

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Compared with the extensive corpus of literature on the foreign policies of powerful and dominant states, there is an acute dearth of studies pertaining to countries that appropriately fit the description of 'small' and 'weak' states. The thesis, is an attempt to bridge this gap by focusing on the foreign policy of Sri Lanka during the period 1948-1988.

The thesis is divided into seven chapters:

Chapter I, 'Small States in International Politics : A Reflection on Conceptual and Contextual Dimensions,' deals with the problematic of 'small states' by attempting a critical review of the relevant literature aiming to make assessment of the spectrum of ideas, insights and conceptual schemas that have been advanced to delineate 'smallness' in the context of international politics and foreign policy. In a fundamental sense the very paucity of literature on the subject is an outcome of a pronounced bias in the dominant Anglo-American tradition of scholarship in favour of powerful and dominant states. The reification of the latter alongside *ipso-facto* neglect of small states, is rooted in at least four inter-related discursive conditions which may be categorized as follows: (a) The near hegemony exercised by the realist perspective on international relations discourse, with its basis in the assumption that international politics is by its very nature a domain of superior military and economic powers; (b) The location of the institutional sites of this discourse invariably lies within the major powers, in turn only serving to further entrench or consolidate (rather than ideologically unravel) the interest of such powers; (c) The Cold War ideology, in which the world stood polarized in thought and action between the two contending super powers, has reinforced the slant; (d) The influence of behaviouralism on

the discipline, especially from the mid-1950s to the early 1970s, tended to put studies of small states at a disadvantage by placing exactness of definition and its empirical translatability at the centre of inquiry, where variability is precisely what characterizes the ‘small state.’

However, the sheer proliferation of small states after World War II, resulting from the fragmentation of once imperial territories and processes of decolonization, has made it incumbent for scholars to come to terms with the phenomenon and to conceptualize it. An initial difficulty encountered here by theorists is the lack of a uniform fit between the terms ‘small’ and ‘weak’ – as would be evident from random examples of states such as Israel, Cuba, or North Korea. With the two determining benchmarks/notions of what makes a state really ‘small’ defying any easy conflation, theorists have advanced a variety of typologies and models that bring into play a differential range of factors and dimensions as constitutive of a small state. These competing typologies and models can be distinguished from each other in respect of their basic orientation towards either stasis or dynamics as their preferred mode of analysis and explanation. In this context, we have attempted a critical assessment of the major interventions made in the field. Invoking a notion of capability, Keohane has advanced a four-fold classificatory model of states comprising the international system, depending upon their varying capacities to impact the latter. Thus states may be identified as (i) system determining states or superpowers; (ii) system influencing states or major powers; (iii) system affecting states, or middle powers; (iv) system ineffectual states or small states. These distinctions and gradations notwithstanding, the model’s key weakness is that it is rooted in *stasis*. By contrast, Galtung proposes a more dynamic model: he summons the nature of interactions between states for grouping them into *strata*, which he then designates as belonging to the ‘top,’ the ‘middle’ and the ‘underdogs.’

To a substantive degree, the search for developing an analytics of ‘small state’ has been a move away from stasis and hierarchic frameworks, as also formalistic definitions, in the direction of isolating key variables constitutive of the phenomenon. The variables are both quantitative and qualitative. Notable in this respect is the work of the Benedict-Fox School

which has effectively disseminated disclaimers regarding ideas of precision and absoluteness that had once been the staple of scholars working on the small state. Thus, David Vital has argued in favour of two specific variables of the small state: (a) size of population; and (b) level of economic development as given in the state's GNP. The characterization, however, is mechanistic and is unable to clearly differentiate middle powers from small states. While Vital, himself subsequently unsure of his original position, veered toward a capability based notion of small state, a group of scholars has tried to make selective use of his two-fold criteria to develop what they tend to see 'objective' standards for determining the small state. Hence, Reid has made a move to single out the size of the population, Azar the GNP, and Barston a combination of the two as prime determinants of the small state. Aiming at greater adequacy, Rapaport brought in a third variable to the ensemble – the territorial size of the state.

While these attempts at quantification have served to advance engagement with the phenomenon, the essentially mechanistic frame of these models has precluded cogent explication of the external behavior of small states. In particular, the models have failed to draw upon the 'economic-technological-capabilities' dimension of states as a significant point of reference in determining their position and orientation within the international system. In critical response to these lacunae, a third group of scholars has taken to exploring alternative contexts/parameters such as the structure of international power, geographical location and specific nature of polity of the states in question, etc. Bjol, for one, has emphasized a different set of benchmarks for identifying small states, indicated by their *relative disparity in capability* and their rather limited range of national interests compared with middle and great powers. These perceptual dimensions, signifying 'constraints' as a defining feature of small states, have found renewed emphasis and elaboration in the writing of Rothstein, even though his pursuit of the small states is problematic on grounds of their inability to ensure their own security alone is not only antiquated as a worthwhile criterion; it belies the realities of the contemporary international system where only a few states, at best, can lay claims to such a privileged status.

A fourth notable approach is represented by a lone Scandinavian scholar, Raimo Vayrynen, who has sought to integrate the different approaches and cull out a five-dimensional model, but without straight jacketing these dimensions as being of equal or unvarying salience across the entire spectrum of small states. Although this integrative approach has overcome many of the shortcomings in the prevailing viewpoints – and continues to hold considerable promise – a Vayrynenian elucidation of the problem has not crystallized thus far. This is due primarily to the lack of systematic data on the international roles and interests of small states, which are indispensable requisite of the model *per se*.

It is against such serious odds, and reckoning with the plain fact that small states, after all, do exist and pursue interests within the ambit of the international system, this thesis attempts to conceptualize the small state. It adopts a working definition of the small state based on the following considerations: (a) ‘small state’ is a *relational* concept that makes sense only vis-à-vis the ‘middle,’ ‘great’ and ‘super’ powers; (b) it cannot be defined cogently and meaningfully in purely quantitative terms; (c) significant variations of structure and context marks off one small state from another, and hence the reality of small developed and small developing states, for instance, cannot go unaddressed; finally, (d) given differences in their economic and technological wherewithal, the specific nature of interests pursued by one small state in international politics may differ considerably from those pursued by another.

