

Political Resolution Unanimously Adopted at the 1st
National Convention of the Tamil United Liberation
Front Held at Vaddukoddai Constitu-
ency on 14-5-76



RESOLUTION

unanimously adopted at the

First National Convention of the

TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT

held at

VADDUKODDAI

on

14-5-1976

Chairman:

S J V. Chelvanayakam, Q. C., M. P., (K. K. S.)



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VADDUKODDAI

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S. V. Chelvanayakam, Q.C., M.P. (K. K. S.)

A Translation

Political Resolution Unanimously Adopted at the 1st National Convention of the Tamil United Liberation Front Held at Pannakam (Vaddukoddai Constituency) on 14-5-76, Presided over by Mr Chelvanayakam Q.C. MP

Whereas throughout the centuries from the dawn of history the Sinhalese and Tamil nations have divided between them the possession of Ceylon, the Sinhalese inhabiting the interior of the country in its Southern and Western parts from the river Walawe to that of Chilaw and the Tamils possessing the Northern and Eastern districts,

And whereas the Tamil Kingdom was overthrown in war and conquered by the Portuguese in 1619 and from them by the Dutch and the British in turn independent of the Sinhalese Kingdoms,

And whereas the British Colonialists who ruled the territories of the Sinhalese and Tamil Kingdoms separately joined under compulsion the territories of the Tamil Kingdom to the territories of the Sinhalese Kingdoms for purposes of administrative convenience on the recommendation of the Colebrooke Commission in 1833,

And whereas Tamil Leaders were in the forefront of the Freedom movement to rid Ceylon of colonial bondage which ultimately led to the grant of independence to Ceylon in 1948,

And whereas the foregoing facts of history were completely overlooked and power was transferred to the Sinhalese nation over the entire country on the basis of a numerical majority thereby reducing the Tamil nation to the position of a subject people,

And whereas successive Sinhalese governments since independence have always encouraged and fostered the aggressive nationalism of the Sinhalese people and have used their political power to the detriment of the Tamils by-

- (a) Depriving one half of the Tamil people of their citizenship and franchise rights thereby reducing Tamil representation in Parliament,
- (b) Making serious inroads into the territories of the former Tamil kingdom by a system of planned and state-aided Sinhalese colonisation and large scale regularisation of recently encouraged Sinhalese encroachments calculated to make the Tamils a minority in their own homeland,
- (c) Making Sinhala the only official language throughout Ceylon thereby placing the stamp of inferiority on the Tamils and the Tamil Language,
- (d) Giving the foremost place to Buddhism under the Republican Constitution thereby reducing the Hindus, Christians, and Muslims to second class status in this Country,
- (e) Denying to the Tamils equality of opportunity in the spheres of employment, education, land alienation and economic life in general and starving Tamil areas of large scale industries and development schemes thereby seriously endangering their very existence in Ceylon,
- (f) Systematically cutting them off from the mainstream of Tamil cultures in South-India while denying them opportunities of developing their language and culture in Ceylon thereby working inexorably towards the cultural genocide of the Tamils,

- (g) Permitting and unleashing communal violence and intimidation against the Tamil speaking people as happened in Amparai and Colombo in 1956; all over the country in 1958; army reign of terror in the Northern and Eastern Provinces in 1961; Police violence at the International Tamil Research Conference in 1974 resulting in the death of nine persons in Jaffna; Police and communal violence against Tamil speaking Muslims at Puttalam and various other parts of Ceylon in 1976 - all these calculated to instil terror in the minds of the Tamil speaking people thereby breaking their spirit and the will to resist the injustices heaped on them,
- (h) By terrorising, torturing and imprisoning Tamil youths without trial for long periods on the flimsiest grounds,
- (i) Capping it all by imposing on the Tamil Nation constitution drafted under conditions of emergency without opportunities for free discussion by a constituent assembly elected on the basis of the Soulbury Constitution distorted by the Citizenship laws resulting in weightage in representation to the Sinhalese majority thereby depriving the Tamils of even the remnants of safeguards they had under the earlier constitution,

