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THE POLITICS OF NATIONALIZING: CEYLON

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## PREFACE

This is a study of one South Asian state -- Ceylon. It is an analysis of the aspirations and frustrations, the trials and errors of a developing nation-state working toward finding its place in the world's state system. It is a distillate of contributory elements toward attaining that condition referred to as nationalism. This work emphasizes a socio-political revolution in Ceylon between 1956 and 1964, a period of a people's determination to revive its cultural identity. It is placed against the broader background of political independence, and a history of 2500 years, which served as the stimulant for that determination.

This study focuses on those instruments which can aid the socialization of diverse communities into a common whole or, conversely, can inhibit the process resulting in a continuum of divided, fragmented communities. It attempts to illustrate how the inept use of these instruments sacrifice logical processes in exchange for questionable rewards which accompany the desire for parochial identity.

Chapter I sketches the background from Ceylon's earliest point in historical time through four centuries of colonial bondage. It was an evolution of both pride and humiliation which today frames the contemporary structure by which the Ceylonese are preoccupied with a rebirth of cultural identity. Associated with the history is the revival of Buddhism and its current political implications. This account forms

Chapter II. Chapter III is devoted to the animosities current between the majority Sinhalese and the minority Tamils, the fears and frustrations of both communities, and examples of racialism in Ceylonese society. Chapter IV undertakes to summarize those problems connected with the utilization of material resources, and the shortcomings in the developmental programs due to the socio-political factors. Chapter V places Ceylon within the scope of external relations; and how and why of being a nonaligned country, and its functions as a nonaligned state. Chapter VI deals with the political structure and the problems associated therewith, the political parties and philosophies. The last chapter offers in summation a general approach to the problem areas through a more judicious use of the instruments and institutions as a means toward the desired goal -- nationalism.

Perhaps it would be appropriate to define the terms politics and nationalizing. The usage here of "politics" is taken to mean an instrument employed in undertaking a task; techniques to produce a desired end; an approach-factor oriented toward a given goal which, in this case, is the unification of social groups. It is also used, of course, in another sense, that of interactions between the actors in government and opposition forces.

"Nationalizing" means that process of bringing together diverse communities of human groups such as racial, caste, religion, labor, linguistic, leadership, and ecetra, and through politics (as defined above) produce a society imbued with nationalism. The use of the word nationalizing seemed preferable to nationalization or nationalism on two counts. First, "nationalization" has taken on a rather narrow and specific

connotation, i.e., the expropriation by a government of foreign or domestic economic enterprises, or the ownership and operation by a central government of enterprises previously private or of local government undertaking. "Nationalism" was somewhat too broad both in definition and application. It is used by some authors in the behavioral sense, by others as an emotion, and by others as a process. Nationalizing here attempts to limit the definition to that process which precedes the condition of nationalism.

A word must be said also concerning dates, especially those predating European contact. For these, I have relied upon three principal sources: the Geiger translation of the Mahayamsa, Nicholas and Parनावитана, A Concise History of Ceylon: From the Earliest Times to the Arrival of the Portuguese in 1505, and Ariyapala, Society in Medieval Ceylon. The dates I have used find common accord in these sources. The same authors are in close agreement as to the spelling of the names of people and places. For other Sinhala terms, I have used Geiger's An Etymological Glossary of the Sinhalese Language.

I have sincerely tried to avoid subjectiveness in this work. Frequently, literature dealing with a foreign country emphasizes the values and observations which best reflect the author's society. His sympathies are very often oriented toward his own kind, his own way-of-life. This I have tried to avoid. In the attempt to stay within the grey range of the black and white scale, I hope I have succeeded. An effort has been made to construct this work neither as a pure vehicle of opinion, nor just an almanac of factual data. It contains some of each. Whatever value the factual data might have, perhaps it rests in summar-

izing the political, resource, and social facets of a very small independent entity among the states of the world.

This work was undertaken in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Oklahoma. The question of acknowledgments is always a very difficult one, since it is virtually impossible to include the names of all those who have given me stimulation and guidance over the years. But especially, I owe a debt of gratitude to the several who have had direct contact with this dissertation. First and foremost, to my doctoral committee at the University of Oklahoma: Dr. Rufus G. Hall, the committee chairman, who guided me in this work from the idea stage through to this, the finished product. And to Dr. Oliver E. Benson, Dr. John Paul Duncan, Dr. W. Nelson Peach, and Dr. John W. Wood, all took the time to discuss relevant points, make suggestions, and lend encouragement. I am grateful too for the interest shown in this study by Dr. Walter F. Scheffer, the Chairman of the Department of Government. A number of agencies in Ceylon have been of great help in responding to inquiries for data and other materials. The typing of the final draft is the handiwork of Mrs. Joe Blackburn of Norman, Oklahoma. This work would by no means be finished today if it had not been for my wife, Bettie Lou, who in addition to her encouragement and patience, spent long hours at the typewriter with preliminary drafts of the material.

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## INTRODUCTION

South-Southeast Asia lies in a long, sweeping arc around the southern and eastern peripheries of the Asian continent. Its land zone begins at the point where Pakistan's border intersects the Makran coast; it runs along China's southern boundary to the northeastern tip of Vietnam, southeast to the Philippines, then southward to include Indonesia. The region is one of startling diversity in cultures, religions, traditions, economics, and political developments. The history is written in terms of tens of centuries, its population is counted in the hundreds of millions, the geographic area is measured by millions of square miles. The term "South Asia" is comparatively new having replaced the outmoded "subcontinent" reference to India, Pakistan, Ceylon, and the Himalaya kingdoms of Bhutan, Nepal, and Sikkim. "Southeast Asia" is chosen in relation to the area it designates encompassing the states of Burma, Cambodia, Korea, Laos, the Malaysian states, Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Ten countries in South-Southeast Asia became self-governing states between July 4, 1946 when the Philippines gained its independence from the United States, and December 28, 1949 when Indonesia emerged from under the guardianship of the Netherlands. Interspersed between these two dates, India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Korea, Vietnam, and Cambodia

gained some measure of independence.<sup>1</sup> The cumulative geographic territory involved roughly 2.8 million square miles, and a population of approximately 725 million people.

White man's flight from this part of the world is usually dated by the mid-twentieth century. However it may have had its beginning a hundred years earlier, or at any one of the subsequent points along the route of history. It may have begun in China in 1842 when the Treaty of Nanking, with all advantages accruing to the foreigner, set guidelines for accords defined by the Chinese as "unequal treaties". The Boxer Rebellion (1899-1900), anti-Western and anti-Christian in nature, may have marked the event. Or perhaps it was Japan's defeat of Russia in 1904-1905 which awakened the revolutionary impetus among all Asian nations suffering, in various degrees, from non-Asian impact. Perhaps it was the voices of Gandhi, Jinnah, and Nehru in India. There are any number of events which might well have been the beginning of the flight, but the real exodus began on a gray September morning in 1945 in Tokyo Bay. The signature of Mamoru Shigemitsu, Minister of Foreign Affairs to His Imperial Japanese Majesty, affixed to the instrument of capitulation clearly spelled out both military defeat and propaganda victory for the Asian peoples. There was no question as to the embarrassment of the military defeat, but in terms of propaganda Japan's sporadic victories and the contributions the Asian people had made on both sides in the war effort gave a good indication as to what could be attained through cooperative arrangements in

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<sup>1</sup>India and Pakistan were granted independence on August 15, 1947. In 1948, Burma, Ceylon, and Korea became self-governing on January 4, February 4, and August 15 respectively; and in 1949 Vietnam on March 8, Laos on July 19, Cambodia on November 8.

peacetime. The slogan "Asia for Asians", born of cynicism and of undated origin, no longer had the hollow ring; Asian would join Asian to make explicit that the white man need no longer burden himself.

The demands for self-governing status brought the emergent states out from under the protective umbrellas of the motherlands to bask in what Asians assumed to be the sunshine of autonomy. The people took a starried-eyed approach toward the newly won freedom, believing that independence of and by itself would produce satisfaction of their economic needs and wants, ethnic and racial equality, and brighter tomorrows. There was a harvest to be reaped: dignity and respect among the world community, equitable economic returns for products and labor, and self-determination in charting a course of complete self-rule.

Crucial to the democratic political process was the common denominator of nationalism wherein parochial interests would be melded and separatist groups would voluntarily accept changes in social structures which had been part of the ethnical consciousness for centuries. The architects of the independence movements were well aware that nationalism could be brought about only through effort and tolerance respecting the provincial diversities. Working plans contained rather broad principles which dictated dramatic changes in the value system -- changes affecting all groupings from peasant to elite. It was admitted that perhaps some inequities did exist in the format, but these were thought to be of minor consequences.

In the history of social organization, acquiescence to dramatic changes in life styles have a rather sorry record of success. Political and economic orders have been plagued by the complex of mores, customs,

and ideologies which have created deep chasms among social groups. In the traditional societies the art of living -- and in many areas of the world it is still an "art" -- had centered itself upon allegiance and responsibilities to family, village, and caste. This relatively narrow interest had negated the acquiring of a sense of common good for the larger society. Communal separatism was based upon castes and sub-castes, classes and sub-classes, a system which for centuries had been the accepted social structure. The doctrine of superiority verses inferiority was grounded firmly in ritual texts and philosophical treatises. Customs and beliefs were nurtured in religious soil.

Challenge of these dogmas had always existed covertly in some quarters but customary law and, later, the politico-economic fabric of colonialism were successful in holding tight reins against violent eruptions within the internal structure. The vanishing of the protective force of Western paternalism coupled with the idea of equality under constitutional law produced a new environment, one in which the long-held premises were overtly contested. Challenge by the lesser status groups were met with responses by the elite; groups struggled to raise their rank while others fought to retain theirs. The lines of separate identities hardened.

Among the states of South-Southeast Asia, with the possible exception of the Philippines, the new status of political independence proved to be the harbinger of a time of new troubles. All too soon it became obvious that the scales of aspirations and efforts were out of balance; people expected too much, too soon, and with too little effort on their part. They clamored for material increments while refusing to

make any sacrifices which meant changing traditional living patterns. There was much that was "sacred" about the "old ways". But, the people themselves were not entirely at fault. The elite who had led them down the path of independence had made promises which predicted something of a Utopia. It was implied at least that there was something for everyone; that even the depressed, poverty-ridden villagers would soon be luxuriating in abundance. The tinsel of a self-sustaining economic system lost its sparkle as self-governing status failed to provide automatically the solution to all problems. Aside from the fact that development plans had been conceived in an agglomerate environment of inexperience, naivete, and idealism, there were other factors militating against the instant realization of the dreams.

The power to govern was a coveted prize sought by the elite when the colonial powers relinquished administration. Political matters were far more important in terms of personal power and, concomitantly, personal reward. Concern for economic matters confined itself largely to self-interest profit motives. To be sure there was national planning which included schemes for "modernizing" the countries, but here efforts were directed generally to projects of the prestige types, and these came quickly under the control of the elite groups. Among a very large percentage of the people, these economic excesses created grave doubts as to the virtue of the free enterprise doctrine of minimal government control in business and industry. Elitist philosophy preached of relieving deprivations among the less fortunate fellowmen, but theory and practice were widely separated. There was little attention given to the conditioning process by which inter-community relations could be bettered insofar

as removing prevailing fears and suspicions. The negligence of the leadership and ineffectual administration left the ground barren for the growth of political stability.

If, in the past, particularisms had made difficult associations between multiple status communities, the present has yet to find a solution to the nationalizing of these groups. Thus, there are some imperatives which face all emergent states regardless of the geographical location. These are:

- 1) the discovery and implementation of political and economic principles broad enough to pervade all cultures and communities within a respective state in order that nationalism can become a reality;
- 2) freedom from the coercions of poverty and oppressions,
- 3) the protection of the characteristics of the individual group so that their identity -- heritage and tradition -- will not be lost.

The island of Ceylon offers fertile ground for an inquiry into the problems which surround the nationalizing process. Long contact with European powers have bequeathed to Ceylon a Westernized flavor, and with it a stature of perhaps the most sophisticated member of the Eastern state system. It has a thoroughly competent, articulate, and proud middleclass in its socio-economic strata, a rather lengthy acquaintance with an elective form of government, and although there is much factionalism among its political parties, still the Parliamentary structure of its government has never been challenged in the past. There is another side of the coin however. The realities of economic life have

slowed the dreams and aspirations of the Ceylonese people. There are fears and suspicions which divide the island's principal racial-linguistic communities, the Sinhalese and Tamils, and the struggle for power in the political area threatens to invite radicalism.

The problems facing Ceylon are those which occur in that awkward gap of transition from the adolescence stage of colonial protectionism to national state autonomy. For any emergent nation, the road between these two is long, filled with unexpected detours. It is one of indecisiveness and, most frequently, of painful experimentation, violent rejection of the colonialism past, and the determination to justify the future with the present. In Ceylon the formidable barriers toward nationalism fall under four general headings: the people's sense of inadequacy, national disunity, indecision as to the political process, and the pace of modernization.

The sense of inadequacy is an inheritance of colonial rule. There is an intellectual climate in which memories of shame and inequality are still quite vivid, and although subjection to the European may have been something less than that normally meant by the term "bondage", it nevertheless was submission to alien masters who preached by their words and manners their own racial and cultural superiority. Foreign domination created an iron tyranny of servitude, the consciousness of inferiority, the depressing condition of being fettered to living processes other than those of the indigenous culture.

With independence, the majority people -- the Sinhalese -- began a cultural retreat to pre-colonial days to capture the inspiration for a future society based upon parochial roots. This parochialism is now an

obstacle to national unity. Implicit in the independence process was a like degree of autonomy for the majority and minority alike. Sinhalese fervor gives the appearance of pursuing a course of purposeful destruction of those safeguards which assure the preservation of the language, customs, and mores of minority groups. In Ceylon, as elsewhere, nationalism demands some deemphasis of cultural traits among all communities of a pluralistic society, and a conciliatory approach to others, for the removal of the witchery of hatred and fears.

The political process is thoroughly imbued with elective forms and representative government and, fortunately to the present time at least, has had no significant record of violent opposition. Yet, the future is in doubt. Current difficulties among the plural society, the preoccupation with status, and the restricted opportunities for educated individuals do not augur well for future public policy without creating even further disunity among the people.

Another area of conflict among the people of Ceylon is the matter of tempo for modernization of the country. Divergent opinions as to the pace of innovation and industrialization have split groups into sub-groups, each intent upon making gains for itself without any thought as to the disadvantage to the other. The result has been dislocation and confusion among the people.

If the separate communities, and the groups and sub-groups within the communities, continue to insist upon attaining separate identities, to the virtual exclusion of any sacrifice for benefiting the whole society, the future forbodes ill. The history, religions, communities, power politics, resources, and internationalism form the matrix of the problem of

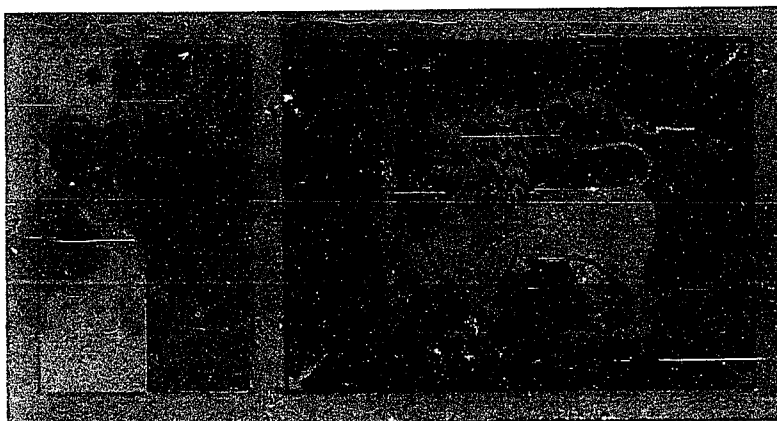


nationalizing. Each part contributes its share in retarding the hoped for national identity -- that somewhat indefinite agglomerate of common ideas, common feelings, and common memories. Without some sort of a solution, the future holds little else other than an accelerated drift toward chaos through increasing hostilities among political parties, religious communities, and social groups.

## CHAPTER I

### THE POLITICS OF HISTORY

The national flag of modern Ceylon fluttered proudly over the island for the first time on the morning of February 4, 1948. With a figure of a yellow lion against a maroon field, this symbol of sovereignty



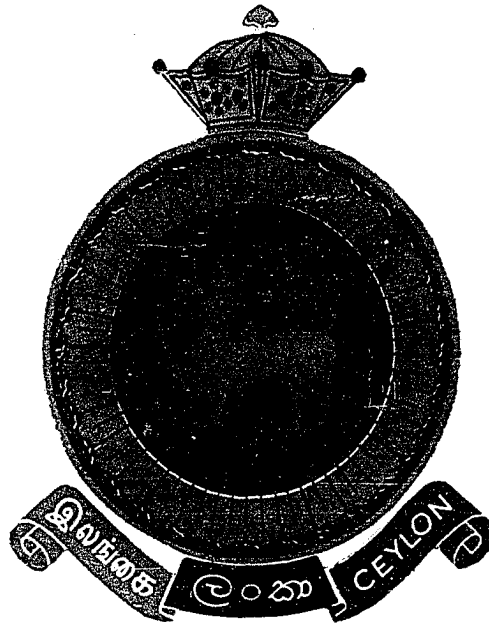
THE NATIONAL FLAG

Fig. 1.--The maroon field is occupied by the symbol of the yellow lion which is distinctive of the island, the Sinhaladipa of history. The two vertical strips are green and saffron, and have been added to the flag to represent the minority groups.

embodied the ancient Lion Flag<sup>2</sup> whose historical association with the Sinhalese people dates to the pre-Christian times and the legendary founding of the "Lion-race" in 543 B.C. On that morning it meant the

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<sup>2</sup>A historical sketch of the Flag will be found in Appendix I.



NATIONAL COAT OF ARMS

Fig. 2.--The National Coat of Arms derives its character from the separate component parts. Flowers occupied a prominent part in Ceylon heraldry. The badge of the Royal House was the sunflower, the lotus was that of the nation. Note the lotus petals about the dark field (maroon) which bears the lion (yellow). The Crown was added at the time of independence signifying Ceylon as a member-state of the British Commonwealth.

return of autonomous rule to Sri Lanka<sup>3</sup> after 443 years of colonial status. It connoted a proud new position, one full of bright promise, among the world's state system. Self-governing status brought to an end the long record written by those who, over the centuries, had come for spices, gems, and elephants, and had remained to rule.

Strangers from all lands had used Lanka as a stepping stone

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<sup>3</sup>Sri Lanka is Sanskrit for "The Island", and as such is used in legislative enactments and official business. It is possible that in the near future Lanka will replace "Ceylon" on area maps. Therefore the Sanskrit term will be used interchangeably with the English designate throughout the text.

across the Indian Ocean. The Egyptian cartographer Ptolemy, and in turn the Greeks and Romans, called the land Taprobane, derived from the Pali Tambapanni. Its Sanskrit name, Sinhala-dvipa (Lion dwelling-place) is connected with the settling by the Sinhalese people. And through the process of time it became Ilam to the Tamils of South India, Si-lan to Chinese traders, Serendib in Arabic, Ceilao to the Portuguese, Zeilan to the Dutch, and Ceylon to the English speaking world. But by whatsoever name it was called, Lanka has always had a magnetic attraction. Fa-hsien, the Chinese scholar, recorded that from foreign merchants who traded with the island, "people of their various countries heard how pleasant the land was, and flocked to it in numbers till it became a great nation."<sup>4</sup> The Venetian Marco Polo, after pausing there in the year 1293 on his homeward voyage, wrote that "the island produces more beautiful and valuable rubies than are found in any other part of the world, and likewise sapphires, topazes, garnets, and many other precious and costly stones."<sup>5</sup> Lanka has been described as a land "set like a delicate piece of jade in a turquoise sea."<sup>6</sup>

There is some misconception that Ceylon is an island possession of India. This error comes about because of the close geographical proximity of the two. In the Bay of Bengal and shaped something like a pearl pendant, or perhaps a mango fruit, Ceylon is separated from India's

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<sup>4</sup>Quoted by Elsie K. Cook, Ceylon: Its Geography, Its Resources and Its People (2nd ed., rev., Madras: Macmillan & Co., 1951), p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>The Travels of Marco Polo, trans. and ed. William Marsden (Garden City, New York: International Collectors Library, 1948), p. 274.

<sup>6</sup>Sir Ivor Jennings, The Dominion of Ceylon (London: Stevens & Co., 1952), p. 3.

southernmost tip by the twenty-three miles of Palk Strait. With this exception, it is a long way to any other land. Southward lie the wastes of the Antarctica some 7000 miles distance, 2500 miles westward is the East African shoreline, and to the east is Singapore roughly 1800 miles with only the tip of Sumatra breaking the monotony of watery distance.

Perhaps sometime in the prehistoric past there may have been what amounted to a land bridge linking Ceylon with its northern neighbor. There is a series of sandbars, some above and some slightly below the surface, extending across the Strait. And lion teeth fossils found in the mid-summer of 1963 give some weight to the theory that it was once part of India's land mass. These archeological findings have, in addition to their geographical consequence, some social significance since the King of Beasts finds a special place in the hearts of the Sinhalese community and roams, as it does, through Sinhala myth, legend, and folklore. There is no archival material to indicate that the animal ever existed in the island's lush jungles, however, the fossils pose the question as to whether or not ancient Lanka may not have been a "lion dwelling-place" in fact as well as in legend and tradition.

The cultural link is an entirely different story. Here it is difficult to determine where Indian influence has not penetrated. The ancient legends of both India and Ceylon find common ground in the Ramayana<sup>7</sup> and the Mahavamsa.<sup>8</sup> Buddhism was brought to Ceylon from India.

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<sup>7</sup>One of the great Indian epics of the Vedic Period written by the renowned Indian sage Valmiki. The original version contained 24,000 couplets. Historians differ on the time of the Vedic Period but 1200-700 B.C. seems acceptable.

<sup>8</sup>The second of three great Pali Chronicles in verse which tell

For long periods of time Tamil power from southern India held the island in its grip, and from the sixteenth century onward much of the European administration was India based. No important change in Indian civilization has failed to leave its impress. This profound impact on the political, social, and religious areas is quite unmistakable, as are the commonalities of problems and maladjustments of both contemporary Indian and Ceylonese societies.

#### Ancient Lanka

There is no way to separate legend from fact in the history of Ceylon, they merge with one another in a hazy fashion. The earliest mention of the country's existence comes by way of the Ramayana, the story of woman's loyalty, passions, and tragedy. One can point out the similarity here with the Odyssey, but the resemblance is only slight, since the Ramayana has more of the sombre Shakespearian approach rather than the adventures of Ulysses. Since the story is not too widely known outside the relatively narrow area of Indian literature, a sketch of the tale follows.

A young Indian Prince, Rama, went into voluntary exile in the Dandak wilderness of southern India, accompanied by his Princess Sita, and his brother Laksmana. One day while Rama and Laksmana were away on a hunting expedition, Ravana, the Demon King of Lanka, came to the hermitage in the guise of an ascetic. He wooed Sita. Rebuffed, he carried

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the history of Buddhism but also contain valuable political and social history. The Dipavamsa (Island Chronicle) and the Culavamsa (Lesser Chronicle) together with the Mahavamsa (Great Chronicle) make up the literary work.

her off by force over the boundless ocean to where "Lanka rose with towering pride". The two brothers, with the aid of Sugriva, the king of the monkeys, and his trusted general Hanumant, searched far and wide for Sita. The latter found the abducted woman in Ravana's palace and, with the aid of an army of monkeys and bears, helped Rama to build a causeway of stones across the water from Southern India to Lanka.<sup>9</sup> Rama warred with the abductor and was victorious. But Sita had dwelt under the roof of another man and though she had not yielded to his desires, according to Sacred Law, Rama was forced to repudiate her. To prove her innocence she offered herself to an ordeal of fire and though she remained unscathed, still the people were suspicious of her piety. She implored Mother Earth to open up and swallow her; the wish was granted.<sup>10</sup>

The author Valmiki perhaps was a contemporary of the hero, Rama, who may actually have existed as a "chief who lived in the eighth or seventh century B.C."<sup>11</sup> It may have been that Valmiki accompanied an army as a chronicler from the kingdom of Kosala, (its present counterpart would be roughly the present state of Madhya Pradesh) as his prince invaded the island. This is speculation, of course.

"Sinhalese" (Lion-race) is derived from the story of the

<sup>9</sup>The earlier mentioned sandbars across the Strait, according to legend, are part of this causeway.

<sup>10</sup>Probably one of the best condensed translations is that of Romesch C. Dutt, The Ramayana and the Mahabharata (London: J. N. Dent & Sons, 1929). The condensed translation runs approximately 2200 couplets. Mr. Dutt is one of the most distinguished literary sons of modern India. The story can also be found in prose. See Maurice Collis, Quest for Sita (New York: The John Day Co., 1947).

<sup>11</sup>A. L. Basham, The Wonder That Was India (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1954), p. 303.

Mahavamsa<sup>12</sup> which relates to the settling of Lanka by Vijaya, the son of the slayer of a lion (sinhala). According to the Great Chronicle, a male child was born from a union between a human princess and a lion. The hands and feet of the child "were formed like a lion's and therefore she (his mother) named him Sihabahu."<sup>13</sup> Eventually, Sihabahu slew his lion-father and, because of parentage, was the founder of the Lion-race. As a king, he ruled over the kingdom of Lala, and he and his consort had many sons (thirty-two in all). One among these was Vijaya who was consecrated as prince-regent. But Vijaya

Was of evil conduct and his followers were even (like himself), and many intolerable deeds of violence were done by them. Angered by this the people told the matter to the king; the king, speaking persuasively to them, severely blamed his son. But all fell out again as before, the second and yet the third time; and the angered people said to the king: 'Kill thy son.'

Then did the king cause Vijaya and his followers, seven hundred men, to be shaven over half their head and put on a ship and sent them forth upon the sea, and their wives and children also.<sup>14</sup>

.....

The prince named Vijaya, the valiant, landed in Lanka, in the region called Tambapanni.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Wilhelm Geiger, trans., The Mahavamsa (Colombo: Ceylon Government Information Department, 1960). This is the chief authority of the history of the island up to 352 A.D. The Geiger translation first appeared in 1912, and was reprinted in 1934, 1950, and 1960.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 51. Sihabahu (in Pali text: Sihabhuja) means "Lion-arm".

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 53-54. The head shaving was a ritual which designated the loss of freedom.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 54. Tambapanni literally means "red earth". The soil of Ceylon is composed of laterit which crumbles into red dust. The exact site has never been determined with accuracy but there is common agreement that it was on the west coast, a short distance below the present Mannar at the source where the old Kadambanadi flowed past Anuradhapura. The Kadambanadi has been renamed the Malwatu Oya. See map p. 22.



Thus was the royal house of Sinhala established on Lanka, launching a monarchical chronology which was to last for 2100 years and cover the rulership of 180 monarchs until the sixteenth century.

It would indeed require a broad canvass to paint the historical evolution in detail. There is room only for those highlights which are suggestive of forces that left an indelible imprint. Even with this selectivity, the history becomes a little burdensome. But it should be kept in mind that a time-span of more than two millennia is being dealt with, and that while the names of people and places, occurrences and dates, may make wearisome reading, it is the melding of these within the framework of the past which gives a clearer perception of the present and perhaps furnishes some insight into the future.

A characteristic of Ceylon's history are the few periods during which the whole island was united under a single ruler. Most frequently the country was divided into several power spheres, and occasionally, in addition, small scattered enclaves existed for short periods. These were harmless as a threat to an established domain, but were important as an early prototype of the balance-of-power equation. Periods of decline became more frequent and of longer duration as time moved on toward the sixteenth century. Court and army intrigues were responsible for the obituaries of a long list of monarchs. The era witnessed invasions from Southern India, since invasions were in style as the sport of kings. Rival claimants to power and sovereigns alike were not adverse to employing mercenaries whose loyalties depended on the fortune of battle. The military hired hands were often carried away, as the saying goes, with their own exuberance. There were some short lived heroic episodes but these

were overshadowed by internal pressures of dynastic rivalries and civil strife, and were as much responsible for the tangled history as were the external forces. The latter were to play a far more significant role in the future.

The event which was to have immortal impact was the coming of Buddhism in the third century B.C. This will be discussed fully in a later chapter, but here it will suffice to note that the religion, during the periods of stability, can be credited as the rallying force for creativeness in the arts as evidenced by the temples, statues, and frescoes, and for progress in social and technological attainments. The monarchs who were successful in establishing single sovereignty are among the heroes of Sinhalese history and literature.

First among these was Duttha Gamani who ruled between 161-137 B.C. Lanka had been successfully invaded by the Tamil king Elara resulting in a long occupation of the whole northern half of the island. Although Elara was a Hindu-Tamil reigning over a Buddhist-Sinhalese people, his justice commanded the respect of the people. Duttha Gamani, an impetuous youth moved by the fire of adventure and freedom for his country, fought Elara at the city of Anuradhapura.

Near the south gate of the city the two kings fought; Elara hurled his dart, Gamani evaded it; he made his own elephant pierce (Elara's) elephant with his tusks and he hurled his dart at Elara; and this (latter) fell there, with his elephant.<sup>16</sup>

Of and by itself, the event is of questionable interest. But it is significant insofar as this pattern of strife was to be the scourge of the country for the next 1800 years, and the nationalistic fervor of

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

Duttha Gamani in the century before the Christian Era was to find many corollaries down to the mid-twentieth century A.D.

