

The National Movement in Sri Lanka during (1870-1943)

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Abstract

This study deals with the national movement in Sri Lanka during the period (1870-1943), during which Sri Lanka witnessed important political and constitutional transformations that had a major role in achieving national independence (albeit within the British Commonwealth system), as it got rid of British colonialism, and this stage witnessed cooperation. It is clear between most symbols of the national movement (except for leftist organizations) on the one hand and the British authorities, and this British-Sri Lankan cooperation resulted in several results, the most important of which is the gradual progress in the political and constitutional situation of Sri Lanka, and an important development in the course of the political process in Sri Lanka. For the first time in the country's history, political parties with diverse ideologies appeared, the most important of which is the Ceylon National Congress, which was established in 1919; The left-wing Sri Sama Samaj Party in 1935; And the "Sinhala Maha Sabha" party in 1937, and during this stage the country witnessed the drafting of the country's first constitution, and its drafting passed through several stages, and it took its final form in 1946, and witnessed the emergence of the first national legislative assembly elected by the Sri Lankan people, and witnessed the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Ceylon's National Congress Party dominated the political scene. Through this, it lays paths of national independence with the escalation of the Second World War, which put Sri Lanka on the threshold of an important historical stage.

Keywords: - Sri Lanka, Britain, independence, constitutional reform, Senanayake, Governor General, National Movement, elections.

Introduction

The first Sinhalese arrived in Sri Lanka late in the 6th century B.C., from northern India. I introduced Buddhism circa 250 B.C., and the first kingdoms developed in the cities of Anuradhapura (from circa 200 B.C. to circa A.D. 1000) and Polonnaruwa (from about 1070 to 1200). In the 14th century, a south Indian dynasty established a Tamil kingdom in northern Sri Lanka. The Portuguese controlled the coastal areas of the island in the 16th century, followed by the Dutch in the 17th century. The island was ceded to the British in 1796, became a crown colony in 1802, and was united under British rule by 1815 (CIA, 2021).

In the late nineteenth century, with the help of the British, an educated Sri Lankan class appeared, working to provide some administrative and professional services in the country. Most of its members were directly or

linked to the British authorities, were influenced by Western culture and ideas, and were loyal to the British authorities (Russell .R., 1990).

Method:

The study followed the method of historical research (chronology) to review the developments that Sri Lanka witnessed during the British colonial era, especially after the emergence of political and religious organizations that were working to advance society and confront the British, with the historical method we use the analytical (philosophical) method to analyze some historical events that deserve analysis. Conclusion.

The aim of the study:

To learn about the policy pursued by Britain towards Sri Lanka, and to learn about the method used by Sri Lanka to pressure Britain to develop its constitutional and political position. It took the research information from important sources, including British documents, some recent books and articles.

Results and Discussions

The emergence and development of the national movement in Sri Lanka (1870—1930)

Considering the changes that Sri Lanka underwent in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Buddhist clergy (Sangha) objected to the Christian missionaries in the country, and they rejected the British exploitation of the country's goods. The American Henry Steel Olcott, head of the Theosophical Movement, who was an advocate for the rights of the underprivileged in the world, and after he arrived in Sri Lanka, Olcott organized a Buddhist campaign against British officials and missionaries, and founded in 1870 (a Buddhist Theosophical Society), which established three institutions of higher education in Sri Lanka, Ananda College, Mahinda College, and Dharmaraja College, and (200) small schools whose mission was to support Buddhist education and inculcate the patriotic spirit and the national belonging of the country. Ancient Buddhist texts are a popular interest in the ancient civilization of Sri Lanka, and the study of the past has become an important focus in the new Buddhist education campaign in Sri Lanka. Archaeologists worked in the ruins of the kingdom of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, and their discoveries contributed to instilling patriotic concepts and pride in the country's history, which helped in 1880 to form another Buddhist association called the "Buddhist - Inspired Temperance Movement". To combat alcoholic beverages (Russell & Others, 1990), Charles Henry founded the (Ceylon Farmers Association), which in September 1888 replaced its name with the "Ceylon National Association", which was an imitation of the Indian National Congress, it aimed to provide the services to the Sri Lankan people (Patrick, 2015). Thus, the national movement

against the British was formed on a religious-educational basis, using Buddhism as a weapon to win the sentiments of people against the British colonial policy.

Then the Social Reform Society was formed in Sri Lanka in 1906 under the supervision of Leader Coomaraswamy (Mark, 2004), as one of the national societies with social reform, calling for fighting most of the ideas, customs, and traditions associated with the West, and its ideas were inspired by Buddhism. The British authorities did not object to the establishment of this association, and its formation encouraged some Sri Lankans to establish political societies, which demanded the formation of an executive council in Sri Lanka, and that there be representatives for them in the Legislative Council. Indeed, in 1910, the British authorities allowed a Sri Lankan leader to represent his country in the Council. Legislative Council and she reserved other seats according to sectarian representation in the country (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006). I may explain it that the British did not oppose the formation of these societies and organizations, because they did not demand the expulsion of the British and fight them. Rather, their demands were more reformist than revolutionary.