In pursuing this line of reasoning, Singer’s definition seems particularly appealing and useful on several counts. At the very outset, it offers chances of a dynamic definition of small state predicated on a conception of ‘components of power’ that comprise it. These components being ‘wealth’ (material and human); ‘organization’ (formal and informal); ‘status’ (ascribed and acquired); and ‘will’ (conscious and unconscious) of the state in question, Singer’s perspective is more sociological than political. It is these four crucial indices which together articulate the power of the state; and it is precisely a structured deficiency in the four closely inter-linked areas that marks the condition and context of a small state in the arena of international politics. Viewed relationally, a small state may be defined as one lacking in all the four components. Having

successfully found a way out of the rigidity of presumably ‘objective’ definitions and presenting a dynamic model that does not place a small state permanently in the category of small states, Singer does not press his argument any further so as to make finer distinctions between small developed and developing states (or, for that matter, between small states and micro states). But these distinctions are not difficult to extrapolate within the terms of his framework which is flexible enough to include these possibilities – especially when inflected with the methodology of ‘perceptual attributes’ much recommended by Rothstein. Thus, hypothetically speaking, small developed states that may be favourably endowed in the components of ‘wealth’ and ‘organization’ could be concurrently sharing common grounds with small developing states in respect of the ‘status’ and ‘will’ components – and, hence, evince a good deal of commonality with them in their international behavior. A synthesis of insights emanating from the two perspectives furnishes us with a working definition of the small state that simultaneously serves the purposes of identification and explanation.

The search for a relevant analytical framework for small states anchoring their foreign policies bears directly on the second objective of this thesis: to formulate cogent explanatory generalizations of the foreign policy of a small state. Compared with the several contending viewpoints focused on locating and mapping the latter, pronouncements and formulations on foreign policy are if anything to be found in greater exuberance. As in the case with small state, the second part of the chapter puts together a schematic appraisal of the prevalent frameworks of foreign policy with a view to abstracting from them a perspective or, at least, some working propositions, to assess the foreign policy of a small state like Sri Lanka.

At the risk of some necessary oversimplification, the foreign policy frameworks seem to fall into four generic groups, which we have categorized as idiosyncratic; governmental; societal; and systemic. *The idiosyncratic approach*, which has to its credit a vast body of literature, takes foreign policy as an outcome of the perceptions and responses of the leadership or foreign policy decision-makers, the perceptions being susceptible to varied contexts of worldviews, ideologies, and even personality traits of the concerned leadership. In this approach mindsets of the

personnel, however construed, take the burden of explanation in the making of foreign policy. As opposed to the realist standpoint, wherein states are assumed to be unitary rational actors in the international arena, this approach has the merit of systematically drawing attention to the role of key actors, their department and dynamic agency, in the realm of foreign policy. However, owing to its exclusive emphasis on psychological factors, alongside the absence of other analytical categories/schemas for explaining foreign policy strategies or foreign relations generally, the idiosyncratic approach tends to lend foreign policy the appearance of an erratic or even irrational activity. For greater explanatory traction, this approach needs anchorage in the domestic and external contexts of foreign policy. *The governmental approach* (also referred to as the 'bureaucratic politics model') sees foreign policy as a political resultant of a complex bargaining process occurring between a host of government departments. The concurrence of the main participants on a particular foreign policy option or agenda confers on it the status of a foreign policy decision. The stress here is on the organizational aspects of policymaking, the impetus it derives from the careers and the departmental interests of decision-makers rather than on their psychological attributes and predispositions. While the approach has been much appreciated for its empirical stance and concerns, it has two major shortcomings: one, a neglect of the larger domestic and foreign sources of influence shaping foreign policies; and, two, contrary to the findings of some recent scholarship, a marked underestimation of the role of leadership while privileging inter and intra bureaucratic factors in foreign policymaking. In particular, the approach offers little help in conceptualizing foreign policy strategies and relations, even though, like the idiosyncratic approach, it does offer a welcome corrective to the realist approach. The third of these approaches, *the societal approach*, is relatively recent though one with anterior philosophical roots. It explains foreign policy through an array of socio-economic, cultural, and political factors, ranging from the size, location, and resources of the state to aspects of its culture, classes and elites, economic and military capabilities, and political institutions. Given its ideological moorings, theorists of the framework have at times argued that a country's foreign policy behavior serves to strengthen and stabilize the ruling elite/class. They ascribe three major objectives or thrusts to the foreign policy of developing states: defense against a perceived threat to the country's sovereignty; mobilization of external resources necessary for socio-economic development; and internal socio-political stability and regime legitimacy. Focusing on domestic conditions and processes implicated in foreign policymaking,

the societal approach is an improvement on explanations emanating from the realist framework. *The systemic approach*, the oldest and most enduring of the approaches, has undergone several modifications and refinements. Previously, before absorption of new terms and categories, the approach was also referred to as realism. It views foreign policy basically as a function of what prevails in the international arena, which it regards as anarchic for lacking in a central authority. Hence states resort to foreign policy in an effort to mitigate perceived threats and secure/expand their independence. The distribution of power in the international system is what essentially drives foreign policy initiative. The exclusive focus on the international power structure has rendered the approach myopic on two counts: one, it looks askance at the reality of international institutions, laws, and normative processes; and, two, it underplays the domestic environment, when both these domains play crucial and varied roles in the making of foreign policies.

What this schematic review of the four generic approaches reveals is that none of them, individually, is capable of providing a comprehensive explanation of foreign policy. Recognizing their partial explanatory frameworks, some scholars have sought to integrate the several insights offered by these approaches to articulate overarching frameworks aimed at attaining a comprehensive framework. Differences notwithstanding, these frameworks tend to cohere in their general construction owing to the absence of substantive conceptual differences. Proceeding from basic realist assumption, these frameworks divide foreign policy into five heuristic categories: (i) motivations; (ii) determinants; (iii) strategy and objectives; (iv) decision-making structure; (v) foreign policy behavior. Foreign policymaking is the result of a complex grid of interactions/reactions occurring between these five categories. Although the latter are largely self-explanatory, a few remarks underlining their inter-linked analytics will not be out of place. It is the combination of ‘motivations,’ a rather abstract condition, and ‘determinants,’ envisaging concrete factors and forces at work, which shape up the ‘strategy and objectives’ of foreign policy. Similarly, the formal apparatus of foreign policymaking interacts with outside influences to constitute a crucial zone in the making of foreign policies. There are also indications of certain thresholds when one or more of these categories may acquire greater salience over the rest. Thus, while foreign policy ‘motivations,’ ‘determinants,’ and ‘strategies and objectives’ are mediated by the ‘decision-making system’ which occupies a privileged position in filtering and translating

changes into specific actions or roles, its mediatory capacities are considerably constrained once the policy has attained explicit articulation.