The time span from 437 B.C. to 846 A.D. is the period of the Amuradhapura kings, so designated by the site of the royal residence. This continuity was interrupted for twenty years when King Kassapa I held court at Sigiriya. One among the several despotic characters in Sinhalese history, his is a story of cowardice, cruelty, sensuality -- and the bequeathing to posterity a monument of which a Pharaoh would have been proud. Some six hundred feet atop Sigiriya (Lion Rock), Kassapa used the four acre plateau to build his impregnable fortress of palace, storage tanks, baths, living quarters for his court, and formal gardens. The ruins still attract tourists and along a spiral stairway are to be found the world famous Sigiriya Frescoes.<sup>17</sup>

With the death of Kassapa I, his successor Moggallana I moved back to Anuradhapura (Royal City) in 497 A.D., and here the capital remained until Polonnaruwa was selected in 1056 as the seat of government by the powerful Vijaya Bahu I. These capital sites are of historic interest as they are the major "Lost Cities"<sup>18</sup> of present day Ceylon.

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<sup>17</sup>These are the only ancient paintings in Ceylon that do not have religious significance. They are definitely sensuous in appeal. The women, mostly in pairs, are Aryan in features, large-breasted, small-waisted, with soft smiles on their lips. At first sight, they appear to be nude; however, close inspection reveals diaphanous garments. No archival material has been found which identify the artist or what the paintings depict. Some idea of the art work can be found in Plates Nos. 40 and 41 of the photographic collection by Pietro Francesco Mele, Ceylon, (Rome: Edizioni Mediterranee, N.D.).

<sup>18</sup>The "Lost Cities" find their place more appropriately in the story of Buddhism, thus, for purposes here the discussion will be found in Chp. II.

### Old Lanka

The record of the thousand years since Duttha Gamani is the history of a land and people racked by political and religious disputes. Invasions such as those of the Pandians and the Cholas came on a grand scale. This marked the rise of the great Chola Empire which at first overshadowed and finally engulfed the Sinhalese Island Kingdom sometime between 1001 and 1005 A.D. The conquest was completed two years later and the king, Mahinda V, was deported to India.

The country was reunited by Parakrama Bahu I (The Great) during his reign from 1153 to 1186, decades which were the zenith of Sinhalese greatness. Parakrama's interest lay in the construction of numerous palaces, buildings, and gardens; he restored Buddhist shrines, and reconciled the divisions among Buddhist priests thereby purifying the religion. The irrigation works to which he gave much attention were specimens of engineering art. But taxation had fallen heavy upon the people; his wars and construction costs "impoverished the country, which never recovered."<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, despite its cost, Parakrama Bahu had united the country, and had given the Sinhalese people a brilliant page in their history. His name is still revered in modern Ceylon.

Following Parakrama's death, civil strife again tore at the vitals of Lanka. By the beginning of the thirteenth century there were three well established divisions: Pihiti, Maya-rata, and Ruhunu.<sup>20</sup> The

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<sup>19</sup>H. W. Codrington, A Short History of Ceylon (rev. ed., London: Macmillan and Co., 1939), p. 65.

<sup>20</sup>See map, p. 22. According to available records, there was in existence during the twelfth century much the same boundary divisions

tides of war shifted the Sinhalese royal residence from Dambadeniya to Yapahuva, to Kurunegala, then to Gampola. Finally, in 1415, Parakrama Bahu IV established total power over the island settling his kingdom at Kotte. The fame of this Parakrama rests upon his uniting the island under a royal sovereign for the last time in the history of Lanka. Eventually, the country was again divided into three kingdoms: Kotte, Jaffna, and Kandy. Parakrama's successor maintained control only over Kotte. Jaffna appeared at some uncertain date in the thirteenth century, probably the latter part, reaching its zenith by the last half of the fourteenth century. An adopted son of Parakrama Bahu II, Sapumal Kumaraya, by virtue of conquest created a power structure within the Jaffna kingdom by which his descendants were to gain control of a considerable part of the island. Kandy, under an independent monarch, seems to have been established about 1480.

On the morning of November 15, 1505, a Sinhalese noting strange ships in the harbor at Colombo, made straightway for an audience with his king. He said to the monarch

There is in our harbour of Colombo a race of people fair of skin and comely withal. They don jackets of iron and hats of iron: they rest not a minute in one place; they walk here and there; they eat hunks of stone and drink blood; they give two or three pieces of gold or silver for one fish or one lime; the report of their cannon is louder than thunder. . . . Their cannon balls fly many a gawwa.<sup>21</sup>

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but named Raya-rata, Dakkhina-desa, and Ruhunu-rata respectively. These changed shortly after Parakrama Bahu's death. As Ariyapala notes: "Tentatively it can be suggested that the change seems to have taken place between the time of Parakrama Bahu and Lilavati (A.D. 1197-1200)." M. B. Ariyapala, Society in Medieval Ceylon (Colombo: K.V.G. De Silva, 1956).

<sup>21</sup>Codrington, A Short History of Ceylon, p. 94.

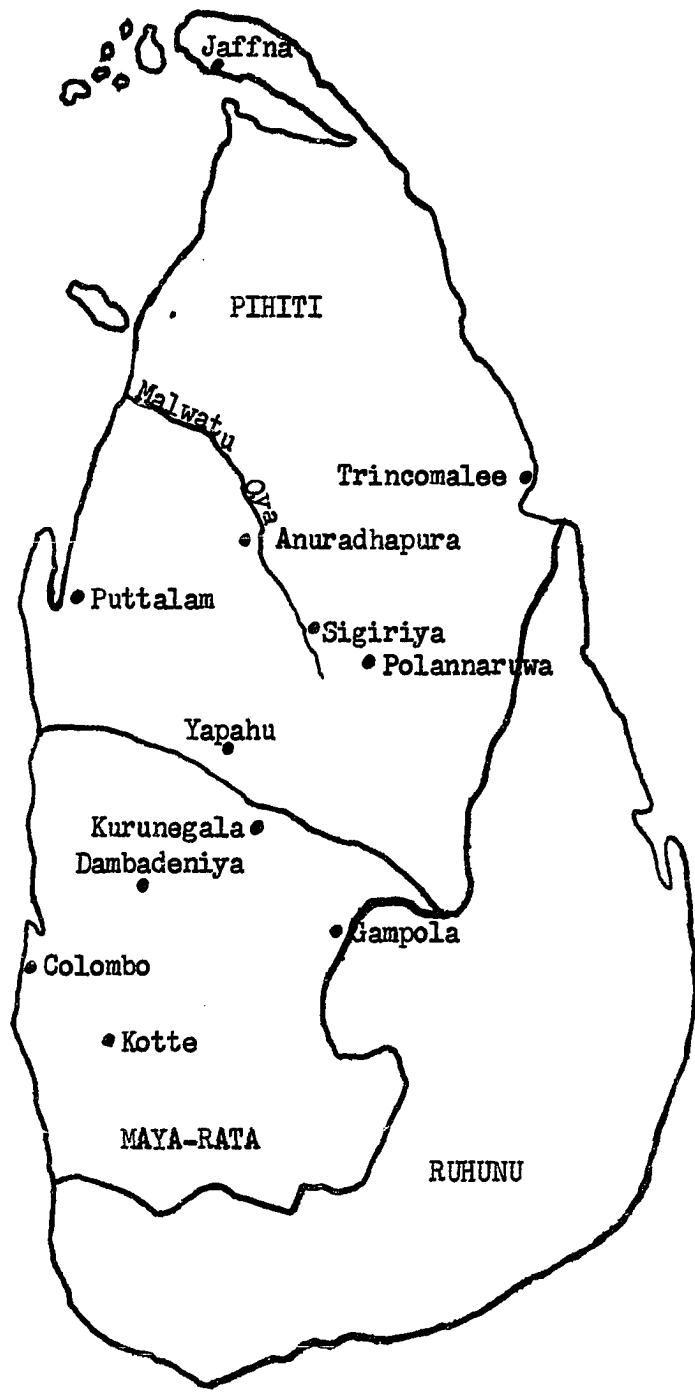


Fig. 3.--Boundaries of Pihiti, Maya-rata and Ruhunu

Thus did a Portuguese squadron of nine baxels commanded by Dom Lorenzo de Almeida make their appearance on Lanka's coast. History records it a chance visit, the ships having been blown off course. The Sinhalese king, Vira Parakrama Bahu VIII was

Naturally incredulous that such a strange people could exist, and he therefore sent his son in disguise to Colombo in order to discover the truth. The Prince on his return said to his father: 'To fight these men is useless; it will be well to give them audience!'<sup>22</sup>

The "hunks of stone" and the "blood" -- the eating of bread and drinking of wine -- were to become familiar sights in Colombo, as were the cannon balls which would "fly many a gawwa".<sup>23</sup> But the Portuguese story of imperialism actually had begun a decade earlier.

On June 9, 1494, the West declared unremitting economic war against the East with the Treaty of Tordesilhas by which Spain and Portugal divided the world into spheres of influence. Tordesilhas fixed a north-south line running through the Atlantic Ocean, 370 miles west of Cape Verde, demarcating respective zonal frontiers for economic and religious conquest. The treaty was given a Papal sanction through the issuing of a Bull by Pope Alexander VI Borgia.

For Portugal, the Tordesilhas Treaty was the conclusion of the experimental phase of exploration begun under Henry, the Navigator, whose inspiration and patronage of scientists, astronomers, and cartographers was to make Portugal a mighty sea power. It was at the Mediterranean port city of Ceuta, over which Henry reigned, that he heard of supposedly

<sup>22</sup>Lord Holden Holden, Ceylon, (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1939), pp. 90-91.

<sup>23</sup>One gawwa equals one-half mile, approximately.

Christian kingdoms on India's northern coast, on the western desert of China, and in Ethiopia. Here too he had learned the myth of "Prester John", the Christian monarch who, it was said, was so powerful that some seventy kings paid him tribute. Such an ally, Henry thought, would be of inestimable value in the religious war against the Muslims, but there would be material benefits as well. Into Portugal's hands would fall the rich commerce in spices and gems, and all Europe would come to Portugal for the luxury items of the East. The Church gave wholehearted encouragement to exploration since it too could envision great rewards. There were converts to be gained among "heathen peoples" living in distant lands. Thus did the State and Church collaborate; the slogan was "Trade and the Cross". By 1502, the Portuguese had gained part of their objective as wholesalers in trade between India and Europe.

The presence of the "strange people" at Colombo in 1505 perhaps had awed and frightened Vira Parakrama. At any rate, he invited the squadron commander to a royal audience during which he pressed for Portuguese protection against the triple threat of Tamils, Arab traders, and warring Sinhalese princes. In return, the foreigner would receive a large portion of the cinnamon trade. A bargain was struck. Dom Lorenzo and the fleet sailed leaving behind a few officials to oversee Portugal's new interest. For the following twelve years there were only occasional contacts. Portugal's ships made periodic calls at Colombo for cinnamon cargoes bound for the marketplaces of Europe.<sup>24</sup> But little materialized

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<sup>24</sup>The cinnamon trade, from the earliest times, had been in the hands of foreigners, the South Indians, Greeks, Arabs, Persians, and Muslims. The Portuguese gradually took over this trade carrying Ceylon cinnamon to the Continent.



in the way of defensive measures for the Kotte kingdom, and the Portuguese stationed in Colombo held themselves aloof from Sinhalese society.

Vira Parakrama died at some uncertain date between 1513 and 1518, leaving two sons as co-regents to the throne. In a court intrigue, the younger of the two, Vijaya Bahu VII, overpowered his brother. And it was Vijaya who received the word that a large squadron of Portuguese vessels had anchored off Colombo.<sup>25</sup> The year was 1518. The event was much the same as the earlier arrival but this time circumstances were different. Colombo had been a chance port-of-call twelve years earlier; now it was part of a well planned campaign.

Lopo Soares de Albergaria, the armada commander, was taken to the palace where he told his host of the hatred of the Portuguese for the Muslims, and suggested constructing a fort at Colombo from which to carry on the fight to rid the East of this "scourge". Vijaya Bahu hesitated, requesting time for consultation with his court. While the king's councilors were deliberating, the Portuguese troops provoked a riot in Colombo; the town was set afire. The monarch was informed that "unless he wished to see his lands destroyed . . . he must become tributary to the King of Portugal".<sup>26</sup> Faced with this black or white situation, the Kingdom of Kotte submitted. In 1505, de Almeida had had the Arms of Portugal carved

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<sup>25</sup>The derivation of the name Colombo is somewhat obscure. Possibly it may be derived from "colomba" meaning dove, but it has no connection with the name of the discoverer of America. Colombo was identified as such long before 1492. It may be a combination of "cola" meaning leaf, and "ambe" meaning "mango fruit". It is interesting to note, however, that later, the Dutch gave the city a coat-of-arms which combined the dove, and the mango-tree.

<sup>26</sup>Sydney Dawson Bailey, Ceylon (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1952), p. 40.

upon a rock at Colombo; at the time, little did the people of Lanka realize this ominous sign.

The Portuguese were to control portions of the country until 1656. In the sense of political and economic imperialism, theirs was a sordid history of suppression and brutalities. Their sympathies and collaboration efforts shifted among the rulers of the kingdoms of Kotte, Jaffna, and Kandy, dependent upon the advantage to Portugal. But they were aided too by the internal situation. Generally the period to 1656 was another chapter of civil strife among warring princes, a continuation of the story of the three kingdoms. Perpetrators of court intrigues used poison rather promiscuously, bringing about a number of rapid changes in the chronology of rulers. Had it not been for the quarrels among the sovereigns themselves and rival claimants to the thrones, the Portuguese might not have ruled over any part of the island.

Portuguese imperialism came in three intervals of roughly fifty years each. The first was 1505-1551 when they were allies of the Kotte king and during which time (1542) the Kingdom of Jaffna became a vassel of Portugal. In 1521, just prior to the death of Vijaya Bahu, the monarch divided his kingdom into two principalities in order to placate his two sons. Bhuvanaika Bahu VII received Kotte, while to the other, Mayadunne, he gave the principality of Sitawaka. Mayadunne had visions of overlordship of the entire kingdom, and to eventually rule the whole of Lanka. To further his plans, he entered a pact with the monarch of Calicut for a joint attack against Bhuvanaika, thus forcing his brother into a defense arrangement with the Portuguese. Only the latter benefited through this internecine warfare. Mayadunne and his Indian allies were

defeated after a struggle of some twenty years.

The second stage begins in 1551 and ends in 1597, highpointed by Kotte becoming a protectorate of Portugal. Bhuvanaika, had only one child, a daughter. Thus, in spite of the animosity existing between the brothers, Bhuvanaika intimated that he would nominate Mayadunne as his successor. The possibility of the principalities joined under a single ruler was against the best interests of the Portuguese, who urged the king to reconsider his choice. Under pressure, Bhuvanaika assented to Portugal's desires and chose a grandson, Dharmapala, instead. In 1551, Bhuvanaika was shot while he stood at a palace window. "There are good grounds for suspecting it was done at Mayadunne's instigation though the crime commonly is attributed to the Viceroy."<sup>27</sup>

Dharmapala ascended the throne and in 1557 was baptized into the Church taking the name of Don Juan. It was a triumph for the Portuguese, but it forecast trouble. According to a contemporary Sinhalese historian, the kingdom could never be governed by "a king who is not of the religion of Buddha."<sup>28</sup>

Mayadunne now appeared in the role of saviour for the Sinhalese people. His power increased as Dharmapala's declined rapidly. There was constant harassment of the Portuguese, continued by Rajasinha I, Mayadunne's son, who succeeded to the throne of Sitawaka in 1578, and later became master of the whole island with the exception of Colombo, its environs, and the Jaffna area.

<sup>27</sup>Codrington, A Short History of Ceylon, p. 97.

<sup>28</sup>Quoted by Bailey, Ceylon, p. 44.

Rajasinha is still renowned in Ceylon for his lengthy campaign to rid the island of the Portuguese. He mustered sixty thousand troops, and for two years blocked the port of Colombo. The Portuguese, having command of the sea and with reinforcements from India, managed at long last to turn the tide, but only after an orgy of plunder and wanton destruction.

The cruelty of the Portuguese on this occasion almost beggars description. One Portuguese official describes how a Sinhalese soldier who had killed twenty-nine Portuguese levies was captured and taken to Colombo. Here a Portuguese soldier killed him in cold blood, cut open his heart, and drank the dead man's blood.<sup>29</sup>

Rajasinha died in 1592 leaving his hatred for the European as part of the legacy to his son, Wimala Dharma Surya I. Jaffna meanwhile had become a protectorate in 1591. Its ruler had made the unwise choice of attacking the Portuguese possession of Mannar, and by this action not only lost his kingdom but his head as well.

The third stage of the Portuguese period began in 1597. Dharma-pala died without an heir to his throne. He bequeathed his dominions and the overlordship of Ceylon to Philip I, King of Portugal, thus effecting a legal sovereignty which was to end some sixty years later.

In retrospect, Portuguese political rule had extended from a rather humble beginning of a fort at Colombo, to control of a small section -- but by far the best part -- of the island. The whole of the western coast from Matara to Mannar and the Jaffna Province<sup>30</sup> had been brought under the flag of Portugal. What the position would have been

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>A map showing Portuguese area is on p. 30.

had not the country suffered from the sins of the dynasties is open to conjecture. Be that as it may, it was a policy of divide et impera. And henceforth, Ceilao -- or Zeilan or Ceylon -- was destined to receive an ever greater impress of foreign influence. Portugal gave new emphasis to the spice trade, still the overall economic results were rather insignificant. There were no major contributions in the improvements of agriculture nor in the administrative sphere. Some social changes were brought about through the introduction of Roman Catholicism. Perhaps as Mendis puts it, "they did not bring about sufficient changes within the island as to make one consider their rule as a turning point in the internal history of Ceylon."<sup>31</sup> They taught the Sinhalese and the Tamils new methods of warfare as well as the use of the gun and cannon. The Portuguese soldiers

Fought with the desperation of men who realized that what they had taken by force could only be retained by greater force. The long state of war with the Kandyan kingdom, the inhumanities of generals like Azavedo, startling even in an age inured to brutality, are to read in the confession of their failure to mobilize anything in Ceylon in their support. Their accusations of perfidiousness, so often levelled against the Sinhalese, sort ill with their own record of dishonourable dealing with the people of the country.<sup>32</sup>

#### The Dutch Era

In 1602, a Joris Spilbergen of the Dutch East Indies Company sailed along the east coast of Ceylon and dropped anchor at Batticaloa. He paid a call on the King of Kandy, Vimala Dharma Surya, who asked the

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<sup>31</sup>G. C. Mendis, Ceylon. Today and Yesterday (Colombo: Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, 1957), p. 56.

<sup>32</sup>E.F.C. Ludowyk, The Story of Ceylon (London: Faber and Faber, 1962), p. 110.

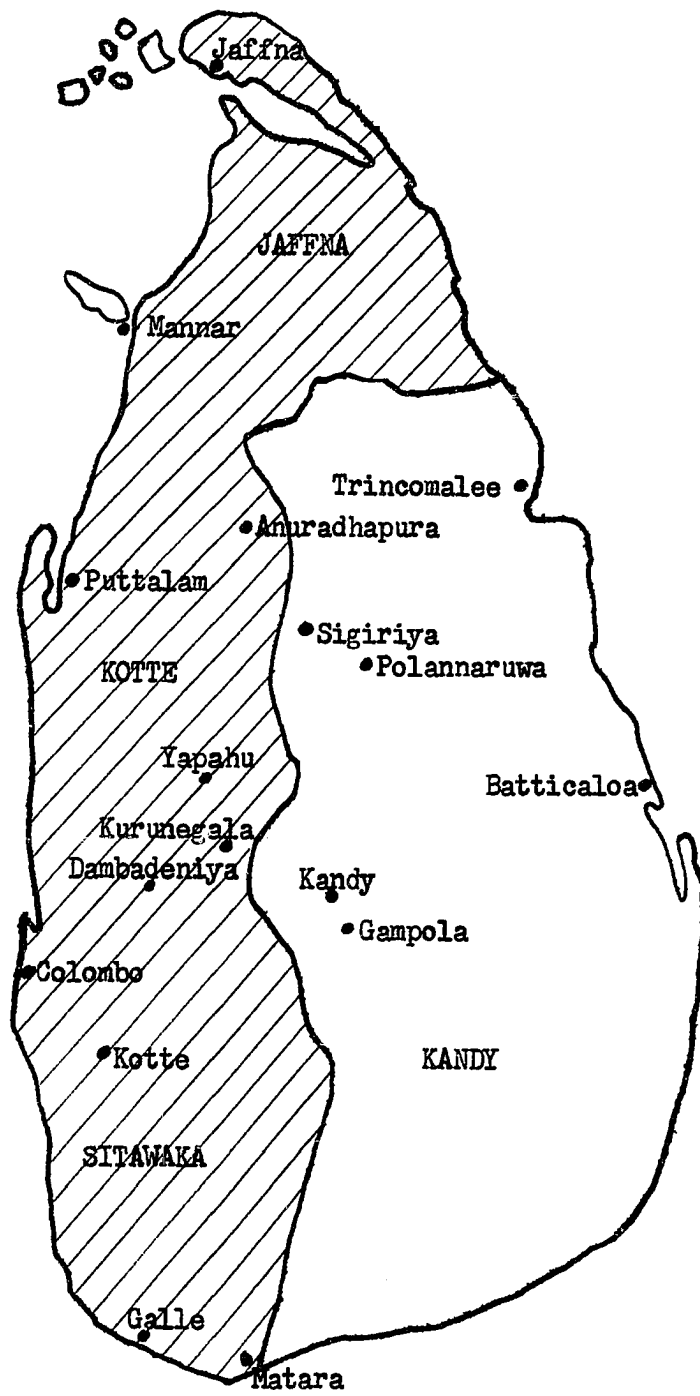


Fig. 4.--Portuguese Ceylon

 Portuguese held territory

Hollander for help against the Portuguese. Spilbergen made no commitment. His visit was the forerunner to that of Admiral Sebald de Weert the following June. Vimala was invited aboard the flagship for talks about military aid in exchange for the cinnamon monopoly. Just at the time the king was to go aboard

The Dutch admiral was drunk and apparently insulted the king; there was some sort of a brawl in which the admiral was killed. The king who was not present when this happened, became panic stricken and decided that his safest course was to massacre those of the Dutch who were on shore.<sup>33</sup>

The Dutch demanded an explanation from Surya to which the latter is supposed to have replied that if peace was desired, peace it would be; if war was wanted, war the Dutch would have. The fleet sailed away.

The Dutch returned in March, 1612. Two months later one Marcellus de Boschouwer concluded a treaty with the second King of Kandy, Senarat, who had succeeded to the throne upon Vimala's death in 1604. Senarat was "a priest who threw off his robes and married his predecessor's widow, Dona Catharina."<sup>34</sup> The treaty provided for Dutch assistance in protecting the Kandyan kingdom from the onslaught of the Portuguese, in return for which permission was granted for the building of a fort at Kottiyar and a trade monopoly in cinnamon, gems, and pearls. But the Netherlands East India Company headquartered at Batavia would have none of these arrangements. De Boschouwer left Kandy in 1615 taking his case to the Company's directorship in Holland. His arguments got nowhere. He went next to Denmark where an East India Company had been formed. King

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<sup>33</sup>Bailey, Ceylon, p. 47.

<sup>34</sup>Codrington, A Short History of Ceylon, p. 109.

Christian, realizing the potentialities of an aid-trade agreement sent a squadron to Ceilao. During the negotiations de Boschouwer had presented to the Danish monarch papers which purportedly gave the Dutchman the right to negotiate on behalf of the Kandyan king. The Danes arriving at Senarat's court found the papers to be forgery and the Kandy monarch in no mood to confirm the original treaty. The Danes did manage to obtain permission to build a fort at Trincomalee, but long before it was completed they were forced by the Portuguese to evacuate.

Meanwhile, Dutch operations elsewhere in the East Indies had been richly rewarding. Aided by the intense animosity of the native people for the Portuguese, generally it required little negotiation to reach an agreement with the rulers of those islands visited by the Dutch. In addition, they had an advantage of wide experience in commercial ventures, sufficient capital for financial risks, and superb seamanship. The first Dutch expedition had been undertaken by the Compaigne van Verre under Cornelius de Houtman who, with four ships, landed at Bantam in 1596, then sailed to Bali. Returning home the following year, the cargo was smaller than expected but Dutch merchants were delighted, as the voyage had demonstrated that with better organization a successful trade route with the Indies was possible. There was new activity in the preparation of fleets, and subsequent Dutch voyages put in at ports in Siam, China, Japan, and Manila.

Intense competition among the merchants and indiscriminate voyaging brought demands from Dutch entrepreneurs for some order in trading operations. The end result was the creation of the United East India Company, or Vereenigde Oostindische Compaigne (V.O.C.). The V.O.C. was



established through a constitution drawn up by the States General of Holland in March, 1602. It granted a trade monopoly in the area between the Cape of Good Hope and the Magellan Straits for a period of twenty-one years, privileges for erecting factories, making treaties, and maintaining the necessary units for protective purposes. Management of the Company was under a group of 17 men, the Heeren XVII, the directorship resting with a group of 76 persons representing amalgamating companies.

With the advent of the V.O.C., Portuguese power in the East Indies was challenged and declined rapidly. The Dutch appeared off the coast of Ceylon in 1635, and by 1638 were in firm control of Batticaloa. Trincomalee fell to them the following year, Negombo and Galle in 1640. An interim of peace followed during which both protagonists occupied spheres of power. Fighting was resumed in 1652. On October 14, 1655, Kalutara surrendered.

The Dutch at once closed on Colombo, and after a desperate resistance, in which the garrison was reduced to famine, Antonion de Sousa Coutinho was obliged to capitulate on May 12, 1656, after a siege lasting six months and twenty-seven days.<sup>35</sup>

The Portuguese commander withdrew to Goa, leaving his country's possessions in Ceilao<sup>36</sup> to be absorbed by the Dutch.

The third Kandyan King, Rajasinha II, proceeded to wage war against the V.O.C. The Dutch, with continuous reinforcements, managed to maintain control of key ports and most of the coastline, yet the total area over which they ruled directly was even less than that which had been Portuguese territory. Holland was interested first in trade, and

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>36</sup>Bailey, Ceylon, p. 64.

secondarily in political power. The latter was seized to prevent the ultimate annihilation by the Kandyan king.

The beginning of the decline of Dutch power in Zeilan is somewhat hazy, but the Sinhalese rebellion in 1760 was at least partially responsible. Root cause of the uprising was an order by the Dutch Governor Jan Schreuder which expropriated peasant lands in order to further cinnamon production.

The land on which it was supposed the cinnamon tree would thrive best was the property of the people, and possessed and inhabited by them. Without regarding the want and misery that must of necessity have overwhelmed those wretched beings if robbed of their lands, upon the produce of which they existed, the governor ordered them to give up their land and remove to a barren waste district which was appointed for them and where they might settle if they chose.<sup>37</sup>

The aggrieved peasants took their petition to Kirti Sri, now the Kandyan monarch, who dispatched an emissary to Schreuder. The emissary was treated with contempt by the Dutch governor whereupon Kirti Sri instigated and openly supported the rebellion. From India, came reinforcements for the Dutch. And from India in 1762 came John Pybus, an emissary from the Madras Council, the local governing agent for British interests in India. The Pybus mission marked the first serious attention given to Ceylon by the British, and was undertaken partly for strategic, and partly for economic, reasons. Bombay was at that time the nearest shipyard for the repair of British ships damaged while at sea. England desperately needed a port in the Bay of Bengal; the most suitable was Trincomalee. From the economic viewpoint, no commodity was more important than cinnamon. Kandy was the heart of the cinnamon growing country.

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

Pybus proposed to the Kandyan monarch a treaty of alliance and friendship. Kirti Sri welcomed the opportunity of aid from the British, in return for which permission would be granted for erecting forts on Kandyan coastal territory and trading privileges. But negotiations collapsed however when the emissary, pressed for definite assurances of military assistance, could offer nothing more than professions of friendship. Pybus was a member of the Madras Council but was not a plenipotentiary, and therefore had not been empowered by the Council to conclude any treaty; whatever proposals were agreed upon at the Kandyan court were subject to confirmation at Madras. Apparently the latter thought the price too high and no further contact was made with the monarch in Kandy.

Hostilities between Kandy and the Dutch continued until 1766. By the treaty of February 14, Kirti Sri was forced to restore to the Netherlands all territories which had been taken from the Dutch during the course of the conflict and, in addition, hand over to them the remaining area of the eastern seaboard. Kandy became a land-locked kingdom, completely isolated from the outside world.<sup>38</sup> The Dutch agreed to defend Kandy against attack; the Kandyan monarch pledged not to enter any pact with another foreign power. For the following thirty years, there was precarious peace. Given the war with England over the right to search ships at sea, and the internal conflict between William and the States General due to the emergence of the pro-French Patriot Party, the Dutch had little time for colonial affairs.

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<sup>38</sup>See map, p. 36.