Meanwhile, the First World War (1914-1918) took place, and Sri Lanka took part in the war as part of the British Empire, though some young Sri Lankans volunteered to defend their land, and some of them joined the Ceylon Cadet Battalion. Some of them formed a force called the "Ceylon Defence Force Formation", and half of the volunteers took part as officers because they had studied in some British military colleges, such as the British Royal College, Thomas College, Kingswood College, and Trinity College (Charitha, 2014), and they were supervised by British officers. However, Sri Lanka was only affected by the war, and the closest fighting took place near the Bay of Bengal when an Australian ship sank a German cruiser (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006). The Times of Ceylon reported that the number of Sri Lankan volunteers in the Ceylon Military Students Battalion and the Ceylon Defence Force reached in 1917 about (1250) volunteers, (105) of them were victims in the war, and (84) were killed, and (21) volunteers died from wounds the number of wounded is (114), and the number of prisoners of war has

reached (18) prisoners, besides those fleeing the fighting (Charitha,2014).

Despite that, but the war affected the development of the national movement in the country, as it encouraged the propaganda of the Allies, which included promises of freedom and self-determination of peoples during the war, the Sri Lankan and they understood it to be implemented, and with this propaganda, there was an event related to the war And it was the first spark for the development of the Sri Lankan national movement, in 1915 sectarian riots broke out between Sinhalese and Muslims on the western coast of the island (Sri Lanka), and the British authorities interpreted this as a plot to overthrow the British government there, and by order of the British Governor-General in Sri Lanka Robert Chalmers (1913-1915) arrested many Sinhalese, including Dr. Don Stephen Senanayake, to curb the unrest, and indeed the British quelled it with excessive and brutal force (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006).

This harsh colonial method prompted Sri Lankan activists to coordinate their efforts to unite action against the British authorities, as the Indian national movement was a model for Sri Lankan politicians, and in 1917 the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League left their differences aside and issued a joint declaration of their activities against the British This was reflected on Sri Lankan politicians, and they were encouraged to become more patriotic and less partisan to achieve constitutional reform for their country (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006). Indeed, some members of the Ceylon National Assembly, such as James Peiris, met with some members of the Ceylon Reform League, including EJ Samarawickrama and Ponnambalam Arunachalam, to form a larger political organization.

Calling for constitutional reform in the country (Gnanapala&Nirmala, 2014), these meetings resulted in the formation of the “Ceylon National Congress” in Colombo on December 11, 1919 (A. Jeyaratnam, 1988), and Ponnambalam became its first president (Gnanapala&Nirmala, 2014). This political agreement between the Sri Lankan organizations reflects the maturity of Sri Lankan politicians, and their ability to leave their differences aside and work to lead their national project.

After announcing its founding, his first demands were to issue a constitution for the country that would increase local control over the Executive Council and the budget, and the British authorities responded to that and issued a constitution for the country in 1920, but it did not meet the aspirations of Sri Lanka, and after constant pressure, amendments were made to it in 1924., Increased Sri Lankan representation in the Legislative Council, but did not allow them to be represented in the Executive Council. Nevertheless, Sri Lanka became the closest thing to a representative government (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006). Demanding the enactment of a constitution for the country has prominently indicated the escalation of the national movement in Sri Lanka.

Despite these constitutional amendments, the government failed in its work and based on that, the British government sent in October 1927 a royal commission headed by the Earl of Donoughmore and the membership of Sir Geoffrey Butler (Sir Geoffrey Butler) and Dr. Drummond Dr. T. Drummond Shiels and Sir Matthew Nathan, to find out the true reasons for the failure of the government to succeed under the 1924 Constitution (S.V.D. Gamini,2008)., the decision to send the commission to Sri Lanka was evidence of the British attempt to contain the rising national movement in Sri Lanka.

The committee spent four months meeting some residents of Sri Lankan regions, during which they held (34) sessions and met (140) people, and through these sessions, the committee reached a conviction confirming the failure of the 1924 Constitution and its ineffectiveness in the administration of Sri Lanka (K. Arunthavarajah,2014), and suggested in its report, changes Constitutionalism is necessary for the establishment of self-government in Sri Lanka, after the failure of the 1924 constitution to create an executive council that enjoys the people’s confidence (Sri Lanka Association of New York,2006).

While the committee was operating in Sri Lanka, Alexander Ekanayake Gunasinha, in October 1928 formed the Labor Party, a left-leaning political party, which was a product of working-class activity and trade unionism during the crisis period. The World Economic Forum (1929 - 1933), and this party was one of the first political parties to appear in Sri Lanka (Kesera, 2002).