This thesis attempts to study the foreign policy of Sri Lanka, indisputably a small state, within the horizons of an integrated analytical framework provided by the conceptualization of the small state, on the one hand, and of the structures and processes informing foreign policy-making, on the other. The critical appraisal of the existing literature on small states and foreign policy approaches has been undertaken with the purpose of trying to correlate and/or juxtapose the two scholarly trajectories, as far as possible, so as to create an overlapping, if not a consistently singular, focus for studying the foreign policy of Sri Lanka. The chronological frame of the study, 1948-1988, has been chosen with two major concerns: at the domestic level it limits the study upto the end of J.R. Jayewardene's presidency; and, at the international level, to the pre-globalization era, with the post-1988 period representing drastic shifts in the international system signified by the breakup of the Soviet Union and the onset of 'globalization.'

Like individuals, a state's behavior is shaped by interactions between its own motivations and of the society embedding it. In abstract terms, security, stability, and status are the three basic motivations of small states. What then determines the specific content and direction of these motivations? Going by Frankel's adage, theoretically the determinants are virtually limitless – they tend to 'embrace the whole universe.' In practice, however they are 'circumscribed by the range of interests and limitations of power' that each state is operatively saddled with. The almost limitless span of factors shaping the three motivations could be broadly classified into six important categories or dimensions: (i) geopolitical setting; (ii) socio-cultural milieu; (iii) political economy; (iv) nationalism; (v) prevailing nature of political regimes; and (vi) specificities of the international environment. These lend themselves further to a more stringent re-grouping into *stable and variable* determinants, with the first three categories above are part of the stable and the last three of the variable determinants. Foreign policy motivations are an inter-play of determinants in these two modalities.

The next section presents a summary of the determinants in these modalities such as they apply to Sri Lanka, discussed at length in Chapter II: 'Foreign Policy of Sri Lanka: Motivations, Determinants, Objectives and Strategy.'

#### A. Stable Determinants

- (i) From the geo-political perspective, Sri Lanka's physical proximity to India is of prime importance, in multiple ways. *One*, it exposes the country readily to socio-cultural influences emanating from India; *Two*, India's enormous size, its economy of scales, and its overwhelming military power spells serious constraints on Sri Lanka's autonomy and independence; *Three*, the presence of a sizeable and territorially concentrated Tamil minority in Sri Lanka, enjoying close ethnic affinity and association with 7.5 million Tamils of India, has compounded the complex of fear/threat that proximity harbours. Aided and abetted by historical memory of invasions from South India (of the actual and mythical variety, both richly nurtured by Buddhist chronicles), it has instilled in the dominant Sinhalese community the perception of being a minority engulfed by a huge Tamil majority. On the other side, Tamil sub-nationalism took roots in a smoldering sense of discrimination at the hands of the Sinhalese majority. It graduated toward laying claims to a separate state of Elam for Sri Lankan Tamils – a political aspiration that struck a sympathetic chord among their co-ethnics in Tamil Nadu. In turn this provided spurs to Tamil-Sinhalese conflict, escalating it to a point where the Indian state came to be embroiled in its tentacles.

But proximity also brings intrinsic opportunities: occupying India's immediate periphery, Sri Lanka is of strategic importance to India's rivals and adversaries. Prospects of containing India incline them to strive to limit its influence on Sri Lanka, draw the latter into their own respective spheres of influence, and to leverage its efforts at self-

empowerment. However, negotiating the contradictory pulls and pressures of these varied pathways to its own advantage also demands a fine, near perilous, sense of balance on Sri Lanka's part – such that it does not impair India's security and incur the risk of being deemed a hostile power. In more positive terms, eliciting Indian support and assistance could be an asset in securing domestic stability, especially for a state torn apart by violent internal conflict. Conversely, viewed from an Indian angle, internal political instability opens the island to external interventions/interference and hence works to the detriment of Indian security interests.

Seemingly remote factors like topography and climate, too, have a bearing on Sri Lanka's foreign policy. Wide topographic and climatic differences have produced marked regional imbalances in the social economy of the island state, forcing it to scout for external financial resources in order to restore a measure of economic and demographic parity between its different parts. For its small, compact size, Sri Lanka is beset with four zones of rainfall, each with its own peculiarities of eco-demographic regime. The southeast part of the island is a wet zone, normally receiving 100-200 inches of annual rainfall. In the south-central mountain terrain the annual average rainfall is 100-150 inches. On the other hand, for the northern and eastern parts of the island the average is about 75 inches, and in the northwestern plains it dwindles to less than 50, typifying the region as the dry zone. The south-central highlands, home to tea plantations, have touched near saturation of land use; even more severe is the predicament of the main rice producing area, the southwest region, which is marked by exceptionally high population densities, resulting in declining agricultural productivity, high incidence of landless labourers and unemployment – all of these fuelling social tensions and political conflicts.

From colonial times onwards, it is recognized that developing the dry zone holds the prospects of easing the twin problems of population pressure and deficient food production. This entails the technically feasible project of bringing to the region the waters of the Mahaweli and other wet zone rivers. But the stupendous expenditure the project entails is

well beyond the means of a small state and makes it imperative for the government to woo sources of foreign funding.

Considered in its entirety, Sri Lanka's central positioning in the Indian Ocean, makes it strategically important. Time immemorial, trading nations have cultivated their presence in Sri Lanka. More recently, the British were drawn to it. During the Cold War period, Trincomalee, the country's natural harbour on the east coast offered excellent shelter for war vessels and submarines. Greatly coveted by the US, the Soviet Union, and China, the island figures prominently in global strategic calculations. Thus, Sri Lanka's geopolitical features are rife with constraints as well as opportunities. In this important sense, geopolitical determinism plays a considerable role in Sri Lanka's foreign policy motivations.

- (ii) Among stable determinants one must count the socio-cultural profile of Sri Lanka. Owing to millennia long immigrations, invasions and intrusions – notably from India – Sri Lankan society is marked by great ethnic and demographic diversity, along with its accompaniments of competition and rivalry between the constituents groups and the impact these have had on the politics and foreign policy of the state. The Sinhalese, who comprise two-thirds of the total population, predominantly occupy the southwest and south-central parts of the island. They speak Sinhala, an Indo-European language, spoken nowhere outside the island. The Sinhalese claim Aryan descent and primacy as the first civilized settlers of the island. Buddhism, which reached the island from India about the third century B.C. has powerfully shaped Sinhalese culture. In modern times it generated a potent ideology based on a fusion of religion and nation, inhering in a worldview that inclined Sri Lanka to project a unique national identity in international politics. However, there is little evidence to indicate that this had any significant influence on Sri Lanka's foreign policy initiatives and alliances.