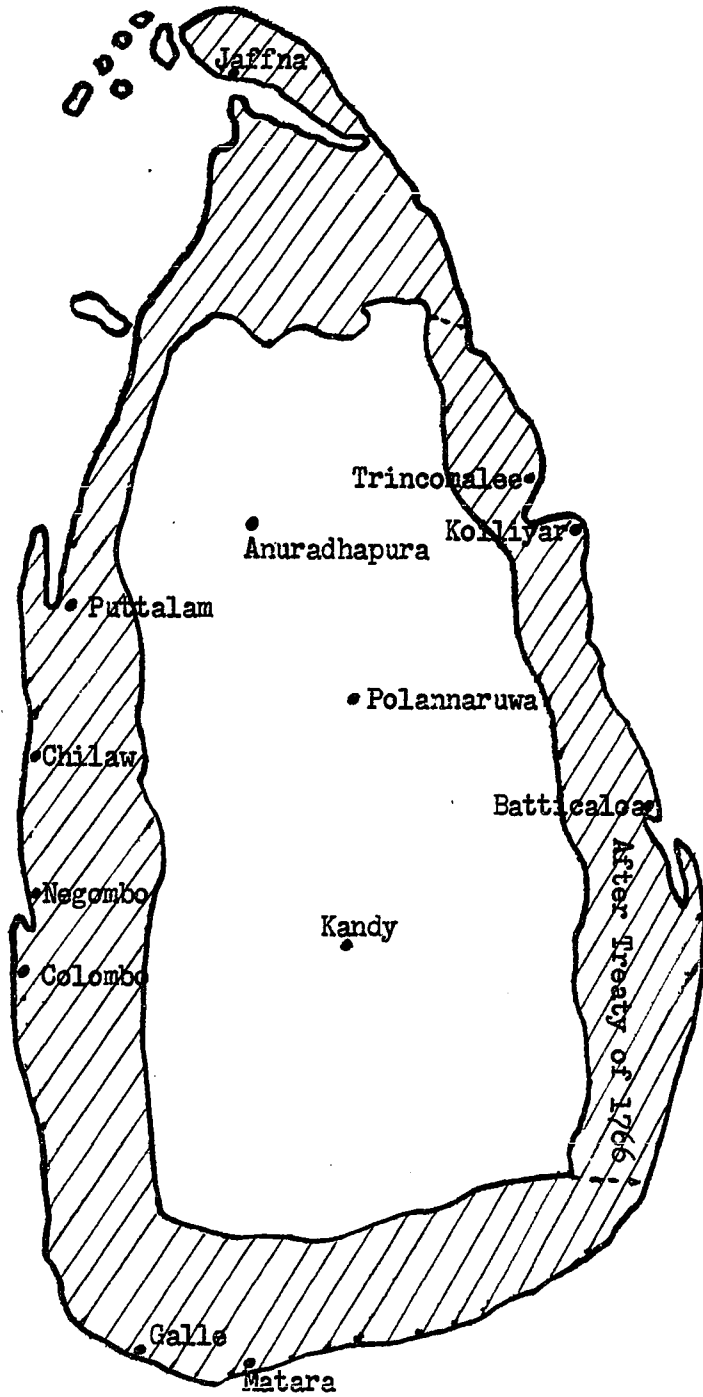


Fig. 5.--Dutch Ceylon



Dutch held territory

Despite the 156 years (1640-1796) of predatory occupation, there is not too much on the island today by way of physical evidence of the Dutch period. Interested essentially in commerce, the Dutch were diligent in trade matters which directly benefited Holland. There were extensive advancements in agriculture through the development of paddy cultivation, and repair and new construction of irrigation works. The historian Mendis notes that the Dutch

Encouraged the people to cultivate in their gardens commercial crops such as coffee, cardamoms, arecanuts, and coconuts. They themselves opened cinnamon plantations instead of depending entirely on what grew wild.<sup>39</sup>

Roads, canals, and bridges were improved or new ones built for the transportation of the products. A major contribution was the introduction of codified local customary law and Roman-Dutch law where local law was found wanting. And notable also was a domination by force, unduly harsh and restrictive laws, corruption and administration inefficiency, and religious intolerance.

#### The British Era

For about twenty years following the abortive Pybus mission to Kandy, the British had less than perfunctory contact with Ceylon. England had been preoccupied with other matters. By the Treaty of Paris in February, 1763, it had gained French and Spanish possessions in North America, and had become safely entrenched in the Indian Ocean through the acquisition of French territory in India. Then had followed the War of American Independence, widened through the entry of France and Spain in

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<sup>39</sup>Mendis, Ceylon: Today and Yesterday, p. 59.

1778 and 1779. Holland joined the coalition in 1781. This move by the Dutch had prompted the British to attack Trincomalee which surrendered to Admiral Sir Edward Hughes in 1782.

Aboard one of the vessels in the fleet which struck at Trincomalee was Hugh Boyd, the second secretary to Lord McCortney, the Governor of Madras. Boyd, in his capacity as emissary, proceeded to Kandy, there to propose to the monarch an alliance against the Dutch. In the meantime, Kirti Sri had died in January, 1782. He had bequeathed his throne to his brother Rajadhirajasinha who, aware of the treatment accorded his predecessor by the British, made it clear that he would negotiate only with a personal representative of George III. Again British overtures in Ceylon came to naught. Shortly thereafter, a series of French-British naval engagements resulted in the fort at Trincomalee capitulating and the return to French control on August 25. It was restored to the Dutch at the Peace of Paris in 1784.

For the next decade, Ceylon lay outside the sphere of British interest. England and France were again warring with each other and,

In that year [1795] Holland was overrun by the armies of the Republic, and she was naturally unable to support her forces in Ceylon. England instantly took advantage of this welcome enfeeblement of her old rival, and by force and intrigue she had secured all the Dutch possessions in the island by 1796. Few British conquests have been made at the cost of so little blood and money.<sup>40</sup>

The "advantage of the welcome enfeeblement" was England's granting of asylum to William V, Prince of Orange, and his issuance of the Kew Letters.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Holden, Ceylon, p. 102.

<sup>41</sup>William was resident in Kew (England) at the time. Hence, the "Kew Letters".

In these, William had given instructions to his colonial governors to place the colonies in British hands in order to prevent the possessions from falling to the French. To the Governor of Ceylon, J.P. Van Angelbeek, the Prince of Orange addressed the following:

Noble and Most Honoured Confidante, Our Trusty and Well Beloved,

We have deemed it necessary to address you this communication and to require you to admit into Trincomalee and elsewhere in the Colony under your rule the troops of His Majesty the King of Great Britain which will proceed there, and also to admit into the harbours or such other places where ships might safely anchor the warships, frigates and armed vessels which will be despatched on behalf of His Majesty of Great Britain; and you are also to consider them as troops and ships belonging to a power that is in friendship and alliance with their High Mightinesses, and who come to prevent the Colony from being invaded by the French.

Wherefore, Noble, etc, . . . we commit you to God's holy protection, and remain

Kew, 7th February, 1795.

Your well-wishing friend,  
W. Pr. V. Orange.<sup>42</sup>

The British had made some vague promises that whatever Dutch colonial territory was given up to English protection would be returned to the Netherlands East Indies Company at the conclusion of hostilities. But despite the instructions which William had issued to his local governor in Ceylon, the latter, upon his own initiative, chose instead to resist the British. There was no question as to the outcome. Trincomalee was again occupied by the British in the latter part of August, 1795, Batticaloa and Jaffna the following month, and Colombo by February, 1796. Thus, a new imperial power came to Ceylon.

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<sup>42</sup>Colvin R. de Silva, Ceylon Under British Occupation, 1795-1833, Vol. I, (Colombo: The Colombo Apothecaries Co., 1953), p. 18. The instructions issued to the Governor and the Commanding Officer at Sea of the Cape of Good Hope appear in Appendix II.

English interest in the non-European world had begun some two hundred years earlier. The 1587 voyage of Sir Francis Drake had produced some stimulation for trade with the East Indies, as had the later sailing of Thomas Cavenish through the Magellan Straits to the Philippines and Java. A petition for further exploration submitted to the Crown in 1589 was left unanswered by Elizabeth I. A second petition fared better. In 1591 three ships set sail from Plymouth. The voyage came to grief due to an appalling mortality rate among crews, still it produced a great degree of enthusiasm since British ships had sailed into the Indian Ocean. But a number of obstacles stood in the way of further ventures. England was again at war and in deep financial troubles, merchants were hesitant to raise the necessary subscriptions, British seafarers lacked knowledge of trade and navigation routes in the Indian Ocean, and British vessels of that time were quite unsuited to long voyages. And too, few goods produced in England could be traded in the tropical areas. Finally, however, the Crown assented to new explorations through the issuance of the Charter of 1600. The East India Company began operations.

Under its royal charter the Company, which consisted of a governor and twenty-four 'committees' appointed to organize a trading expedition to the East Indies, was granted a monopoly of trade in the region between the Cape of Good Hope and the Magellan Straits for a period of fifteen years. For its first voyage it raised a capital of £68,000. Four ships were especially purchased at a cost of £41,000, £6,860 was spent on goods for trading, and specially coined 'rials of eight' to the value of £21,742 were put on board for the purchase of return cargoes.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>D.G.E. Hall, A History of South-East Asia (London: Macmillan and Co., 1955), pp. 227-228. It should be noted that the Charter was granted in the very same year, 1600, as that of the Netherlands organization, and for trade monopoly in the same region i.e., between the Cape of Good Hope and the Magellan Straits. Given the competitive nature of trading, this predestined Dutch-English conflict.



With the end of warfare in 1796, the "question of the future of Ceylon immediately arose. Was it to be restored to the Dutch . . . or should it become a British colony?"<sup>44</sup> England decided the matter in its own interest. An office of Governor was established in 1798 with dual control of the Crown and the East India Company. Ceylon became a Crown colony on January 1, 1802. But Kandy still remained a land-locked island within an island until 1815 when it was forced to submit to European control.

In the Kandyan War which preceded the capitulation, the British were aided by Kandyan nobles and common people alike who begged the Crown for aid against the cruelties of Sri Vikrama Rajasinha, the last King of Kandy. Bailey gives the following account of the British decision to wage war against Vikrama.<sup>45</sup> Sir Robert Brownigg, who had succeeded Sir Thomas Maitland, as Governor of Ceylon

Could not hear with indifference the prayers of the inhabitants of five extensive provinces, consisting more than one-half of the Kandyan Kingdom, who with one unanimous voice raised against the tyranny and oppression of their ruler . . . implored the protection of the British Government. . . . Neither could His Excellency contemplate without the liveliest emotions of indignation and resentment, the atrocious barbarity perpetrated in Kandy upon ten innocent subjects of the British Government, seven of whom died instantly of their sufferings, and three miserable victims were sent, in defiance, with their mutilated limbs across their limits, to relate the distressing tale, and exhibit the horrid spectacle to the eyes of an insulted government, and an indignant people. His Excellency had become convinced of the unavoidable necessity of resolving to carry

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<sup>44</sup>Bailey, Ceylon, p. 68.

<sup>45</sup>Besides Bailey, see also: Colvin R. de Silva, Ceylon Under British Occupation (Colombo: Apothecaries Company, 1953); S.L. Ludowyk, ed., Robert Knox in the Kandyan Kingdom (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1948); Lennox A. Mills, Ceylon Under British Rule (London: Longsman, Green and Company, 1945); S. G. Perera, History of Ceylon, 1505 to the Present Day (Colombo: Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, 1949).

His Majesty's arms into the Kandyan country. . . .But it is not against the Kandyan nation that the arms of His Majesty are directed. His Excellency proclaims hostility against the tyrannical power alone which has provoked by aggravated outrages and indignities the just resentment of the British nation. . . .His Excellency hereby proffers to every individual of the Kandyan nation the benign protection of the British Government.<sup>46</sup>

The Convention of March 2, 1815 brought an end to the Kandyan War. In summary, the main points of the Convention were: that Sri Vikrama Rajasinha was deposed as the King of Kandy, his family and relatives excluded from succession to the throne, that Buddhism was to be maintained as the religion, and that rights and privileges of all people were guaranteed under the administration of the British. For the first time in four centuries, Ceylon was united under one effective rule.

The 133 years of British administration which followed was something more than imperialism per se -- although surely it was that. But it was also political and economic experimentation which had been lacking in the administrative programs of the two European predecessors. The differences in approach to administration was based upon the comparative value of Ceylon to Portugal, the Netherlands, and England respectively. A higher estimate was made by the British, weighted by the strategic location of Trincomalee in the Indian Ocean. The harbor, developed in the early nineteenth century, was a vital link in the chain of British domination of the seas. The value of Ceylon to England was best summed up when in 1802, Pitt described it in Parliament as "the most valuable colonial possession on the globe . . . giving to our Indian empire a security it had not enjoyed from its first establishment!"<sup>47</sup> The spice

<sup>46</sup>Bailey, Ceylon, pp. 81-82.

<sup>47</sup>Colvin R. de Silva, Ceylon Under British Occupation, Vol. I, p. 26.

trade shared, of course, in this role of importance. But primary emphasis rested upon the political value. The Madras and Calcutta conquests under Clive had established power centers in the Indian Ocean, the scene of naval engagements between England and her rivals. Paramount in British plans for her control of the Indian Ocean was a naval base in the Bay of Bengal, and Trincomalee fit nicely into the grand scheme. It is little wonder that Pitt described Ceylon as he did in Parliament.

#### An Appraisal

The politics of history -- the four centuries of foreign impact -- held immense difficulties for the people of Ceylon. And, in retrospect, it is indeed "a wonder that any of the essential characteristics of Sinhalese culture have ever emerged."<sup>48</sup> There is no question that the stream of invaders from southern India, the warring princes, and internal strife left their impress upon the island throughout its long history. Yet the culture itself was left largely untouched. Prior to 1505 there was seldom the hacking-up and casting aside of the indigenous characteristics such as became the pattern from the sixteenth century onward. And this legacy of colonialism will linger long in the future.

The theory of colonialism can be argued from widely divergent points of view. It produced political and economic unification which supplied something of a fabric, knitting together the various communities in such a way that transition to self-governing status was without civil strife such as the horrors of the India-Pakistan partition. The Portuguese and the Dutch, for example, can be credited as being the instrument

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<sup>48</sup>Cook, Ceylon: Its Geography, Its Resources, and Its People, p. 30.

which bridged the gap from the medieval period to adapting the island for the contemporary period, abetted by the British who were heirs to these foundations. And it was the British period which saw the transition from a colonial structure into a nation-state.

The other side of the coin is the rather sordid story of the manner and means by which the colonial powers saw as their duty the need to, in their words, civilize and christianize the native people. Here both the Portuguese and Dutch destroyed some parts of indigenous religious and social structures. Colonialism was to make a mockery of the dignity of labor, and the Western bases of law and order came in direct conflict with the people's historically established customs. Employing the engines of government for territories and spheres of influence for the pure commercial value, the theory of competition was introduced, market crop values became the scales of survival. The force of competition did much to undermine the fabric of society.

The politics of history then bequeathed a legacy of suspicion and resentment not only against the former colonial masters, but generally toward that part of the world which is called "the West". Further, this past is the heritage of attitudes and emotions which continue to shape the outlook and dictate the policies of present-day Ceylon.

## CHAPTER II

### THE POLITICS OF RELIGION

Ceylon is the world center of Theravada Buddhism. This connection with one of the world's great philosophies has contributed much to the island's fame, especially in the Eastern world. Buddhism has been a living force in Ceylon for two thousand years. It survived the impact of Islam and Christianity, and this survival, together with its disappearance in India at the close of the twelfth century, ranks among absorbing historical mysteries.

Buddhism was born in India sometime before the close of the sixth century B.C. It was the result of an evolution in religious outlook during the era of transition by the Indo-Aryan race from a pastoral to an agricultural people. It came during an age of social and intellectual ferment. The supremacy of the priestly Brahmins and the fanatical asceticism they preached had become controversial issues in Hindu society. Buddhism offered a middle ground between the supernatural and the worldly life.

Among those seeking this middle path was Siddhartha Gautama. He was an offspring of noble birth, the son of the chief of a hill-tribe, the Shakyas. Gautama's birthplace was the town of Kapilavastu in that part of northern India which is present day Nepal. At the age of twenty-

nine years, leaving behind a wife and son, he donned a saffron-colored robe (still the apparel of the Buddhist monk) and gathering together a group of followers set out in quest of the secrets of wisdom and sorrow. Eventually these were revealed to him as he meditated beneath a bodhi tree in the town of Gaya. Gautama died in 483 B.C.<sup>49</sup> at the age of eighty years having bequeathed to the world the foundation of an immortal philosophy. He is the Buddha, the "Enlightened One" or "The Awakened", a religious title which has as its corollary in Christianity the appellation "Christ" or "The Savior".

For a thousand years, Buddhism was deeply entrenched in India. It started to decline in popular favor for some unknown reason and at a date which can in no way be determined. It may well be that covert forces were active as early as the fourth century A.D., which saw the rise of the great Gupta Hindu empire. In any case, there followed after this time a constant diminishing of Buddhism's influence upon the people. Gradually, the religion was looked upon as a branch of Hinduism. By the time of the Muslim invasion of India in 1192, the absorption of Buddhism by Hinduism was almost complete. When Bihar and Bengal, the last two Buddhist outposts, were occupied by the Muslims, and the shaven-headed priests expelled or slain, Buddhism in India was dead. Perhaps the major underlying cause was ideological -- that fighting and battle, sanctified through the Hindu caste system (Warrior Caste: Ksatriya), held preference

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<sup>49</sup>The year of Gautama's death coincides with the landing on Lanka by Vijaya and his followers. For argument that these two events occurred in the same year see Geiger, The Mahavamsa, pp. xx-lil. It is sometimes stated that both occurred on the same day. However, the chronicle, The Dipsavamsa, states that Vijaya came to Lanka at the time of the death of the Buddha, not precisely on the day of the death.

in moral duty to Buddhism's ahimsa (non-violence). Whatever the suggestions as to the demise, all are purely speculative.

Buddhism was exported to Lanka from India by the great Maurya emperor Asoka in May, 246 B.C. He sent his son Mahinda, a Buddhist monk, to Devanampiyatissa, King of Lanka, with a message of the Buddha. History records that later Asoka himself became a monk after having embraced the religion out of remorse over the carnage he had caused by aggressive warfare. Some rock inscriptions which are among the earliest intelligible written records surviving from ancient India, give evidence of the emperor's sincerity and remorse.

As to speculation for the religion's survival in Ceylon, the ground is a little more firm. There was the positive factor of strong Sinhalese Buddhist rulers whose periodic reigns were powerful enough to hold Hinduism within tolerable limits. And on the positive side was the progress in arts, culture, and social organization accomplished under Buddhist kings. This evoked a feeling of pride among the people and acted as a unifying force in religio-nationalism. But perhaps even more important were the negative, self-defeating methods, manners and approaches of the Europeans. Bailey sights an example,

'We charge you' wrote the King of Portugal to his Viceroy in the East, 'to discover all the idols by means of diligent officers, to reduce them to fragments and utterly consume them. . . .And because the heathens submit themselves to the yoke of the Gospel not alone through the convictions of the purity of the Faith and for that they are sustained by the hope of Eternal Life, they should also be encouraged with some temporal favors. . . .And, therefore, you should earnestly set yourself to see that the new Christians from this time forward do obtain and enjoy all exemptions and freedom from tribute.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup>Bailey, Ceylon, p. 42.

In the contest between Christianity and Buddhism, coercion and confusion were the hallmarks of the Europeans. Illustrative of the latter is the story of the Sinhalese who was given a copy of the New Testament by a Jesuit missionary. A short time later, the Sinhalese in bewilderment returned to the priest. "Jesus Christ," he said, "had never taken money from anyone. Why were the Portuguese Christians so grasping?"<sup>51</sup>

And again:

Christian man say only one God got, only one religion everybody got, but Christian Baptist man say his God right, his religion right, no other; Wesleyan man say his God, his religion right, no other; Salvation Army man say his God, his religion right, no other; Church of England man say his God, his religion right, no other. . ."<sup>52</sup>

Nevertheless, circumstances were such that a spiritual vacuum was created wherein the people gradually lost contact with the old ways with the consequent breaking down of traditional ethnic relationships. It was the getting in touch again with the "old ways" which was the heart of the renaissance of Buddhism in Ceylon, a subject which will be taken up later in this chapter.

### The Doctrine

Theravada is Pali<sup>53</sup> terminology for "Teaching of the Elders".

Theravada Buddhism lays claim to preserving the original doctrine as handed down from the days of Gautama. Strictly speaking, Buddhism is a concept of life founded upon a religion psychological in nature, rather

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

<sup>52</sup>Corner, Paradise of Adam (London: John Lane, 1918), p. 264.

<sup>53</sup>Pali is the Prakrit language of the Buddhist scriptures. It is taken from the Sanskrit pali-bhasa, literally, canon language.



than theological or metaphysical. The Doctrine (Pali: Dhamma) reflects a fundamental and universal moral law based upon the Four Noble Truths:

- 1) sorrow is the manifestation of evil in the world,
- 2) sorrow arises from human desires which spring from passions and hatreds,
- 3) desire comes from an attachment to the transitory features of a material world, and
- 4) sorrow ceases only when desire ceases, the cessation of desire coming about through discipline in moral conduct.

The moral code is based upon the Noble Eightfold Path, or Ways, which, in summary, embraces righteousness in one's intentions, efforts, conduct, thoughts, concentration, speech, knowledge and livelihood. Man is said to be reborn into successive lives which are filled with sorrow. The sorrow is brought about through subjection to worry, pain, and suffering which are produced by man's material desires. To escape the sorrow, to gain salvation man must overcome desires. Only by so doing does he reach the state of Nirvana ("blowing out"), that condition which grants escape from subsequent rebirths and sorrow.

In substance, then, the doctrine amounts to spiritual and mental disciplining for attaining the correct views of life. There is much doubt as to the original messages of the Buddha. Undoubtedly, many of the words attributed to him were actually those of his disciples. There has been considerable expansion of his teachings since his death. In about the first century A.D., there occurred a division into two schools of thought, the Hinayana and Mahayana.<sup>54</sup> The salient points which brought

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<sup>54</sup>A further subdivision has occurred mainly in the Mahayana

about the schism are far too complex to detail here, but in summation these are theistic arguments relating to the priesthood, the elaborate rituals, shrines, processions, and the like.

Generally, the Westerner, having been reared in the ideology of monotheism, finds much that is confusing about Buddhism. The Westerner recognizes God as an omnipotent living Being, having an "is" quality, and "aliveness". Prayers and oblations are offered to this Immortal usually as supplication for help of one type or the other, and because of the idea of "existence", there is faith that prayers will be "answered". The existence is an unquestioned truism, therefore "God" assumes a human status. The Buddha does not possess this "human" quality; he cannot help man with worldly problems. He is not thought of as a deity in the conventional use of the term. Rather, the Buddha is acknowledged as having lived in the past, of having communicated to his followers a code of ethics and morals by which to conduct their daily lives. Still, the Buddha occupies a principal place in a hierarchy of gods. He is one among many deities who have been given places of honor in the pantheon, these having been integrated into the structure over the centuries as new rituals were introduced. More will be said about these "other gods" presently. In the worship of the relics of the Buddha, it is his "personality" which is being venerated, rather than a "human" with immortal attributes.

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stream resulting in offshoots which can now be considered schools in their own right, for example, Tibetan lamassary which extends into Bhutan and Sikkim, as well as Mongolia, and Zen Buddhism in Japan. The Mahayana stream is found in Tibet, Nepal, Korea, China and Japan. Theravada Buddhism is fundamentally of the Hinayana stream and the principal doctrine in Ceylon, Burma, Cambodia and Thailand.

Shrines, Relics and "Lost Cities"

For centuries Ceylon has attracted the adherents of Buddhism from the world over. It was common practice for Chinese emperors to send a continuous flow of missions to learn more of the doctrine, and to obtain sacred writings and relics of the Great Teacher. The grand Kublai sent envoys "first in order to request -- in vain, as it turned out -- the ruby<sup>55</sup> belonging to the king of the island . . . and then procure -- which they did -- some relics of the Buddha."<sup>56</sup> Marco Polo was undoubtedly aware of the power of Buddhism in the East.

Marco had a vague idea of the moral greatness of this remarkable man, but only after having learned something about the historical Buddha in the sanctuaries of Ceylon, on the way home at the end of his great adventures; he could then say . . . that 'for certainty, if he had been baptized a Christian he would have been a great saint before God.'<sup>57</sup>

The number and magnificence of the Buddha shrines have long been common sights on Lanka. Called dagobas,<sup>58</sup> most are vast structures of brick and stucco, bell-shaped and spired, as large as a pyramid; others are the village type, less ornate and rarely more than twelve feet in height. Their pretentiousness evolved from a rather humble beginning.

<sup>55</sup>Marco Polo described this ruby as "the grandest ruby that was ever seen, being a span in length, and the thickness of a man's arm, brilliant beyond description and without a single flaw." See William Marsden, ed., The Travels of Marco Polo. (London: Unwin and Green, 1948), p. 174. The story goes that the Kublai offered the island king the value of a city if he, the monarch, would relinquish possession of the gem.

<sup>56</sup>The words are those of Marco Polo quoted by Leonardo Olschki. Marco Polo's Asia, (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press), 1960, p. 398n.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 256.

<sup>58</sup>From "datu" meaning relic, and "ghabbhan" meaning shrine. More precisely translated "relic-chamber".

Originally stupas (burial places), they began a rise to splendor at the time Devanampiyatissa received from Asoka the collar bone and the alms bowl of the Buddha,<sup>59</sup> and gradually became repositories for things associated with him.<sup>60</sup> There are processional ways which encircle the dagobas and used by the bhikkhus<sup>61</sup> and laymen alike while meditating on the words of the Master.

In all Ceylon, no relic is considered holier or more miraculous than the Tooth of the Lord Buddha. It rests today in the innermost of seven golden caskets at the Dalada Maligawa (Temple of the Tooth) in Kandy. The story goes that the Tooth was found following the death of Gautama and was guarded for eight hundred years in a Buddhist monastery in what is now Bihar Province. In the fourth century the Buddhists fled to Ceylon in order to escape persecution in India. According to historical accounts, at the time of this exodus, the Tooth was borne to Lanka by a princess from Orissa who concealed it in her hair in order to protect it against desecration. The relic remained in Ceylon for more than a thousand years until 1560 when, supposedly, it fell into the possession

<sup>59</sup>By Asoka's time, monks had begun deviating for the practice of wandering through the countryside with begging bowls in hand and had taken to settling in monasteries which had been erected on lands granted by kings and wealthy patrons.

<sup>60</sup>Desecration of relics is certain to trigger civil uprisings. This is also true among the Muslims with regard to relics of the Prophet Mohammed. The most recent case involving the Muslims occurred in Srinagar (Kashmir) December 27, 1963 when a silver-capped glass phial containing a three-inch long hair of the Prophet was stolen from the Hazratbal Mosque. It was later recovered on January 4, 1964 by the Central Intelligence Bureau of Kashmir. Meanwhile, however, there were riots and mourning processions.

<sup>61</sup>Bikkus is Pali for "beggars". Bhiksu in Sanskrit has the same meaning, however, the more preferable translation is "monk".

of the Portuguese who, triumphantly, took it to Goa where it was destroyed with fire by the Archbishop in the presence of the Viceroy. It was, of course, an idolatrous object to the Portuguese. But Sinhalese tradition denies that such was the fate of the Tooth. Rather, it maintains that the relic which was seized by the Europeans was an imitation; that the genuine object had been secretly safeguarded against just such an eventuality. Whatever the facts, the Tooth of the Buddha has long been paid homage by way of a great national pageant, the Esala Perahera.<sup>62</sup>

For sheer beauty, the Esala Perahera finds no match anywhere in the world. This major Buddhist festival began during the reign of King Gaja Bahu (113-134) as a purely secular event, a victory parade in the monarch's honor for having successfully invaded India. The Buddhist significance dates back approximately two centuries when a religious revival took place in Kandy under Kirti Sri. Now each year, more than a hundred elephants, beautifully caprisoned, escort the Maligawa (Temple) Elephant through the streets of Kandy. The Temple Elephant, splendidly attired in a panoply of velvets and gems, bears upon his back a jeweled casket containing the Tooth. And there are standard bearers, torch carriers, drummers, dancers, and temple priests. The festival has a distinctive character which no Western nation could emulate. There is no more important symbol of Sinhalese religio-nationalism to be found on the island today than that of the Tooth; from the time of its coming to Ceylon, it has linked the past with the present and it is the core of faith in the tomorrow.

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<sup>62</sup>Esala is the Buddhist month of August; Perahera means procession or festival. Hence, literally August Procession.

The relics of the Lord Buddha cross international boundaries to make an impact upon political relations between states. For example, a few years ago Peking won itself new friends among the people of Ceylon when the then Chinese Ambassador to Ceylon, Chan Tsen Ming, arranged to bring to the island another Tooth which was in China's possession. It arrived by aircraft to a reception which would have done justice to a visiting high dignitary of state. The Prime Minister was on hand as were scores of officials, jet aircraft roared overhead while sarong-clad Kandyan drummers pounded their drums --- and Kandyan drummers pound the drums only on the most solemn occasions. The Tooth, encased in a gold casket, was placed aboard a motorized chariot trimmed in gold and red, and escorted to Colombo's Memorial Hall behind a motorcade. Wherever this relic was exhibited during the lengthy island-wide tour, long queues of the faithful paid homage while orators eulogized the generosity of the Chinese government. In terms of international politics, it was a diplomatic coup, a masterful stroke by China in rebuilding its image which had been somewhat tarnished by the suppression of Lamaist Buddhism in Tibet. The gesture of the loan undoubtedly will be remembered much longer than will the tragic Chinese sacking of the Buddhist Tibetan monasteries and the persecution of the Lamas in 1959.