Meanwhile, in 1930, the commission presented a proposed constitution for Sri Lanka, in which the British Governor-General kept all powers, affirming that only legal legislation could be promulgated. With his approval, the constitution proposed that there be seven executive committees to run the country instead of forming ministries so that there would be an administrative progression in taking over the responsibility for self-government by the Sri Lankan people, and there would be a legislative council for Sri Lanka known as (the official state council), and the seven committees would perform executive duties. Each committee is composed of appointed members from the aforementioned council, and each one of them is headed by an elected Sri Lankan person who directs his committee in his capacity as its minister, and alongside these seven Sri Lankan ministers there will be three British officials with the rank of minister, who manage matters related to foreign affairs, defense, financial and judicial affairs, and this constitution is known. In the name of the “Dongmuri Constitution”, which gave a kind of participatory democracy to Sri Lankans, and encouraged the emergence of some political organizations (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006). Despite the many shortcomings of the constitution, they considered it a great gain for Sri Lankans because it allowed them to actively take part in managing the affairs of their country, and paved their way towards independence.

Elections and formation of the Executive Council in Sri Lanka

(1931-1935)

After they approved the constitution, it was necessary to work on implementing its most important articles, which call for general elections in the country. Indeed, in 1930, the British authorities began forming a joint technical committee (British and Sri Lankan members) to demarcate the electoral districts that would produce 50 elected members. As for the official state council (which is the proposed new name for the Legislative Council) and (8) members nominated by the Governor-General, and after work, the committee decided that for every 100,000 voters there would be one seat on the proposed council (K. T. Rajasingham, 2001), and the committee guaranteed the right to take

part in the elections. For men and women, it specified their age, as it allowed the participation of men who reached the age of (21) years and over, and women over the age of (30) years (Paul R., 2010). On April 15, 1931, I submitted the order. The Legislative Council, which approved it and published it, agreed to convert the Legislative Council to the name “State Official Council” (K. T. Rajasingham, 2001).

In the first reaction to this decision, the Tamils objected to the seven seats allocated to them, and the “Jaffna Youth Congress” held its annual meeting in April of the same year, and announced a boycott of the elections (K. T. Rajasingham, 2001), and confirmed that the elections are under the Constitution of Dongmuri. It is rejected, because it did not give clear indications of achieving self-government in the country (Hansard, 1931), and they asked everyone to boycott the elections. However, the Tamil candidate in northwest Jaffna (Northern District) has nominated himself, and the two Tamil candidates in the Eastern Province of the country have also announced their candidacy for the elections, and not adhered to what it stated in the youth conference meeting. This means that the seven seats allocated to Tamils were three candidates and four candidates were left behind (K. T. Rajasingham, 2001). We may interpret the Tamil boycott of the elections as not a rejection of the Dongmuri constitution, but because of the number of seats allocated to them. If it increased the number, they would not take part in the elections and would not boycott them.

Meanwhile, the constitutional timings for the elections were announced, and the Legislative Council was dissolved on April 17, 1931, and they confirmed that May 4 of the same year would be the last day to receive nomination applications for candidates for the elections, and the elections would take place during the period (June 13-20) of the aforementioned year (K. T. Rajasingham, 2001).

Despite the Tamil boycott, elections were held, and their results were announced on June 20, 1931, during which the candidates competed for (46) seats, (9) of them won without a competition, and the remaining (37) ones competed with other candidates. The percentage of voters in the elections was about (60%) of the total electorate, and the low-ranking candidates (all Sri Lankan) won (28) seats, and the

Canadians (who are also Sri Lankan, but they distinguish themselves because they live in the city of Kandy) won (10) seats, and won The Europeans won two seats, the Tamils Ceylon (who did not live in Jaffna) won three, Tamil Indians (not from Jaffna) won two seats, and the Muslims won one seat (Hansard,1931). It is worth it.

noting that most of the candidates in the elections competed as individuals and not as members of political parties because the party system in Sri Lanka was not yet rooted (D. B. S. Jeyaraj, 2018).

After announcing the results, on June 26 the Governor-General announced the names of the eight members nominated for the State Council, four of them were Europeans, two from the Alburger minority, one Tamil of Indian origin, and one Muslim named Muhammad Khalid Salmin, and on July 7, the councilors elected Alexander Frances Mulamur (Alexander Francis Molamure) in his capacity as their spokesperson, then they elected the members of the seven executive committees by secret ballot, then each committee met to choose its president, and the chairpersons of those committees declared themselves ministers (K. T. Rajasingham,2001), and the results of their elections resulted in the victory of Don Baron Jaitilaka. Baron Jayatilaka as Minister for Home Affairs, Don Stephen Senanayake as Minister of Agriculture and Land, Tikiri Banda Panabokke as Minister of Health, Charles Batuwatudawe as Minister of Local Administration, and Haji Mohamed Macan Markar minister for Transportation and Business, Dr. Christopher Williams W. Cannangara as Minister of Education, Periannan Sundaram as Minister for Labor, Industry, and Trade (Ananda,2011), and on July 10, the inaugural meeting of the Council was held in an atmosphere of wonderful celebration (K. T. Rajasingham,2001).

