and until those memories can be erased, till we can once more meet each other in this country—not as has been done today by Members of the Government or by the hon. Member for Jaffna (Mr. Ponnambalam) as Sinhalese and Tamils—as Ceylonese with a sense of common nationality, we will take this country from one set of disasters to another, so that other men at other times may produce other apologies for them to explain themselves.

Why are we not learning the lesson of India? Must we, in the certainty of the capacity of the Government to which we belong, put into the streets bayoneted and steel-helmeted men to keep order? Have we to repeat this ancient and discredited mantram that out of injustice unity can flow, that out of division prosperity can flow, that

out of mutual suspicion some queer new nationalism can flow? Why do we not face up to the facts? Is it not better, would it not be fruitful for Members of the Government itself, for this entire House and for the country with us to ponder the sequences of events which have little to do with what the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food thought it necessary to relate today?

Before the 1956 April General Election, the United National Party, flushed with nine years of power and self-deceived by the fact that its leading group had been in power for 20 years, decided that the people of this country can be utilized to implement what was nothing but political treachery. Be that as it may, they at the Kelaniya sessions publicly changed their policy and came out with that Sinhala only claim. When that act of theirs was accompanied by rank bestialism and foul behaviour at the Town Hall meeting which the L. S. S. P. held, we said then that those were fair warnings of what was coming if those in power insisted on pursuing any policies of that nature. The U. N. P. and the M. E. P. entered into a tragic competition on the subject of Sinhala only. I know, Sir, in the M. E. P. manifesto there certainly was a declaration that they stood for Sinhala only as the official language with the reasonable use of Tamil accorded to people who spoke that language. But it is also necessary to remember that in the agitational activities of the general elections if there were indeed any member of the governing party of today who did remember that tag about the reasonable use of Tamil they did so in a voice that was hardly audible. Thereafter, we had 1956 June—the riots in Colombo, the riots in the Gal Oya Valley, the riots in Batticaloa—Sinhalese and Tamils, Ceylonese of our country, killing each other, injuring and damaging each other merely because the one was a Tamil or the other Sinhalese and it was in respect of that occurrence that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food was once sure that but for them the trees would have been growing today over our graves. Sir, if anyone can find in his heart occasion for pride in that situation, it is a measure of the degeneration that that person has undergone and not a measure of the principles for which we stand. I never thought to myself that one who had been a colleague and friend of mine could have used the term that he used today. Some of you may have in this House wondered what this reference to thuppahi socialism was—

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: What?

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: May I educate you in the political terminology of your Colleague the Minister of Agriculture and Food? This is a reference to a colleague of mine who is today a Senator. His name I shall state in this House. He is Senator Doric de Souza who is the son of the most famous nationalist editor of this country in the dark days of the 1915 riots. If this man stood for thuppai nationalism, at whose feet the father of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food worshipped! I beg him not to forget that.

The Hon. D. P. R. Gunawardena: I explained the term fully.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: That is not all. The Hon. Minister of Finance stood up today and he was most thoroughgoing in his condemnation of the hon Member for Jaffna (Mr. Ponnambalam). I shall come to that shortly. But he also stood up there and, in the language of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food, not merely stood up but stood up on his hind legs. He stood up there and he said that he would not be in this Government if his Government was unfair to the Christian minority to which he belonged. Doric de Souza's father, Armand de Souza was a Goan—that is his thuppai-ism! He was one of the most courageous of men of his day and I will be wanting in my duty and in my honour if I do not say here that Doric de Souza is equally one of the most intelligent and most courageous of men of today. But one may not like his brand of Marxist socialism. It would appear that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food had read all the Marxist books before some of us had read any. If the House does not mind a rather esoteric reference I should like to remind the Hon. Minister of Plekhanov who had read all the books on Marxist socialism before Lenin; and yet Plekhanov had to be denounced by Lenin as a traitor to the Revolution in 1905.

And today my hon. Friend sits there, I hope, denounced by Doric de Souza as traitor to the working class movement and of Marxist socialism in this country —(Interruption.)

The Hon. D. P. R. Gunawardena: As the hon. Member understands it!