In Ceylon -- a land laden with legend and myth -- the people find little reason to differentiate between the miraculous and the ordinary, and no attempt is made to separate religious fable from religious fact. There is the example of the worship of Sri Pada -- the Sacred Footprint. Sri Pada is a clear and distinct giant-size impression of a human footprint upon an enormous boulder atop Adam's Peak. Devout Bud-

dhists revere it as the place where the Buddha supposedly left the impression of his foot on a visit to Lanka centuries before the religion came to the island. To the Buddhist, its sacred rank is second only to that of the Tooth. But the faithful of other religions also lay claim to the phenomenon. Muslims attribute it to Adam, the first man; Hindus believe the impression to have been made by the great god Saman, and Christians maintain it is the imprints of the foot of St. Thomas, the Apostle of India, placed there when the saint visited Ceylon. Each year thousands of pilgrims make a long and weary trek to the summit of Adam's Peak. For centuries, it has been the object of veneration by Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus and Christians alike, "for the footprint on the rock, that which men go out into the wilderness to see, is sacred to them all."<sup>63</sup>

Adam's Peak rises like the spine of a Gothic cathedral to roughly 7000 feet. Legend has it that its summit was once the famed seat of worship of the Hindu mountain deity Saman, and it is known in history and literature as the Samantha-Kuta, The Peak of Saman. He, then, is the god of Adam's Peak charged with the guardianship of the mountain and of the province of Sabaragamawa wherein it is located.<sup>64</sup> Muslims call the mountain "the hill of Father Adam", hence the name Adam's Peak. There are a myriad of stories which connect the First Man with Ceylon. One tale has it that on the Peak, Adam and Eve mourned the death of Abel and on the rocky precipice Cain was forced to live out his days. The English author,

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<sup>63</sup>John Still, The Jungle Tide (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930), 22.

<sup>64</sup>See map p. 56.

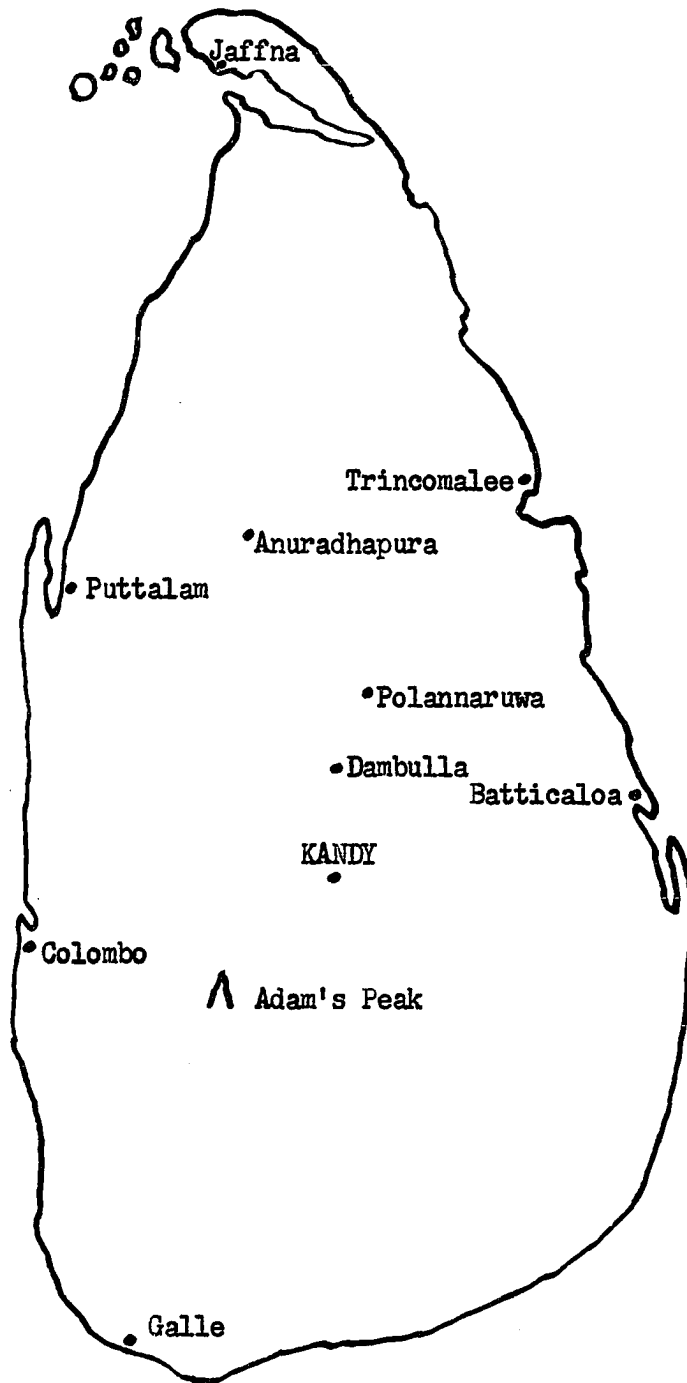


Fig. 6.--Location of Adam's Peak and Dambulla



Caroline Corner, refers to the island as The Paradise of Adam.<sup>65</sup> Adam, so the story goes, "found something wanting when driven out of Eden. He parted from Eve on the Plains of Mesopotamia prior to his banishment to Ceylon, the Paradise of Adam."<sup>66</sup> Another version says that Adam, having been driven out of Paradise, was given, through the benevolence of God, his choice as to where he wished to reside to live out his life. Adam chose Lanka, because next to Paradise, this was the most beautiful land on earth.<sup>67</sup> So go the legends of the Footprint and of Adam.

By no means can the famed Bodhi (or Bo) Tree of Ceylon be overlooked when reference is made to things sacred. Again, according to legend, a branch of that original tree beneath which Gautama sat at the time of his enlightenment was carried from India to Lanka in 245 B.C.

From this branch

Miraculously grew eight shoots, which were planted in various parts of Ceylon, becoming the progenitors of thousands of Bo-trees on the island today, all deeply revered by devout Buddhists. What is believed to be the parent tree, said to be the oldest living thing in the world, still grows among the noble ruins of Anuradhapura after twenty-one centuries.<sup>68</sup>

The "noble ruins", too, have religious significance. Thick-set forest has overrun those areas where once stood the proud cities of Anuradhapura, Tissa, and Polonnaruwa, which were at one time or another

<sup>65</sup>Caroline Corner, The Paradise of Adam.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>67</sup>Accounts such as this with variations have been told to me on several occasions. They vary in blandishments depending upon the enthusiasm of the teller.

<sup>68</sup>Argus John Tresidder, Ceylon. An Introduction to a Resplendent Land (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1960), p. 72.

among the magnificent capitals of the ancient world. Devout Buddhists still make pilgrimages to these places to worship at the great dagobas, the only remaining architecture on the jungle-shrouded landscape. These ancient sites are among the famed "Lost Cities" of Ceylon which, in their prime, rose and flourished in an atmosphere ecclesiastical rather than civic, with their foundations rooted in Buddhism in the same manner as the medieval towns of Europe were dependent upon the Church. To be sure, enormous sums were spent by Lanka's kings and nobles to satisfy their luxurious appetites, but these expenditures were equaled by the appropriations directed toward the building of temples and shrines. The one measurement used to determine the piety of royalty toward the Buddhist religion was subservience to the doctrine; the most noble of kingly pursuits was the protection of the bhikkhus.

#### Other Gods

Hinduism has contributed significantly to the spiritual life of the Buddhist. Many Hindu deities occupy prominent places in Buddhist temples and are honored along with the Lord Buddha. This relationship

Is not altogether surprising if we remember that Buddhism was originally an offshoot of Hinduism, and that in Ceylon the two religions have coexisted for over two thousand years, sometimes with the Tamil Hindus dominant.<sup>69</sup>

The Buddha is at the vertex of this pantheon, but Hindu deities such as Vishnu, Pattini, and the aforementioned Saman, among others, have retained popular favor. Vishnu, for example, is second in status only to the Buddha, as it was he, Vishnu, who was appointed by the Buddha himself as the

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<sup>69</sup>Ibid., pp. 184-185.

guardian of both the religion and the country of Ceylon. Pattini is the great goddess whose maternalistic benevolence has long been a source of hope. In addition, there are other gods which are believed to hold any number of powers. Changing social conditions necessitated changes in religious rites and the introduction, from time to time, of new rituals. Thus, old gods were resurrected from limbo and took auspicious places in the pantheon. The roles of the Buddha and the Hindu deities are quite separate and distinct. The Buddha can in no way help man with worldly problems; he can only furnish guidance and spiritual salvation. The Hindu gods, on the other hand, are believed to have the power to aid mankind in finding solutions to the worldly dilemmas he faces. The combination of the two -- the Buddha and the deities -- is the channel for man's peace within himself.

There are representatives of other religions in Ceylon, of course. Problems which exist in the interrelationship of these religious communities are largely ethnic in nature rather than of pure religious base. The interrelationship will be discussed in a more appropriate place.<sup>70</sup> Here need only be mentioned that the majority of the population, approximately seventy percent, are Buddhists; the second largest religious group, eleven percent, are adherents to Hinduism. Christians, Muslims, and Free Thinkers follow in that order, Zoroastrians and Agnostics constituting the minute remainder.

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<sup>70</sup>These are communal problems rather than religious although the latter aspect cannot be eliminated entirely. The collisions occurring among the ethnic groupings, and the sources thereof, are examined in Chapter III.

### The Renaissance of Buddhism

To this point in this chapter, the focus has been on those components which lend themselves to the formation of Sinhalese Buddhism. It was the national religion prior to the European era. Before that time there were influences militating against the philosophy, nevertheless it was the principal force in guiding and directing pre-sixteenth century Sinhalese society. Hinduism, and to a lesser extent Islam, were largely sterile opposition. Buddhism had managed to contain both challengers. On Lanka, Buddhism had absorbed Hinduism the reverse of what had taken place in India. It comprised the nationalistic fervor of the Sinhalese -- a religio-nationalism -- neither element of which could have stood by itself without support from the other. This "religio-nationalism" was the construct of what is fondly referred to as the "old ways" of the Sinhalese people. And it is this nostalgia for former Sinhalese greatness which brought forth the embryo of the Buddhism renaissance movement in Ceylon some eighty years ago.

The brink of Buddhism's survival in Ceylon had been reached about mid-way in the British Period. It cannot be denied that the missionaries of European religious denominations had more than minimal success in luring into their folds large numbers of Buddhist laymen. Economic coercion were valuable Portuguese and Dutch tools in conversions. Englishmen needed only to amplify those policies established by their predecessors to assure that British interests would best be served. Under Sinhalese kings, bhikkhus had played an important role in leadership among the people; under foreign domination, this status was no longer tolerated by

governing authorities. Temple schools, which had been fountainheads of Buddhist education, were gradually throttled, thereby forcing Buddhist families to send their children to Christian missionary institutions. This coercion appeared in a rather subtle manner. Employment in government service was not only a source of relatively lucrative income but a mark of the highest prestige attainable. Thus, it became a much-sought-after prize. Still, government positions were filled on a highly discriminatory basis and this same preferential treatment was meted out in the commercial world. Virtually the only avenue open to either type of employment was a Christian school education. The Buddhist had very little choice.

The embryo efforts of Buddhism to regain its pre-sixteenth century status are attributable almost entirely to an American, Henry Steel Olcott (1832-1907). An adherent of the philosophy and a world traveler, Olcott landed at Galle (Ceylon) in 1880. He was quick to note the demoralized state of Buddhism on the island and the plight of the Buddhist monk and laymen alike. He set about marshaling forces which would breathe new life into Sinhalese Buddhism. He edited and published the Buddhist catechism and designed a Buddhist flag. He had envisioned a banner as a rallying symbol, an instrument for unifying all sects worldwide; by 1950, this flag had become the universal standard of Buddhism in some sixty countries. The colors in the flag are the same as those which appear in the aura around the head of the Buddha: blue (neale), yellow (petta), red (lehita), white (odata), and light red (manjetta),<sup>71</sup> aligning these

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<sup>71</sup>The words appearing in the parentheses are Pali terms for the colors.

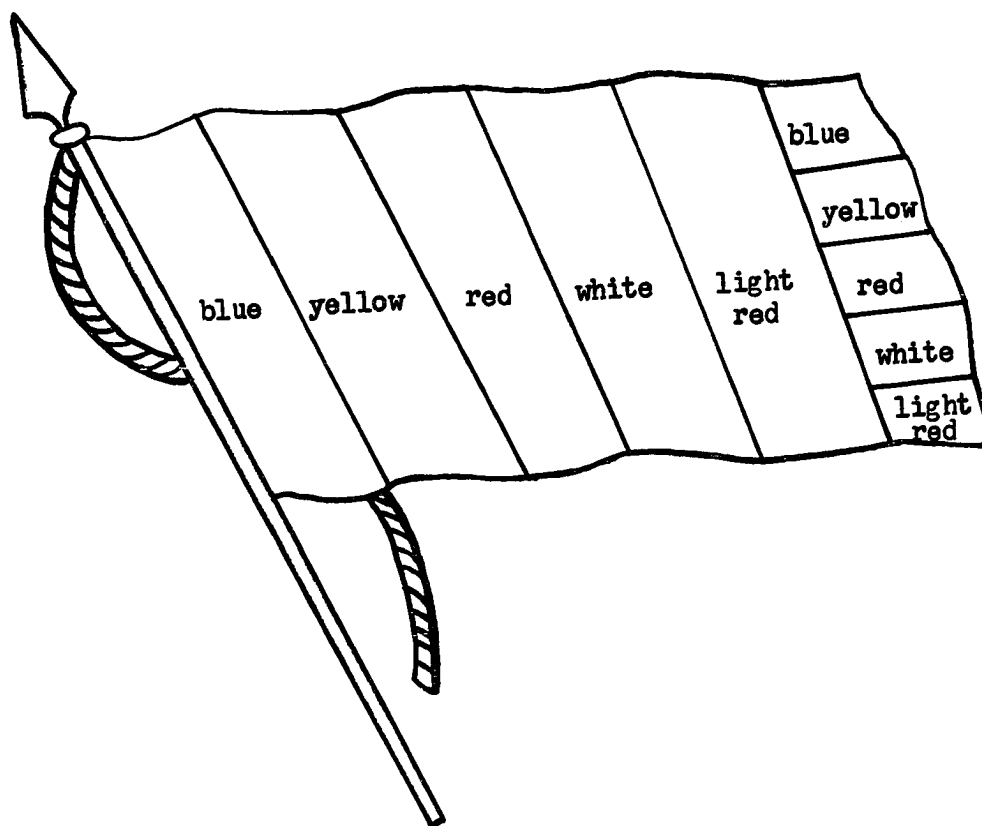


Fig. 7.--The Buddhist Flag

in five vertical strips. A sixth color is an agglomerate of the five but for design purposes was distilled and used horizontally in the same order.

Olcutt went on to found the Colombo branch of the Theosophical Society<sup>72</sup> then turned his attention to reestablishing Buddhist schools. In this undertaking he was joined by a young Buddhist, David Hewavitharana, who acted as interpreter. The two crossed and criss-crossed the island urging the people to shun foreign customs, to return to the ancient

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<sup>72</sup>Olcutt was the founder of the American Theosophical Society in New York in 1875, whose principal tenets were the establishing of a nucleus of brotherhood of humanity, and the systematic studies of the mysteries of life and matter and comparative religions.

Sinhalese culture, to join together in the crusade toward reinstating Buddhist education. At the time that Olcutt and Hewavitharana launched their campaign, there were but four Buddhist schools in Ceylon; today there are over four hundred.

David Hewavitharana (1864-1933) resigned his position with the British government service to accompany Olcutt. He changed his name to Anagarika (the Homeless) Dharmapala, and under this name was to devote his life to unifying not only Sinhalese Buddhists but the religion's devotees throughout Asia. His words and promptings to return to the "old ways" served as a pivot in the renaissance of Buddhism and did much to fan the flames of national political independence among the Sinhalese.

But it was in India that Dharmapala achieved perhaps his greatest work in helping the country to rediscover its great Buddhist heritage. The well-known sites which are connected with the life and teachings of the Lord Buddha and which annually attract thousands from the world over -- places such as Buddha Gaya, Sarnath, Kusinara, Sanchi and others -- owe their glorious contemporary stature to Dharmapala under whose guidance these sacred places were restored to their former glory. There is little question that the rebirth of Buddhism in India, which is one of the most extraordinary events of the modern religious world, can be attributed, partially at least, to Dharmapala. The "increase in the number of Buddhists during the last 10 years has been phenomenal indicating a mighty wave of conversions."<sup>73</sup> During the decade of 1953-1963 the membership increased from a mere 181 thousand to 3.25 million.<sup>74</sup> New centers of

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<sup>73</sup>The Hindu Weekly Review, Nov. 11, 1963, p. 4.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

learning and meditation were founded to provide the Buddhists of Ladakh, Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal the spiritual guidance for which they formerly looked to Tibet prior to 1959. Dharmapala died on April 29, 1933, but his spirit stays on to guide the renaissance of Buddhism in the land of its birth.

In Ceylon during the years which followed the rather temuous revival of Buddhism, many people were to join the crusade. The movement attracted the aid of wealthy Sinhalese businessmen and sympathetic educationalists from other countries. But it is to Olcutt and Dharmapala to whom the Ceylonese Buddhists are perhaps most indebted. Both men have become national heroes. Henry Steel Olcutt has been adopted by Ceylon as one of its own. Each year on February 17, the anniversary of his death, there are island-wide commemorative ceremonies which pay homage through eulogies, unveilings of his portrait, and public oratory which retells the story of his untiring efforts on behalf of Ceylonese Buddhists. Dharmapala is paid the same respect and nationally acclaimed as one of the country's great social reformers.

The resurgence of Buddhism is not confined only to Ceylon and India. On the contrary, like activity elsewhere has been keynoted by what was perhaps one of the great religious events of the twentieth century. On November 30, 1952, the 2500-year-old relics of Sariputta and Moggallanna, two of the earliest disciples of the Buddha, were reinterned at Sanchi in central India in a new vihara (monastery) constructed especially for this purpose. This ceremony was part of an International Buddhist Conference held in India and attended by hundreds of Buddhist priests and thousands of laymen from Asia, Europe and the United States. And in the



United States, earlier that same month, a Kalmuck<sup>75</sup> Buddhist Temple for some 250 Russian Buddhists was dedicated at Farmingdale, New Jersey. The Kalmucks were brought to the United States by the Church World Service and the Tolstoy Foundation following release from displaced persons camps. The New Jersey community was among the first organized Kalmuck settlements in the post-war world.

At Rangoon, the Buddhist Great Council opened May 18, 1954, the first Council of its kind since 1871, and only the sixth since the death of Gautama. It attracted more than 50,000 adherents, monks and laity alike, from nearly all countries. As a gesture to the opening, the government of Burma commuted all death sentences of criminals to life imprisonment, and the penalties of other prisoners were reduced by three months. These were but some of the events in mid-twentieth century which keyed the revival of Buddhism.

There is no way to determine what rather suddenly rekindled the interest in the moral concepts of Buddhism. In any case, the reawakening was a concurrent phenomenon with the emergence of the independent Asian states. And despite its contemplative, nonmaterialistic nature, Buddhism now has surrounded itself with a political environment. No longer confining itself to the purely religio-social aspects of life, it has incorporated political agitation into the mainstream of its philosophy.

The political militancy of the Buddhist leaders in Saigon need not be given elaboration here. Their roles in spearheading the religious

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<sup>75</sup>Kalmucks are descendants of the Mongolian followers of Genghis Khan. In Russia their republic was abolished and its citizens sent to Siberia because of their failure to support Russia in World War II.

and political campaigns against South Vietnamese governments is certainly well known. They have moved into the forefront in insisting upon a cease-fire in the guerilla warfare and an end to all foreign intervention. Largely, the political decision-making machinery is the Vien Hoa Dao, the Institute for Secular Affairs. The Institute was a provision of the charter national organization, the Unified Vietnam Buddhist Church, the aims of which was to establish Buddhism as a permanent political and social force in South Vietnam. The national organization<sup>76</sup> was the product of a four-day national Buddhist convention held in Saigon in early January, 1964.

The Vien Hoa Dao is the political and social arm of the church. This single national organization has the tailored opportunity for developing a mass political base and certainly must be reckoned with as a springboard for political action. The charter provides for a powerful eight-man leadership group and an organizational network extending into all of the nation's forty-two provinces and districts within them. The pyramidal hierarchy is on the order of a government structure, with the directions filtering downward from the major Buddhist institutes in Saigon to regions, provinces, districts, cities and villages.

In Japan the growing strength of the Sokka Gakkai,<sup>77</sup> the militant Buddhist organization, is being watched with considerable attention. It claims a membership of approximately ten million in 255 chapters through-

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<sup>76</sup>The charter of the Unified Vietnam Buddhist Church also sets up the Bien Tang Thong, the Institute of Religious Affairs. This, and the Vien Hoa Dao, are the two main government bodies.

<sup>77</sup>Sokka Gakkai means "Value Creation Society."

out Japan. Regardless of whether the membership is as high as claimed, Sokka Gakkai has made a successful entry into Japanese politics. Aside from its cultural and religious program, the organization's political arm, the Komei Seiji Renmei -- the League for Just and Fair Politics -- had fifteen members in the upper house of the Diet and more than one thousand members in the prefectural assemblies and municipal councils all over Japan. Komei Seiji Renmei reflects no consistent domestic philosophy other than aiming toward the elimination of corruption in politics and promoting the welfare of the people. Internationally, it seeks peaceful coexistence, the condemnation of nuclear armaments, and opposes rearmament of Japan. Sokka Gakkai is a highly disciplined organization with a declared policy of the promotion of world peace and a denial of militarism.

In Ceylon, Buddhist political shock waves were first felt in the 1956 general elections. Ascetics, as a group, joined a Nationalist-Trotskyite coalition to wage a full blown campaign against the incumbent Prime Minister, Sir John Kotelewala. The bhikkhus denounced Sir John on a number of issues primarily for his failure to advance Buddhism to that status which they considered to be its rightful place, and for leaving unfulfilled his promise to make the Sinhalese language the official language of Ceylon. These same issues were to remain points of contention during succeeding administrations, about which more will be said later.<sup>78</sup> Mention of this campaign is made at this juncture since it was the harbinger of future political activity. The Nationalist-Trotskyite-Buddhist coalition scored an overwhelming election victory.

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<sup>78</sup>Both of these issues remain today as the basis of communal and political ferment, and are taken up fully in later chapters.

Buddhism in Ceylon assumed a new role in secular affairs. And there was little question that henceforth the voices of the bhikkhus would be influential instruments in affairs of state. Prime Minister Soloman West Ridgway Bandaranaike was the standard-bearer of the Buddhist rights during the campaign and remained the champion of the cause after his party's victory. But subsequently this new force -- the voice of Buddhism -- within the structure of secular politics was to be viewed with a great deal of trepidation by officialdom and by the people alike. The government was forced to acknowledge, reluctantly, the participation of the Buddhist monks in the Sinhalese-Tamil civil disorders of 1958.<sup>79</sup> The press gave the matter of Buddhist participation the low-key treatment, exonerating the monks on the basis of being innocent victims in the maelstrom of cynicisms, fear, and hatreds of the pluralistic society. Gradually, this explanation gained general acceptance. But the apologists were forced into a hasty retreat the latter part of 1959.

On the morning of September 25, Prime Minister Bandaranaike was assassinated at his residence, Rosemead, the victim of a bullet fired by a young, saffron-robed Buddhist monk, Talduwe Semarama Thero. The political overtones in the assassination were only indirectly related. The gunman, it seems, reportedly was angered by the Prime Minister's refusal to go all the way in giving precedence to ancient Eastern medical techniques known as Ayurveda. Bandaranaike had consistently followed a course of Westernizing public hospitals and clinics. More will be said about the assassination and its aftermath in a later chapter.

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<sup>79</sup>The story of civil disorder which racked Ceylon is told in Chapter III.

Heretofore, the political activities of the ascetics had been deemphasized by government and press alike; now, all avenues were open to make certain no facts were suppressed. In bold type, the Ceylon Observer called to the attention of its readers that the Inspector General of Police

Wanted the public informed that mischief makers [are] trying to spread a rumour that the person arrested in connection with the assassination of the Prime Minister [was] not a Buddhist priest. He confirms that the person concerned is a Buddhist priest.<sup>80</sup>

In November, 1959, an ad hoc committee was set up by the Governor General of Ceylon to consider ways and means of implementing some general suggestions put forth earlier by an unofficial Buddhist Commission studying reorganization. Among the recommendations were: the total ban on participation by Buddhist monks in party policies, business, or in administration of temple lands; no Buddhist monk should be appointed to any post for which he would be paid a salary or other remuneration; and operations of the Buddhist educational institutions would fall within the purview of the state. There were other recommendations, but these were the principal ones. The following March, the Ministry of Internal Affairs warned that seditious and inflammatory pamphlets, which were being mailed chiefly to Buddhist monks, could have disastrous effects. The pamphlets exhorted the Buddhist clergy to lead the way in militant action against other religious denominations.

The structural power base of the religion's political influence and activity in Ceylon is the Sangha, the monastic order of the Buddhist clergy. Originally, the Sangha were cave-dwelling, wandering hermits

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<sup>80</sup>Ceylon Observer, Sept. 27, 1959, p. 1.

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<sup>80</sup>Ceylon Observer, Sept. 27, 1959, p. 1.

whose principal duty was the fulfilling of the spiritual needs of the people. Later, the temple became a beacon of learning, a fortress of cultural heritage, and, as has already been mentioned, the monks settled in monasteries, to carry on their work. Despite this transition, the Sangha remained subject to rule by their own ecclesiastical laws; there was no leader, no authoritarian power. This complexion is undergoing a change today and it is becoming obvious that an internal power struggle among the Sangha is in the offing.

The Buddhist clergy, like its counterpart in other religions, has, from time to time, broadened its function to meet the changing needs of the people. As in other religions, each time a change has taken place, questions have been put forth by the conservative wing (in this case, of the Sangha) as to whether or not the innovations did not represent an even further departure from the original doctrine. There are approximately 15,000 monks in Ceylon living in about 6,000 temples. There is a loose division among the Sangha which lacks authoritarian leadership. These divisions are: the conservative wing, on the order of a vigilance group watching over the purity of doctrine and living along the lines of the original code; the middle-of-road group, moderate and complaisant, who refrain from entering the controversy; and the activist wing who are spearheading a new atmosphere in which those roots, which were dying out under foreign domination, can be transplanted to flourish in the mid-twentieth century. It is the latter who argue for wider participation in secular affairs.

Today, the Sangha is again under scrutiny. It has entered -- perhaps reentered would be more correct -- the world, but now in the

political area. Critics point to the wide deviation between this and the earlier path of cave-dwelling and life of meditation. Their role in past ages found no place for dabbling in politics; the farthest extension of such activity could be found in an advisory capacity to rulers. The conservative factor maintains that it is not necessary to poke fingers into the administrative process since religious guidance has no common meeting ground with politics. The Sangha is faced with the problem of how to be a part of the world without really being in the world. In other words, to what extent should the clergy enter the spheres of activity normally defined as purely secular in order to equip the clerics with modern knowledge to be of service to modern man? The solution may be found in the not too distant future through the calling of a Sangayanawa (a Buddhist Council conference), not for discussion of doctrinal matters, but rather to clearly define the place of the Sangha and the conduct of the laity in the modern state.

#### An Appraisal

What is the future political role of Buddhism in Ceylon? It seems unlikely that its voice will be quieted, and it may well predestine irreparable divisions in Ceylonese society. As a political force, it was heralded in 1956 as one which would bring about a new era wherein the pristine glories of Lanka would be revived on a partnership basis between society and the Sangha. The partnership flourished for awhile, but in 1959 the death of the Prime Minister was laid at the doorstep of the Sangha's political activity.

Buddhism is a great religion, with a noble philosophy of life.



Its saintly Founder set guidelines for the bhikkhus such as meditation, self-control, and service to mankind. If there is a negation of these principles in preference to the heat and dust of politics (and politics here is meant as the active participation in national and local administration), then surely adversaries of the religion will utilize every inch of ground for criticism. The urgings to return to the religion of the ancestors will, it would seem, have a hollow ring, the tone being one of political power rather than spiritual ministry. And there is the paramount question as to whether any one religion has the right to be the vanguard of political strife if the interest of the people are threatened.

History is filled with the tragic consequence where religions have been mixed with politics. Marching across the pages of historiographies are the persecutions and brutalities of Jews and Gentiles, Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims, Protestants and Catholic, one against the other. Far from serving the ideals of public peace, tolerance, and brotherhood of men, chaos and disorder followed hurriedly when clerics have descended their pulpits to mount political rostrums. And history is filled too with dire consequences when civil government has abrogated its principal raison d'etre and delivered itself into the grasping hands of religious groups; the oppressions and suppressions which followed do not make a pretty picture. In the infancy of the human race, priests existed before kings. With the advancement of civilization, clerical authority has become subservient to the temporal government.