On this occasion, the British King George V sent a message to the new council, in which he said: "On the occasion of the opening of the State Council, I would like to convey to my people in Ceylon [Sri Lanka] through their elected representatives and to confirm the interest with which I will monitor the implementation of the constitution that came building On the recommendations of the Special Committee chaired by Lord Dongmuri, I had the pleasure of granting you this constitution, which will give

the island a great deal of autonomy... "(K. T. Rajasingham,2001)

After the Council began its work, Edward Walter Perera formed in 1932 on some articles of the Dongmuri Constitution and demanded that the Council abolish them, those related to the extensive reserve powers granted to the Governor-General, and the right of the British Crown power to decide without taking the opinion of the Council, The formation of the government based on executive committees and not as ministries. As a result, discussions were held between Governor-General Sir Graeme Thomson and the Council of Ministers (heads of executive committees) to amend some of them, but the Governor-General rejected any fundamental amendments to the constitution and considered them premature steps, and towards this rejection, the Council of State sent a delegation composed of five members to meet with the British Foreign Secretary, but the British government rejected this matter (K. T. Rajasingham,2001).

Meanwhile, political organizations appeared to have sought to achieve their own goals and work to restore Buddhism to its former glory, so they formed All Ceylon Moors Association in 1935 (K.N.O. Dharmadasa,1992), and on December 19, 1935, the Ceylon Society Party, known as the Lanka Sama Samaja Party), which has Trotskyist orientations, and the party had two main goals, the first is to work to achieve complete independence of the country from British colonial control, and the second focuses on the transformation of Sri Lankan society from a capitalist society to a socialist society, and among its most prominent leaders are Dr. Colvin Reginald De Silva (Percy,2007), Dr. Sugiswara Abeywardena Wickremasinghe, Don Philip Gunawardena and Dr.Nannyakkarapathirage Martin Perera (Raja,2008). These organizations have appeared in the country with the approaching date of the State Council elections, to organize and direct the masses according to their ideas and party programs.

The internal situation in Sri Lanka from the elections to the Second World War (1936—1939)

The first Council of State was to be dissolved on June 23, 1935 but was extended until December 7 of the same year for two reasons, the first of

which was to pass the appropriations (budget) bill for the year 1936-1937, and the second was to prepare the voter register for the general elections. Thus, a new procedure was adopted by which all voters who may vote are registered, and on this basis, the number of voters increased, reaching (2,451,323) (K. T. Rajasingham,2001).

In keeping with their pledge, the State Council was dissolved on December 7, and the second State Council elections were held during the period (February 22 - March 7, 1936), on days (22, 25, 27, 28, 29) of February, and days (3, 5). 7, from March (Dushyantha, 2007), and (7) candidates won without competition, and the rest were won they competed with other candidates, and the elections witnessed the victory of many new personalities (K. T. Rajasingham,2001), most Philip Junawarden and Dr. Nanyakrathurje Martin Pereira, two prominent Marxists and members of the Lankan Samaja Party (LSSP) (Walter, 2009), and Dudley Shelton Senanayake, son of Don Stephen Senanayake (Charitha, 2014).

After the results were announced, the members of the council elected the seven executive committees, Baron Gyatelaka took over the Ministry of the Interior and the Presidency of the State Council together, Don Stephen Senanayake at the Ministry of Agriculture and Land, the Bandaranaike (SWRD) local administration, and George Claude Stanley Corea of the Ministry of Labor. Industry and Trade, John Lionel Kotalawala, Ministry of Communications and Works, Arthur de Silva, Ministry of Health, and Christopher William Canangara, Ministry of Education. All of these ministers are Sinhalese (Sri Lankan), and other minorities did not have any minister in the State Council, and the Sri Lankan leaders justified that, because of their desire to secure government consensus to achieve constitutional reform in the country (K. T. Rajasingham,2001). After this election, the Council of Ministers became composed of (11) people, seven representing the executive committees, and were Sri Lankan, and three British ministers responsible for foreign financial, judicial, and defense affairs, Add to them the Governor General, who was head of the Ministerial Council (B.S. Wijeweera, 2009) . The latter held its (first) opening session on March 17, 1936 (The Sunday Observer Newspapers,2005).

After the formation of the committees (the ministerial council), the associations and political parties representing minorities denounced how the committee heads were elected, and the monopoly of the Sinhalese, as the Jaffna Association expressed its dissatisfaction, and called Gangaser Ponnampalam Ganapathipillai to form an investigation committee In the work of the constitution, indeed, in February 1937, the State Council held a conference of all political parties in the country, and most of the council members attended, except for the European members who were nominated by the Governor-General. During the conference, Arunachalam Mahadeva (a member of Jaffna) proposed electing a committee to plan proposals for constitutional reform, which would be acceptable to the members of the conference. It was sent to the governor, but the delegates failed to reach conclusions on reforms (K. T. Rajasingham,2001).

After this failure, the Council of Ministers (the heads of the Seven Committees) presented in March 1937 a memorandum concerning the constitutional reforms of Governor-General Reginald Edward Stubbs, in which they demanded that the reserve powers of the Governor-General be reduced and the position of state officers (the British ministers responsible for defense and foreign affairs) be abolished Finance and the judiciary), replacing the executive committee system with a regular government system, and that the prime minister is chosen either through his election to the State Council or if the Governor-General nominates him, to choose his ministers after that. However, the Governor-General rejected the first two proposals, arguing that it was too early to transfer the powers and functions of the elected ministers, and suggested forming a committee to study Sri Lanka's problems, to determine other appropriate reform proposals (K.M. De Silva& Howard,1988).