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: I agree it must be as I understand—just as the Hon. Minister must go by his understanding of it. But his understanding of Marxism is as it is written in the tradition of Bernstein and of Jean Jaures and of the other men who in the name of expediency and contemporary practicality fled from the principles that they had had the courage to teach others.

Oh, yes, the M. E. P. in his opinion has a programme that will enable this country to lay the foundations of socialism.

The Hon. D. P. R. Gunawardena: Time will tell.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: For two years my hon. Friend and I living in the same jail sometimes studied and discussed the same books, and he will remember, and I hope he will remind his hon. colleague on his right, that the heart and the substance of a socialist society is a nationalized economy in which all that is decisive in production stands nationalized. And then, in order to teach the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food a brand of socialism to which he now adheres there got up in anticipation of him—who?—my always loquacious, too oftener rant and more consistently thoughtless nephew, the hon. Minister of Lands and Land Development. He made a very important declaration in this House. That is what is important. He said in this House, “We have nationalized transport”. “We are nationalising”, he thought, the Harbour—but I remind him—only the loading and unloading operations. But he said, “Now, no more nationalization”.

The Hon. C. P. de Silva: Immediately.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: My good Friend very characteristically and all too often speaks thoughtlessly. Even if the Hon. Minister intended to say “immediately”, he forgot to do so and not accidentally.

The Hon. C. P. de Silva: May I explain?

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Certainly, let the Hon. Minister correct himself.

The Hon. C. P. de Silva: Not immediately. What I said was until it is efficiently worked.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Even then I am sorry his memory is failing him. What he said was, “But since we do not have a reliable Public Service we cannot—(Interruption.)

The Hon. C. P. de Silva: Not “reliable”—“efficient.”

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Since we have not got an efficient Public Service we cannot nationalise! Let us take the nationalising of really important industries. Let us think for him and take his thought another step. The next step to that is: “Until we have an efficient Public Service we cannot do any further nationalization.”

For two years they have administered this country and the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food says they have ended up with the civil administration paralysed and incapable of carrying on, having had to resort to the Military and their bayonets in order to keep their administration going. So now the thought of nationalization is postponed till the emergency is over. Then if there is another emergency there will have to be a re-starting, a re-winding, re-tuning up of the normal civil administration, and then of course we shall have another lapse to Neanderthalism and we shall have another emergency and then we shall have to recover from that emergency. No, Sir, this is in line with the earlier pronouncements of the Government.

On the eve of the departure of the Hon. Minister of Finance to the United States of America on one of those begging-bowl expeditions which everyone used to condemn when they were made to Whitehall, it was announced by the Government that, in particular, the nationalization of the foreign-owned tea plantations for which the plans of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food are complete down even to the figure of compensation, and I have no doubt the source of the finance, has been put off for five years. I beg your pardon, for ten years, but five years would do for me, for on their own estimates they hope to last the three years which would bring them up to the next general elections. But judging by the continuous behaviour of the back-benchers one can already see that they are conscious that whether they last the next three years or not they are not going to see the inside of this Assembly thereafter.

Now, Sir, you then postpone your nationalization beyond the lifetime of your Government and you say that is what you mean by "immediate". Of course, but the truth is elsewhere; the truth is in an earlier remark which the Hon. Minister of Lands had made which when he made I was not present but which, I understand, he made and that is, that the question of the socialist development of this country must have as its precondition the rendering of this country self-sufficient in food.

Dr. Perera: Who said that?

Dr. Colvin R; de Silva: None but the same source. Now, this is, of course, the newest argument against socialism. You cannot have socialism in a country till you have made it self-sufficient in food. I beg your pardon, it was even before you

get to Socialism; you cannot plan your economy till you reach self-sufficiency and, of course, till you plan your economy you cannot talk of socialism.

The Hon. C. P. de Silva: You were told all wrong.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: What did you say, I will take it from you? I will readily give way to my hon. Friend.