And whereas all attempts by the various Tamil political parties to win their rights by co-operating with the governments, by parliamentary and extra-parliamentary agitations, by entering into pacts and understandings with successive Prime Ministers in order to achieve the bare minimum of political rights consistent with the self-respect of the Tamil people have proved to be futile;

And whereas the efforts of the All Ceylon Tamil Congress to ensure non-domination of the minorities by the majority by the adoption of a scheme of balanced representation in a Unitary Constitution have failed and even the meagre safeguards provided in article 29 of the Soulbury Constitution against discriminatory legislation have been removed by the Republican Constitution;

And whereas the proposals submitted to the Constituent Assembly by the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kadchi for maintaining the unity of the country while preserving the integrity of the Tamil people by the establishment of an autonomous Tamil State within the framework of a Federal Republic of Ceylon were summarily and totally rejected without even the courtesy of a consideration of its merits;

And whereas the amendments to the basic resolutions intended to ensure the minimum of safeguards to the Tamil people, moved on the basis of the nine point demands formulated at the conference of all Tamil political parties at Valvettithurai on 7th February, 1971 and by individual parties and Tamil members of Parliament including those now in the government party were rejected in toto by the government and Constituent Assembly

And whereas even amendments to the draft proposals relating to language, religion and fundamental rights including one calculated to ensure that at least the provisions of the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Regulations of 1956 be included in the Constitution were defeated resulting in the boycott of the Constituent Assembly by a large majority of the Tamil members of Parliament

And whereas the Tamil United Liberation Front, after rejecting the Republican Constitution adopted on the 22nd of May, 1972 presented a six point demand to the Prime Minister and the Government on 25th June, 1972 and gave three months time within which the Government was called upon to take meaningful steps to amend the Constitution so as to meet the aspirations of the Tamil Nation on the basis of the six points and informed the Government that if it failed to do so the Tamil United Liberation Front would launch non-violent direct action against the Government in order to win the freedom and the rights of the Tamil Nation on the basis of the right of self determination;

And whereas this last attempt by the Tamil United Liberation Front to win Constitutional recognition of the rights of the Tamil Nation without jeopardising the unity of the country was callously ignored by the Prime Minister and the Government;

And whereas the opportunity provided by the Tamil United Liberation leader to vindicate the Government's contention that their constitution had the backing of the Tamil people, by resigning from his membership of the National State Assembly and creating a by-election was deliberately put off for over two years in utter disregard of the democratic right of the Tamil voters of Kankesanthurai and

Whereas in the by-election held on the 6th February 1975 the voters of Kankesanthurai by a preponderant majority not only rejected the Republican Constitution imposed on them by the Sinhalese Government but also gave a mandate to Mr S J V. Chelvanayakam Q C and through him to the Tamil United Liberation Front for the restoration and reconstitution of the Free Sovereign, Secular, Socialist State of TAMIL EELAM.

The first National Convention of the Tamil united Liberation Front meeting at Pannakam (Vaddukoddai Constituency, on the 14th day of May, 1976 hereby declares that the Tamils of Ceylon, by virtue of their great language, their religions, their separate culture and heritage, their history of independent existence as a separate state over a distinct territory for several centuries till they were conquered by the armed might of the European invaders and above all by their will to exist as a separate entity ruling themselves in their own territory, are a nation distinct and apart from the Sinhalese and this Convention announces to the world that the Republican Constitution of 1972 has made the Tamils a slave nation ruled by the new colonial masters the Sinhalese who are using the power they have wrongly usurped to deprive the Tamil nation of its territory, language citizenship, economic life, opportunities of employment and education thereby destroying all the attributes of nationhood of the Tamil people.

And therefore, while taking note of the reservations in relation to its commitment to the setting up of a separate state of TAMIL EELAM expressed by the Ceylon Workers Congress as a Trade Union of the Plantation Workers, the majority of whom live and work outside the Northern and Eastern areas,

This convention resolves that restoration and reconstitution of the Free, Sovereign, Secular Socialist State of TAMIL EELAM based on the right of self determination inherent to every nation has become inevitable in order to safeguard the very existence of the Tamil Nation in this Country.