The next largest ethnic group is of the Tamils. About one-eighth of the total population, they form an absolute majority in Jaffna and areas immediately to its south, but are largely absent from other parts of the state. The Tamils trace their ancestry to India, and date their

arrival in Sri Lanka from the same time as the Sinhalese. This challenges the latter's claims to being the first civilized folk to inhabit the island, which is central to the ideology of *Sinhadipa* and *Dhammadipa*. 'Indian Tamils' comprise a distinct subgroup. Descendants of the indentured labour force the British enlisted from Tamil Nadu on their coffee and tea plantations, they have a sense of difference with the main stock of Sri Lankan Tamils.

Besides the two dominant groups above, two other smaller segments in Sri Lanka's demography are the Moors and the Burghers, of whom the former is not insignificant in Sri Lanka's political calculus. The Moors practice Islam, but are otherwise differentiated into Arab, Indian and Malay ethnicities. Predominantly engaged in trade, the Moors have a presence in most urban areas but are especially concentrated on the eastern coast. The Sinhalese political parties have tended to accede to Moor sentiments with an eye on electoral arithmetic and the fact that they could be a counterweight to Tamil assertions. The Burghers are small in number and are ethnically of mixed European-Sinhala descent. They are Christians, speak English, and are largely confined to Colombo. Once important in Sri Lankan bureaucracy and educational services, they have suffered reverses in the post-colonial period increasingly prompting them to emigrate to the West.

Taken all together, the variegated/pluralistic demography of Sri Lanka, covering the period of our study, has tended to sway more sharply toward a fractious socio-political order than a composite one. In particular, given the embittered relationship between the two major communities – resulting in fratricidal strife, riots and terrorism – the state's foreign policy has been burdened with acute concerns for safeguarding the island's territorial integrity and its tenuous internal stability over the long term.

- (iii) Problems and structural peculiarities of Sri Lankan political economy – some of them clearly the tenacious legacy of lopsided colonial policies, others of more recent provenance – continually impinge on the foreign policy concerns of the state. Among these one may count an underdeveloped agricultural sector, a direct offshoot of the wayward leveraging of coffee and tea plantations at the expense of agricultural self-sufficiency in domestic food consumption; rapid population growth between 1940 and 1970; unemployment of educated

youth; decreasing traditional export earnings; escalation of expenditure on imports with a severe adverse balance of payment problem; and paucity of capital to foster export oriented production. Attempts to overcome these bottlenecks came decisively to a head in 1977, with the UNP coming to power under Jayewardene and initiating a bold programme of structural adjustments, involving economic liberalization, market reforms, particularly tax reduction, deregulation of financial markets, promotion of foreign trade, reduction of food subsidies, and privatization of government owned industries. Making a sharp departure from the SLFP outlook and policies of the pre-1977 period, the UNP made its focal point not import-substitution, but creation of an export-oriented economy that was heavily reliant on foreign aid and investments, making it imperative to suitably modify the island's foreign policy orientation and send out the right signals.

## **B. Variable Determinants**

The variable determinants of foreign policy refer to a cluster of contingent factors at work in the country's foreign policymaking environs. These may be broadly classified as emerging in the realms of nationalism, political regimes and international settings. Unlike 'stable determinants,' which crisscross the foreign policy environs, somewhat amorphously, in the manner of generalized socio-political concerns and exigencies, the *variable* determinants are more sharply focused, immediate, and overt field of force impacting foreign policymaking. The following section briefly summarize four of these themes:

### **(i) Nationalism**

Nationalism is a potent political force. The conduct of foreign policy tends to veer toward the structure, governing ideas, and specific content of nationalism, expressed in varied versions and ideological tenors that may have gained salience or ascendancy in the politics

and affairs of the state. Since independence, Sri Lanka has gone through four successive phases of nationalism. The first phase lasted till 1956. It was taken up almost exclusively with concerns for preserving the territorial integrity and political independence of the island state, and lacked any pronounced cultural, economic or social elements of articulation. The second phase of nationalism began to unfold immediately after 1956. It brought to the fore, almost suddenly, Sinhala ethno-cultural and religious elements that laid claims to Sri Lanka as the land of Sinhala Buddhists. The growth of ethno-cultural nationalism adversely affected Sri Lankan perception of Britain. For instance, presence of British military installations in the island came to be now regarded as an infringement of the country's independence tending to privilege the need for correcting the pro-West bias in its foreign policy and to promote the island's international identity as a nonaligned country. The assimilation of economic dimensions into the burgeoning complex of Sinhala-Buddhist ethno-cultural nationalism, such as the demand for nationalization of domestic and foreign enterprises, led to reduction of imports, promotion of import-substitution industrialization under state control, etc. The growth of Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism had a telling effect on Tamil ethnic consciousness which saw in it a looming threat to their language, culture, and socio-economic interests, especially with Sinhala replacing English. As a safeguard, the Tamils demanded a federal form of government and a parity between Tamil and Sinhala. The demands, however, remained well short of challenging the territorial integrity of the island state or posing an irreconcilable conflict between Tamil subnationalism and Sri Lankan nationalism.

The third phase of nationalism began in the early 1970s and lasted over a decade. It involved a complex braiding of previous nationalistic trends with more recent ones. This period saw the deepening of Buddhist nationalization and Sinhalization of the state. Importantly, the 1972 constitution made Sinhala the official language and Buddhism the official religion of the state. A second distinctive strand within this brand of nationalism was championed by the JVP. It wedded Sinhala-Buddhist values with Marxist, Leninist, and Maoist ideas. In 1971 the JVP engineered a short-lived insurrection along these lines. Although defeated, the party's revolutionary organization saw a resurgence in its activities from the 1980s. Having become a dominant force in Sri Lankan politics, especially in the

Southern Province, the JVP underwent a quick reversal in its fortunes. Between late 1989 and early 1990 it was militarily crushed.

The third strand of nationalism was a pronounced Tamil subnationalism. Having won popular allegiance, it went beyond the demand for mere autonomy of Tamil speaking areas within a federal scheme to the creation of a separate Tamil State. Toward this end it created a common front of all important Tamil organizations, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF). Barring occasional violence, political activity of TULF remained bound within civil and constitutional limits.

The next, fourth, phase of nationalism was more or less a continuance of the preceding trends, with two notable differences: one, while mainstream Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism maintained its dominance of the political arena, it dispensed with its previous economic content and was no longer averse to foreign capital; two, more significantly, Tamil subnationalism broke through the civic-constitutional framework to embrace full blooded political extremism and terrorism. This phase was fraught with internal competition and conflict that eventually concentrated power in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), ushering an era of violent conflict and armed struggle lasting well beyond the period of this study.

