



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London S.W.1

15 June 1979

Dear Bryan,

SRI LANKA

I enclose the original of a message to the Prime Minister from the President of Sri Lanka which was transmitted to the Lord Privy Seal when he saw the Sri Lankan Finance Minister, Mr Ronnie de Mel this afternoon.

In the course of this call, Mr de Mel emphasised the great progress that his Government had made in the liberalisation and development of the economy. They had achieved a growth rate of over 8% last year. They had also made great strides in integrating minority communities. He echoed the President's warm sentiments about UK economic assistance to Sri Lanka and hoped that we would continue to consider their projects favourably. The Lord Privy Seal, while explaining that we could give no commitment pending the Government's review of expenditure, said that we would continue to give priority to the Commonwealth ^{in the} aid programme.

The Lord Privy Seal raised the question of Vietnamese refugees and suggested that the Sri Lankan Government was particularly well placed to use its influence, especially among the non-aligned. Mr de Mel said that he would raise this with his Cabinet and President and that he was sure something could be done.

I will let you have advice on a suitable reply to this message next week.

Yours ever,
Stephen Gomersall
S J Gomersall
Private Secretary to the
Lord Privy Seal

B G Cartledge Esq
No 10 Downing Street



PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T12A/79T

President of Sri Lanka

21st May, 1979

My dear Prime Minister,

It gives me much pleasure to be able to send Mr. Ronnie de Mel, Minister of Finance and Planning, and Mr. Gamini Dissanayake, Minister of Mahaveli Development and Minister of Lands and Land Development, as my special envoys to you.

They bring you the good wishes of my Government and of myself for your success in the great responsibilities that have devolved upon you. I would like you to consider their visit to you as an index of the importance that Sri Lanka attaches to the further development of the cordial relations which we have with your country.

Our countries share many common and vital interests, and since coming to office in 1977, my Government has attached special importance to the development of the historical relations which Sri Lanka has had with the United Kingdom - not the least of which is our common link with the Commonwealth.

Apart from the efforts to create a free and just society, our endeavours are to hasten the pace of economic development. The accelerated programme for completing the Mahaveli Scheme, the creation of an Export Promotion Zone, the Development of Greater Colombo, and the liberalization of the economy, are the corner stones in this programme of development. I would very much value your giving an opportunity to my Ministers to outline to you personally our plans for implementing these projects.

Let me take this opportunity to convey to you the appreciation of my Government and myself for what the Government of the United Kingdom has been able to do for Sri Lanka from time to time, especially the generous assistance extended for our development projects. I can think of no better example of your country's concern for mine than the recent waiver of the loans that you have given us - a gesture which my Government and people deeply appreciate.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely,

J.R. Jayewardene.

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
Prime Minister,
UNITED KINGDOM.