There is no denying that in Ceylon, under Sinhalese rulers, the Sangha contributed greatly to education and culture, nor is it to be denied that an equally great contribution could be made in the twentieth

century. But the politics of religion in Ceylon may introduce a whole range of problems: a permanent rupture in the plural society, outrageous demands upon government, and a collision between a religious oriented culture and a secular economic life. The role of Buddhism in Ceylon, it would seem, is that vital connection between the descriptive and prescriptive -- and between the state and society -- elements in the nationalizing process. Between these two lie the social and economic institutions based upon law, order, unity, toleration, and justice. And all of these are explicit in the moral code of Theravada Buddhism's Noble Eightfold Path.

## CHAPTER III

### THE POLITICS OF COMMUNITY

The populace of Ceylon is a mosaic society of articulate communities.

There are the Sinhalese and Tamils, Europeans and Burghers, Moors, Malays, and the Veddahs. The Sinhalese are divided among the Kandyan Sinhalese and the Low-country Sinhalese, and the Tamils are identified as Ceylon Tamils and Indian Tamils. In no other country of such small geographical area in the world is there the broad spectrum of races and the intermingling of minorities. One of the overriding problems is finding a process which will meld all social, political, economic, and religious forces into a unified whole. To the present time, nothing resembling a nationalism has begun to appear. Whatever degree of social cohesiveness is manifest, it is a resurgence of individual group identities mainly along ethnic and religious lines and further subdivided on economic and religious bases.

Deep gulfs began appearing in Ceylon's socio-political groupings as the dusk of British rule began settling over the island. Prior to independence, there was a competitiveness, of course, among the social strata, and there did exist a division among the groups. The exodus of the foreigner and the dawn of self-government introduced a new form of

competition -- the struggle for political power. Old alignments among the communities were shattered as reorganized groups and subgroups cast about for new coalitions which offered the promise of rewards either in status or, minimally, a few comforts of life. As population pressure has increased upon the land, with a concomitant decrease in carrying capacity for support of the population, lebensraum has taken on a very real meaning.

#### Population and People

The census of 1963 estimated that 10.625 million people<sup>81</sup> were crowded into Ceylon's 25,332 square miles. Based upon this estimate, there are roughly 238 persons per square mile, and the overcrowding condition is well on its way to worsening. The rate of increase in 1946 was 1.5 percent, by 1953 it was 2.9 percent, and the average annual rate of population increase between 1958 and 1963 was 2.7 percent. A United Nations population study in 1958 projected that by 1970 there would be 13.3 million people in Ceylon; 18.3 million by 1980.<sup>82</sup> Assuming these projections to be substantially correct, by the latter date the island will have a density of a staggering 715 persons per square mile. Table 1, page 76, gives the annual population increase since 1948.

There has been only modest fluctuation in the birth rate since 1900. There have been periods of rise and decline but the changes were

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<sup>81</sup>United Nations, Demographic Yearbook, 1963, p. 155. The first dicennial census of Ceylon was undertaken in 1871. The population then numbered 2,400,380.

<sup>82</sup>United Nations, The Population of Southeast Asia (Including Ceylon), 1958, p. 11.

TABLE 1

POPULATION INCREASE, 1948-1962\*  
(in thousands)

1948	7244
1949	7455
1950	7678
1951	7876
1952	8074
1953	8290
1954	8520
1955	8723
1956	8929
1957	9165
1958	9388
1959	9625
1960	9896
1961	10167
1962	10442

\*Source: United Nations, Demographic Yearbook, 1962, pp. 134-135.

slight. In Ceylon, as in other areas of the world, the rapid increase in population is due largely to better sanitation and more widely distributed health services. Putting it simply -- more people are living longer. The health and sanitation practices begun by the British in 1850 progressed rather slowly until 1939. They were given impetus between 1939 and 1946, and the strides made in the cure and prevention of diseases have been extraordinary.

The [deathrate] decline is sometimes attributed to malaria control by DDT spraying, begun in 1946. The influence of this measure is undoubtedly great, but the contribution of economic prosperity and, flowing from it, of improved sanitation, health services and distribution, should not be forgotten.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>83</sup>N. K. Sarkar, The Demography of Ceylon (Colombo: Government Press, 1957), p. 166.

Population pressure upon the land is a major factor contributing toward communalism in Ceylon. The imbalance between human numbers and economic development threatens to depress what has been to the present time a relatively high standard of living in an Asian country.<sup>84</sup> Communal divisions within a country usually coincide with races, religious groups, and castes. These have a bearing upon Ceylon's social problems certainly. But the root cause of Ceylon's divided communities is more directly attributable to economic causes, especially the competition in securing government positions and official appointments. The elbowing of one another is the manifestation of a struggle for power. The value of "power" was first illustrated by European colonialism, and power has been adopted in a new dimension by Ceylon's plural communities. Those whose name, caste, or economic strata once guaranteed the comforts and amenities of living are now challenged by sociopolitical discontented groups who are seeking new ways and means for gaining prestige and power. The self-centering of the old elite, at the cost of the general welfare, led to the political revolution of 1956 which brought a Leftist coalition into government.<sup>85</sup>

Approximately 70 percent of the population are Sinhalese.<sup>86</sup> Their language is Sinhala although a large number are fluent in English, and they take pride in dating their ancestry to the days of Vijaya. There is both unity and division within the Sinhalese community. The

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<sup>84</sup>The economics of Ceylon are dealt with in Chp. IV.

<sup>85</sup>Details as to the causes and results of this political change are more appropriately a part of Chp. VI.

<sup>86</sup>For the estimated distribution of Ceylon's population see Table 2, page 78.

TABLE 2

ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION  
ACCORDING TO RACE\*

Low Country Sinhalese	48.85%
Kandyan Sinhalese	20.42%
Ceylon Tamils	10.00%
Indian Tamils	12.00%
Moors	6.60%
Burghers	1.00%
Malays	0.41%
Others	0.72%

\*Source: Government of Ceylon, Department of Census, 1963.

unity is for developing those interests which are parochial to the Sinhalese people, but division is the result of political, economic, and security self-interest. Exploitation of one another is most apparent in the power and status struggles, principally where elections to Parliament and local governing bodies are concerned. Very few persons can become members of the administrative organizations. This creates disunity and distrust among those individuals who feel they have an inadequate share of opportunities. Some economic inequalities have always existed between the peasantry and the more sophisticated, but the commercial age produced sub-groupings according to economic pursuits and intracommunity exploitation. Despite the long history of the Sinhalese as rice farmers, today's middleclass look upon those who grow the rice as inferiors notwithstanding the fact that the cultivator class -- Govigama -- is considered the highest caste in Ceylon. Because low-country Sinhalese outnumber the Kandyan by a wide margin, they find themselves in economic and political competition with their counterpart from the Kandy area.

The Kandyan Sinhalese have departed less than the low-country Sinhalese from ancient customs. . . . There are fewer Christians among the Kandyans than among the low-country Sinhalese. Caste organization is still stronger up-country than in the more sophisticated urban communities along the coast. The low-country Sinhalese have been more receptive to industrial, commercial, and social changes than the Kandyans, many of whom look back with regret on the passing of their feudal privileges.<sup>87</sup>

The Tamils too are disunited. The language is Tamil, the religion is Hinduism, there is a common ancestry but here the similarities end. The ancestors of the Ceylon Tamils came to the island centuries ago; the Indian Tamils are rather recent arrivals. Collectively, Tamils make up roughly 22 percent of the total population. The Ceylon Tamil is a respected member of Ceylonese society, recognized for having made many contributions to Ceylon and its people. Mostly the Tamils are concentrated in the North and Eastern provinces -- the Dry Zone -- and since the climate offers limited resources they have, for decades, sought other economic pursuits primarily in government posts for which they were trained by the British.

The Indian Tamil came in a constant stream from India during the days of British control to work the tea, rubber, and coconut estates when the Sinhalese refused to leave their own lands for employment with the British entrepreneurs.

From about 1823 onwards we find the growth of new plantations in this country. First coffee, then tea and rubber became important industries. The local inhabitants of Ceylon did not desire to work in plantations and leave their farms, so the European planter who owned the plantations were compelled to bring people from South India to work in them. This is how the Indian Tamils were brought to Ceylon.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>87</sup>Argus John Tresidder, Ceylon: An Introduction to the "Resplendent Land", p. 31.

<sup>88</sup>I.D.S. and Marguerite I. Weerawardana, Ceylon and Her Citizens (Madras: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 4-5.



But the estate worker migrating from India did so under a catalog of British guarantees such as minimum wages, medical care, and educational facilities. The Ceylon Tamil had no such guarantees. Gradually, he grew more resentful toward the immigrant and began to make political demands of the British government that some type of regulation be instituted. The British could overlook these demands; the autonomous government of Ceylon cannot. Numbering about 975 thousand today, it is primarily the Indian Tamil which is the heart of a national and international controversy, the details of which will be taken up in sequence here.

Among other minority groups, there are the Burghers, Moors, Malays, and the Veddahs. The Burghers are descendents of Portuguese and Dutch colonists who have varying amounts of native blood. In percentage they make up less than one percent of the population, are Christians, have adopted English as the communication media, and show a decided preference for European dress and customs. The Burghers are recognized for their energy and craftsmanship, and for more than two centuries have played significant roles in government. They continue to cling to some official posts, although their hold is becoming increasingly tenuous. And they have made many contributions to law, medicine, and education.

There is a very small group of Malays, less than one-half of one percent, whose ancestors were soldiers under the Dutch and British. Today, they are found mostly in police and security forces. The Moors are of Arab extraction, make up about seven percent of the total population with a religious attachment to Islam. The language is Arabic, however, they are conversant in the predominant language of their resident area, which is mostly the western section and the coast of the Eastern province.

The Arabs have left their mark on Ceylon. During the Middle Ages they carried on much of the foreign trade of the island, and some settled there and took Ceylonese wives. Their descendents, the Moormen, have retained their Moslem religion and form a separate community. They control much of the retail trade, and are scattered throughout Ceylon.<sup>89</sup>

The Veddahs are a vanishing community. They live deep in the jungles of the backward province of Uva. They bear a close resemblance to the pre-Dravidian tribes of southern India and take pride in asserting that their ancestors came to the island when Ceylon was still physically linked with India. In the curious admixture of Ceylon's races, the Veddahs form the most primitive of surviving peoples, lingering on in a world to which they have been unable to adapt themselves. The government takes a special interest in rehabilitating these ill-educated, ill-equipped people, and some progress has been made in assimilating them with the rest of Ceylon's society.

There are very few Chinese on the island, thus there is no problem of the "overseas Chinese" which is found elsewhere throughout South-Southeast Asia. Unofficial estimates place a total of perhaps as few as 200 Chinese currently in Ceylon which includes the wives and children of members of international missions. There are a few Buddhist priests and religious workers from China, and Visit Visas holders issued to visitors to the island for a period not to exceed six months.

Among the Sinhalese and Tamils particularly, communal divisions began occurring midway in the sixteenth century. Small clusters of individuals saw opportunities in casting their lots with the European. The

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<sup>89</sup>Mills, Britain and Ceylon (London, Longmans, Green & Co., 1945), p. 10.

inter- and intra-community gaps widened steadily, the gulf reaching its widest breach during the last months of British rule. The exodus of colonial government set the stage for indigenous competition for political power; there has been no retrogression in the power struggle to the present time.

### Caste

The caste system is still a factor in Ceylon society, but of somewhat lesser importance than perhaps twenty-five years ago. In the ideal structure of the Sinhalese caste system, like that of Hinduism, each person was assigned a position in life by which attention and service were rendered to other members of society.<sup>90</sup> In the social structure of ancient Ceylon

At the top was the royal family; then came the chiefs, priests, and monks, and at the bottom the cultivators and craftsmen. The "middle-class" if any was insignificant. . . . And as time past, with the joint family as the unit of society . . . the caste system was gradually adopted by the rest of society too.<sup>91</sup>

Gradually, changes brought about caste displacement and replacement, with the cultivator being accorded the highest status. The man who tilled the soil belonged then, as now, to the Govigama, the highest grouping within the system. The caste stratification began to lose historical significance and sanction during the British occupation. The crown abolished rajakariya -- a rule compelling people to give free service to the state -- in 1832.

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<sup>90</sup>For a comprehensive study of the caste system in Ceylon see Bryce Ryan, Caste in Modern Ceylon: The Sinhalese System in Transition (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1953). Also, the same author's Sinhalese Village (Coral Gables: Univ. of Miami Press, 1958).

<sup>91</sup>G. C. Mendis, Ceylon. Today and Yesterday, p. 29.

In breaking down this arrangement of cooperative feudalism, it prepared the way for increased efforts in a competitive commercial age and allowed free choice in occupation irrespective of caste or class. New occupations demanded by the plantations and allied fields led to cutting across caste lines in employment opportunities. This eventuated in the rise of a middleclass among Sinhalese society which, with its economic foundation, ignored the traditions of social stratification according to caste.

Bryce Ryan notes that in the past decade the Goyigama claim to the highest caste has been challenged, particularly by the Karavas caste (fisherman). According to Ryan, the challenge is also being made by the Salagamas, (cinnamon peelers). The Karavas claim descent from the Ksatriya warriors who came to Ceylon with the invading Indian kings. The Salagamas claim descent from Brahman ancestry. In both cases, lineage is basis for the challenge.

In view of urbanization and the influence of Western modes, there are now few uncrossable caste lines. The lessening of the importance of social stratification has become more prevalent among the Sinhalese in the low-country districts. In the cities and towns, there is increasing reluctance to acknowledge another's superiority simply on the "higher birth" traditionalism. This is all the more true when the person of higher caste is no better off financially than his social inferior. However, there is also another aspect. Where very close friends and marriage are concerned, caste has retained much of its importance. The same holds true in politics. Candidates for public office are usually of the same caste as the majority of the constituents in a particular electoral district, and politicians dwell upon their caste origins.

Sinhalese vs. Tamil

There are few more potentially explosive social problems anywhere in the world today than that of the Sinhalese-Tamil in Ceylon. It burst forth in savage fury in 1958, quieted, and now rests in an aura of uncertainty. It is a package of exaggerated fears and misunderstandings. Nowhere in the history of ancient or medieval Lanka does one come across the deep gulf now prevalent. Both the Sinhalese and Tamils are striving for cultural identification lost more to the Sinhalese than the Tamil during the European era of Ceylon. The Sinhalese are preoccupied with the idea that the Tamils wish to dominate; the latter, in turn, fully believe that they have been marked for cultural liquidation through laws and other regulations established by the Sinhalese-dominated governments.

The seeds of the conflict are also economic. There were in Ceylon people of Indian extraction prior to European colonialism. With the arrival in droves of the Indian Tamil as plantation workers, the Sinhalese sensitivity of racial, linguistic, religious, and cultural consciousness was awakened. The British, for their part, had no alternative in light of the reluctance of the Sinhalese to work the plantations. The Tamils made a successful bid also for other employment opportunities, especially in coveted government posts and other prestige-connected appointments. During the days of the British occupation, the educational, economic, and political advantages held by the Tamil over the Sinhalese was greatly out of proportion to their numerical minority.

The Sinhalese demonstrated little competitive spirit during the early Tamil emigration. But as greater numbers of the Indian-born arrived,

as the land for support of an increasing Sinhalese population began to shrink, as the economic status between Tamil and Sinhalese widened, discontent gave way to hatred. The British, from time to time, had made concessions to the Sinhalese in something of a half-hearted attempt to ameliorate the dissidents. Hope for a whole catalog of equities was stimulated when the British appointed an ad hoc commission for direct negotiations with the Sinhalese leaders.<sup>92</sup> The matter of the Tamil immigrant was set aside during the war years and until 1948 when the Ceylon Citizenship Act of that year brought matters to a head. The provisions of the Act and its ramifications will be taken up shortly. The problem, then, being economic is concomitantly one of preserving cultural identity. The long decades of subservience created an environment of humiliation for the Sinhalese particularly. Self-government set the course for the Sinhalese community to regain its former status and, in the process, economic and political blows were struck against the Tamils. The Tamil feels his culture is threatened, and without culture as the basis of racial existence he cannot preserve his identity and racial dignity.

#### Citizenship and the "Stateless"

There is in Ceylon a large segment of the Tamil people who are called -- for want of a better term -- the "stateless". Numbering somewhere in the neighborhood of one million persons, these are immigrants from India, yet for political and other reasons are citizens of neither India nor Ceylon. These immigrants fall into two categories: shopkeepers,

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<sup>92</sup>With these negotiations began an international problem between Ceylon and India which at times threatened to disrupt the otherwise cordial relations. Details of this dispute appear in Chp. V.

servants, municipal employees and the like, are in one category; plantation workers are in another. The problem of the stateless relates to the latter, the plantation laborer.

These people were considered by the British as a special class. In 1923, for example, the British established an agency, Controller of Indian Immigrant Labour, to oversee their affairs while in Ceylon. With the end of British rule, the status of the immigrants became internal and external matters of both India and Ceylon. The latter, of course, has the right to decide who will be granted citizenship and who will not; India likewise. And that residue of the population which cannot qualify for citizenship under the laws of either country are, legally, no one's responsibility.

The immigrant problem has political, legal, and economic facets. Politically, it is a question of allegiance to Ceylon. A considerable number of these people refuse to renounce their homeland, India, choose their wives in India, and cling to the cultural attributes which distinguish the Indian Tamil community from the Tamils of Ceylonese extraction. Culturally there are considerable differences. Marriage ceremonies, birth rituals, funeral rites, dress, worship of the gods, are different. Even the Tamil language is not the same. Only a small minority have proficiency in the Tamil language of Ceylon and hardly any can claim a working knowledge of Sinhala. The legal phase involves the satisfying of certain provisions in the Ceylon Citizenship Act which will be taken up shortly. The economic quantum focuses on employment in jobs which, if vacated by the Tamil immigrant, would be filled by either a Sinhalese or a Ceylon Tamil. The return to India would open, then, additional opportunities

for Ceylon citizens, something which is critically needed. The matter involves the future status of a sizable portion of the Tamil population.

The contents of the Indo-Ceylon negotiations will be considered in a later chapter. But in passing here it might be well to mention that a number of attempts have been made between India and Ceylon to affect a settlement as to the disposition of these stateless. On October 10, 1954, Sir John Kotelewala, then Prime Minister of Ceylon, and Jawaharalal Nehru concluded the Delhi Pact setting forth procedures by which the people of Indian origin in Ceylon could opt for citizenship. An inducement plan was first offered in 1954, but it was not until ten years later that the Government of Ceylon proposed something concrete. The scheme was a gratuity payment not to exceed Rs. 1000 (US\$200) per family who had applied for citizenship but had failed to obtain it because of legalities. It was mainly applicable to the plantation workers, but all Tamils who registered with the Indian High Commissioner were also eligible, thus indicating a desire to return to India. However, anyone whose assets exceeded Rs. 5000 (US\$1000) could not qualify for payment. A scale set the amount each person would receive depending upon the age of the individual. The maximum amount of Rs. 1000 would apply, for example, in the case of a man below 45 years of age with a wife and at least three children. Table 3, page 88 gives the amount of payment each person would receive according to the age categories.

If plans had materialized according to the provisions of the Delhi Pact, there would be only two classifications of citizens in Ceylon today: those with automatic citizenship under the Citizenship Act, and those who had declared for citizenship under the Delhi Pact provisions.



TABLE 3

INDUCEMENT SCHEME PAYMENT\*  
PER PERSON

(Maximum Amount Per Family Rs. 1000)

<u>Age</u>	<u>Amount</u>
55 and over	100
54-50	250
49-45	300
44-21	400
Below 20	150

\*Source: Hindu Weekly Review, April 6, 1964, p. 14.

Such however was not to be the case. A third grouping of people have emerged -- those who can not legally claim Ceylon citizenship, but who, nevertheless, give no indication of their intention to return to India. These are the stateless.

Ceylon's Citizenship Act was promulgated on September 21, 1948, and later supplemented with the Indian and Pakistani Residents Citizenship Act of August 5, 1949. Prior to 1948 there was, of course, no citizenship law, inasmuch as all British subjects were enfranchised providing they met the qualifications as set forth by the British. But today in Ceylon, one is a citizen by descent, not by birth. Normally every person inherits the domicile of his parents at the time of his birth. Ceylon differs because

There are in Ceylon . . . persons of recent Indian descent, many of whom regard India (or Pakistan) as their home and who intend to return to that home in due course. In order to sort out those who have an "abiding interest" in Ceylon from those who have not, and at the same time to avoid the complications involved in determining domicile, a substantial period of residence with wife and children

have been prescribed. Since many of those who are in truth "Indian" have children born in Ceylon who eventually return with their parents to India, citizenship is not based upon birth but descent.<sup>93</sup>

Citizenship is granted in the following ways:

Firstly, to those whose ancestors have been in [the] country for a long time (called citizenship by descent; . . . Secondly, . . . to those Indians and Pakistanis who have been in Ceylon for a considerable time and who intend to make Ceylon their country. Thirdly, . . . under certain conditions, to those who are married to Ceylon citizens and resident in Ceylon, because their marriage and residence show their intention to make Ceylon their country. Fourthly, . . . to those foreigners who have given distinguished service to [the] country.<sup>94</sup>

Particularly in the case of people of Indian descent, some proof must be furnished that either the male parent, male grandparent, or paternal great-grandparent were also born on the island. This requires a birth certificate, and here is the hitch. Many persons born on estates find it difficult to obtain their own certificate, since there may have been a long delay in registering the birth, or the certificate may have been lost or destroyed. How much greater then is the task of obtaining those of the male ancestors. There is also the control of illicit entry into Ceylon from India, a matter which has plagued the island for years. The requirement of establishing proof of citizenship by the birth certificate is by no means a fully effective weapon against illicit immigration, but it is an instrument of partial control.

Ceylon has always considered the Indian Tamils as being Indian

<sup>93</sup>Jennings, The Dominion of Ceylon, p. 79. For a comprehensive discussion of Ceylon citizenship see also S. Namasivayam, Parliamentary Government in Ceylon, 1948-1958 (Colombo: K.V.G. De Silva & Son, 1959), pp. 17-22.

<sup>94</sup>T.D.S. Weerawardana and Marguerite I. Weerawardana, Ceylon and Her Citizens, pp. 118-119.

nationals. It was on this premise that the Indian and Pakistani Residents Act was passed and implemented, and under which the people of Indian origin, according to the Kotelewala-Nehru pact of 1954, would opt for citizenship of either country. The process of registration began almost immediately, but dragged along until 1962, since neither country was anxious to fulfill the agreement. Ceylon has accepted 31 thousand people as citizens, has rejected 205 thousand applications; India has granted citizenship to 53 thousand. Ceylon's position is that only those whose applications have been allowed are citizens and that the remainder are Indian nationals. India refuses to accept this argument. There was the basic assumption in the 1954 agreement that those persons whose applications were rejected but who did not apply for Indian citizenship would automatically be granted it by Ceylon at the end of ten years, or in 1964. It was assumed then that only a small number would be in question. In this, practicalities outdistanced assumptions. An official estimate set the number of persons whose status is still in doubt at 975 thousand at the end of 1964.<sup>95</sup>

Since the stateless people are physically in Ceylon, it is obviously Ceylon's problem as to their disposition. Excluding the ethnic phase, they are of little concern to India. Essentially, it is an internal matter, but one which can only be settled through bilateral negotiations. Whatever agreement is reached eventually, there will remain in Ceylon a residue of people in the stateless category for whom some provisions must be made. It is unfortunate that the present state of affairs

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<sup>95</sup>These figures are taken from Prime Minister Bandaranaike's statement in the Senate, Nov. 11, 1964. Quoted in the Ceylon Weekly Times, Nov. 18, 1964, p. 3.

involves many persons who have been in Ceylon for a long period of time and who have contributed to the growth and prosperity of the island. It is an irony that some of the individuals have had no connection with India, many have not set foot upon India's soil, yet are caught in the entangling web of legalities. A new set of proposals<sup>96</sup> brought a glimmer of hope in 1964. But there is no guarantee that a satisfactory solution is in the offing. Legal experts and politicians continue to indulge in polemical and hair-splitting discourses as to whether the people concerned are "stateless", Indian subjects, Ceylon subjects, or for that matter, British subjects. In any case, approximately ten percent of Ceylon's population is involved. While there are the political, economic, and legal points to be considered, there is also the human aspect, the misery and frustration which "statelessness" entails. Meanwhile, the hope of the people continues to linger on based on the proposition that somehow and in some way justice will be done.

#### "Sinhala Only"

The growing animosity between the Sinhalese and Tamils, and the feeling of depression by the latter, hit new heights in 1956. In June, the Ceylon Parliament passed the Official Language Act which declared Sinhala<sup>97</sup> to be the only official language in Ceylon. Thus English, which had been the general communication media without the benefit of law but merely through custom and usage, no longer held its prominent place.

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<sup>96</sup>See Chapter V, pp. 183-185.

<sup>97</sup>Sinhala is peculiar to Ceylon being spoken in no other country. There is no closely related tie to any other language with the exception perhaps of a vague connection with Bengali.

Tamil also, which from time immemorial had been considered something of a national language, no longer was on a par with Sinhala. In agencies of the government, the deadline for implementation was fixed for January 1, 1961, with full implementation in all other areas set for three years later in 1964. The passage of the Language Act was to have enormous consequences, manifested by civil unrest<sup>98</sup> which swept the island for two years.

The Tamils charged that the legislation was an instrument for destroying their culture, a device of humiliation and subordination. This was only part of a much larger picture. It placed the Tamils at a distinct disadvantage. Under the law, all Tamils who held government posts were faced with dismissal unless they could attain a proficiency in Sinhala. Further, the number of public service appointments which heretofore had been open to them would be decreased substantially, and the chances of promotion greatly lessened. It produced an enormous sense of frustration among the Tamil youths particularly in the Jaffna area since here had long been the geographical source of Tamil appointments to government positions. Of the total population in 1956 (8.9 million) some six million Sinhalese were considered fluent in Sinhala while the number of Tamils conversant in the language was extremely small. Those who had the most to lose were the Tamils.

The adoption of Sinhala as the official language was an attempt to solidify the common efforts of the Sinhalese community, and an attempt to efface the remnants of the European era. But the politics of language was also the language of politics. The elevating of Sinhala was an

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<sup>98</sup>See below.

emotional issue raised by the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (Peoples United Front) political party in its successful bid in the 1956 general elections. Upon taking office, the M.E.P. coalition made it priority legislation. It was argued that because the Sinhalese people comprised the vast majority of the population it was only right that Sinhala be made the official language.

Despite the pro-Sinhalese argument, protests arose on many sides. The mercantile community was unhappy that the heads of departments would be forced to correspond in Sinhala; work stoppages became prevalent in industry, and waves of student demonstrations protested the plan. In May-June, 1957, riots swept some quarters of Ceylon. The seriousness of this dissent was disclosed when the Prime Minister told the House of Parliament "that 159 people lost their lives in the Tamil-Sinhalese riots between May 26 and June 26."<sup>99</sup> But all of this was only a prelude to the terrorism which befell Ceylon a year later.

Sinhala became the official language for all of Ceylon on January 1, 1964. The Prime Minister, Madame Sirimavo Bandaranaike, marked the occasion by attending an all-night Buddhist ceremony in Independence Hall while in the Tamil areas the occasion was observed as a day of mourning.<sup>100</sup> The government did make a last-minute minor concession to officials in

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<sup>99</sup>Overseas Hindustan Times, July 17, 1957, p. 4.

<sup>100</sup>For Buddhists and many Hindus, January 1st is not the beginning of the new year in Ceylon. The new year during 1964 began April 4. In Ceylon, January 1, 1964 was known as the "Day of the Switchover". Not only did Sinhala become the official language replacing English, but also all import and distribution of petroleum products became the monopoly of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation, all insurance business was nationalized, and the People's Vigilance Movement was inaugurated.

the technical, scientific, and professional service by exempting them from the language requirements, but emphasized that in the matter of promotions, preference would be given to those persons proficient in the Sinhala language.

This matter of the language has produced a division of gargantuan proportion between the Sinhalese and Tamils. It has been responsible for terror and brutalities, hatreds and fears, and no one can predict where, how, or when the end will come. For more than seven years the Tamils have held hope that the government would relent and find some manner and means by which to solve the issue at a much lesser cost to the minority people; but these hopes are receding rapidly. The Tamils continue to maintain that the object of the legislation is aimed primarily at destroying their culture by deemphasizing the Tamil language. Obviously, where there is no need for it in public administration, commerce, or education, the Tamil language would be of little value. But the fear that the Tamil language will be driven out of the Tamil provinces appears to be unfounded. It is virtually impossible to supplant one language with another in a compact linguistic community. The years of dominance of the English language in the British Isles have done nothing to obliterate the Welsh, Scotch, and Irish languages; in Ceylon, the more than the century and a half of English political domination and English language has done nothing to kill Sinhala.