## (ii) **Political Regimes**

The nature of political regimes, their ideological predisposition and their perception of foreign policy goals, play a direct role in the conduct of foreign policy. Since 1948, two trends in regime formation are observable in Sri Lanka: during the phase 1948-1956 and, then again, 1977-1988, governments were formed by the UNP, a right of centre ideological force that had attained a decisive edge over other political formations. The foreign policy tilt of the state during these phases was pro-West, as well as pro-English as the language of the state. However, under pressure of the progressive build-up and consolidation of Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism, the UNP retracted from its commitment to English. During the intervening phase, 1956-1977, governments were alternately formed by the two

dominant parties, the UNP and the SLFP, in alliance with other parties. In contrast with the UNP, the SLFP is a left of the centre party and coalition governments led by it favoured closer ties with the Soviet Bloc and also China. Notwithstanding divergent trends in the nature of political regimes and their causal linkage with changes in emphases and orientations of foreign policy, the two-dominant-party system worked largely within the overall framework of nonalignment and gave rise to a bipartisan approach in several areas. This emergent zone of consensus and commonalities has been a significant determinant of foreign policy in Sri Lanka.

(iii) **International Setting**

A diverse range of influences emanating from the international setting has shaped the foreign policy of Sri Lanka. For analytical purposes, we have classified them into three: normative, politico-strategic, and economic. The normative authority structure of international society with its core principle of the sovereign equality of states can provide legitimacy to small and weak states, protecting them from the designs of powerful states. It also enables them to work collectively so as to expand the scope of the normative authority structure in support of their own interests.

The important politico-strategic influences on Sri Lanka at the time of its independence were the cold war, the decolonization movements, the emergence of China as the first Asian Communist State and Sri Lanka's relations with Britain and India. In the face of the cold war, the country was extremely vulnerable given the presence of a powerful indigenous communist movement. Decolonization movements had both emotive and practical claims on Sri Lanka, itself a former colony. Participation in the process of decolonization was at once a moral and pragmatic politico-strategic consideration, even necessity, for Sri Lanka if it was to effectively refrain powerful states from eroding its sovereignty. In economic terms, Sri Lankan tea export was dependent on London and it greatly influenced its relationship with Britain. Contrarily, the island's acute dependence on India prior to independence was perceived as an unwelcome advantage the latter had over

Sri Lanka, in addition to what nature and history had bequeathed, inclining Sri Lankan nationalism to press toward undoing this dependence. More recently, structural changes in the international order ushered in by the post-cold war setting has impelled the US, Russia and China to pursue more inward-looking foreign policies and to urgently attend to their own state and economy building programmes. Changes in the interaction of these powers, once entrenched in cold war positions, has expanded India's autonomy and manoeuvring space in South Asia, and simultaneously shrunk the space for Sri Lanka's traditional policy of exploiting its vulnerability to India in order to avail generous politico-economic and strategic assistance from powerful countries. Lastly, globalization has had a telling effect on Sri Lanka's traditional foreign policy discourse; with the marginalization of competing paradigms and programmes it has become almost hegemonic and, hence, synonymous with development.

### **Foreign Policy Objectives**

Given the above setting, Sri Lanka has pursued the following objectives: (i) protecting its territorial integrity and political independence; (ii) using foreign policy to maintain internal economic and political stability and promoting economic development; (iii) ensuring world peace and stability; (iv) opposing colonialism, apartheid and racism; (v) ushering a New International Economic Order conducive to the fulfillment of the economic aspirations of Third World countries; (vi) indentifying with other small and weak states; and (vii) strengthening the NAM, the Commonwealth and the UN.

### **Foreign Policy Strategy**

To actualize its foreign policy objectives, Sri Lanka adopted nonalignment as its foreign policy strategy, distinctly spelt out in 1956. All parties regardless of their ideological moorings

have adhered to nonalignment as the guiding framework of foreign policies, though the emphasis of their interactions varied.

Chapter Three, 'Foreign Policy Making in Sri Lanka : Institution and Processes,' is about the foreign policy making edifice and the role of various functionaries therein. The foreign policy of Sri Lanka is formulated and executed by designated personnel. Other individuals and social groups who are knowledgeable in international relations and whose socio-economic, cultural and political interests are inter-linked with the external relations of the state try to influence the foreign policy making process. The citizens are not directly involved in or concerned with the making of foreign policy, except when situations in the international area affect their religious, linguistic or cultural sentiments. Even on such occasions, it is the socio-political elites who mobilize the masses or act in awareness of popular sentiments and interests, thereby foreclosing mass assertion.

At the time of independence in 1948, Sri Lanka did not inherit any foreign policy tradition or institutions. The colonial administration did not maintain a diplomatic corp (whether within or without) except for an office in New Delhi to address problems of the Tamil immigrant labour force. Nor did Sri Lankan leaders' particularly of the dominant political party, the UNP, evinced much interest in international relations during the colonial period and had left, almost willingly, this crucial area to the colonial government. It was only towards the end of colonial rule that some leaders began to demand for the devolution of power in the sphere of external affairs, but neither was the request made vigorously nor was the colonial government inclined to give in.

Thus, the responsibility of creating a foreign policy machinery and making it work fell upon the Sri Lankan leadership that took over from Britain. D.S. Senanayake, the first Prime Minister of independent Sri Lanka, established the Ministry of External Affairs, a very rudimentary level organization that co-existed with the Ministry of Defence. Under its aegis

diplomatic relations came to be initiated with a handful of countries, mainly the Commonwealth States and the US. From there on the Foreign Office gradually evolved into an elaborate apparatus in terms of both its internal structure and the number of foreign missions it had spawned. In 1972, the Foreign Office separated and became an autonomous ministry.

The main actors in foreign policy making have been the official political elites especially the Head of the Government, i.e. the Prime Minister during the era of Parliamentary Democracy and the President during the period of Presidential form of Government and the bureaucratic elites with a few exceptions have acted as policy executors, although in the initial years of independence some civil servants enjoyed considerable autonomy in policy making because of the political leadership's inexperience in the realm of diplomacy. D.S. Senanayake had a low profile in foreign policy matters. This initiative fell short of embarking on a foreign policy designed to project and promote Sri Lanka's international identity and status. This was also true of his successor, his son Dudley Senanayake. It was only when Sir John Kotelawala assumed Prime Ministership that foreign policy came into its own. He evinced keenness toward an important role in international affairs whether it was the Commonwealth or the Afro-Asian movement. With S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike coming to power, foreign policy gained even greater prominence. He was keen to project Sri Lanka's identity and status in international politics. During the terms of his wife, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, this remained an abiding concern. She embarked upon a dynamic foreign policy, particularly in the Non-aligned Movement. Although J.R. Jayewardene pursued a more inward looking foreign policy geared to promote economic growth and stability, as the Head of the State and the Government he continued to hold the reins of foreign policy making. He issued directives on all important foreign policy matters, despite having a Minister of Foreign Affairs in A.C.S. Hameed who largely attended to routine foreign policy affairs. Thus, there was no change in the tradition of the Head of the Government being the principal figure in the foreign policy making process even after the adoption of the Presidential form of government.

