

Table of Contents

Introduction	I
Early Constitutional History	I
Donoughmore Constitution	6
Soulbury Constitution	10
First Republican Constitution of 1972	14
Part 1: System of Government under the 1978 Constitution	19
The Executive Presidency	21
Comparison with the 'Gaullist' Constitution of France	22
Variations from the French model	25
Presidential immunity from legal proceedings	27
Impeachment of the President	30
Should the country revert to a 'non-executive' President?	31
Independence of the Legislature from the Executive	33
The argument for a Second Chamber	35
Amendment of the Constitution	38
Seventeenth Amendment and Constitutional Council	50

Part 2: The Ethnic Question and the Devolution of Power	59
The language issue	60
How other countries handled language issues	62
Present day language rights	64
Territorial devolution of power	67
Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution	70
SC Judgment on Thirteenth Amendment	73
Subsequent interpretations of Thirteenth Amendment powers	76
Provincial Council powers over land	78
The Provincial Police Force	80
Power sharing at the Centre	81
Special Arrangements for the North and East	82
Cross-cutting devolution: the Belgian model	85
Asymmetrical devolution	87
Criticisms of federalism based on ethnic lines	89
The South African example	92
The Northern Ireland Peace Agreement	94
Part 3: Electoral Reform	97
The change of voting system after 1978	98
Sri Lanka's PR system	99
The District Development Council Elections	101
The 1982 Referendum	103
Introduction of the preference vote	107

Parliamentary Select Committee on Electoral Reform	110
The 'National List'	112
Elections to Local Authorities	115
Elections: Principles and Rules	116
The role of the Commissioner of Elections	117
The Seventeenth Amendment in relation to Elections	120
Re-examining the law relating to election malpractice	122
Election Petitions	122
The power to order a re-poll	126
Crossovers and expulsions	128
Part 4: Fundamental Rights	135
Rights expressly recognized under 1978 Constitution	135
Effect of Emergency Regulations	138
The Right to Life	139
Constitutionality of death penalty	141
Adding new rights to the FR Chapter	144
The use of FR provisions for public interest litigation	150
Language Rights	153
Laws that infringe fundamental rights	153
Other institutions to enforce fundamental rights	155
In Conclusion	159
Whether to amend or replace the Constitution	159
The limits of constitutional reform	162