Adoption of Sinhala as the national language would appear, at first, to appeal strongly to national sentiment, but this was only partially true. Implementation of the Act also produced a division within the Sinhalese community itself. The rupture here occurred between the

upper middleclass English-educated and lower middleclass Sinhalese-educated. Thus, the former are as much a victim, temporarily at least, as are the Tamils. The upper middleclass have for decades subordinated Sinhala to English. The Act demands that the learning process begin anew; the language which gradually fell from usage among families and kin must now be returned to its former status. An internal problem within the Sinhalese community is thus created and, again, it is a matter of status. Among many people, independence really made little change insofar as status was concerned. The Sinhala-educated people remained socially inferior, counting very little in the economic and political spheres.

The Tamils seem unable to grasp the fact that the Language Act makes victims of the English-educated Sinhalese as much as it does the Tamils. The Act is, then, a movement of the Sinhala-educated Sinhalese of the lower middleclass against the English-educated Sinhalese of the upper middleclass. The Buddhists of Ceylon have been vocal in their demands for Sinhala as the national language. Their role in the controversy has been directed against the English-educated, but indirectly it is also a movement against Christianity in Ceylon, specifically the Roman Catholic Church.

#### A Time of Terror

As political independence had drawn near for Asian countries, Asian philosophers had cautioned that the people faced an enormous task in building their societies. They had warned that the human mind most generally seeks out political, economic, social, and religious self-interest, thus dictating man's behavior according to the degree which



the parochialism best serves the individual. Communalisms, said the sages, begin as swiftly moving subterranean currents among the people, undertows which must be stilled in order to prevent them from later surfacing and bursting forth in torrents of discords and hates. Nationalism demanded tolerance of and for all races, castes, and creeds.

If the people of Ceylon had listened with a more attentive ear to these promptings, then perhaps the blood bath of May-June, 1958, would never have happened. As it was, this infinitesimal period of time in the island's history was a remarkable record of man's inhumanity to man. Hundreds of people -- no one will ever be sure of the exact number -- were either fatally or seriously injured. Men, women, children, clerics, merchants, and government officials, all were caught in the terror which swept Ceylon. The property toll was enormous. Sinhalese and Tamils clashed in a savagery which left ugly sores still not completely healed.

In the political campaign of 1956, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and his coalition party, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (M.E.P.) had championed the cause of "Sinhala Only". During the campaign, the party also promised the Kandyan peasants that Indian Tamils would be driven off the estates thereby providing more employment opportunities for the Ceylonese. The M.E.P. swept the general election<sup>101</sup> except in the predominantly Tamil area where the Federal Party, which represents Tamil interests, led by S.J.V. Chelvanayakam captured ten seats in the lower house of Parliament. The enactment of the Sinhala Only Act came just two months after the M.E.P. took over the government. The passage of the bill triggered the

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<sup>101</sup>Sixty seats were at stake. The M.E.P. won 51.

first incident of race-hatred when Sinhalese clashed with Tamil in the Gal Oya Valley, on the eastern side of Ceylon. Other racial violence continued in scattered parts of Ceylon during the following year.

In June, 1957, the Federal Party threatened a civil disobedience campaign planned for August. Bandaranaike appealed to the party leaders to refrain from plunging the country into the chaos which would result. On June 13th the Federal Party MPs walked out of Parliament when the Governor General read the Throne Speech in Sinhalese and English but not in Tamil. The threatened satyagraha was narrowly averted when the Prime Minister made a half-hearted concession by promising reasonable use of the Tamil language, but he ruled out equal status with Sinhala. Bandaranaike said that while making Sinhalese the official language, he would "give due recognition to the Tamil language for all practical purposes, with the sole exception of this sentimental attachment to the idea of parity."<sup>102</sup> At the same time, he assured the Sinhalese community that Sinhala would remain the official language of Ceylon. Chelvanayakam accepted the "reasonable use" agreement for the Federal Party. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Lands and Land Development had proposed the resettlement of roughly 400 Tamil families in the Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura districts. Many of the older Sinhalese families had always considered this area as traditionally Sinhalese and, furious over the resettlement plan, lost no time in venting their feelings upon Tamils already in the district. Sinhalese laborers organized themselves into a striking force to prevent implementation of the plan. The government dropped the proposal.

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<sup>102</sup>Overseas Hindustan Times, July 17, 1957, p. 4.

On April 9, 1958, Bandaranaike made a radio broadcast in which he announced abrogation of the pact he had made with Tamil leaders relative to the use of the Tamil language. Tamil leaders called for a non-violent civil disobedience campaign. Within a few days, the Public Service Workers' Trade Union Federation and the Ceylon Trade Union Federation called strikes for more political rights and a decrease in the cost of living. It was estimated that more than 125 thousand workers were idled. Troops and armed police patrolled the streets of Colombo. While all this was going on, race-hatreds were in evidence elsewhere in Ceylon.

The racial situation was completely out of control by late May, 1958. Terror struck in Colombo where demonstrators tossed homemade bombs, smashed shop windows, and stoned passing vehicles. The terror swept northward to Jaffna. At Polonnaruwa, "a crowd -- nearly a thousand strong -- invaded the premises of the Polonnaruwa railway station. They assaulted everybody in sight, including Sinhalese travelers and railway officials, and damaged a good deal of railway property."<sup>103</sup> And in Polonnaruwa,

The Tamil labourers in the Polonnaruwa sugar-cane plantation fled when they saw the enemy approaching and hid in the sugar-cane bushes. The goondas wasted no time. They set the sugar-cane alight and flushed out the Tamils. As they came out screaming, men, women, and children were cut down with homemade swords, grass cutting knives . . . or pulped under heavy clubs.<sup>104</sup>

Looting and killing on a massive scale took place in Pettah, Ratmalana, Kurunegala, Kalutara, Galle, and Matera; from one end of the island to the other.

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<sup>103</sup>Tarzie Vittachi, Emergency '58: The Story of the Ceylon Race Riots (London: Andre Deutsch, 1958), p. 36.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., p. 40.

Blood was all the goondas wanted. In the chaos . . . it was almost impossible for anybody to keep a count of who had been injured, who had been lynched, and what had been burnt -- so swiftly did the goondas move from area to area, and so ruthlessly did they set about their tasks of destruction. . . . Men, women, and children were pulled out of their homes -- wailing and screaming for mercy -- and beaten, more often than not, to death. Houses were set ablaze and law officers were powerless.<sup>105</sup>

Shortly after noon on May 27 the government declared a state of emergency. At 2:00 p.m. the Prime Minister delivered the following message to the people of Ceylon:

This morning the Cabinet further considered the deteriorating situation in the country and the increasing lawlessness and violence. Under the circumstances, the Cabinet has invited the Governor-General to proclaim a state of emergency under the Public Security Ordinance. I have also advised His Excellency to bring into operation immediately the necessary regulations under this ordinance.<sup>106</sup>

The proclamation meant the suspension of civil authority enabling the military to handle law and order. There was a dusk-to-dawn curfew, meetings and processions were banned, and censorship of the press. The Federal Party and the Jatika Vimukti Peramuna, a recently formed organization of Sinhalese membership, were banned as both represented the extreme in the conflict.

The decision to declare the state of emergency had been made reluctantly, apparently, as up to the very moment of the proclamation the Prime Minister had seemingly ignored the civil strife and brutalities. Despite the rampaging, looting, raping, and killing, Bandaranaike had done nothing to stem the tide. Early on the morning of the 27th a group of prominent citizens had called at Rosemead Place, the official residence,

<sup>105</sup>Ibid., p. 53.

<sup>106</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, May 29, 1958, p. 15.

begging him to take the necessary steps. The chief-of-government is supposed to have replied that many of the stories being told were merely exaggerations and that the situation did not require a state of emergency. "His supplicants later said they were appalled at the insouciance with which the Prime Minister appeared to be taking the mass murders, looting and lawlessness which had broken out everywhere in Ceylon."<sup>107</sup> At mid-morning, Governor-General Goonetilleke had gone to Rosemead to add his voice to the several demanding that some action be taken. Perhaps Bandaranaike was overconfident that Buddhism would prove to be the stabilizing factor. He had stated on a number of occasions that the solution to the Sinhalese-Tamil problem lay in invoking the principles and tenets of Buddhism -- the Middle Path -- while reminding his audiences that not only was he the Prime Minister but a Buddhist Prime Minister; and that from the tenets of Buddhism would come communal harmony, brotherhood, and national unity.

On May 29th, a government spokesman said that the situation was well in hand and that the military authorities would have law and order throughout the island within a few days. There were a few other skirmishes which were quickly put down. June 2 was the first day of complete quiet throughout Ceylon since the communal disturbances had begun some two years before. The people of the Jaffna district in the Northern province were asked to surrender their licensed and unlicensed firearms or face heavy penalties. The leaders of the Federal Party and the Jatika Vimukti Peramuna were placed under house detention on June 5 and released

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<sup>107</sup>Vittachi, Emergency '58, p. 54.

on September 4. On September 6, the government again permitted political meetings. But the state of emergency remained, and was indefinitely extended on September 25. It was not revoked until March 13, 1959.

#### An Appraisal

Today, six years after the rioting of 1958, the lack of national solidarity is still the most acute problem in Ceylon. In all areas -- racial, linguistic, religious, economic -- there is much greater interest shown in the piling up of allegations of one group against the other than there is in attempting programs of cooperation. A sense of social purpose is nowhere to be found, because of the racial-linguistic strife generated over the past years. The urgency for reaching an understanding on these social problems stands heavily underlined, not so much on the need simply to accord equality and justice to the minority groups, but more so from the standpoint of ensuring an efficient and purposeful functioning of the whole society as a productive mechanism.

Since 1956 there has been very little effort made by a Sinhalese oriented government to find ways which would enable the Tamil people to consider themselves equal partners in a great common endeavor to build a united Ceylon. The overwhelming numerical majority makes the Sinhalese a powerful factor in the political structure. Unfortunately this power has been used, on several occasions, injudiciously, in a discriminatory way against the minority groups, especially the Tamil community. If, in being powerful, one group denies another certain rights because of race or language, then it follows logically that other rights -- religion, caste, locality or some other yet undiscovered distinction -- may also be denied

eventually. This prospect is the very heart of the racial issue. Political misadventures, oriented to favor the Sinhalese, have taken a toll by dissipating the energies of society. In a domestic country such as Ceylon is attempting to build, the recognition and toleration of diversities is certainly more important now than at any time in its long history.

The long decades of coercive subservience to a foreign power were lived in an environment of humiliation especially for the Sinhalese. Commercialization, brought about through Western self-interests, changed the social relationship from one of collaboration among the communities to one of competition. This change was not an overnight phenomena; it was the product of decades, even centuries. Today, a return of effortful cooperation will require a long period of time. No single community anywhere in the world has a monopoly on wisdom. In Ceylon, Sinhalese and Tamils alike have made exceptional contributions to the society of the island. The Tamils accept their position as a minority group. Their demand is only that their culture be guarded and that mechanisms in directing cultural particularisms and attainments be preserved.

The question as to what brought about the intense violence of the civil disturbances has never been fully and concisely answered. The Sinhalese blamed the Tamils; the Tamils accused the Sinhalese, and right-wing elements in the government saw the events engineered by Moscow through local agents, the Marxists. But the answer, partially at least, lies far removed from any simple propositions. Economic challenge by the majority against the minority -- and vice versa -- triggered the open warfare. The government's plan for relocating Tamil families appeared as a permanent allocation of economic resources in areas considered by the Sinhalese to

be traditionally Sinhalese. Added to this were the demands by the Kandyan peasantry for the removal from the island of the people of Indian origin in order that vacancies thus created in employment might be filled by Kandyan Sinhalese. On the Tamil side, the Official Language Act was considered as only the first step in the loss of cultural identification. The demands made by the government insofar as mandatory language proficiency in a number of job areas placed the Tamil in an unfair competitive position. In summary, on both sides there was the fear of being elbowed out of employment and future security. And on both sides, there was the prospect of loss of potential living space and resources which both require to care for their increasing human numbers.

Yet, it is the language dispute which transcends all other issues dividing the Sinhalese and Tamil. And in this matter, both are guilty of myopic, uncompromising attitudes. It is true that the Tamils are justified, perhaps, in their bitter resentment over the government's policy. A language is, of course, a mode of communication, but it is more. It is a means of national identity, a repository of cultural history, a symbol of aspirations. Where diverse groups intermingle, it is a vehicle of communication by which a better understanding among the peoples may be had. The Tamils must be given the assurance that requiring a proficiency in Sinhala is not intended as a means of sacrificing their individuality and culture. They must receive a guarantee that the use of Tamil within a broad, well-defined area not only will be permitted but even encouraged. At the same time, it appears only fair that, should the Indian Tamils desire to remain in Ceylon, they give some indication of a readiness to break down separatist barriers and attempt to identify themselves with



the indigenous population by better communication.

A delaying game in finding a solution to Ceylon's racial problem is disaster ridden. Race distinction and race antagonism is very much of a reality. Whatever hope there may have been at the time of political independence for nationalism proved disappointing as cultural identities lost themselves in racialism. Whether or not there will be a gradual mutation into a national consciousness, no one can foretell. Nationalism depends almost entirely on the people themselves. The unity of a nationalism has many advantages, but it also has a major disadvantage insofar that it demands some degree of depersonalization of social groupings. In this respect and in the large picture of society about all which remains is a personal bond to some impersonal entity called the "government", and specific communities very often become abstractions. If, then, the sought-for nationalism is finally to be attained, both majority and minorities must take a scrupulous appraisal of the total contributions which can be made by all communities in the society. And general acceptance of the ideas -- and ideals -- which underline each segment must be looked upon as the guardian of the country's moral and political progress.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE POLITICS OF RESOURCES

In January, 1964, the New York Times gave the following assessment of Ceylon's economy: "Despite a record tea crop, the economic outlook for this island nation remains bleak. Unemployment runs high, dwindling prices have cut tea profits, and foreign investment is still lagging."<sup>108</sup> Another source noted that "the Ceylonese Government of Premier Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike . . . is facing growing pressure to set the island's chaotic economy right."<sup>109</sup> Nothing had changed to brighten the picture as the year grew to a close. Economic clouds have hung over Ceylon since about 1954. Nothing on the horizon indicates their dispersion in the near future.

This economic condition is in contrast to that prevalent at the time of political autonomy. The country had prospered during the war.

One country alone [in Asia] was better off than before the war, Ceylon. Her national income was in 1947 nearly half as much again as in 1938, while her population had gone up only one-sixth. Rice production doubled; the fish catch was nearly trebled. Government expenditure multiplied four times and still the budget was balanced.<sup>110</sup>

The economy was sustained during Korea by virtue of demands made upon crude

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<sup>108</sup>The New York Times, Western edition, Jan. 21, 1964, p. R3.

<sup>109</sup>The Asian Student, Jan. 18, 1964, p. 5.

<sup>110</sup>Maurice Zinkin, Asia and the West (London: Chatto and Windus, 1951), p. 217.

rubber production. Traditionally, Ceylon has always depended upon exports to finance the importation of many manufactured goods and roughly 50 percent of food supplies. Until about 1954, this system had worked well. The average Ceylonese had enjoyed a living standard appreciably higher than most Asians.

When Ceylon had become politically independent in 1948, the people exuded enormous pride in the new status. Concomitantly, they were seized with a forceful determination to have for themselves all of the luxuries of life. The facts of colonial commercialism had made the Ceylonese a resentful people. Decade after decade, they had watched the foreigners mobilize in commanding fashion the island's resources and, with equal aplomb, amass material wealth. As the land had produced more and more, there was the hope that the increased productivity would reap some benefit for the dependent people. But the increases had been taken from them, and with the taking had died their hopes. It left a trail of frustration and bitterness. In view of the prosperity during the early days of independence, it appeared to the people highly unrealistic that they should delay the fulfillment of economic wants.

Ceylon went on a buying spree in 1954. There were virtually no import controls and luxury goods flooded the markets and shops. This policy, begun under the United National Party, was supplemented in 1956 with a wide range of social welfare legislation under a successor government, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP), the People's United Front. Among other things, it gave the people one of the best public health programs to be found anywhere in Asia, free education for all, and subsidies galore, even subsidization of rice, the basic food. Like a child who,

having been denied sweets for a long period of time, is certain to become ill when offered all he can eat, Ceylon was headed for economic ills. Yet, even to suggest an austerity program would have meant political suicide for the party in power. The national economy went from bad to worse forcing Ceylon to make radical readjustment in 1960. The government curtailed imports, increased tariffs and taxes, discouraged foreign travel to conserve foreign exchange, and initiated a stepped-up drive for state control of production and distribution. The severe restrictions on imports, in order to stem the outflow of foreign exchange, have had a depressing effect on the internal commercial life. Unemployment stands at a record high. And for political reasons, the government has been unable to curtail its expenditures on food subsidies and welfare services.

#### Estates and Agriculture

The history of Ceylon estates begins with cinnamon. The British took over this Dutch monopoly concurrent with political rule in 1796. It was the mainstay of revenue temporarily, but the amount of taxes collected in the feudal economy was extremely small, resulting in annual financial deficits in the operation of the colony. Cinnamon was made the principal export item to European markets under a policy of restricted sales, in order to assure demand over supply and, consequently, a higher price. Cassia, a lesser quality cinnamon, from southern China and Southeast Asia gradually made its way into trade channels as a competitive product to the Ceylon cinnamon. The latter, although excelling in quality, eventually lost its markets, despite the government's reduction of the London import duty. Ceylon cinnamon as the principal export gave up the ghost

in 1833. European investors sold their plantations to Ceylonese, turning their attention to coffee.

The initial attempt at coffee cultivation was made in the Kandyan mountains in the 1820s. Although only partially successful in the early years, the venture attracted British investors who reaped a windfall of profits between 1837 and 1845. There was a downturn in 1847, then gradually a slow recovery by 1853. Meanwhile, agitation was growing among the planters for a new transportation method for hauling the increasing shipments of coffee beans from the inland area to the port of Colombo. The existing mode of transport, the cattle-drawn cart, could scarcely meet the challenge. The Ceylon Railway Company was formed in England in 1845; the first engine landed in Ceylon in January, 1864. The line from Colombo to Kandy, the heart of the coffee industry, was completed on April 25, 1867. The rail lines to other parts of the island were taken in stages. By 1878, some "275 thousand acres of coffee were under cultivation."<sup>111</sup> A coffee blight appeared in 1868 and by 1882 had swept the whole planting area with almost every coffee tree destroyed. A few planters managed to survive but coffee cultivation in Ceylon was doomed. Coffee growing had enormous consequences for Ceylon.

Coffee was the key-signature marking the transition from old to new Ceylon, and not constitutional and legislative enactments. The new tune to which planters, government, and the populace adjusted their steps was coffee and "the unexampled prosperity" (to use the stock phrase of those times) it brought to all those associated with it. Not only the European planter who owned most of the plantations benefited; coffee sent money downwards from the hills into the Western and Southern provinces. It brought into being practically everything associated with modern Ceylon -- its characteristic economy, its changed social structure, its altered landscape and

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<sup>111</sup>Mills, Ceylon Under British Rule, p. 59.

even its political development. Coffee means little or nothing to present-day Ceylon dependent for the bulk of its revenue on tea, rubber, and coconuts, but there is nothing these products have brought about in Ceylon's economy which coffee had not set up before.<sup>112</sup>

Despite the fluctuations in Ceylon's colonial economy due to a single principal item of export, the ingenuity of British entrepreneurs had permanently turned the financial tide in the 1850s. Small quantities of other agricultural commodities and cottage products were shipped to Europe and elsewhere within the British Empire so that "from 1855 onwards there was an expanding revenue and a growing annual surplus. Ceylon became one of the wealthiest and most prosperous of the Crown colonies."<sup>113</sup>

Where coffee had acted as an economic bridge with the abandonment of the cinnamon trade, cinchona bark assumed that role between coffee and tea. For five years to 1883, cinchona exports to Europe increased rapidly until they collided with Dutch export of the commodity from Java. A market glut pushed prices downward until cultivation was finally abandoned in preference to what had been, to this time at least, supplementary crops: tea, rubber and coconuts.

The tea bush can rightly be called Ceylon's Tree of Life. The economic fortune of the island depends heavily upon the earnings from tea and the ancillary trades allied with the industry, packing, transport, storage, and insurance. A small tea estate had been established in the high country about 1845.<sup>114</sup> Little interest had been shown in cultivating

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<sup>112</sup>Ludowyk, The Story of Ceylon, p. 190.

<sup>113</sup>Mills, Ceylon Under British Rule, p. 47.

<sup>114</sup>The Botanical Gardens of Ceylon are supposed to have received the first tea seeds from China in 1824, and later from Assam in 1839.

the crop for commercial purposes, as long as coffee together with cinchona, were profitable items in international trade. With the coffee-plant blight and Dutch competition in cinchona, by 1887 emphasis was given to tea cultivation. By the early 1900s, small individually owned estates had been absorbed within corporate structures, financed and operated by London concerns. To people in many parts of the world, Ceylon and tea are synonymous as are Ceylon tea and Thomas Lipton. The story of Lipton, his initial venture in tea, and the growth of his estates in Ceylon are beyond the scope of this work. Any one interested in this phase of Ceylon's tea industry, or in the man himself, will find The Lipton Story by the renowned British author Alec Waugh a rewarding literary experience.<sup>115</sup>

During 1963 and 1964, a precarious situation was developing in Ceylon's tea industry despite the all-time highs in production. Soil conservation, the use of better fertilizers, replanting of high yield varieties, and intensive cultivation, all have contributed to record yields. Production for the year 1964 promises to be somewhere in the area of 490 million pounds. A comparative figure of thirty years ago (1934) was 224.7 million pounds attesting to the enormous growth of the tea industry. The Table on page 111 gives production and acreage under tea for the period 1957 to 1964.

The somewhat uncertain future of the industry is centered in circumstances over which Ceylon has little or no control. Just as production has been on the increase in Ceylon, tea crops in other parts of

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<sup>115</sup>Alec Waugh, The Lipton Story (London: Cassell & Co., 1951).

TABLE 4

## TEA PRODUCTION AND ACREAGE\*

Year	Production (million lbs.)	Acreage (thousands)
1957	397.8	570.5
1958	413.1	572
1959	413	577
1960	434.7	581.8
1961	455.2	587.4
1962	467	591.1
1963	484.6	587.4
1964	490 (1)	592

\*Source: Compiled from Ceylon Weekly Times, and International Financial News Survey.

(1) estimated.

the world have been increasing also. A major question facing the whole tea industry is whether or not world markets will be able to absorb the larger volumes of production. India is the world's largest producer of tea and its crop largely determines the level of world output. It is estimated that India will have an annual production of one billion pounds by 1970. There is no evidence available which leads one to suppose that world consumption can keep pace with increasing production.

In Great Britain, tea consumption is in a race with coffee and other beverages. It imported 176.8 million pounds in 1962; in 1963, there was a drop of 3 million pounds. Tea circles in Ceylon are increasingly



concerned about the flight of technical experts to East Africa for the rapidly developing tea gardens in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika. East Africa is almost certain to become a major competitor in the world market. The main factors for the departure of some personnel of the Tea Research Institute<sup>116</sup> were the attractive terms offered East African plantation proprietors. By comparison, the Ceylon plantation owners are subjected to high taxation, exchange restrictions, increasingly powerful labor unions, and ever increasing operating costs. A part of the uncertainty for the outlook of the tea industry is of the government's own making. It has suggested an acreage tax of Rs. 60 per acre on all estates of one hundred acres or over, instead of the ad valorem tax which has been applied only to sales which have brought Rs. 1/85 a pound.<sup>117</sup> This gives a decided advantage to the estate whose products demand high prices but might well annihilate the production of the low-grown variety which averages below Rs. 1/55. The margin of profit of most of these estates, after the payment of the direct export tax is now less than Cts. -/15 per pound.<sup>118</sup>

Ceylon's rubber industry, like that of tea, has much the same unhealthy glow. The market has changed considerably since the boom years of the Korean War, and through expansion of synthetic production by the industrialized countries.

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<sup>116</sup>The Institute, which continues to do much in the way of improving the commodity, was established in 1925.

<sup>117</sup>Rs. 1/85, in Ceylon currency is one rupee, 85 Ceylon cents. It should be kept in mind the rate of exchange in U.S. currency is approximately 5 rupees = U.S. \$1.05. Therefore, Rs. 1/85 equals approximately US 37 cents.

<sup>118</sup>Roughly US 3 cents per pound profit.

Prior to the Second World War natural rubber producers dismissed the test tube material as a bogey, and their attention was confined chiefly to balancing supply and demand. The extraordinary demand for rubber during the Second World War, however, led to far reaching changes. Within a few years a formidable synthetic rubber industry was brought into existence, and in the post-war period synthetic competition has assumed menacing proportions. The plantation indigo industry in India was killed by the development of synthetic dyes, and in some quarters there [has been] considerable concern whether the same fate will befall the natural rubber industry.<sup>119</sup>

Ceylon was the birthplace of the rubber industry in the East.

Rubber was first grown in 1876 from seeds imported from Brazil, planted in England, then taken to Ceylon as young plants. Its position as a principal crop came very slowly. Difficulties in cultivation were considerable due primarily to incorrect methods. Research undertaken by the Agriculture Department in the Botanic Gardens eventually was rewarded and the commodity was perfected for a number of usages. The developing automobile industry in the United States and the introduction of the motor vehicle in Ceylon in 1902 added impetus to production. The United States, during this period, "normally required 72 percent of the annual world output."<sup>120</sup> Ceylon was a principal supplier. In 1922, the Stevenson Commission was established in London especially to handle rubber exports from the Crown colonies. It contrived a quota system; the intent being to assure Great Britain of a high-demand, high-price market. But the system was to have a dire effect. Limiting as it did the exports of natural rubber, world buyers turned to other sellers particularly Dutch enterprises in Southeast Asia. "By 1927, Britain's share of world production had decreased to 52 percent while the Hollanders had increased their

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<sup>119</sup>Ceylon, Central Bank of Ceylon, Bulletin (Colombo: Dept. of Economic Research, August, 1964), p. 13.

<sup>120</sup>Mills, Britain and Ceylon, p. 66.

portion of the market from 25.5 percent to 40 percent."<sup>121</sup> The importance of rubber during the two world wars, the reconstruction periods, and the Korean conflict hardly needs mentioning.

The industry has been in a recession since 1961, causing a great deal of concern in Ceylon as both state revenue and the producers are vitally affected. There was a flurry of activity in the sheet market in October, 1963, as speculators took advantage of the tensions created over the Malaysian issue; it is still too early to gauge the world effect of the stepped-up war in Vietnam. The Central Bank of Ceylon in a recent issue of its monthly publication, the Bulletin, struck an optimistic note, however, in forecasting increasing future world demands of natural rubber. Said the Bulletin,

The demand forecast . . . is based on estimate of growth in G.N.P. and industrial production in consuming countries. This increased demand has been considered sufficient to absorb the augmented output of natural rubber from the areas being replanted or newly planted. Some of the big manufacturing companies . . . also appear to place considerable reliance upon the future for natural rubber as they are themselves undertaking new rubber plantings in Africa, South America, the Philippines and Southeast Asia.<sup>122</sup>

Thus, prospects are brighter but still the question remains as to the permanency of the technical advantage of natural rubber, and the price which consumers will agree to pay vis-a-vis the advantages and price of the synthetic products. The real issue then is whether or not the rubber producers can recover cost and earn a reasonable profit.

Currently there is some reseeded taking place. However, old and uneconomic rubber lands are being devoted to alternative crops, such as

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<sup>121</sup>Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>122</sup>Bank of Ceylon, Bulletin, p. 13.

cocoa, coconut, coffee, and tea. The foreign exchange earned from rubber is vital to Ceylon. But equally important is the increase in the number of unemployed should the Ceylon rubber industry fail to meet the production cost-ceiling price onslaught of the synthetic. The following Table gives the rubber acreage and production for the years 1957 to 1964.

TABLE 5  
RUBBER ACREAGE AND PRODUCTION, 1957-1964\*

Year	Acres	Production ( '000 tons)
1957	660,725	109.7
1958	664,836	112.0
1959	668,000	102.5
1960	668,948	108.7
1961	670,830	107.4
1962	674,274	102.4
1963	675,683	103
1964	669,179	109.8

\*Sources: Weekly Times, July 29, 1964, p. 3, and Ceylon Chamber of Commerce correspondence August, 1965.

The coconut is the island's third largest money crop and a native of Ceylon. Tea and rubber were transplants to the island, but the nut-bearing palm trees have always grown there, and in such abundance as to take care of the needs of the people besides millions of nuts for extensive export. There was a record harvest in 1964 of roughly 3.15 billion

coconuts or about 40 thousand tons. "The coconut is the friend, the fetish, and the universal provider of the Sinhalese. In it are contained all the seeds of humanity, they affirm, besides as many uses as there are days in the year."<sup>123</sup> The coconut gives food and drink, rope, fences, matting, firewood, oil, and "beauty for even a poor man's yard."<sup>124</sup>

The record 1964 crop was the result of modern cultivation methods, liberal use of fertilizers, and favorable weather conditions. But production figures can sometimes be misleading. For the past few years there has been a downward trend in the prices of coconut products on the world market. There is also considerable attention being given to a much needed program of rehabilitating those growing areas currently afflicted with soil deterioration. The nut-bearing palm trees are owned almost exclusively by Sinhalese in a multiplicity of small holdings, the number of which greatly outdistance similar ownership in tea and rubber lands. If the coconut industry continues to deteriorate, it will be the small producer who will lose the most as he lacks the financial resources and, in many instances, technical know-how.