The roles of the non-official elites was dependent upon their ability to assert power through articulation of popular opinion. The ruling political elite tended to give in to such pressures which posed a threat to the legitimacy of their authority. However, under normal circumstances the establishment furnished little scope for the non-official elites to influence the decision-making process excepting on issues that were inherently advantageous to their own political interests. The media has been a noteworthy actor in the sphere of foreign policy. The Lake House group exercised significant influence during the UNP phase, but it had waned by the time the SLFP assumed power, so much so that the SLFP led government nationalized the group in 1970.

Although the ruling political leadership exercised both formal authority and actual say in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy, they did not enjoy the latitude to give unimpeded vent to their idiosyncrasies, the latter being effectively circumscribed by the ideology and world-view of the party in power or the prevailing definition of what constituted national interest. Thus, for example, Sir John Kotelawala's move to make Sri Lanka a member of the SEATO failed owing to the combined opposition of his own party – the UNP and of the opposition. In a similar vein, Dudley Senanayake, although a staunch anti-communist himself concluded the Rubber-Rice Barter Agreement with China under severe economic compulsions. Hence, notwithstanding the centrality of the leadership in the formulation and implementation of foreign policy, the ideology and world-view of the parties and economic imperatives are decisive factors delimiting its role and scope of action.

Chapters Four and Five discussed Sri Lanka's behavioural patterns and trends in the international system during the governments of the UNP and the SLFP respectively. The two parties displayed distinct patterns in the foreign policy interactions of the island. The UNP governments were pro-West while the SLFP governments, although not clearly pro-East, authored a more assertive stance. However, environmental factors, that is domestic and external determinants, led to areas of convergence between the two parties inclining their governments to

pursue similar roles. With the passage of time, this bipartisan approach has, if anything, become more pronounced.

During its first tenure in power, between 1948-56, the UNP had three different persons as Prime Ministers, namely, D.S. Senanayake, followed by after his untimely death, his son Dudley who prematurely relinquished office under popular pressure and was succeeded by his cousin, Sir John Kotelawala. All the three leaders pursued a pro-West and anti-communist foreign policy, even as all three pronounced that they were pursuing a 'middle path' in international politics. D.S. Senanayake entered into a Defence Agreement with Britain according to which the latter retained its air base at Katunayake and naval base in Trincomalee in return for Britain providing security to Sri Lanka. Furthermore, Sri Lanka maintained cordial relations with other Commonwealth countries, and the US, but refrained from establishing diplomatic relations with the communist countries. Not just this, D.S.Senanayake granted port facilities to American war ships enroute to suppress communists in Korea. Likewise, Sir John Kotelawala permitted refueling facilities to American planes carrying French troops to fight communist forces in Indo-China. As recounted before, Sir John Kotelawala at one point even considered joining the American sponsored military alliance, the SEATO, but gave up because of adverse domestic and international pressures. Not only this, the three leaders refused visas to foreign communists and delegates from communist countries on several occasions. The UNP governments banned the import of communist literature and films but allowed the US to distribute anti-communist literature in the island. Indeed the Sri Lankan government took upon itself the distribution of American anti-communist literature.

Like security motivation, the pursuit of stability motivation had a pro-West tilt. The three UNP governments favoured western capital to promote economic growth and development, assuring potential investors that there would be no restrictions in the remittance of profits and dividends abroad. Although significant amount of foreign capital did not flow into the island because of lack of profitable opportunities, Sri Lanka did not face dearth of foreign capital

liquidity as it had accumulated a huge sterling balance through war time activities especially due to the boom in the prices of its exports, such as tea and rubber.

But on issues of colonialism and imperialism which were not embroiled in cold war politics, Sri Lanka identified with the growing spirit of Afro-Asianism. Contrary to previous examples, it denied Holland facilities to use its airport and harbour during Dutch operations against Indonesian nationalists struggling against Dutch colonialism. But Sri Lanka changed its stance when it came to anti-colonial struggles enmeshed in cold war politics. In such instances, the attitude of Sri Lanka was pro-West.

There were two exceptions to the pro-West and anti-communist pattern of interactions. While recognizing the People's Republic of China in 1950 it refrained from establishing diplomatic missions in Beijing. Presumably, the decision to accord recognition to China was prompted by Britain extending recognition to China, a decision in tune with Britain's economic interests in South-East and East Asia. As Sri Lanka's foreign policy was heavily influenced by Britain, Colombo followed British policy towards China. However, it did not accede to Chinese invitation for opening a Sri Lankan diplomatic mission in China. Instead, it averred awkwardly enough that the British mission in Beijing would take care of Sri Lanka's interests. The second exception was the signing of the Rubber-Rice Barter Agreement between the two countries in 1952 whereby the Chinese bought rubber from Sri Lanka at a price higher and sold her rice at a lower price than the prevailing world market prices.

China's 'generosity' stemmed as much from economic as strategic reasons. The UN and the US had banned supply of 'strategic materials' to China following her involvement in the Korean civil war. This included rubber traditionally supplied by Malaysia, Singapore, etc., forcing China to look for alternative sources for rubber. Further, in order to nullify the US sponsored embargo on her, she supplied Sri Lanka with rice. The US retaliated with withdrawal of aid to Sri Lanka, amounting to about one million dollars, in keeping with the Battle Act of

1951. This, however, did not prevent the UNP leaders from continuing to maintain cordial political relations with the US or ceasing to admire it.

The period 1956-1965, when the UNP was out of power, saw major changes in the architecture of international relations as also in Sri Lanka's foreign policy. Internationally, the cold war was on the wane following the Cuban missiles crisis, the Soviet Union embraced the doctrines of peaceful co-existence of all nations and the Non-capitalist Path to Socialism through parliamentary means; and finally, the communist bloc saw a split with China emerging as an international player challenging the hegemony of the Soviet Union, which it considered revisionist, and of the US as well. Domestically, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike when in power, Sri Lankan foreign policy turned towards nonalignment. The state not only gave recognition to all the communist countries, it established diplomatic relations with them. The communist countries came to play an important role in Sri Lankan economy, making the latter a beneficiary of their generous aid programmes and lucrative markets for Sri Lankan exports, thereby reducing Sri Lanka's dependence on the West. Under Sirimavo Bandaranaike Sri Lanka's shift towards the Eastern bloc and China deepened further.

