

Peace efforts to end the war, now a reality-Chandrika. (1994, October 15). *The Island*.

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Wijitha Nakkawita reporting from Padaviya with Cyril Basnayaka, Padaviya and Pulmudai Corrs.

Addressing an election rally at Padaviya yesterday Prime Minister and PA Presidential candidate Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga said the peace efforts to end the war that has been going on, are now becoming a reality after 11 years during which thousands of lives had been lost in vain. The government in a short time of one month has already initiated efforts to find a political solution to the problem. However the UNP had never made a sincere effort to end the war. The UNP candidate Gamini Dissanayake is now going round the country telling people that he will co-operate with the PA government in achieving peace, Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga Prime Minister and Presidential Candidate of the PA, said.

But what was the history of the UNP? It was the UNP government in which Gamini Dissanayake was a member that was responsible for the war in the North. The UNP in which he was a Cabinet

Minister was responsible for going to the North, disrupting the elections, burning down the Jaffna Library and causing the war now raging in the North.

She said that it was the UNP that also destroyed the peaceful way of life of the people of this country during the past 17 years and created a society bent on violence, corruption and even making deals and selling arms under the table. In short the UNP had turned the war into their own way of life.

They had deprived the people of this country the right to criticise those in power. Any person who had dared to oppose the UNP or speak on word critical of those in power was harassed. The PA promised the people that they will be free to criticise anyone from the Premier down to the lowest PA official, and the PA has already fulfilled that pledge. Today anyone is welcome to criticise the government, she said.

The Prime Minister also said that no one who dared oppress or

harass the people will be free to do so with impunity any more. Now legislation has been framed to ensure that freedom of the people will be guaranteed. The UNP was going round the country today telling the people that they will solve the problems of the people. But what was their record other than wanton killing, corruption and bribery that ran into billions made by the members of the UNP and corrupt officials were serving the UNP during their period of rule.

The PA had promised the people a small Cabinet of 20 Ministers and it was able to appoint a cabinet of 22 with Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike not drawing a salary for her portfolio. By this measure alone the PA has been able to save at least five billion rupees that the UNP had spent on 91 ministers every year. These funds would now be invested for public works and development, she said.

Berty Premalal Dissanayake, Deputy Minister of Industrial Development said the

UNP had not given the people of Rajarata the freedom to move about freely after the election victory of 1977.

Opposition supporters were harassed, assaulted, and killed after the UNP won. Had they won the last general election there would have been much suffering for the people who supported the PA. The leadership of Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike was responsible for the peaceful way of life that has been revived today.

Tissa S. Karaliyadda (PA) MP for Anuradhapura District said that the people of the NCP had continued to have faith in the PA government and would give a larger mandate to the Prime Minister in the Presidential Election. The PA government was making every effort to solve problems and in a very short time it had restored the fertilizer subsidy and reduced the cost of living as relief to the common man. Therefore the UNP could not deceive the people any more, he noted.