

*Mrs. Bandaranaike's book
in charge. (Sri Lanka)*

Statsminister

S P E R R E F R I S T

Odvar Nordli

Fredag 8. oktober 1976 kl. 2000.

Statsminister Nordlis tale ved middag på
Akershus Slott fredag 8. oktober 1976 kl. 2000.

Your Excellency, distinguished guests,

For the first time we have the pleasure and the
honour to have the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka visiting
Norway.

Under the leadership of your great husband, and
under your leadership, Madam, Sri Lanka has created an

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image of its own. Your country is confronted with the
same complex of problems, as is the majority of developing
countries.

We appreciate that you have taken a number of
policy measures, which many Governments ought to take,
and wish to take, but which few of them do take.

- I am referring to your far-reaching land reform,
- to your ambitious programme to expand general
education,
 - to your measures to establish national control of
important sectors of the economy,
 - and to your public health programme which also
contains an important element of family planning.

Throughout the world Sri Lanka is known for its balanced and wise performance in international matters. Without compromising the unconditional claims for a new economic world order, Sri Lanka has contributed largely to ensure continued negotiations between the nations of the world, both in UNCTAD and elsewhere.

We have a deep respect for the way in which you have executed the chairmanship of the group of non-aligned countries. Thereby, you have contributed substantially to increase the respect for your country as well as for the group of non-aligned countries.

The Norwegian Government attaches great importance to increase the financial flow to the developing world,

and to the urgent need for a reorganization of the world economy, a new economic order.

At the recent conference on trade and development in Nairobi, we found no difficulties in supporting the proposal to create a common fund as a part of an integrated raw material programme. We regret that so few industrialised countries were able to follow us at this occasion. It is a main task for us to participate in the further preparatory work which eventually will create the new economic world order.

However, on our side, we must also pay attention to the internal problems of structural change in employment and production in our own economy.

The national acceptance in Norway of the new economic order is dependent on a successful solution of these structural problems.

Therefore a certain delay may be needed in the implementation to allow the necessary adjustments to take place.

Another topic which directly affects both Sri Lanka and Norway, is the Law of the Sea. The work on new international conventions in this field has to a large extent been influenced by Sri Lanka and Mr. Amerasinghe, her Ambassador at the UN and President of the 31st General Assembly, as President for the Conference on the Law of the Sea. Unfortunately the last Conference in New York did not arrive at conclusive

results and further work and discussions are necessary. However, I am convinced that the outstanding problems will be solved, not least through your country's mediation and negotiating efforts.

In recent years there has been a considerable increase in contacts between Sri Lanka and Norway. Norwegian participation in development projects and tourism may be mentioned. The Norwegian Good Templar Youth Association has been engaged in development projects since 1967, and three other private organizations have successively taken up the challenge, Save the Children, The Church's Relief Fund and the Norwegian Housewives' Association.

The Government has proposed the opening of an official development cooperation programme with Sri Lanka. Detailed discussions on this programme may take place already before the end of the year, if this is acceptable to the Government of Sri Lanka.

Your Excellency, we know that all your tasks do not leave many openings in your programme. We are therefore honoured that you could make this official visit to Norway. This is a good omen for our future relations. The time will not allow you to see much of the country at this occasion, but we hope that we may have a later opportunity to show you how people live and work also in other parts of the country.

Let me conclude by proposing a toast to the health of Her Excellency Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, to the progress and prosperity of Sri Lanka and its people and to the friendship between our two countries.