The main objective of Dudley Senanayake (1965-1970) was to promote economic growth and development as the economy of Sri Lanka was faced with the problems of huge population growth, large scale unemployment, rising expectation of the masses coupled with increasing prices of imports and decline in the prices of export products. Under these circumstances, he had to implement a populist economic programme. Dudley alleged that the previous SLFP government was biased towards the communist countries and that he would follow a genuine nonaligned policy in international relations; but what this actually meant was that his government distinctly veered towards the West. Dudley faced hurdles to attract western investment because of the actions of the previous SLFP government. He assured foreign investors that his government had no intention to nationalize foreign companies, and in case it was constrained to do so in the nation's interest, adequate compensation would be paid. The UNP led government settled the differences with the US arising after Mrs. Bandaranaike's

nationalization of the Anglo-American oil companies. This measure on the part of Dudley Senanayake led to the resumption of American aid to the island. In addition to receiving bilateral aid and assistance from the US and other western countries, Sri Lanka received assistance from the US dominated international development agencies like the World Bank and the IMF.

Despite a pro-West tilt of the UNP regime, it continued to interact with the communist countries. Apart from the fact that rescinding it would have cast doubts over its nonaligned credentials, interaction with the communist countries provided Sri Lanka the much needed stable market for her exports and imports. Sri Lanka welcomed assistance from them. But the two major communist countries, the USSR and China, reacted differently. While the USSR and its East European allies continued to help Sri Lanka as had been the case during the SLFP period, China maintained an indifferent attitude. Relations with China were at a low ebb because of a number of conjunctural factors and there was apprehension that China may not renew the Rubber-Rice Agreement but fortuitously for Sri Lanka the Chinese government did not renege.

Under J.R. Jayewardene, the UNP came to power for the third time on a massive landslide victory in the 1977 elections, conceding only 8 seats to the SLFP. In keeping with its electoral pledge it switched over to a Presidential form of government with J.R. Jayewardene as the country's first President. Significant changes had occurred in the international system. There was détente between the US and the USSR although it terminated with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. But the US-China relations had improved dramatically so much so that in the words of a high ranking American official China was seen to be the '16<sup>th</sup> member of the North Atlantic Alliance.' Significantly, western Europe and Japan too emerged as major economic centres at this moment. The international system could now be considered Pentagonal – the US, the Soviet Union, China, Western Europe and Japan as focal points of power. Jayewardene had pledged in the elections to set right the political and economic systems of the island. Soon after assuming power he faced threats of violent Tamil separatism under the LTTE. Thus Jayewardene was required to resolve the twin problems of sustaining the island's socio-economic and political stability and safeguarding its territorial integrity.

Forsaking excessive “dynamism [as being] harmful” to the interests of a poor country, Jayewardene’s foreign policy was geared towards rejuvenating Sri Lankan economy along the expected lines: he liberalized foreign exchange control, removed import restrictions, devalued the rupee at the behest of the World Bank and the IMF, abolished the food subsidy to a great extent, so as to create a friendly politico-economic environment for western investment. The development programmes he undertook, such as the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Scheme, the Free Trade Zone and the Greater Colombo Development Scheme, made foreign investment and assistance imperative. The West responded favourably. The US and Britain as well as Canada and Japan poured in huge amounts of aid.

Jayewardene appealed to Britain and the US to come to the island’s aid to tackle the LTTE led Tamil successionist movement which adopted violent means to achieve its goal. But both powers preferred not to get militarily involved in the ethnic crisis and advised Jayewardene to seek a political solution to the problem. In fact both Britain and the US appreciated the Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord. In the absence of military help, Jayewardene sought and received military assistance from China, Pakistan and Israel. Thus, in short, all the UNP governments pursued a pro-West foreign policy, though since their second tenure in power they were not indifferent toward communist countries like the USSR and her East European allies and China.

In sharp contrast with the UNP, the SLFP government of Mr. Bandarnaike put forward a radical socialist programme, asserting the political and economic independence of the island much to the satisfaction of its social base. The MEP government advocated the nationalization of all essential industries including foreign owned plantations, transport and banking and insurance. Basic heavy industries like iron and steel, chemicals, cement, fertilizer, textile and sugar, etc., were reserved for the state leaving only light consumer goods to the private sector. The successful implementation of its economic programme depended upon the reduction of the dependence of the island upon the West and diversification of its trade and aid.

Essentially this meant counter-balancing the 'pro-west' and 'anti-communist' image of the island. Hence S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike declared his foreign policy to be nonaligned and friendship with all countries, one that was neither 'pro-west' nor 'anti-communist' but 'pro-Ceylon,' and was intrinsically linked with economic objectives as its focus. He negotiated the withdrawal of British military bases, that is the air base in Katunayake and the naval base in Trincomalee, without abrogating the Defence and External Agreements with Britain. He established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, China and East European communist countries. He also abolished the ban on the import of communist literature and films and adopted a nonaligned stance on cold war disputes. This resulted in Sri Lanka receiving aid from communist countries along with the benefits of trade diversification. Through his nonaligned foreign policy, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike endeared Sri Lanka to both the blocs.

Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who had succeeded her husband, with a very brief intermission, pursued a more dynamic and assertive outward-looking foreign policy. In her first tenure Sri Lanka had veered closer to the USSR and her allies and China, but without disrupting relations with the West, even though the nationalizing of American and British oil companies during her term in office led to the suspension of aid from the US and the American dominated international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF. While Sri Lanka abstained from retaliation, it received generous aid from the USSR and China, the former supplied oil at concessional rates which made up for the fiscal loss.

During her second term Sirimavo Bandaranaike, leading a coalition government of the SLFP which included the Marxist parties, the LSSP and the CP, gave a thrust to the objective of ushering in a socialist state through democratic means. Accordingly, in sharp contrast with the preceding phase of the UNP, foreign policy interactions with communist countries increased markedly. However the JVP insurrection of April 1971 threw a spanner in the works. It exposed the weakness of the coalition to meet the varied socio-economic and political challenges facing the country, and diverted the government's attention towards the maintenance of internal security

and stability. Although the government succeeded in suppressing the insurrection, because of the timely help it received from the international community – that included the Western and the Eastern blocs as well as China, India and Pakistan - its foreign policy became more inward-looking. The foreign countries were concerned about status quo in the strategically located island being overturned by a non-conformist revolutionary party. However, the insurrection, though unsuccessful, worked to considerably tone down the SLFP's assertive pursuit of its previous foreign policy orientation. It now sought economic and military assistance from all countries, irrespective of their ideological moorings.