The Hon. C. P. de Silva: In working out any plan of development one basic fact should be remembered, that is, that we import today a large quantity of foodstuffs somewhere in the region of Rs. 375,000,000 most of which we can produce here and to produce which employment can be given to a large body of people. That is one of the basic facts.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: If that is the pathetic statement he made, I am sorry I took it up for criticism at all. One would have expected some argument to flow from this.

The Hon. C. P. de Silva: It is a fact.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Of course, it is a fact, but the task of thought is to relate elementary facts together in order that you may arrive at a complicated conclusion. That, at least, in spite of my good Friend's mathematical training he does not seem to have mastered in other fields. No, Sir. This self-sufficiency in food talk is coffin talk. The only place in which you can have logical self-sufficiency is in your grave; there is no other place.

I once met in South India, along with my Friend the Minister of Agriculture and Food, a gentleman whose name I will not mention, a very revered old gentleman who in due course became the President of the Indian National Congress. My hon. Friend and I and my hon. Friend on my left (Dr. Perera) were travelling together to the sessions of the Indian National Congress at Faizapur in the days when our understanding of socialism was united and our political activity was also united and, on that occasion, we fell into a chat with that very reverend old gentleman and in order to show us that our Marxism was a chimera, one of those mirages, which it is of the fondness of youth to chase and of the habit of old age to shed, he said, "I stand for self-sufficiency not only of India, I stand for the self-sufficiency of every province in India." Nay more, he said, "I stand for the self-sufficiency of every district of India and I stand for the self-sufficiency of every village in India." And you will forgive me, I

was young and irreverent and I said "that self-sufficiency can be reached only in one's grave."

What are we worried about self-sufficiency? I agree with my hon. Friend the Minister of Agriculture. There is a genuine, every-day, and if you will excuse my use of our jargon, a reformist task, a bourgeois reformist task, a capitalist task of trying to improve and raise our agricultural productivity.

The Hon. Minister of Lands was trained under the late Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake—the late Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake had a land policy—and so he said, "I am better than the wretched old medieval English visionaries. I stand not for four acres and a cow, but 8 acres and a cow—5 of lowland and 3 of highland." He said, "Go and settle down there and soon you will be having Rs. 5,000 lodged in your savings bank." Those people never got their cow. Under him, the Hon. Minister of Lands—

Dr. Perera: No they got a buffalo.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: The hon. Leader of the Opposition reminds me that they got a buffalo. A very rude remark enters my head which I will not make. I will only say this. Having tried to learn that policy my hon. Friend became the Minister of Lands and Land Development. He thought he could improve on Mr. D. S. Senanayake who offered 8 acres and a cow which he forgot. My hon. Friend then brought it down to 4 acres. He is today distributing 1/4 acre and he says, "I am alienating Crown land so fast that I myself cannot keep pace with my own total", so much so that every other week he republishes the old total as a new one. We cannot go on like this. Why is the Government reduced to this position? And that is where I wish to take up the Hon. Minister of Finance.

He stood there and made a terrific onslaught on the hon. Member for Jaffna (Mr. Ponnambalam,) one of the easiest people to attack on his political record.

Now it is true as my hon. Friend said that the hon. Member for Jaffna has one of the most miserable records in the field of communalism that any politician in this country can have. It is he who with the Tamil brand of communalism displaced the nationalism of the Youth Congress of Jaffna of that time, and led the Jaffna people down the barren road of opposition to the Sinhalese instead of assisting in the building of a Ceylonese nation. That is the melancholy history of the Tamil Congress.

But, Sir, I say if the Hon. Minister of Finance thought it necessary to enter into an onslaught on the hon. Member for Jaffna on his Tamil communalism through the Tamil Congress, ordinary fairness required that he should have balanced it by recalling and repeating in this House his contemporary denunciation of the leader of the Sinhala Maha Sabha who first introduced this virulent, this foul communalism amongst the Sinhalese people. But he says, "I stand in this Government because it is doing no wrong to the minorities"

My hon. Friend the Member for Maturata read a ruling of the late Speaker, Sir Francis Molamure, in which he said that the word "prostitute" was not unparliamentary. So, if I use the word "prostitution" I trust you will pass it. All I mean to say is this: the Hon. Minister telling this House that standing within the M. E. P. Government he sees no communalism reminds me of a man who has wandered into a house of prostitution and seeing all the charming and rather ungarmented ladies there says, "But I see no prostitution around me".