While Governor Reginald Stops thought that the only practical course left for the British government was to appoint a new constitutional committee to look into the problems of the Sri Lankan government, his government removed him from office (K. M. de Silva& Howard,1988) on June 30, 1937, and appointed Sir Andrew Caldecott in his place, And who arrived in Sri Lanka and assumed his duties on October 16 of

the same year (Patrick, 2015), and Andrew Caldecott received during the period (January - May 1938) eleven official delegations to discuss constitutional reform, and Poonambalam asked him on behalf of all minorities in Sri Lanka to have their share (50%) In the State Council, but the ruler rejected that proposal, accusing him of trying to restore the old sectarian system (K. M. de Silva& Howard,1988).

On November 10, 1938, Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs, Malcolm John MacDonald, sent the Governor-General instructions regarding reform, and asked him to submit them to the State Council for discussion, the most important of which was mentioned in these instructions:

- 1- Not to diminish the powers of the Governor-General.
- 2- The old sectarian representation system cannot be returned.
- 3- Increase the number of State Council seats and redistribute them after an investigation by a local committee which should consider how to increase opportunities for the return of minority representatives.
- 4- Abolishing the executive committees.
- 5- Withdrawing state officers from the cabinet (executive committees) and the state council.
- 6 - Choose the Prime Minister through the Governor-General, and the former must choose his ministers in consultation with the Governor-General, and consult him on any other recommendations (K. T. Rajasingham,2001).

It is worth mentioning that the recent elections had a role in the emergence of some political organizations in the country. In 1937 Bandaranaike established an organization called The Great Council of The Sinhalese, known in Sri Lanka as “Sinhalese Maha Sabha” (Sinhala Maha Sabha), one of the strongest organizations supporting the idea of restoring Buddhism to its privileged position among the Sri Lankan people, and other organizations were established in the country, so the “Burgher Political Association” was formed in 1938 (Sri Lanka Association of New York,2006), and the Indian Mothha succeeded (GR Motha) and IX Pereira, the spokespersons of the Indian community in Sri Lanka in founding the “Ceylon Indian Congress” on July 15, 1939, which in 1940

became known as the (Federation of Ceylon National Workers’ Conference) (The Ceylon Indian Congress Labor Union) (Patrick,2015). Perhaps the announcement of Sinhala Maha Sabha that it wants to restore Buddhism to its former glory is just propaganda to achieve its own goals, by attracting the Buddhist clergy in particular and the Sri Lankan people and winning them in the upcoming elections.

Meanwhile, the instructions of Malcolm MacDonald were submitted by the Governor-General in 1939 to the Council of State, discussed by the latter, and approved in full with no substantial modification (K. M. de Silva& Howard,1988), and these instructions were issued as a series of decisions by the Governor-General. When reforms were moving in the right direction, World War II (1939-1945) took place, and Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939, and this shift in events made Sri Lanka aligned in the war with Britain like the rest of the British Commonwealth (K. T. Rajasingham,2001).

Left Parties in Sri Lanka and their Position in World War II

(1940-1943)

In early 1940s, cracks appeared in the Sri Samaja Party, and they expelled many of its members from the Executive Committee which led to the emergence of the United Socialist Party in 1941, of which Merengna Gausius Mendis became its general secretary. The party builds a popular base for it among Colombo workers, and they often denounced the British colonial presence in the country, which prompted the British authorities to ban the party with the Sri Sama Samaga Party in 1942, this ban, prompted many members of the United Socialist Party to organize their work, They held special meetings among them, including the meeting that was held during (2-3) July 1943, which resulted in the decision to dissolve the United Socialist Party, and the formation of the Ceylon Communist Party on July 3 of the same year, and Dr. Sojiswara Abewardena and Myrna Julius, the most prominent of its leaders (Raja, 2008).

Besides, another group emerged that split from the Sri Samaja Party known as the “Bolshevik-Leninist Party”. These three parties represented

the so-called (extreme left), and it is useful to mention the reason for this. Partisan fissures are because of the ideological differences that emerged after the death of Vladimir Lenin In 1924, the Soviet Union expelled leader Leon Trotsky, and then the Soviet Union's decision to enter World War II (1939 - 1945) on the side of the Allies, and thus the Communists split into Trotskyists and Stalinists (Sri Lanka Association of New York,2006).

Most of the leaders of the Sri Lankan Samaga Party are affiliated with the Fourth International (meaning Trotskyists) and competitors to the Comintern and its followers, and most of Sri Lanka's communists have joined him, and most of them were arrested during World War II, for refusing to take part in or support the war. (Unlike the Soviet Union, which aligned itself with the Allies during the war), as an imperial war. As for the Ceylon Communist Party began as a Stalinist faction within the Sri Lankan Samaga Party and was later expelled, and appeared with this name in 1943, and remained loyal to the instructions of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. Whereas the "Bolshevik-Leninist Party" was formed as another separatist group from the Sri Lankan Samaga Party, and represented the left working class in the cities, which were few and limited, and worked within trade unions, and they lacked the public support to take part in the formation of the Sri Lankan government. However, despite these well-known formations, leftists often formed temporary political coalitions from time to time before the elections, and they were a parliamentary nuisance (Sri Lanka Association of New York,2006).