As regards status motivation, a bipartisan approach came to prevail. Both the dominant parties opposed imperialism, colonialism, apartheid and the cold war. They worked in concert with other Third World countries to eradicate these aberrations in the international system. Both advocated the reform of the international economic order so as to render it conducive to the economic aspirations and programmes of the Third World countries. They pursued the creation of the New International Economic Order in international fora. There was unanimity on the issue of disarmament. Both the UNP and the SLFP governments worked to end nuclear arms race and mobilized international opinion for the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Peace Zone. The UNP government of Jayewardene went a step further by proposing the establishment of a World Disarmament Authority under the auspices of the UN. Sri Lanka mobilized international opinions through the auspices of the NAM, the UN, the Commonwealth and other such international fora to achieve its goals. For this reason both the parties articulated deep commitment to the NAM, the UN, the Commonwealth, etc. In short, the governments of the two parties tried to strengthen the international normative structure, founded on liberal democratic ideals, as it assured the security, independence, and stability of a small state like Sri Lanka.

Chapter six, "Sri Lanka and the South Asian Sub-System," examined Sri Lanka's external interactions in the region aimed at creating a regional balance of power to fortify the island against a probable attack from either India or intrusive actors like China, and simultaneously to increase its manoeuvring capabilities in international politics. One can discern

divergent patterns of interaction as the governmental power alternated between its two dominant parties – the UNP and the SLFP. The early UNP leadership perceived threat from international communist forces and also India, and to fortify the island from both they established special relations with Britain in the form of Defence and External Agreements. Besides, the leaderships became active protagonists of the Commonwealth, in the absence of membership of the UN, deriving thereby a psychological sense of equality with regard to India. During its second term in office (1965-70), the UNP led by Dudley Senanayake followed the foreign policy framework initiated by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike of manipulating the core, peripheral and intrusive sectors to Sri Lanka's advantage. In this period the UNP's leadership perceived greater threat from China and tried to mitigate the threat perception by cultivating closer relations with India. At the same time Senanayake's government maintained close relations with the peripheral actors, particularly Pakistan, to minimize India's pro-eminence. Furthermore, he continued with the traditional UNP policy of friendship with the UK, the US and the Commonwealth countries.

The SLFP in its first tenure beginning in 1956 articulated a clearly defined regional policy. Under the leadership of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, Sri Lanka befriended China to contain India without forsaking cordial relations with latter. In deference to India's sensibilities Sri Lanka did not unduly ingratiate itself with Pakistan. When Sirimavo Bandaranaike assumed power she inclined more towards China, thereby considerably increasing her country's bargaining capacity *vis-à-vis* the core, i.e. India. This is clear from the fact that New Delhi, in order to prevent Sri Lanka's move towards China, made efforts to solve the vexatious Indian Tamil problem with the signing of the Sirimavo-Shastri Pact in 1964. Although Sri Lanka moved closer to China, Colombo did not completely capitulate to the Chinese foreign policy outlook as shown by the fact of its becoming a signatory to the NPT, or not supporting the Chinese call for an alternate and parallel Third World movement to the Non-aligned Movement. As recounted before, the initial pro-China tilt tempered as a fall out of the JVP insurrection but also with reference to the new subcontinental power realities signaled by the break-up of Pakistan into two separate countries it made the government inward-looking in its foreign policy seeking to stabilize the economy and arrest the alienation of the masses especially the unemployed youth.

The Jayewardene led UNP government continued to pursue the strategy of manipulating the core, peripheral and intrusive sectors to preserve the independence, autonomy and security of the island and enhance its capacity to manoeuvre *vis-à-vis* the core. His active role in establishing SAARC was aimed at bolstering confidence in dealing with the core. However, the outbreak of the ethnic strife dealt a blow to this, forcing Jayewardene to woo external political, military and strategic assistance to suppress the Tamil secessionist movement. But both the UK and the US refrained from getting embroiled in the affairs, primarily owing to India's serious reservation in the matter. Hence, cautiously, the two powers sought to persuade Jayewardene to seek a political solution to the crisis through India's mediation. China and Pakistan, however, extended military and strategic assistance but kept short of direct involvement. With external assistance not forthcoming the only option left to Jayewardene was to accept India's mediation much to his own dislike as also of his government and of the Sinhalese people at large.

The brief survey of Sri Lanka's foreign policy substantiates the propositions stated in chapter one that the independence of the island is severely constrained in international and regional politics and the extent of its constraints is proportionate to the degree of its dependence. For instances, the JVP led insurgency of 1971 and the Tamil secessionist movement of the 1980s resulted in Sri Lanka's acute dependence on the international and regional systems and imposed severe constraints on its assertive role in international politics. Despite this, Sri Lanka was not devoid of playing a meaningful role in international relations. In the international system, Sri Lanka refrained from actions which would alienate major powers, but greatly concerned about peace, security, order and justice, it pursued these goals through the strategy of nonalignment which enabled it to make common cause with other like-minded states and concertedly act through the platforms of the UN, the NAM, the Commonwealth and the like. While there were two distinct patterns of interactions of the governments of the two major parties through these fora it mobilized international opinion against cold war, imperialism, colonialism, and racism. Similarly, through concerted action with like-minded states, it advocated the cause of disarmament and reform of the international economic order.

In the regional context, Sri Lanka tried to counter India's imposing presence by skillfully interacting with intrusive and peripheral actors and participating in international fora and institutions. In the early days of independence, it signed the Defence and External Affairs Agreements with Britain which allowed Britain to retain its air base at Katunayake and naval base in Trincomalee; through these measures Sri Lanka gained strategic confidence with regard to India. Subsequently with the removal of British military presence in 1956, Sri Lanka counteracted India's pre-dominance by articulating its foreign policy strategy of nonalignment more clearly. Its nonaligned strategy enabled it to more skillfully manipulate intrusive and peripheral actors to gain confidence *vis-à-vis* India. Its internecine conflicts limited its manoeuvring capacity *vis-à-vis* India with the US and Britain denying it strategic and military support to deal with the crisis, and on the contrary trying to prevail upon Colombo to seek a resolution to the conflict through the good offices of India. Nonetheless Sri Lanka attempted to stave off its dependence on India by trying to forge closer ties with China and Pakistan among others.

Sri Lanka's dependence on the external milieu is more acute and persistent in the economic sphere. It tried to diversify its economic dependence by expanding its export and import markets and sources of foreign aid and assistance. In the early years of its independence, Sri Lanka was dependent on Britain but since 1956 with establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and its allies and China the island has successfully diversified its economic relations. The SLFP governments pursued the diversification strategy with greater vigour than the UNP governments, which is not say that the latter were not concerned with the issue of diversification of economic dependence. In short, Sri Lanka's external interactions have revolved around the perceptions of its governments of the domestic and international milieus as much as the international configuration of forces.