The Hon. Minister of Agriculture's reference to my friend Doric de Souza is the best proof of the depth to which communalism has eaten into this Government. Five years ago certainly 10 years ago, he would not have been capable of that remark. Association with the M. E. P. Cabinet the M. E. P. Party, and the M. E. P. as a whole has brought him to a stage where he has to refer to a man's race in order to denounce his politics.

The Hon. D. P. R. Gunawardena: It is not race but culture.

Mr. Deputy-Chairman of Committees: Mr. Speaker will now take the Chair.

Whereupon Mr. Deputy - Chairman of Committees left the Chair and Mr. Speaker took the Chair.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Now the Hon. Minister of Finance said he was a Catholic, or rather that he was a Christian. Is that not so?

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: Go on!

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Normally, the Hon. Minister of Finance is only too anxious to answer questions. I appreciate his becoming modesty at the moment. I will therefore speak from memory. He referred to the fact that he was a Christian, that he

belongs to a Christian minority, and said that he stands there especially today to assure the Christian minority of this country that all the fears they entertained of their future are undeserving. I would have treated that remark with greater seriousness if I had heard that even today the Hon. Minister of Finance had, as a representative of this Government, gone to the junction of Darley Road and McCallum Road and removed the Buddha statue which was surreptitiously placed on the pedestal for the LeGoc memorial.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: If the hon. Member will give way—

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: With pleasure.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: Immediately that act occurred I took the matter up with my Government and the Government was prepared to take certain steps in that regard. I was in consultation with certain high Catholic dignitaries and I was requested to leave the priesthood out and get in touch with the committee that was concerned with the memorial. I did so and it is in deference to their wishes that nothing further has hitherto been done.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: There is one error in his remark and one significant meaning. The error is that "nothing further has been done". There has been now set over the Buddha statue a canopy—of course, that is nothing—and that canopy has been made at the expense of the Colombo Municipality. It is nothing; it is a small matter. But far more important, the LeGoc Memorial Committee itself thought it wiser to let what had happened remain. They dared not assert their rights lest they will suffer. That can be the only meaning to it.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: Again if the hon. Member will give way, I think it is grossly unfair for him to try to read into the conduct of that committee something which he finds useful for the purpose of his own argument. Perhaps the LeGoc Memorial Committee foresaw that men like my hon. Friend will make use of any action of theirs to stir up further discord, and they did not want to give occasion for it.

Dr. Perera: That is not a personal explanation; it is an argument.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: I like him to make speeches because, like a certain immediately preceding Premier of this country, every time he opens his mouth he puts his foot into it. He says per-

haps—(Interruption). Your pretended indignation is in keeping with the studied sponteneity of your speech today. You said you were afraid that peple like me would use that to further communal discord. The Hon. Minister is silent.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: If the hon. Member gives way—

Mr. Speaker: There must be a limit to giving way.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: Then may I give way to his rhetoric which sweeps the House but leaves no impression?

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: It is indeed a very peculiar thing that many of the Ministers can hit but can never take a beating. It will do them good once in a way—

The Hon Stanley de Zoysa: Will take it when it comes. It has not come from you yet.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: It has.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: Not by a long chalk. Do not pat yourself on the back.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: The hon. Minister is unperturbed by the criticism I have levelled at him. He is so unmoved that he is moving about his seat. I will remind him of the cheapness of his jibes at the hon. Member for Jaffna. Why this terrible contempt for Magistrates? Did he not appear before them? Is that the type of argument that the Hon. Minister used as an advocate before Magistrates? Can he then, if that was his habit, get over it and change his habit because he is in the front bench now? One must take the cut and thrust of debate. I will give way to him as often as he likes, but each of his interventions helps me to initiate a fresh argument against him.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: If that is so, I will remain silent.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: I have always said that the Hon. Minister will discover that discretion is the better part of valour.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: If anything can be done to silence you I will do it.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: If this Government can silence the voice of the L. S. S. P. then only will it be able to sleep comfortably. But I say, so long as there are people called "Ceylonese"

in this country, so long as there is a working class in this country, the L. S. S. P. will be there—if in the Opposition to show what is wrong and, in due, course, as the Government, which will lead this country towards right.