The National Movement in Sri Lanka from the Second World War to the formation of the Solpyuri Committee (1939—1943)

Before the outbreak of World War II, Leader Senanayake (Minister of Agriculture and Land) had a strong personality and clear political intelligence, so he wanted to control the State Council (Parliament) and the Council of Ministers, unlike his predecessors such as Don Baron Jaitilaka and others who were undermined by circumstances (1938-1939) for constitutional reform and the beginning of the Second World War (K. M. de Silva, 1981).

While general elections for the State Council were scheduled to take place in 1941, the Sri Lankan Cabinet decided not to hold them under the existing constitution, and, the Governor-General informed the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs about the increasing unrest in Sri Lanka and recommended postponing the elections and appointing a progress committee. The future constitutional proposals required for the country, and based on this data, and after consulting with Leader Senanayake (as representing the moderate wing in the Sri Lankan national movement), the new Minister for Colonial Affairs George Ambrose Lloyd announced on June 12, 1940, that the elections would be postponed for two years, and Confirming the need for more time to decide on constitutional reforms and the delineation of electoral district boundaries after it was increased the membership of the new State Council was the main reason for the decision to postpone the election (K. T. Rajasingham,2001; K.M. De Silva, 1981).

Because of the circumstances of the war, the Sri Lankan administration placed at the disposal of the British Commander-in-Chief in Sri Lanka, and formed a military administration on December 1, 1941, that worked to unify the civil and military authorities, through the help of some important Sri Lankan personalities such as Senanayake, the Minister of Agriculture and Land, who became responsible for Preserving and equipping the country with food, Oliver Goonetilleke, who took over the accounts department, and Ivor Jennings, who worked as a legal advisor, and these three personalities were meeting almost every evening, to discuss civil defense and other affairs in the country (D.T. Aponso, 2001).

Senanayake and his party (Ceylon National Congress) represented in early 1942 the more moderate wing of the Sri Lankan national movement, which was no longer obligated to accept the instructions reached during (1938-1939), but wanted to elevate Sri Lanka to the rank of a Dominion within the British Commonwealth. To exploit the conditions of World War II, which witnessed a Japanese invasion of most of the countries of Southeast Asia, it took control of Burma, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, and the Philippines, and the Japanese forces were threatening the northeastern borders of India, which was

reflected in the strategic importance of Sri Lanka to the Allied forces (K. M. de Silva, 1981).

After Singapore fell under Japanese occupation on February 15, 1942 (Faridah, 2012), Sri Lanka became a central base for British operations in Southeast Asia, and the port of Trincomalee regained its historical strategic importance, and because Sri Lanka was an important strategic stronghold for the British Royal Navy, it was a military target for the Japanese, and as a result, it planned Japan to launch a major attack on the western Indian Ocean region, to control Sri Lanka, to cut off transportation lines and vital supplies to the Allied forces dependent on Arab Gulf oil, and to move to meet the Axis forces in Egypt (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006).

To implement this strategic plan for Japan, Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto ordered his Vice Admiral Chuichi Nagumo to lead a huge fleet to confront and destroy the British fleet in the Indian Ocean, but the confrontation did not occur between the two fleets, because the two fleets disappeared, one from the other in the ocean waters. Al-Hindi and some military historians have asserted that if the two fleets had met, the British fleet would face a major disaster. Instead of the naval plan, the Japanese fought several desperate air battles over the cities of Colombo and Trincomalee, in which they lost about (36) aircraft and many ships, and thus Yamamoto's strategy failed to isolate or destroy any unit of the British fleet in the Indian Ocean, and after that, the theater turned Events of the war away from Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka Association of New York, 2006).

With the escalation of the war, Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton was appointed on March 5, 1942, Commander-in-Chief of the British Army in Sri Lanka (K. M. de Silva & Howard, 1988), who could exercise additional powers (emergency powers) that were among the powers of the Governor-General at the time he saw appropriate. A military council was formed to manage the country's affairs, which made up an expected future point of intersection and disagreement with the Governor-General and the Council of Ministers, and was considered an unexpected new challenge for Senanayake on the road to constitutional reform (K. M. de Silva, 1981).

Under these circumstances, in December 1942, leader Senanayake became President of the State Council and Deputy Prime Minister (albeit the country is under the administration of the Commander-in-Chief), after Don Baron Jaitilaka retired, who confirmed that the gradual delegation of Sri Lanka and the granting of powers to its ministers is the best way to reach freedom. Patriotism and the achievement of independence from Britain, and to achieve this, Senanayake declared his support for Britain in the war, providing total support and service to the British war effort (D.T. Aponso, 2001).