The Ministry of Agriculture adopted a program in mid-1963 for the expenditure of Rs. 7 million chiefly for fertilizers on a subsidized basis. Some progress has been made in replanting, however, the pace requires acceleration with special attention to repairing the soil. The government subsidy allows fifty percent on the purchase of the fertilizers and, in the case of small producers, the individual's share of the cost

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<sup>123</sup>Corner, Paradise of Adam, p. 162.

<sup>124</sup>Tresidder, Ceylon: An Introduction to the Resplendent Land, p. 145.

may be loaned by the People's Bank, canalized through the Cooperatives, to be repaid in produce installments after 18 months. The rehabilitation program is a long range project.

At the rate of 50 million more nuts to provide for Ceylon's explosive population increase, at least there will be little to fear for ten years. By that time most of [the] replanting areas which should be at least 250,000 acres (25,000 acres are replanted per annum according to present plans) or one-fourth of the total acreage of one million acres, should be nearing full production too.<sup>125</sup>

The current acreage of coconuts is 1.1 million acres. There has been a certain amount of new planting, but no accurate information is available as to whether or not the goal stated above has been reached. The following Table gives the coconut production for the years 1958 to 1964.

TABLE 6

## COCONUT PRODUCTION, 1958-1964

Year	Production (million nuts)
1958	2201
1959	2491
1960	2362
1961	2796
1962	2993
1963	2704
1964	3148

\*Source: Letter from Coconut Research Institute, Ceylon, July 1, 1965.

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<sup>125</sup>Statement by M.L.M. Salgado, Director of Coconut Research Institute of Ceylon in Ceylon Weekly Times, September 4, 1963.

In 1854, the British author Sir Samuel W. Baker wrote the following concerning rice production in Ceylon:

The chief article of native consumption, "rice", should be an export from Ceylon; but there has been an unaccountable neglect on the part of the government regarding the production of this important grain, for the supply of which Ceylon is mainly dependent upon its importation.<sup>126</sup>

If Sir Samuel had written these words more than a century later, his statement would still be partially correct; that portion concerning the "unaccountable neglect of the government" would not apply. Ceylon is still a major importer of rice. Baker noted that "in the . . . general resources of Ceylon, the cultivation of rice [had] scarcely been deemed worthy of notice."<sup>127</sup> The British of course had emphasized expansion of estates rather than enlarging acreage for food supply. N. K. Sarkar has compiled the Table on page 119 pertaining to the expansion of estates vis-a-vis rice cultivation during the British period. The comparative years until 1921 vary slightly, however, Sarkar points out that, "considering the rise in population, rice cultivation [had] been a decaying industry."<sup>128</sup> The population between 1901 and 1946 had increased by some three million people, yet the comparative acreage for the cultivation of rice was substantially less.

Since earliest times, the economy of Ceylon was based upon rice production. Vast intricate artificial irrigation systems were an old and familiar part of the scenery predating 1505. Water from the mountain tops

<sup>126</sup>Sir Samuel W. Baker, Eight Years Wanderings in Ceylon (Chicago: Belford, Clarke & Co., 1854), p. 63.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid.

<sup>128</sup>Sarkar, The Demography of Ceylon, p. 211.

TABLE 7

## ESTATE EXPANSION, 1857-1946\*

Year	Acres Under Estates ( '000)	Acres Under Rice Cultivation ( '000)
1857	81	600
1871	196	564
1881	321	604
1891	334	650
1901	460	670
1911	975	678
1921	1,093	798
1946	1,500	621

\*Source: Sarkar, The Demography of Ceylon, pp. 210-211.

was canalized into "tanks" for storage until required for the rice.

The foundation of the ancient system of rice cultivation was based on the irrigation works and great care and attention was paid to water conservation. The system of irrigation and water conservation was constructed in such a way that the topography and the climate of the country was fully utilized for the purpose. The cap of the dense forest at higher altitudes received the heavy monsoon rains, which then flowed down the slopes, often in underground streams, and were stored in tanks for the purpose of irrigation. . . . The plantations struck at this vital link of the system, destroyed most of the forests, altered the climate and rainfall and created a difficult problem from soil erosion and the silting up of irrigation tanks, canals and rivers.<sup>129</sup>

Lanka's rulers looked to a food supply grown by the people themselves.

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<sup>129</sup>Ibid., p. 213.



The whole society was organized on that basis and the system of land tenure depended upon it. Hill streams were tapped and their water guided into the giant storage-tanks below, some of them four thousand acres in extent, and from these, channels ran to other large tanks farther from the hills, and from them to others still more remote. And below each great tank and each great channel were hundreds of little tanks, each the nucleus of a village; all, in the long-run, fed from the wet mountain zone.<sup>130</sup>

The philosophy concerning the tanks was that "none of the rain which fell in such abundance in the mountains should reach the sea without paying tribute to man on the way."<sup>131</sup> The tanks and the irrigation system were perhaps among the greatest achievements of ancient Lanka's peoples. A comparable system was to be found nowhere else in the world, not even in India. There is a bit of a historical mystery here since no trace of mathematic formulas or any instruments have been found, yet, it is somewhat inconceivable the methods used could have been transmitted orally. In any case, the system demonstrated an extraordinarily high degree of technical ability. Even in this seventh decade of the twentieth century it would be considered a major undertaking.

Much has been done by the Government of Ceylon to increase the yields of the paddy lands. It enacted the Paddy Lands Act in 1958 giving security of tenure to the tenant-cultivator and supplied other incentives for increased yields. A rice cultivator's Cooperative was established, subsidized fertilizer to the extent of 50 percent, guaranteed the price at Rs. 12 per bushel, and established an island-wide machinery for providing rural credit. The Crop Insurance Act of 1961 gave legal sanction to an insurance scheme of protection against drought, floods, plant disease,

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<sup>130</sup>Still, The Jungle Tide, pp. 76-77.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., 74.

and the like. The dividends which the additional time, money, and efforts have brought can be determined from the increase in production as illustrated by the Table below.

TABLE 8  
RICE PRODUCTION 1956-1962\*  
(\*000 of tons)

Year	Tons
1956	631
1957	717
1958	840
1959	838
1960	986
1961	986
1962	1,102

\*Source: United Nations, Statistical Yearbook, 1963, p. 124.  
Equivalent of metric tons. 1 metric ton = 1.1 ton approx.

Elsewhere in the agricultural sector, Ceylon has a long way to go toward increased efficiency in production. A new undertaking which could reap great benefit is the land allocation policy for jobless youths. Under a State subsidized colonization scheme, the Ministry of Land, Irrigation, and Power has made available several thousand acres of jungle land suitable for cultivation purposes for a limited number of crops. The initial projects were begun in Galle, 72 miles south of Colombo, and in Kalutara, 40 miles south of the capital. The maximum for each person is

two acres. Each receives subsidy for clearing a tract, free planting materials and fertilizers, technical assistance, and an allowance, in the form of monthly wages, for a specified period of six to twelve months. Suggested crops are those which will produce a return within six months such as Plantain (banana), yam, and cereals. Assistance is also given to encourage poultry and livestock raising. The products are channeled into government and privately operated markets for local consumption. Hopefully this plan will make possible fewer foodstuff imports with a consequent saving in foreign exchange.

A good example of the chaotic state of Ceylon's agricultural undertakings is the case of sugar production. It is an essential food with annual consumption of approximately 150 thousand tons. Production has amounted to only two percent of the requirement. Only 82 hundred acres have been devoted to sugar cane since 1952. There are additional thousands of acres available for cultivation and the government has poured millions of rupees into the erecting of two modern mills. Yet, sugar production in Ceylon is ridiculously small. The United Nations Statistical Yearbook, 1963 gives the following production figures in thousands of tons: 1960, 3.3; 1961, 4.4; 1962, 11.0.<sup>132</sup> A huge portion of foreign exchange could be saved through increased production for domestic consumption. Sugar cane production and refining are handled by the Sri Lanka Sugar Corporation, a government enterprise.

The Co-operative movement has not been altogether a happy one. Co-op Societies increased spectacularly during the war and shortly there-

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<sup>132</sup>United Nations, Statistical Yearbook, 1963, p. 230.

after. Gradually they became patrons of the government assuming the roles of distributors rather than emphasizing production. They have the appearance of being more interested with profit motives rather than as instruments of self-help for national regeneration. The Co-op Societies are the arteries of rural development movements. The latter have been plagued by the absence of a clear concept to guide and unify common efforts. There has been little coordination between the village organizations, and the government has not provided adequately trained personnel and field training so that available facilities might be used more effectively. The vacillation in national policies has been due mainly to political rivalries, especially between those in charge and the lesser figures at the local level. The government has simply failed to provide either the inspiration or the tools by which the food supplies could be substantially increased. Still, the government continues its food subsidies policy, an expenditure which has averaged roughly Rs. 100 million (US\$20 million) annually. The everwidening subsidies program is depriving the country of urgently needed resources for capital investment.

### Industry

Development in Ceylon, as in other emerging countries, stems from the preoccupation with industrialization, population growth, inability of an agricultural economy to absorb the increase, and the premise that the well-being of the people is the responsibility of government. Especially since 1956, the government has become more and more deeply entrenched in influencing and directing investment and production in industrial development. It has never tried to hide the ultimate goal -- a socialist state.

A nine-point program for economic growth was drafted in 1954 which, in summary, contained the following:

- 1) promotion of small scale enterprises
- 2) encouragement of foreign investments in large scale undertakings
- 3) government assistance to all sizes of industries
- 4) directional control of capital movements
- 5) government participation in private enterprises
- 6) re-drafting of industrial legislation
- 7) acceleration of industrial research
- 8) coordination of training facilities
- 9) standarization of industrial products.

The plan had no chance of success. Ceylon simply did not have all of the financial requisites nor the organization or management skills for proper implementation. A series of supplemental proposals espoused tighter state control over the private sector while bidding the central government to follow a course of expanding its control over the four factors of production: land, labor, capital, and entrepreneur.

Economic development in Ceylon got off to a shaky start for several reasons. First, industrializing rapidly in order to gain some parity with Western institutions was unachievable but, unfortunately, went unrecognized. The Ceylonese set out upon a course of using Western methods without apparently giving thought to the necessity of adapting the importations to suit the indigenous environment. The Ceylonese had long been observers of British financial and management policies, but there is a difference between participant and observer. The people demanded immediate

maximum gains, refusing to accept the premise that short term results were not, in themselves, all of the thrust needed for continuing development over the long haul. As economic conditions worsened, the people, disappointed and frustrated, made increasing demands upon government for guarantees of well-being and future security. The last of these -- well-being and future security -- was conceived to be paramount in importance from the standpoint of political expediency.

The "well-being and future security" of the people dictated broad social welfare schemes which predestined the growth of government power in all sectors of the economy. To the proponents of the laissez-faire philosophy, the argument that government is the proper directing force for industrial development is unpalatable. Still, a government's position, is well summed in the general observation made by Margaret Mead:

If extensive intervention by government has made it possible for such countries as Sweden, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, West Germany, and the United Kingdom to maintain an optimum standard of living, then government appears to be the appropriate instrument for benevolent economic change; the welfare of the people is thought of as inextricably related to the activities of government and the focus is on the nation -- which has a government -- as the appropriate unit in developing the means of improving the well-being of a people.<sup>133</sup>

From 1956 Ceylon's economy has slowly moved into crisis and chaos. Mr. Maithripala Senanayake, Minister of Rural and Industrial Development, during a speech in the House of Representatives in August, 1964, said "there was no need to despair and there was no need to heed the prophets of despair in regards to Ceylon's industrial development."<sup>134</sup> The Bank

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<sup>133</sup>Margaret Mead, "The Underdeveloped and The Overdeveloped", Foreign Affairs (Vol. 41, No. 1, October, 1962), pp. 83-84.

<sup>134</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, August 12, 1964, p. 3.

of Ceylon took a dimmer view. It noted that the foreign exchange crisis was gradually worsening, imports were exceeding exports, unemployment stood at an all-time high, increasing public debt threatened to accelerate the process of inflation, and there was an unprecedented increase in the price of essential consumer items.<sup>135</sup>

The government meanwhile has been moving full-speed toward corporate state structure for a number of enterprises, about which more will be said presently. Regarding private enterprise, the government has never precisely defined the limits of the private sector in the industrial sphere. Directives issued to guide this end of the economy have been stop-gap measures, arbitrarily decreed by some ministry. Private enterprise has become a formidable target particularly in the matter of taxation and is always faced with the threat of expropriation. Taxation and other restrictions negate the development of industry under conditions which are conducive to long term growth. The Weekly Times said, that "a repeated complaint has been that the tax burden is already so heavy that it is in fact killing private enterprise."<sup>136</sup> The press elaborated by offering as an example a privately owned company whose earnings during 1963, "amounted to Rs. 11 $\frac{1}{4}$  lakhs; of this the amount paid in income and dividend taxes to Government totalled over Rs. 8 lakhs, compared with only about Rs. 3 lakhs left over for the 1,125 shareholders."<sup>137</sup> Industrial development usually takes place in an environment of low taxation

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<sup>135</sup>Ceylon Observer, Nov. 29, 1964, p. 8.

<sup>136</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Dec. 25, 1963, p. 7.

<sup>137</sup>Ibid. A lakh = 100,000.

and few restrictions. Development in Ceylon is faced with the extremes from the other end. Government policies have the appearance of a shrewd, slow-but-sure liquidation of the private sector. It would be misleading to leave the impression that Ceylon is not expanding the industrial sector. On the contrary, the opposite is true. But, what is being done is taking place almost entirely through state ownership and operation. And the expansion of private industry falls mostly within the Ceylonization policy. In the private sector all applications for starting a new industry, regardless of size or potential, must be approved by an Industries Acceptance Commission. This Commission is composed of the Director of the Development Division, Director of Rural Development and Cottage Crafts, and the Controller of Imports and Exports. It has broad powers to establish saturation points among private enterprises in order to control the growth of the private sector. It also has the power to decide whether or not a particular entrepreneur should be allowed to establish a business, or whether an existing enterprise should be allowed to expand.

Ceylonization aims to discourage non-Ceylonese from entering or continuing in private or joint ownership of enterprises. In companies, the majority of directors must be nationals and, in almost all cases, employment must be confined to Ceylonese except in special circumstances where approval of non-national labor may be obtained from the appropriate government agency. There have been instances where even Ceylon citizens not possessing Sinhalese names have been asked to prove citizenship, and especially in instances where lineage is Ceylon Tamil, Arab, or Malay. Late in January, 1963, the government approved legislation which banned the sale of land to non-nationals, a move aimed at preventing non-Ceylonese



from buying tea and rubber estates. Toward the end of that year the Controller of Imports and Exports issued notices that only registered Ceylonese traders would be permitted to import textiles. Gradually, the list was expanded to include several dozen items, and complete Ceylonization of trade was to become effective on January 1, 1965.

This policy affected Ceylonese and non-Ceylonese alike, although greater hardship to the latter as Ceylon nationals could be gradually absorbed into those businesses taken over by the State or by Ceylonese entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, there were a number of Ceylonese added to the unemployment role as the Ceylonization policy forced off the island a number of foreign employers. Particularly hard hit were the Indian merchants. An estimated eight thousand were engaged in the import, wholesale, and retail trade of textiles, subsidiary foodstuffs and pharmaceuticals, pawn-broking, money lending, and small provision shops in the provinces. The Throne Speech of July, 1964, placed the deadline of January 1 on all Indian business activity in Ceylon. Merchants were permitted to take out of the country a maximum of only Rs. 250 thousand of their assets, with the balance allowed to be withdrawn in annual installments of Rs. 25,000. As a result, the Indian government is faced with the problem of providing special facilities for the displaced Indians. In addition, it must find ways and means of aiding rehabilitation of the merchants through tax exemptions and other economic increments. Appeals to the Ceylon government for reconsideration of the policy went unheeded. As 1964 drew to a close, a large number of Indian entrepreneurs had closed up shop.

Total Ceylonization of all trade is scheduled during 1965-1966.

According to government and trade circles, this policy and the establishment of the State Trading Corporation will save about Rs. 15 million (US\$3 million) in foreign exchange each year. It is much too early to make a guess as to the effect of Ceylonization upon labor. Replacements in any number of commercial areas are not as easy as sometimes appear on the surface. A nation of shopkeepers cannot be created overnight.<sup>138</sup>

Whether or not the government is correct in its Ceylonization program obviously cannot be answered now. Some pain inflicted during the transition period to the socialist state may, in the end, result in greater good for a larger number of people. It is of course necessary that if a public corporation is to do the job, something more than merely a legal structure is required. Persons in authority must have the confidence of the people, a reputation among the public which is unimpeachable. This confidence and unimpeachable reputation are apparently lacking in some government agencies in Ceylon. The outgoing chairman of the Ceylon Merchants Chamber said,

It is also becoming increasingly obvious now that most of the State Corporations are running at a loss. These corporations for the greater part are run by inexperienced men and are quite often riddled with corruption. Millions of rupees belonging to the tax payer are poured into these corporations and this would appear to be nobody's business.<sup>139</sup>

However bleak Ceylon's industrialization process appears to be in light of all the foregoing, there are a number of government policies which have gone far in starting the island on the transition from an

<sup>138</sup>Burma adopted a similar policy toward Indian entrepreneurs in May, 1964, forcing them to leave Burma. See The Hindu Weekly Review, May 18, June 8, and July 20, 1964.

<sup>139</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Sept. 11, 1963, p. 2.

agricultural to an industrialized economy. A few examples deserve mention here.

Several aids to small industries became effective in 1961. The intent was to facilitate the development of cottage and other small-scale undertakings. Government loans to individual craftsmen were raised, and credit limits to private industrial workshops were increased. Concessions were made to new private industries which accepted some state participation in operation and/or product distribution, and which began production before March 31, 1963. These received a corporate income tax exemption over a five-year period which also applied to dividends paid investors, adjustments in tariffs, protection through import controls, land for factories, loans, technical advice, state marketing, and government patronage.

Ceylon's first industrial estate is rising on a 70-acre tract on the outskirts of Colombo. Developed according to a three-stage plan, some 40 manufacturing units are in operation turning out a variety of consumer items from carbon paper, suitcases, and wire nails to kerosene cookers, cables, and mirrors. Items such as these heretofore have been imported. It is said that altogether some 975 new enterprises representing capital investment of Rs. 92 million have begun operations in Ceylon during the past two years. The locally produced consumer items it is estimated, will save millions of rupees in foreign exchange each year.

Although the waters surrounding the island hold a variety of seafoods, Ceylon must import roughly Rs. 800 million (US\$1.6 million) in fish and fish products annually. The government took over the importation and distribution in 1961, and instigated a modernization program. The traditional method of fishing off Ceylon's shores was by the theppan,

a few logs tied together and powered by a triangular sail. The theppan is giving way to mechanized craft. Ice plants for storage and fisheries harbors have been completed or are under construction at a cost of millions in rupees. Fish catches have substantially increased and if all goes well the day is not far off when the island's fishermen will be netting all the fish Ceylon requires for domestic consumption.

By the end of 1964 the following had come under control of state corporations: steel, engineering, rubber tire production, insurance, banking, harbors operations, a few estates, and the petroleum industry, cement and ceramics, leather products, chemicals, textiles, sugar, and imports.

### Trade

Higher expectations of comfort, increased capital requirements for economic development, an unprecedented rise in world market prices of imported goods particularly foodstuffs -- all have contributed to Ceylon's expansion of imports. At the same time, prices of tea, rubber, and coconut products have been in a downward spiral. Ceylon's foreign assets have been at a critically low level since 1960.<sup>140</sup> In that year, Ceylon managed to reduce its trade deficit by some Rs. 123 million through an increase in exports, a substantial decrease in imports, and stringent measures governing travel abroad.

The basic Ceylonese foreign exchange quota for tourist travel, which was previously [Rs. 4,200] for a period of four years and was granted for travel to most foreign countries, was withdrawn on September 1, 1960. In the future, any person leaving Ceylon will have to make an

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<sup>140</sup>See Table 9, page 135.

application for foreign exchange, and each application is to be treated on its merits only.<sup>141</sup>

Another provision denied Ceylonese who had traveled abroad during the preceding five years any further foreign exchange for future travel. This policy was still effective in 1964. The legislation was aimed primarily at those who wished to travel out of the country on vacation, however, other restrictions limited travel of students and persons visiting other countries on business. In each case, the individual application is subject to the approval of the Controller of Exchange.

The importing of diamonds, soap, and crude sugar was virtually banned beginning in January, 1961, and from the same date the importation of textile material is no longer permitted except on individual license. Importers were requested by the government to cancel all outstanding orders. The import of foreign automobiles was strictly controlled. The following year another 47 items were transferred to individual licensing from the open general license list among which were such items as electric lamps and lamp shades, paper, and cheese. And a general ban was placed on the importation of 22 different items. A new regulation prohibited nonresident firms and persons from sending out of the country any proceeds from sales of movable or immovable property in Ceylon.

Imports of all merchandise in 1962 fell by about Rs. 43 million over 1961, and were Rs. 300 million less than in 1960 when import controls were first applied. Ceylon ended 1962 with a surplus in its balance of trade of Rs. 148 million as opposed to a surplus of only Rs. 30

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<sup>141</sup>International Monetary Fund, International Financial News Survey, October 7, 1960, p. 356.

million in 1961 and a deficit of Rs. 128 million in 1960.<sup>142</sup>

In November of 1963, the Ceylon government moved to Ceylonize its import trade. The Ministry of Industries and Commerce submitted a scheme restricting such trade to nationals only, and increasing the quota allocations to Ceylonese traders while correspondingly reducing the quotas of the non-Ceylonese merchants. It might be well to again mention the requirements for classification of a Ceylonese trader under the Ceylonization program. To qualify, a trader must be a Ceylon national by descent or registration, and all of his work force must be Ceylonese nationals. The major investment in the firm must be owned by Ceylon nationals. The firm's directors or partners must be Ceylonese.

Concurrently with this trade policy, the Ministries of Industries and Commerce suggested a State Trading Corporation which was finally approved by Parliament in August, 1964. Under the legislation, the Minister of Internal and External Trade and Supply, is authorized to deal in imports, exports, and distribution of such commodities as milk foods, textiles, fertilizers, cement, drugs, and pharmaceuticals. It is merely a matter of time until the list will be lengthened considerably. The feasibility of a State Trading Corporation was based upon a number of arguments which, in summary, were

- 1) that the Ceylonese business community did not possess sufficient financial resources nor sufficient experience,
- 2) to prevent malpractices by unscrupulous importers such as the overloading of invoices,

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<sup>142</sup>See Table 9, page 135.

- 3) to prevent remittances of profits and dividends out of Ceylon,
- 4) that trade agreements with other countries could be more effectively fulfilled.

The private sector mercantile group, those most directly affected, refused any of these premises. There were charges that private enterprise was being liquidated. There is no question that the State Trading Corporation, and other government corporations, are encroaching into the private sector, nevertheless there is also hardly any doubt that government corporations are in Ceylon to stay.

It is estimated that the trade deficit for 1964 would be in the neighborhood of Rs. 98.7 million. This is in comparison with a surplus of Rs. 240.7 million in 1963. Again, the costs of most essential imports vis-a-vis the decrease in world market prices for Ceylon's principal exports is reflected here. Table 9, page 135 supplies data with regard to Ceylon's external assets, import-export volume, and balance-of-trade between 1957 and 1964.

Ceylon's number one trading partner among Asian countries is China, a relationship which can be summed up in three words: rice for rubber. Ceylon accorded recognition to the Communist government of China in 1950, but delayed diplomatic recognition until 1956 due to political pressure brought by the United States upon the rightist United National Party which held the reins of government.<sup>143</sup>

In 1952, there were indications of an impending downward trend in rubber market prices. Peking made overtures to Colombo agreeing to

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<sup>143</sup>The political relations between Ceylon and China will be taken up fully in the next chapter.

TABLE 9

**EXTERNAL ASSETS, IMPORTS & EXPORTS VOLUME  
AND BALANCE OF TRADE 1956-1964\***  
(Millions of Rupees)

Year	External Assets	Imports	Exports	Balance of Trade
1957	1,061.9	1,804	1,682	- 122
1958	933.2	1,717	1,711	- 6
1959	734.0	2,005	1,754	- 251
1960	541.3	1,960	1,832	- 128
1961	531.7	1,703	1,733	+ 30
1962	503.9	1,660	1,808	+ 148
1963	462.3	1,500	1,730	+ 230
1964	324.5	1,974	1,875	- 99

\*Source: 1956-1962, United Nations, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, July, 1963; Ceylon Observer, Nov. 29, 1964, p. 8.

the purchase of a considerable amount at prices well above those prevailing on the world market. Over objections by the United States, a five-year agreement covering 1953-1957 was signed on December 18, 1952. It provided for an annual barter of 50 thousand tons of rubber for 270 thousand tons of rice. The pact stimulated trade between the two countries from less than US\$1 million in 1950 to approximately US\$95 million in 1953. It leveled off to an average of US\$55 million for 1955-1957.

China, in 1956, undertook an expansion of trade with Ceylon by offering a variety of manufactured goods to progressively liquidate debts to Ceylon incurred under the rice-rubber barter agreement. "China's debt



. . . to Ceylon [was] considerable reaching . . . US\$37.8 million in 1957.<sup>144</sup> A new five-year agreement was signed September 19, 1957 which, in addition to rice and rubber, involved other commodities including iron and steel. Concurrently, China granted Ceylon Rs. 75 million in economic assistance to be utilized over a five year period primarily for the rehabilitation of rubber plantations. The 1957 agreement provided for a minimum of US\$20 million in trade both ways. Two years later

In accordance with the provisions of the "Trade and Payment Agreement between the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of Ceylon" concluded on the 19th September 1957 between the two Governments, representatives of the Government of the People's Republic of China and the Government of Ceylon, after negotiations conducted in Colombo, have signed the "Protocol Relating to the Exchange of Commodities between China and Ceylon in 1959", as well as the contracts for the purchase of [33,000] tons of rubber by the Government of the People's Republic of China from the Government of Ceylon and for the purchase of [253,000] tons of rice by the Government of Ceylon from the Government of the People's Republic of China for 1959.<sup>145</sup>

The volumes for 1960 dropped somewhat with 22 thousand tons of rubber being exchanged for 160 thousand tons of rice. The following year Ceylon exported to Mainland China 34 thousand tons of sheet rubber and received 200 thousand tons of rice. "A renewal of the rice-rubber agreement between Ceylon and China (Mainland) provides for Ceylon to import 200 thousand tons of rice from China in 1964, and to supply in return 35 thousand tons of rubber."<sup>146</sup> Another trade protocol signed in 1963 at Hong Kong provided for an exchange of other commodities in the amount of approxi-

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<sup>144</sup>Shao Chuan Leng, "Communist China's Economic Relations with Southeast Asia", Far Eastern Survey, Vol. XXVIII, No. 1 (Jan. 1959), p. 7.

<sup>145</sup>Embassy of Ceylon, Newsletter, July 6, 1959.

<sup>146</sup>International Monetary Fund, International Financial News Survey, January 10, 1964.

mately Rs. 100 million.

China entered the Ceylon tea auctions on a large scale in 1964 purchasing amounts of 50 thousand pounds. There is indication that it will continue its activity in the Ceylon tea market for some time. But the type of tea purchased led to some speculation as to its disposition. "The Chinese buying of (black) medium tea -- as against green tea consumed by her people -- lent support to the belief in tea trade quarters . . . that it was intended for sale to countries with whom she had bilateral trade connections."<sup>147</sup>

India and Ceylon renew their bilateral trade agreements on a year to year basis with the commodities holding fairly close to traditional lines. India supplies dried fish, tamarind fruit, unrefined sugar, and hand-loomed products; Ceylon exports mainly rubber, copra, and coconut oil. The framework for Indo-Ceylon trade is a general agreement finalized in 1961 with an annual value of approximately Rs. 55 million both ways.

On February 8, 1958, Ceylon concluded its first trade pact with the U.S.S.R., while expanding its trade with other Eastern European countries that same year. Two-way trade is under a general license to Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Rumania. Incidentally, the same open general license agreement is also applicable to China and the U.S.S.R.

Today, oil is the base of Russo-Ceylon trade.

Ceylon, in 1964, agreed to buy 610 thousand tons of petroleum

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<sup>147</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Oct. 14, 1964, p. 9.

products in addition to the 250 thousand tons bought annually under a five-year contract signed December 15, 1961. Ceylon's oil requirement is estimated at one million tons, 60 percent for internal consumption and the balance for bunkering ships. The oil trade pact is part of a larger story which has to do with the expropriation of Anglo-American oil refining and distribution facilities in Ceylon. The details are more appropriate in Ceylon's relations with the United States and hence forms a portion of the next chapter. Here, however, it should be mentioned that the U.S.S.R. oil pact, the formation of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), the expropriation of Anglo-American properties, and stoppage of United States aid and assistance to Ceylon were all intimately connected events.

The CPC was established by an act of the Ceylon Parliament in May, 1961. A two-fold purpose prompted the formation. The Ceylonization policy was gathering momentum, and the new corporation would save a large amount in foreign exchange. It would permit the government to buy petroleum from the U.S.S.R., Rumania, and the United Arab Republic at lower prices than those offered by the Anglo-American companies which held the monopoly on petroleum distribution. Early in 1962 the first shipment of Soviet oil arrived in Ceylon. Additional legislation gave the CPC a monopoly of importation and domestic distribution.