Now, Sir, let us get back. Mr. Prime Minister have you found your missing Speech?

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: I cannot prompt you any further.

Colvin R. de Silva: Apparently he was holding the Floor for the Hon. Prime Minister to come after having found his lost paper.

Now I wish to turn to another matter. From what is entirely polemics I want to get to certain important matters. Much of this discussion today has gone on this footing, that the trouble in this country is the existence of communalist extremists. I think, and I wish to submit to this House, that is a mistake. It is a mistaken notion. The trouble with the country is not that there are communalist extremists but that there is such a vast number of simple unadulterated communalists in the M. E. P. Government. It is communalism that is a problem, not just extremism. Extremism, in fact, in that kind of matter stands stultified. When a man speaks in regard to communal matters in that extreme way he thereby exposes, the very illogicality of his reasoning. It is those people who are just communalists making no claim to extremism who are the worst influence. That is the danger. I say to the Prime Minister that his besetting sin in this field is that he can never remember to speak as the Premier of the Ceylonese nation. He is always speaking as the leader of the Sinhalese.

Where exactly are we today? One thing is certain. The very widespread explosion of the last two weeks of May, the emergency thereafter introduced, and the various consequences that have flown from the twin occurrences have, I submit, completely transformed the political situation in this country. That is the true position. Now, I ask in what way has that transformation manifested itself? What are the elements of the transformation?

The first point I want to make is that (whether or not we will be able, at some historical future, to forget this terrible occurrence of the last week of May) as at present, the major communities of this Island have drawn considerably apart. That is a fact. Whether it be the moderates of whom the Hon. Minister of Finance says he has knowledge, or whether it be the Federalist extremists whom they have translated to another place; whether it be the hon. Member for Jaffna

or the uncommitted mass of the Tamil people and the Sinhalese people, we know this fact after the end of May. The two communities are psychologically and mentally thrown further apart than they ever were. We must accept that. We would be idle in our political thinking if we try to gloss over that fact and continue to work out measures and solutions to the problems before us.

Secondly, something in many ways even more dangerous has taken place. We have a situation in which considerable numbers of Sinhalese and Tamil people feel afraid or, shall we say, gravely uncomfortable about living in each other's majority areas. The Government may give its assurance, we may give ours, we may all combine to try to remove the fear that has been implanted in their minds, but in truth and in fact at this moment, even where men are coming from Jaffna to Colombo to attend their offices or people are going from Matara to Jaffna to revive and restore their bakeries and their fishing, they are carefully leaving their families in their villages. That is a fact. A tragic, a terrible and fateful fact. The task of politics is to try even at this late stage to ensure that it will not continue thus.

There is a third feature which is, to say the least, worrying. Masses of Tamils and masses of Sinhalese have left regions of the other race's predominance and got back to their homes. That process has taken even the appearance, at times, of vast proportions, though I agree, and I am assured, that it is not so. But when you say that, under tight security regulations, you sent 6,700 Tamils in six commandeered ships to Jaffna and brought 2,700 Sinhalese in a ship via Trincomalee to Colombo, you are announcing what may appear to others as an exchange of populations. In other words, there has gone on a process in the country which has come suspiciously near to the two communities drawing apart geographically. It is as if there has to be not one Ceylon but two: a Tamil Ceylon and a Sinhalese Ceylon, with the added disability that the Sinhalese of Sinhalese Ceylon are hesitant to go into Tamil Ceylon and the Tamils of Tamil Ceylon are hesitant to go into Sinhalese Ceylon. If there is one thing that can hold this country together as a single country, a single Ceylonese nation, it is that there continues alive as a reality in the minds of everybody in this country that, whatever be the race one belongs to, as a Ceylonese one could go anywhere in the country, settle down anywhere in the country, do business anywhere in the country, can bear children and bring up families anywhere in the country. It is no good our saying, "we are a powerful Party, a strong Government, with an army that we can deploy throughout the country, a

police which we have armed, not to mention the navy and soon a jet plane air force to go into action." That military might can temporarily bring down violence, but only temporarily. If military might could hold down the masses permanently within the framework of a disagreeable regime, then revolution would never have been known in the history of this world.