Sri Lankan support for the British war effort became so vital that it prompted Governor-General Andrew Caldecott and Brigadier General Geoffrey Layton in December 1942 to urge the British government to make an early promise to Sri Lankan ministers regarding constitutional reform, because they feared that Sri Lankan support might cease if the declaration were made. From a government promise regarding constitutional reform, add to that the constant pressure from the Indian National Congress, which has been in continuous interference in Sri Lankan politics, through a Sri Lankan organization called the "Freedom Group", which was very influenced by revolutionary doctrines. To pursue revolutionary action in India. Based on the aforementioned, it became necessary to support the moderates in Sri Lanka (Senanayake and his supporters) who supported Britain and stood by it in the war, and called for independence within the British Commonwealth system (D.T. Aponso, 2001).

The British government responded to this call in December 1942, by assuring that it would exchange views on state constitutional reform in Sri Lanka, but Caldecott and Leighton were not convinced of this and confirmed that if the declaration was not more positive for Sri Lankan, it might affect the percentage of their participation in the war effort, and perhaps it will lead to the deviation of moderate national opinion towards extremist nationalist ideas and demand the secession of Sri Lanka from Britain (K.M. De Silva, 1981).

As a result, on May 26, 1943, the British government issued a new statement, in which it affirmed that "Her Majesty's Government attaches great importance to constitutional reform in Sri Lanka, as it will work after the war

and achieve victory on the development of the foundations of the institutions of self-government of Sri Lanka within the British Commonwealth, and will help form self-government responsible for all internal civil affairs, except in foreign relations and defense, and will also preserve the areas of security, construction, maintenance, communications, and staffing, which are necessary for the maritime and military air security of the British Commonwealth, including Sri Lanka as well, and the two governments will take part in Sums to provide security later, and this government will be under the British Crown, and the British government will oversee Sri Lanka's relations with other countries and some countries of the British Commonwealth, and the Governor-General will administer these powers after consulting the London government, who may enact legislation related to foreign affairs and defense after consulting the government in London as well "(D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

Among the contents of the declaration also is that the drafting of a new constitution by the contents of the declaration will be subject to examination through holding a conference or forming a special committee after the war and achieving victory in it because the circumstances do not now allow for the use of some state ministries for such a matter. Sri Lankan ministers plan their proposals and review the loopholes in the Dongmuri constitution, and then come up with a new constitution (a constitutional blueprint) that represents the aspirations of public opinion in the country, provided that it is approved by three-quarters of the State Council (except for British officials and the speaker of the council or the session chair), and it is within the guidelines that The May 1943 Declaration came with it, and this declaration came from Her Majesty's government in appreciation of the war effort presented by Sri Lanka, which is administered by the Council of Ministers and the Council of State (D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

Sri Lankan Prime Minister Senanayake admitted on June 8, 1943, that the May 1943 Declaration was a major gain, but (on behalf of the Cabinet) submitted an inquiry about the content of some points of the declaration, which need an explanation from the British government. However, British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden said, "He cannot go into details." The Sri

Lankan ministers stressed that "they cannot continue drafting their plan until they know whether their interpretations of some points of the declaration are acceptable or not." The British Foreign Secretary replied to them, "The declaration came with general principles, and entering a discussion of the details is not appropriate [meaning at the time of World War II]", but he assured them by saying: "He did not find a contradiction.

It is essential between the interpretations provided by the Sri Lankan ministers and some points of declaration. " , Sri Lankan ministers viewed this answer as convincing of the Sri Lankan interpretation (D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

Despite this, Andrew Caldecott (Governor-General) issued on July 2, 1943, a clarification regarding the May 26, 1943 declaration, stating that there are three key points that this declaration will achieve. British internal control over Sri Lanka, as state officials (British) and the reserve powers of the British ruler over Sri Lanka, would be relinquished, the Sri Lankan government would be responsible for internal civil affairs, and, the British government would keep the reserve powers of the British Crown as a basis for British external control over Sri Lanka (K. M. de Silva, 1981). Based on the foregoing, on July 15, 1943, the President of the State Council (Parliament Speaker) directed the ministers to proceed with drafting a new constitution (D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

Sri Lankan ministers admitted it was difficult for three-quarters of the members of the State Council to approve their draft constitution, and consensus was the obstacle that had always been in the way of every stage of reforms in their country. The ministers expressed their high confidence in the State Council, which with its great national spirit will bypass all intersections of the internal political system, and they obtained official approval from the Sri Lankan Cabinet to draft the constitution so that the matter would be completed and with the consent of all (D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

Drafting a draft that met most of the May 1943 Declaration represented a major challenge to Senanayake and the Sri Lankan Cabinet, which formed a constitutional committee headed by Senanayake and the membership of his advisers (K. M. de Silva, 1981). The committee completed its work in early February 1944 and

sent a copy of the draft to the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs and there was concern from some ministers about some articles in the draft regarding minorities in Sri Lanka (D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

Senanayake's touches were clear in drafting most of the draft articles, and the speed of its completion is because Senanayake did not invite anyone from the cabinet or the state council but headed the committee and the membership of his advisors, and in it, he made clear concessions to the Sri Lankan minorities, and uniqueness in drafting the draft was the most important criticism made by the Tamil minority and British minorities with commercial interests in Sri Lanka (K. M. de Silva, 1981), and the Indian minority objected to the draft, because they did not consult about their future, and declared that "the draft was a document organized by the Sri Lankan ministers only," and confirmed, "that most minorities in Sri Lanka will not accept this draft."(D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

After completing their mission, the Sri Lankan ministers led by Senanayake pressured the British authorities to get formal approval for their draft constitution, and they emphasized the internal conditions in the country need a quick decision, because it is not possible to grant another extension to the members of the State Council for a second session. After all, it is unacceptable. Public opinion, and thus elections, should be held in early 1945 by the new Sri Lankan constitution (D.P.B.M.G.,1945). It is clear from this that Senanayake and his colleagues wanted to take advantage of the conditions that Britain was going through during the war to get more concessions on the cause of national independence.