This Convention further declares-

- (a) that the State of TAMIL EELAM shall consist of the people of the Northern and Eastern provinces and shall also ensure full and equal rights of citizenship of the State of TAMIL EELAM to all Tamil Speaking people living in any part of Ceylon and to Tamils of EELAM origin living in any part of the world who may opt for citizenship of TAMIL EELAM.
- (b) that the constitution of TAMIL EELAM shall be based on the principle of democratic decentralisation so as to ensure the non-domination of any religious or territorial community of TAMIL EELAM by any other section
- (c) that in the state of Tamil Eelam, caste shall be abolished and the observance of the pernicious practice of untouchability or inequality of any type, based on birth shall be totally eradicated and its observance in any form punished by law,
- (d) that TAMIL EELAM shall be a secular state giving equal protection and assistance to all religions to which the people of the state may belong,
- (e) that Tamil shall be the language of the State but the rights of Sinhalese speaking minorities in Tamil Eelam to education and transaction of business in their language shall be protected on a reciprocal basis, with the Tamil speaking minorities in the Sinhala State.

(f) that Tamil Eelam shall be a Socialist State wherein the exploitation of man by man shall be forbidden, the dignity of labour shall be recognised, the means of production and distribution shall be subject to public ownership and control while permitting private enterprise in these branches within limit prescribed by law, economic development shall be on the basis of socialist planning and there shall be a ceiling on the total wealth that any individual or family may acquire.

This Convention directs the Action Committee of the TAMIL UNITED LIBERATION FRONT to formulate a plan of action and launch without undue delay the struggle for winning the sovereignty and freedom of the Tamil Nation;

And this Convention calls upon the Tamil Nation in general and the Tamil youth in particular to come forward to throw themselves fully in the sacred fight for freedom and to flinch not till the goal of a sovereign socialist state of TAMIL EELAM is reached.

Copy of letter addressee to Mrs. Srimavo R. D. Bandaranaike Hon Prime Minister by Mr. M Sivasithamparam Joint Secretary General of the Tamil United Liberation Front in reply to her statement about the civil disobedience campaign of the T. U. L. F. on the 22nd May 1976.

M Sivasithamparam 100, Norris Canal Road,
Colombo - 10.
25th May, 1976.

Dear Madame Prime Minister,

I write this letter to you as Secretary General of the Tamil United Liberation Front and also as the General Secretary of the All Ceylon Tamil Congress

It was reported in the "Ceylon Daily News" of 24th instant that you had said "that the Federal Party has been campaigning for a separate state" and "that Federal Party M. P. have been involved in the distribution of subversive literature" Both these statements are factually incorrect.

The resolution for a separate, free, secular, sovereign, socialist state of Tamil Eelam was adopted at the delegates Conference of the Tamil United Liberation Front in the course of the first National Convention held at Vaddukoddai on 14th and 15th of May 1976. This resolution was endorsed at a public meeting attended by more than 50,000 people. Therefore, the demand for a separate Tamil State is not that of a single political party, but that of the Tamil United Liberation Front, which is as much - if not more - representative of the Tamil people of Ceylon as your Government is of the Sinhala people. The decision to defy the Emergency Regulations, being the distribution of leaflets in derogation of the

Constitution was taken at the Action Committee of the T. U. L. F. Perhaps, your reference only to the Federal Party was to give the impression that only a section of the Tamil people were involved in the demand for a Seperate State and defying undemocratic and unjust Emergency Regulations.

The complete and spontaneous Hartal in the Northern and Eastern provinces, both on the 21st and on the 24th is the clearest indication that the entire Tamil Nation is one with the T. U. L. F. It is also reported that 'the Tamil people of North and East are dead against a Seperate State demand'. This is hardly a matter for argument. Apparently the lesson from the Kankesanthurai by-election has not been learnt. Wish to state further that we are prepared to face any known method of gauging public opinion on this matter and accept their verdict. If this test is to be any use, you also must be prepared to accept the verdict.

It is also reported that you described the campaign launched by the T. U. L. F as anti-social and subversive. All colonial masters have described freedom movements in this way. But history's verdict has always been different.

Also, it has been reported that you threatened to take stern action against those involved in this campaign. Ours is a non-violent, civil-disobedience movement. According to the tenets of Gandhiji's teachings, we shall suffer whatever stern action you propose to take. History has again shown such sacrifices triumph in the end.