Therefore we must address ourselves to the true question which I am sorry the Hon. Minister of Finance is not here to listen to, because that is what he forgot. He denounced communalism but he forgot to ask, "What do we do?" This much surely is clear to every hon. Member. We must find the correct political remedies for this political malady—nothing less. There we must go to our experience and to the experience of others historically.

Let us start with our own experience. We have now had enough experience of "Sinhala Only" as the law, with all its attendant features and incidents for these two years. In these two years we have compressed the experience of many generations. And what do we find? We find that under the policy which is embodied in the "Sinhala Only" Act, we can move only from one interruption of public order to another with increasing intensity.

If any hon. Member of the Government reminds us that there were no great communal troubles worth the name in the course of last year, I would like to remind him of something. The Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food spoke of the famines we underwent, of the drought, the floods and the various natural calamities that have stood in the way of this Government. A country preoccupied with national calamities like these has no time even for communal rows. I would like to remind hon. Members of the Government that this time, when they broke novel ground in the Governor General's Speech and, instead of telling us what they intend to do in the coming period, also set about recapitulating what they claim they did in the last year, every single one of the achievements there mentioned was accomplished in the period of the lull in communal disorders consequent upon the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact.

They have given us the list of achievements. In fairness to them, may I read it out? Let me quote the very words:

"The Motor Transport Act, the Paddy Lands Act, the Port (Cargo) Corporation Act, the Employees' Provident Fund Act and

the Ceylon State Plantations Corporation Act are some of the major legislative measures that were passed during the last Session."

Those were the fruits of a lull in the communal strife. Is that not the best proof that there is hardly a sacrifice worth the name on the part of our country and our nation in order to ensure communal harmony and peace? If in a lull we could release forces which could result in achievements such as those mentioned in the Speech, if we can eradicate this malady and wipe it off the face of our land, if we can end this virus of communalism, what are the achievements that will be beyond the Ceylonese nation? None I say. So, let us study it from that point of view.

Today, they say, "We shall bring in the Reasonable Use of Tamil Bill." The hon. Minister of Finance let the cat out of the bag on that, and even the Hon. Minister of Agriculture and Food. Said he, "We gave a promise at the election that we shall have Sinhala only, with reasonable use of Tamil". What I have to point out is that the "Sinhala Only" Bill came in 1 1/2 months; two years are gone and the "Reasonable use of Tamil" Bill has not yet emerged in the House. Whatever the reason, they have not introduced it. So even that which they thought was the remedy they have not applied.

It is like a man who says, "I know that you are suffering from double pneumonia. I have been told to apply a mustard plaster to both your lungs. I will do it when you are near unto death." The mustard plaster which they have prepared, namely, the reasonable use of Tamil, they are applying, or still hope, intend and promise to apply, when the doublepneumonic patient is in his last throes. Is it surprising if we believe that at that stage no mustard plaster will be able to revive the patient? You want something more thoroughgoing, something more radical, more root and branch in its character, something that goes down to the root of thing.

The Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike: Bowels of the earth?

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Not the bowels of the earth.

Why do I say this? Hon Members of the government have always said that parity is out of the question, that it is too radical. They have said that it cannot be applied by them for two reasons: firstly, it is contrary to their election pledge; secondly, they do not believe in it. I do not want to talk about that question today in the sense of mere terminology. Every time the word "parity" is used, I find that each Member of the Government gives it his own dark content and then denounces it. So we will forget that.

But this much, I submit, is clear. Today, the least that can be done to start the patient on the road to recovery is to make Tamil itself an official language. If we can do that—I am not saying that this Government can do that; I shall come to that in a moment—we can get started on the road to mutual amity again. For immediately you do it, there will be room and reason for all concerned to come together at this celebrated round table. I do not know why the table is always round; let it be square or rectangular! But let us come together to discuss how to work it.