During his time in the British House of Commons, Anthony Eden (British Foreign Secretary) on July 15, 1944, confirmed that "the recent request of the Sri Lankan ministers is contrary to what was stated in the May 1943 Declaration, which affirmed that after achieving victory in the war, the draft constitution will be examined through a conference. Or send the committee to find the draft materials and interpret them. "The British government formed a committee to study the draft ministers, and to meet with some minority representatives in Sri Lanka, and She will visit Sri Lanka at the end of 1944, extending the life of the State Council,

perhaps for another two years (D.P.B.M.G.,1945).

The Sri Lankan ministers objected to the decision to form the committee and expand its work, and emphasized that this matter contradicts what was stated in the May 1943 Declaration, and disavowed the consent of the British Foreign Minister regarding his approval of the explanations presented by the Sri Lankan Cabinet who emphasized that there was no fundamental contradiction between The Sri Lankan ministers understood the declaration and the points of the announcement, and the ministers requested that the committee's task be limited to examining the draft without considering minorities because the approval of three-quarters of the members of the State Council would protect minorities. However, the ministers realized that their protest did not work in the face of the British government's decision to send the committee to Sri Lanka (D.P.B.M.G.,1945). Perhaps Senanayake and his colleagues' rejection of the decision to consider minorities is because they fear Britain will exploit this issue to delay the granting of independence to Sri Lanka, and to invoke the protection of minorities to put obstacles on the way to independence, and they may even reach the level of disavowing some contents of the May 1943 Declaration.

Conclusions:

1- The emergence of the Sri Lankan national movement in its beginnings on a religious-cultural basis, through the establishment of schools and universities, which worked to nourish the people with patriotism and instill national concepts in their minds, in order to confront the policies of alienation and missionary campaigns.

2- No Sri Lankan political figure emerged in the nineteenth century who could impose their presence on the Sri Lankan people, even if they were working against the British authorities, and even the organizations that were formed did not rise to the required level.

3- The year 1915 is considered an important event in the history of the national movement in Sri Lanka, as it revealed to the Sri Lankan organizations the British colonial style in the country.

4- The national movement developed during and after the First World War (1914-1918), as it demanded constitutional and political reform in the country, and as a result, the British authorities responded and enacted the country's first constitution, held the first elections (albeit restricted) for the Legislative Council, and sent a committee Dongmuri (1927-1931).

5- In the thirties of the twentieth century, Sri Lankan political figures emerged, who imposed their respect on the people and led and containing them, then confronted the British authorities, and the most prominent of these figures was the leader Senanayake, who led the independence movement.

6- Most of the political organizations that emerged before and during the 1930s were formed on a religious-ethnic basis, as there are special organizations for the Sinhalese (Sri Lankan) and others for Tamils and others.

For Muslims and some of them (burger), which enshrined a policy of racial discrimination between Tamils and Sinhalese in the country after independence.

7 - The year (1931) is one of the most prominent milestones in the history of the national movement, in which the first legislative elections were held globally, in which men and women took part, according to the age level specified for them, and in the same year, the first Council of Ministers was formed (albeit as executive committees Not ministries) More than half of his ministers were Sri Lankan, the first time in the country's history, and then repeated in the 1936 elections.

8- The political organizations in Sri Lanka developed after the Second World War (1939-1945), through the programs and goals they set and demanded. After they were demanding constitutional and political reform, they demanded independence from Britain.

9- The religious influence in forming political organizations in Sri Lanka almost ended after the Second World War, and ideological parties, prominent political figures led which, appeared.

10- The outbreak of the Second World War in 1939 had the effect of fragmenting the organizational structure of the left-wing Sri Samaj Party, as it was divided into two parts. The first supported the Soviet Union's decision

to enter the war on the side of the allies, given that the international position requires such a decision While the second was against this, considering that the decision contradicts the principles and ideas of the party for which it was founded.

11- The national movement in Sri Lanka (except for some left-wing parties) stood by Britain in World War II with no restrictions or preconditions (unlike India).

12- Despite this position, the government of Winston Churchill (1940-1945) did not deal with the demands of the national movement, and it often stalled and procrastinated in order to abort these demands, sometimes sending committees and at other times invoking the protection of minorities, to benefit from time In her favor, and after the war, she renounced most of the promises and declarations she had made, the May 1943 declaration, and declared that it would be possible to grant Sri Lanka independence after six years.

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