I say this with all the earnestness I can command, and I beg that it be treated with the seriousness that is due to the earnestness of our side. Do not brush it aside as merely being politically impossible. There were men who said in the long years of U. N. P. rule that it was politically impossible to overthrow the U. N. P. The masses of this country, despite all the difficulties, learnt that it was necessary to find, and found, the means of achieving it.

The Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike: On what issue?

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: On this issue.

Even so—if I may use the words of the psychologist—this Neanderthalian recidivism, if it goes on repeating itself, will teach the country more than we can teach it. I am confident in my knowledge—if you disagree, by all means disagree—that large numbers of people, who in 1956 were not ready even to contemplate giving Tamil any place at all, today say in this desperate way: “Well, if the only way we can go forward is by making Tamil also an official language, let us do it, if that is the only way out of this.” My hon. Friends say, “If you do it, you will have a Sinhalese communalist uprising.” They also say that they are confident of their capacity to hold down both the Sinhalese and the Tamils. But I say that, if we place faith in what my Hon. Friend the Minister of Finance called “moderate opinion” but what I call those large masses of the country who are sick and tired unto death of these communal conflicts, if we would rely on them and have the courage of our convictions to act along the lines of relying on them, this can be achieved.

Now I ask the Hon. Ministers to think of this. In this situation the administration periodically comes to a halt. How can you develop the country when this happens? How can you plan? Can you include in your plans the interruptions of communal upsurges? How do you foresee them? Or is it that, not foreseeing them, not anticipating

them, not expecting them, each upsurge will take you by surprise and thus disorganize whatever little plans you have made?

The Hon. Prime Minister knows, because I know he knows it, how in these last few weeks all departments of our administration were disorganized. But what is worrying me is not the temporary disorganization induced by the absence of this or that public servant who has fled. They may be brought back; I do not know. But this I know, that there has been induced by this whole situation a demoralization so profound in the entire administration that it may take a decade or more before we get out of it.

Ask yourselves a simple question. I will only give a simple illustration; I do not say it is general. In the Departments of the Hon. Minister of Lands and Land Development there are whole groups of workmen who work in the field. They work under supervising officers, sometimes of a different race. You may have what is popularly called a "gang" of workers of one community supervised by officers of another community. In that last week of May, what happened? Those supervising officers, whatever their race, were openly humiliated and driven out of their posts by the very men they had to supervise. Now, by whatever rewards you may bring those supervising officers back, in that field and over that gang, can you imagine that they can ever exercise any authority? They cannot. Can you transfer them to another gang? You can transfer them in one of two ways. You can transfer them to another gang which is also a gang of a different race from that of the supervisor. Well, the tale of what happened once to those supervisors will follow to the other gang. Take another way. You can put the man in charge of a gang of his own race. Then we shall have already gone down the path of racial division even in the organization of our production activities. Whole hordes of our public servants will not be able to concentrate, in years to come, on their work, for, humanly, they will be looking over their shoulders at colleagues who may at any moment relapse into Neanderthalism. No, we cannot go on with this.

The Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike: Finish.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: The Hon. Prime Minister wishes me to finish. I will honour his request and set about the task of finishing; not that I haven't much more that is pertinent to say, but now that he has discovered his lost notes, he might be afraid that

he may forget the words he has prepared for his speech. So I will be short.

Where do we go from here? I wish to say, in all seriousness, to this House that, in my belief and in the belief of our Party, this Government cannot solve this problem. It is necessary to say it now. For two years we sought to urge them, to persuade them, even to decoy them into the path of rectitude. Now we have reached the stage of despair about that. We do not believe that they can, for we find it too clearly to be misunderstood.

The Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike: A Sama Samaja Government.

Dr Colvin R. de Silva: The Hon. Prime Minister says, "A Sama Samaja Government".

The Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike: You are not leading us up the garden path.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: I would not lead you up the garden path. The Hon. Prime Minister knows very well that I cannot lead him up the garden path, seeing that he has already gone up that path. He will realize that what I am refusing to do is to follow him along the garden path up which he has been led, if he will do me the kindness of not merely listening but thinking over what I say, however profoundly he may disagree.

I mentioned the co-existence of two things. It is not merely that we have had this communal upsurge and this emergency situation and its consequences. It has itself come in the setting of another set of developments which have reached, in our view, their ultimate end. In our view the Government has already reached an impasse politically, quite independently of the communal question. Now, I do not expect the Government to agree with this. I have no doubt that it will be denied in due course by the Prime Minister.

We noted the following things. This Government had relied on financial policies which have now brought it to the stage when it has had to go to the United States of America for a Rs. 400 million loan.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: That is incorrect.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: Well, the Hon. Minister of Finance says it is incorrect. All I can say is, he went with that announcement made officially on behalf of this Government; if he has come back without asking for it, I am willing to accept it from him.

The Hon. Stanley de Zoysa: Not officially made, made by Lake House.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: It is remarkable that so important an announcement was left uncorrected. I am beginning already to guess what will be the speech on his visit that the Hon. Minister of Finance promised us for the Budget Debate, but that is by the way. We saw that.

Secondly, we have noticed that, in the realm of economic development, although there has been an enterprise here, an enterprise there and certain ameliorative measures, particularly in the field of agriculture, there has been no real systematic plan of development of the economy even prepared; and now it will be, in my honest belief, impossible to prepare such a plan. Oh yes, one may get down Nicholas Kaldor and Professor Gunnar Myrdal and all the Joan Robinsons. They will all come and go and before you can say Jack Robinson they will produce a plan. But it will be ultimately left to the Government to develop the plan. These people can only come and plan on the basis of what the Government tells them. We have no statistical service.

The Government has come to a stage where in our view it had to make a choice. The choice was this. In the last two years it was able to talk socialism by passing off ameliorative measures as socialism. That is my claim. But now even the talk of socialism is not tolerable to the capitalist class which the Government has been serving, and therefore in order to go forward in one direction or another they have to make a decision. That decision is called generally the decision between capitalism and socialism or by us between the capitalists and the working class.

Will you align yourself with the working class, face up to the Imperialist threat and economic pressure, fight them, take over their enterprises and those of the local capitalists in order that you may be able to run them in a co-ordinated way as part of a systematic plan for the development of this country, or will you revert to the old and discredited idea, which the U. N. P. tried out and failed, of telling the capitalists to do the job for us?

Capitalism failed to do the job. That is why the masses brought you into power. Now after two years you are stopped, and even—in our view—the visit to the United States of America marks the stage at which, precisely because of the previous guarantees given about non-

nationalization of the estates and the pretence to socialism by the M. E. P. Government, you have to think afresh. In that setting there can be no solution to the problem, for all are agreed, on all sides of the House, that if the communal problem is to be fundamentally solved, even if you take the necessary political measures, there must be a sufficient rate of economic development to ensure that competition between man and man will not be converted into competition between race and race.

That is the crux of the problem. That I believe this Government cannot solve. Therefore it is my duty to state on the Floor of this House that in our view the time has come when all who are seriously bent on solving this problem, in this House and outside, have to consider, the question of the alternative that has been forced on us. And I say, in all humility but with the greatest sincerity, that the only Government which will be able to take this country forward from its present plight from its present position in the mire, is a Government which will have to be led by the Lanka Sama Samaja Party.

The Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike: Well done!

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva: To that day we shall work, and are working. Against that day of course my hon. Friends will be working to prevent it; but inasmuch as the onward march of man involves a march to the achievement of socialism; inasmuch as in Ceylon the achievement of socialism requires an intransigent struggle against local and foreign capital; inasmuch as that struggle can be conducted only under the leadership of a Government which is formed by us, tuned and completely responsive to the working class at all decisive points; and inasmuch as our Party has historically been the product, the child, of the working class, its instrument for its own emancipation, I take the liberty of stating on the Floor of this House that only a Lanka Sama Samaja Party-led Government can lead country forward to racial harmony, to the ending of communal disorders and to the economic development that will ensure the raising of the standard of living of every person in this Island.