The U.S.S.R. has become Ceylon's major oil supplier. There is no doubt as to a considerable expansion of general trade. A fair estimate is Rs. 300 million in trade turnover by 1967, compared to a few years ago when the figure stood at about Rs. 20 million. The U.S.S.R. has agreed to increase its agricultural imports from Ceylon during 1965-1966. Ceylon

and India have largely replaced China as the tea supplier for the Soviet Union. In September, 1963, the U.S.S.R. withdrew from the Colombo tea auctions for two months then resumed its purchases. During 1963 and 1964 the tea volume was approximately six million pounds each year. This is expected to increase indicating that tea perhaps will be the main purchase item among other goods such as leather footwear, shirts, towels, and other industrial consumer products included in a trade agreement of September, 1964. The Soviet Union will export to Ceylon various types of machines and equipment, cement, cotton piece-goods and, of course, petroleum products.

Trade talks with Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia have brought contracts for purchases of products from Ceylon's developing industries with gradual volume expansion both ways. Aid to Ceylon has been promised by supplying equipment to industries on the basis that any excess production of such industries would be purchased by the East European countries. Negotiations have begun for setting up a petroleum refining and fertilizer plant. The Italian State oil agency, Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi (ENI) and Technoexport of Czechoslovakia have submitted offers, the latter acting for that country's Kralovopolska Chemical Plant Fabrication Works. The Ceylonese have high hopes of having their own refining installation sometime during 1967. As to whether or not oil deposits exist must await a future day until a complete geological survey is completed. A start on such an undertaking was made in the early 1900s by one Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, but his efforts were centered on a comparatively minute area. Since his death, no survey of any consequence has been undertaken. There is a mineral export company, the Mineral Sands Corporation, govern-

ment operated and established in 1957. Its chief export is graphite, however the volume is infinitesimal. Only very recently the corporation is showing some promise through shipments of ilmenite to Europe and Japan. Even a small volume of mineral exports would help, of course, in diversifying the export trade of tea, rubber, and coconut products.

Trade with the United States was begun in the mid-1800s when the British exported Ceylon's three main agricultural products. The trade grew slowly through World War I, then suffered a sharp reversal as the U.S. Congress placed sweeping restrictions on imports from a number of countries. In 1918, the United States bought 11 million pounds of tea, 25 thousand tons of rubber, and 20 million pounds of dessicated coconut. Currently Ceylon enjoys a substantially favorable balance of trade with the United States which is the second-best tea customer outside the Communist world, the United Kingdom holding the number one spot. An expansion of general trade has been hampered by controls and restrictions imposed by Ceylon during the past three years, but equally so the market has been curtailed by the United States because of U.S. prices, credit terms, and shipping costs. A third factor here is the competition, especially from the Commonwealth countries which enjoy preferential customs rates. The international climate between the two countries which was precipitated by Ceylon's expropriation of the American oil properties has made only little change in trade relations. Throughout the negotiations attendant to the compensation for the expropriated installations the matter of decreasing trade was nowhere discussed. What the future holds in this regard must await another day.

### Planning

The increasing number of people who must be housed, clothed, and fed, for whom jobs must be found, the transition of an agricultural to an industrial economy, the increased demands for goods of all types, these things make economic planning for Ceylon of crucial importance.

By definition, planning means the exercise of rational, deliberate, and continuous efforts channeled in specific directions to further the process of economic development. Ceylon inaugurated its economic development program in June, 1959, when the National Planning Council presented the Ten-Year Plan<sup>148</sup> to the Parliament. The 500-page detailed document aimed at "providing for the first time a comprehensive Plan of development for the Ceylon economy covering both the public and private sectors."<sup>149</sup> It was the product of three years of intensive study and research by a 13-member National Planning Council in cooperation with an eight member Planning Secretariat, assisted by United Nations and Colombo Plan consultants.<sup>150</sup> The Council Chairman was the then Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. As stated by the government, the purpose of the Ten-Year Plan was, in general

To meet the needs of the people. These are food, clothing, and shelter; health and education; work and leisure. It aims to provide for

<sup>148</sup>Ceylon, National Planning Council, The Ten-Year Plan (Colombo: Government Press, 1959).

<sup>149</sup>Ibid., p. iii.

<sup>150</sup>The Planning Council also had the assistance of a number of economists who visited Ceylon at the Council's invitation. They were: John K. Galbraith, J.R. Hicks, Ursula K. Hicks, Nicholas Kaldor, Oskar Lange, Gunnar Myrdal, and Joan Robinson. All contributed to Papers by Visiting Economists, published by the Planning Secretariat, 1959.

schools, hospitals, and houses. It must try to make sure there are enough jobs -- be they for peasant or labourer, factory worker, nurse, teacher, manager or civil servant -- so that the people may earn incomes and so provide for their daily needs and for the enjoyment of leisure. It seeks first that all shall be able to do this. It seeks next to provide for an increase in the level of their standards of living.<sup>151</sup>

The Council stressed the Plan provided

A focal point around which the efforts of the nation should henceforth be centered. It is therefore of the greatest importance that the Plan [should] become the subject of nationwide discussion. . . . Informed criticism and comment, and suggestions concerning both the Plan itself and its implementation would be of particular value.<sup>152</sup>

The Ceylonese hardly needed such invitation. The Plan was greeted by the public with mixed emotions. It was termed by some a document of faith, hope, and promise; by others, a masterpiece of induced optimism; by still others as not worth considering seriously because such an extraordinarily ambitious undertaking was doomed in advance. Be that as it may, the Ten-Year Plan was a significant attempt by the National Planning Council to find ways of solving the economic problems.

A longer than usual period -- ten years as opposed to three or five years -- was chosen since the Plan proposed to bring about a shift in the nature of the economy. With its agrarian base, it prepared the way for rapid industrialization in the 1970s. A major shift from land employment to the factory was not anticipated immediately. It recognized that much remained to be done from the agrarian standpoint of employment and output, and it incorporated a vigorous program for small scale and cottage industries. It was the intention of the Plan to expand on the

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<sup>151</sup>Ceylon, Government Information Department, Ceylon News-Letter (Colombo: Government Press, July 6, 1959).

<sup>152</sup>The Ten-Year Plan, p. 1.

already existing large-scale industries and slowly to provide new ones wherever possible. The total investment over the ten years, 1959-1968, was estimated at Rs. 13.601 billion of which Rs. 4,470 represented increased annual domestic production. It envisaged that by the end of the Plan period some 1.39 million additional persons would be employed. Table 10 presents in summary the gross investment, production increase in value, and estimated increase in employment.

TABLE 10

THE TEN-YEAR PLAN

## Gross Investment, Increase in Production and Increase in Employment

Industry	Total Planned spending on investment (1959-1968)	Increased Annual Domestic Production - 1968	Additional people employed by 1958
	(Rs.M)	(Rs.M)	('000)
Tea	507	317	158
Rubber	411	115	6
Coconut	315	127	14
Other Agriculture	1,877	1,095	258
Fisheries (excl. fisheries harbours)	223	142	13
Industry	2,714	910	237
Electricity	826	100	3
Transport & Communications	1,941	208	54
Construction	325	589	211
Housing	2,725	145	-
Public Adm. (incl. health & education)	1,026	231	109
Other Services	711	491	327
	13,601	4,470	1,390

Source: Compiled from Ceylon News-Letter, July 6, 1959, and The Ten-Year Plan, Colombo, 1959.



It was intended that by 1968,

Each year 100 million more pounds of tea will be produced, almost two and a half times as much paddy, three times as much new land will be opened up, five times as much fish . . . 123,000 more houses being built, six times more electricity and twelve times as much cement.<sup>153</sup>

In 1962, the Minister of Finance presented, along with his Budget Speech, a draft of a short-term implementation policy covering a three-year period. It was officially called The Short-Term Implementation Programme.<sup>154</sup> Its objective was to reexamine the realities of Ceylon's economic condition in light of changes and "to examine past policies critically, [lay] bare the weaknesses, where they exist, and [expound] the measures required to strengthen the economy and prepare the way for a better future."<sup>155</sup> The Prime Minister said that "the prospect before us is far from rosy though certainly not one of defeatism,"<sup>156</sup> and that what Ceylon was launching was "a struggle for [the] very survival as a free community."<sup>157</sup> Another program, the third, was presented covering fiscal 1964-1965.<sup>158</sup> The implementation plans dealt mainly with unemployment and underemployment, diversification of the economy with less dependence upon the three major export crops, an equitable distribution of national income, and stabilization of price levels. The general economic develop-

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<sup>153</sup>Ceylon News-Letter, July 6, 1959.

<sup>154</sup>Ceylon, Department of National Planning, The Short-Term Implementation Programme (Colombo: Government Press, 1962).

<sup>155</sup>Ibid., Foreword

<sup>156</sup>Ibid.

<sup>157</sup>Ibid.

<sup>158</sup>Ceylon, Department of National Planning, The Development Programme 1964-65 (Colombo: Government Press, 1964).

ment program of Ceylon is a Plan operating within a Plan within a Plan.

The end of the ten-year program is still a few years away. At the mid-way point prospects for fulfillment of the goals are anything but bright. The economic problems are not intractable and much can happen by 1968. The current crisis arises from what the government has done, and has not done, and what the people themselves have done, and have not done.

In the face of steadily declining external assets, the government has attempted to supplement revenue by a patchwork of taxation measures. Taxes have sapped the strength of industry for expansion and the wage earner of his purchasing power. The following list of taxes were applicable to a considerable portion of the population in 1963: sales tax, wealth tax, National Development Tax, income tax, profits tax, personal tax, rice subsidy tax, land tax, estate duties, stamps, and fees for the registration of businesses and professions. In the Budget proposal for fiscal 1964-1965, the Minister of Finance, Dr. N.M. Perera, suggested an acreage tax on tea, a special tax on residential property, export duty on gems, and an excise duty on cigarette tobacco.

The Ceylon government has not created the proper atmosphere which invites private foreign investments. While stating emphatically that the government welcomed private capital from foreign sources, the following conditions govern such investments:

- 1) It should generally be for productive purposes, particularly in new fields of industrial activity or in fields where the private sector has not already established itself in Ceylon.
- 2) It should generally be permitted in collaboration with local enterprise, such collaboration being dispensed with only if

capital from local enterprise is not forthcoming or if the enterprise undertakes to manufacture products for export under trade names of wide usage.

- 3) It should lead to the progressive domestic manufacture of goods that ultimately will replace imports to the highest practicable degree.
- 4) It should provide for local training in management and skills.
- 5) It should generally not enter fields reserved for the expansion of the public sector.<sup>159</sup>

Meanwhile, American and British oil properties have been expropriated, and the spectre of estate nationalization hangs heavy over British tea interests in Ceylon. This matter will be taken up fully in the next chapter. There is also the expanding encroachment by state owned corporations into practically all industrial fields, constantly increasing taxation, and foreign exchange restrictions. This is hardly an environment which would invite to Ceylon financial ventures from private foreign sources.

A case in point as to what the government has not done to further its development program is found in the nonutilization of economic assistance. According to one observation,

The chief cause seems to be the absence of planning ahead. Certain projects . . . were dropped (at the request of the Ceylon Government) long after the signing of the agreement because the preparatory work had not been done when the time came to implement the project.

Or gifts or money in kind lay idle for years.

The machinery of government departments which are usually called upon to implement these projects is frequently found to be unequal to the

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<sup>159</sup>International Monetary Fund, International Financial News Survey, V. XII, No. 67 (Oct. 21, 1960), p. 379.

demands upon it, in particular on account of the dearth of trained personnel, chiefly technical officers. Though much also has been spoken of overcoming the shortage of such personnel, little practical headway has been made.<sup>160</sup>

Another source rapped the government for its lackadaisical approach to utilizing assistance made available by the Colombo Plan. It was pointed out that,

Ceylon, unfortunately, has still to demonstrate that the very best use is being made of foreign aid, Colombo Plan or any other. . . . On the development front, possible deeds have unfortunately got drowned in seas of words, in speeches, plans, programs and memoranda. . . .<sup>161</sup>

The Colombo Plan is an economic organization, the blueprint for which was drawn up by the Foreign Ministers of the Commonwealth countries in January, 1950, meeting in Colombo, hence The Colombo Plan.<sup>162</sup> The original members were Australia, Great Britain with the Federation of Malaya, Singapore, North Borneo, and Sarawak, Canada, Ceylon, India, New Zealand, and Pakistan. It was not treated as a purely Commonwealth development program. From the very beginning, membership was open to other countries in South-Southeast Asia and to non-Commonwealth countries from outside the area. Thus, Japan and the United States also joined. The present membership stands at twenty-three.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>160</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, March 11, 1964, p. 6.

<sup>161</sup>Quoted from the Ceylon Daily News in the Asian Student, January 15, 1963, p. 7.

<sup>162</sup>An excellent survey of the aims and objectives will be found in Frederic Benham, The Colombo Plan and Other Essays (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1956). Reports dealing with all phases of the Plan are made periodically by The Colombo Plan Bureau, Colombo, Ceylon.

<sup>163</sup>The present membership includes all countries of South-Southeast Asia, and Japan, Great Britain, and the United States.

The Colombo Plan's objectives are a close parallel to those found in the Marshall Plan, but on a much smaller scale. Efforts are devoted to ways and means of improving living standards in South-South-east Asia by providing economic and technical assistance through the cooperative membership. From the outset, The Colombo Plan has been warmly received by Asian area governments and peoples alike to the extent that it exceeds the reception given programs of the United Nations and individual donors. The reasons are not difficult to find. There are no power bloc commitments, no guardianship, no "strings". It is Asian in origin, for the most part Asian directed, Asian administered, and the recipients are Asians. Predicated upon its past performance, it seems likely that The Colombo Plan will be around for a long time. Initially, it was drawn up to cover a six-year period from 1951 to 1957. Its life was extended to June, 1961, again until June, 1966, and recently until June, 1971. Few other organizations can boast of the achievements made by this multilateral organization in assisting developing countries.<sup>164</sup> Ceylon seems to have been unable to take full advantage of the programs. The reasons were summed in the following statement by the Ceylon press:

The best the [Colombo] Plan can do is to help nations help themselves, but Ceylon has either spurned such help or spent it with a profligacy almost unmatched in this region. Valuable equipment has too often lain unopened in crates. Some of it is sent out to places which neither asked for them nor appear to need them. . . . Experts come to Ceylon and make studies of specific problems, but the studies remain academic documents left to collect dust. . . . Men sent out for training come back to be misfits, being assigned to duties that have nothing to do with their specialities.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>164</sup>It is virtually impossible here to do justice to the activities connected with The Colombo Plan. The reader is referred to The Colombo Plan Bureau, Progress of The Colombo Plan (Tokyo: Bunshodo Printing Co., 1963).

<sup>165</sup>Quoted from the Ceylon Daily News in the Asian Student, January 15, 1963, p. 7.

Foreign Aid and Assistance

Despite these criticisms, each year Ceylon includes assistance from foreign sources in the Budget to help offset the deficit. Receiving foreign assistance is one thing; making the best use of it -- or use of it at all -- is something else. There is sufficient evidence to prove that the chief cause of non-utilization is the absence of planning. Also, perhaps there remains the psychological factor of suspicion in the minds of the Ceylonese as to the donor country's intentions when offers are made. It does appear that Ceylon has overcome its wariness in this regard, an attitude which was prevalent until about 1955. Then, it was generally accepted that aid was connected somehow with imperialistic ventures by the major countries. No observer can be sure as to whether or not there remains some thread of distrust as to motives.

The current rate of utilization of foreign aid does represent an improvement over previous years. This has helped considerably in view of the critical condition of foreign assets. Still, much remains to be done in this respect.

At July, 1963, of a total of Rs. 1,151.7 million of foreign aid received by Ceylon in grants and loans, only Rs. 760.3 million has been allocated to projects, leaving an unallocated balance of Rs. 391.4 million.<sup>166</sup>

During fiscal 1964-1965, Ceylon hopes to receive somewhere in the region of Rs. 250 million. A considerable portion of this amount has been agreed to by Peking, currently the chief donor. Canada too, will contribute substantially through the Colombo Plan.

Mainland China has been sending increasingly large amounts of

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<sup>166</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, June 3, 1964, p. 6.

aid to Ceylon since the first bilateral agreement was signed in 1957. At that time, Peking agreed to a grant of Rs. 75 million, part of which Ceylon used to erect a cotton-spinning and weaving mill in 1961. A gift of 1200 power looms was made in November, 1963, the value of which, by estimate, was said to have been Rs. 5 million. The looms were scheduled for delivery over a three year period. The most recent China aid is an interest-free loan of Rs. 20 million, along with a considerable amount of machinery and other aids for the agricultural sector, and a gift of 25 million yards of Chinese textiles valued at about Rs. 20 million.

Canadian aid totals roughly Rs. 130 million to date, almost the entire amount being outright gifts. The largest single block of the total was made available in March, 1964, with a grant under the Colombo Plan amounting to Rs. 33.8 million for improving Katunayake airport and for developmental projects in that area.

The U.S.S.R. signed an aid agreement with Ceylon in 1958 for Rs. 150 million repayable in either pounds sterling and/or goods. About 25 percent of the amount had been utilized through 1962, however a number of major plants completed and underway will involve another Rs. 40 million.

Whether or not the United States will lift its suspension on aid to Ceylon, imposed in 1962 when American property was expropriated, cannot be predicted. Between 1956 and 1963, United States assistance amounted to about Rs. 425 million (US\$85 million), the major portion in the form of food supplies under Public Law 480. There were a number of developmental projects underway at the time of aid suspension. The course of future events between Ceylon and the United States depends largely upon some compensation for the privately-owned oil properties.

So much then for some things the Government of Ceylon has done and has not done which inhibits economic development.

### Labor

Now to some of the things the people themselves have done and have not done which has impeded the progress.

In 1956, the MEP coalition -- a People's Government -- came into power. The people of Ceylon took hold of the idea that everything was destined to go well automatically without the people having to bother much about work, or disciplining themselves to the rules of social cooperation. Later, when the National Planning Council presented the Ten-Year Plan, it was pointed out that in order for the goals to be attained it required

The understanding, cooperation and self-discipline of the ordinary people -- the workers, the peasants and office assistants. It [was] dependent on the exercise of their skills and on the willingness to work hard. The Plan will either fail altogether or fall dismally short of its objective if this cooperation [was] not forthcoming.<sup>167</sup>

In several sectors of Ceylon's society, not much attention was given this warning; the response was one of laxity in cooperation, an impatience with authority, and a general desire of something-for-nothing.

At a time of a national financial crisis, it is human nature to blame all economic ills upon the government. There is little argument that many of the hardships facing the Ceylonese today are due to government inefficiency and the failure of official policies. But it also has been the lack of discipline in the work forces which has impeded the implementation of official policies and economic development. In practically

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<sup>167</sup>Ceylon News-Letter, July 6, 1959.



every occupation there has been agitation and work stoppages for higher compensation with less work.

Most workers in Ceylon belong to one of twenty-seven organized labor groups. The island has been besieged with trade union rivalries which have been, to a large extent, responsible for the frictions which have divided the country against itself. Trade unions are appendages of political parties, divided according to parochial interests of a section of society. They are functioning in Ceylon as political agents and reservoirs of massed political power; the sole objective is to mobilize people for political goals.

Successive governments have produced the necessary machinery for settling industrial disputes: collective bargaining, redress for an individual's grievances, means for negotiations, conciliation, and arbitration, and labor tribunals. Still, the government chooses not to use the machinery it has espoused. One excellent example of this is a work stoppage in the ports.

The Ceylon Observer of January 12, 1964 bannered its Sunday edition with "Strike=Settlement Is Reached At Last."<sup>168</sup> After seventy days of idleness, the ports of Ceylon resumed the handling of cargoes from some forty ships which had waited more than two months when nothing moved in or out of the ports. Meanwhile, clerks of the Port Cargo Corporation, the Ceylon Mercantile Union, and the government chose to stalemate negotiations on work conditions and salaries. And meanwhile, another forty ships had bypassed Colombo which represented "about 50,000 tons of cargo

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<sup>168</sup>Ceylon Observer, January 12, 1964, p. 1.

. . . either shut out or overcarried.<sup>169</sup> In adding up the total cost of the port strike, it was estimated that

Over Rs. 35 million has been lost to revenue . . . This figure does not include the losses sustained by importers and shippers of export cargoes. Their losses are also said to be considerable.<sup>170</sup>

The movements of tea and rubber shipments bound for world ports were hardest hit, with some 52 million pounds of tea, 10 thousand tons of crepe rubber, and three thousand tons of sheet rubber wasting away in shipper's warehouses.<sup>171</sup> As late as May, some four months after the strike settlement, 100 thousand tons of food cargoes were still afloat aboard ships inside and outside Colombo harbor. The loss to Ceylon from tourism was also enormous; no estimate has ever been made, but conservatively it approximates perhaps Rs. 1 million. While passengers aboard freighters waited days upon days to disembark, only one vessel was allowed to jump a four-week long queue since it carried in its hold a top-priority item. The important cargo was the first-ever Siberian tiger -- Niccola by name -- to land upon Ceylon's shores. He was bound for the Dehiwala Zoo. He was unloaded and carefully so! And back went the vessel to join the line of ships, subsequently to be unloaded of the remaining cargo in its proper turn.

The very life of the island is dependent upon its export-import trade which can function only through the ports. The government operates the ports through a state corporation. And troubles in the ports --

<sup>169</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, February 12, 1964, p. 2.

<sup>170</sup>Ibid., January 22, 1964, p. 2.

<sup>171</sup>Ibid., January 15, 1964, p. 2.

strikes and slow-downs -- bring out the government's critics in full force. In all sectors, petty grievances have resulted in work-stoppages which cumulatively have had a crippling affect upon the economy. It is in the shipping trade where potential disaster rests for Ceylon. A malfunctioning here results in serious drain upon the economy and is an obstacle to the progress of the country. When the time arrives that the people give wholehearted support to the idea that work is necessary for the good of the country as a whole, the people will have achieved a great deal.

Elsewhere in the labor picture, the establishing of new industries and some of the development projects have done little to relieve the critical unemployment problem. In August, 1964, the last month for which unemployment figures are available, the Central Bank of Ceylon said there were more than 161 thousand persons without jobs, the highest ever recorded. This figure represents only those persons who have registered their availability for jobs and does not include a large number of persons in the rural areas. If anything, job prospects will continue to worsen. In 1959, the following forecast had been made:

In an economy, organized as the Ceylon economy now is, there will not be places for the people who will be demanding places in a few years time. Development is necessary in order that places should be found for them.<sup>172</sup>

Two years earlier, the government had ordered all future labor vacancies on tea estates be filled by Ceylonese rather than by immigrant Indian labor hoping thereby to partially solve the problem of unemployment

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<sup>172</sup>J.R. Hicks, "Reflections on the Economic Problem of Ceylon", Papers by Visiting Economists (Colombo: National Planning Council, 1959), p. 9.

in the villages. In June, 1962, Parliament passed a law which enabled the Labour Ministry to determine who could or could not be employed on estates. This law virtually dictated to estate management the number of Ceylon citizens which were to be employed, and obliged the employers to fill all vacancies with Ceylonese until the quota was reached. Its intent, besides insuring employment of nationals, was that of an instrument of coercion. It was hoped Indian immigrants would take out passports and leave the country. This policy has had some success.

The Ceylonization program has forced many foreign entrepreneurs to close their doors thereby retrenching from the labor force, present and prospective, non-Ceylonese and Ceylonese alike. Restrictions on a variety of goods have necessitated staff reductions in several production areas. State corporations encroaching upon the private sectors have led to a reshuffling of employees and, frequently, a reduction in the number on the payrolls. In almost all cases, those who join the ranks of the unemployed are skilled and semi-skilled workers, whose specific specialities can only be utilized by a very narrow sector of the economy. As economic development continues to expand, these specialities will find a place. But today, it is the present which is at the crisis point. Looking at it pessimistically, tomorrow does not appear much brighter. Thousands of young men and women are being graduated from Ceylon's higher institutions of learning with proficiency in fields which are already overcrowded.

#### Education

Knowledge is the premier resource. It is based upon education whether or not the latter is along the lines of the more formal university

style, or gained through something akin to apprenticeship in the crafts. Ceylon's plight is its inability to make the most use of these resources. In effect, Ceylon has potential plenty in the midst of poverty. Education has made little or no readjustment to meet the needs of the country in coping with the problems of economic development. Nothing much has been done to interest the country's youth in fields which would ease the dearth of available technicians and craftsmen, so vitally needed now by the expanding industrial sector. Generally, for the past decade at least, there has been little effort to council young men and women to choose careers in those skills which require not only mental application but manual dexterity as well. Instead each year graduates pour from the University of Ceylon with degrees which manifest proficiency in the arts, gravitate toward a labor market to compete for teaching or clerical positions both of which fields are overflowing with applicants. These jobs are not to be had because no vacancies exist. "The schools are turning out tens of thousands of . . . qualified young hopefuls every year who are climbing over each other's backs to get within grasping distance of a one-hundred-rupee pittance a month."<sup>173</sup>

Ceylon's problem in education has some of its roots inextricably tied with the British colonial past, and others of much more recent vintage linked with the Official Language Act. In a previous chapter<sup>174</sup> mention was made of the British deemphasizing the Buddhist religion. In connection therewith emphasis was upon English-style education in preference to that of the Sinhala language oriented institutions. Even the

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<sup>173</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, October 30, 1963, p. 6.

<sup>174</sup>Chapter II, pp. 61-62.

status of the teacher varied. The historiographer Mendis points out that,

The Sinhalese schoolmaster received a lower salary than the one who taught in a school where English was the medium of instruction and was given a status lower than that of the English teacher. Above all, the pupils in the Sinhalese Schools . . . had very, very few avenues of employment and had to take up posts as servants. Unemployment became rampant among them and these Sinhalese-educated began to despair of their future.<sup>175</sup>

Therefore, English education expanded not necessarily because of its quality but merely because it -- and it alone -- opened the door to a position as a government official, or a clerk, or a professional man. Traditionally these occupations, particularly in government, have always carried far more prestige than any form of manual labor.

Changes appeared after political independence. Gradually, more Sinhalese replaced the British as vacancies occurred but the English-educated Tamil remained entrenched in his position. The turnover was slow; well-paying, prestige positions did not increase as rapidly as the Sinhalese had hoped. Many thousand young people were receiving their secondary school education in the Sinhala language yet it was difficult for these to compete for entrance to the English-speaking University of Ceylon.

A word about the University of Ceylon appears to be in order here. Its campus is acclaimed by many visitors as one of the most beautiful anywhere in the world. Located at Peradeniya, not far from Kandy, it is comparatively new. It was established in 1942 through the incorporation of the Ceylon University College, founded in 1921, an overseas extension of the University of London. The University of Ceylon was initially designed to cater almost exclusively to a small, well-defined group of students,

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<sup>175</sup>Mendis, Ceylon: Today and Yesterday, p. 135.

mostly Sinhalese and Tamils whose proficiency in the English language was above reproach. It is patterned along the lines of Western residential institutions. But, no longer is it an institution for the elite only. More and more students are filling its classes under the democratization of education policy. The changes being wrought in Ceylon, especially through the Official Language Act, have been reflected in changes which have been made and are destined to take place at the University.

Among the changes, the most significant is the instituting of swabasha -- teaching in the languages of the country i.e., Sinhala and Tamil. English as a medium of instruction in the social sciences and the arts is practically dead. There remains only a minute number of students who receive instruction through English; the overwhelming majority are lectured in the swabashas. The English language finds a place only in an accelerated program in order to equip undergraduates with some reading comprehension. Attendance at these classes is purely voluntary, neither encouraged nor discouraged. There is a dearth of reference material currently available in the swabashas; thus, these special English language classes do act as a medium in opening a vast storeroom of knowledge. In the past a knowledge of English was a requisite for entering the University of Ceylon; now it is no longer required.

In the physical sciences also the days for instruction through the English medium are numbered. Much in this area is already being conducted in Sinhala and Tamil. English remains the language of science in Ceylon but the swabashas cover the same material in parallel courses. Such will be the case until 1968, the date established by the Parliament Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Education for the complete switch-

over. With the English language gradually disappearing, the Ministry of Education has yet to explain how the swabasha-trained Ceylon scientists will keep abreast of the latest advances in the scientific and technological knowledge of the English-speaking world. As might be expected there are two streams of thought in Ceylon regarding swabasha instruction in science. One holds that the island is now ready to change to Sinhala and Tamil up to the university level with complete adoption in 1966; the counter-argument runs that science students cannot be given the proper training except in English and for a number of years after 1968, due to the paucity of science texts in the Sinhala and Tamil languages.<sup>176</sup>

There are other institutions of higher learning in Ceylon, all considerably smaller than the University. Among these are the law school at the University, a Law College for the legal education of students; the Ceylon Technical College which provides training in engineering, vocational studies, and commerce; Jaffna College, an American sponsored missionary school founded in 1828; and Aquinas University, a Catholic school in Colombo. In the political campaign of 1956, S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike championed the Buddhist cause and upon election announced plans for generous financial grants to the island's two Pirivenas, the institutes of higher education for the training of the bhikkhus. These are Vidyalankara and Vidyodaya, both located within easy commuting distance of Colombo and both were granted university status as of January 1, 1959. Many of the prominent Buddhists in Ceylon and India are either part-time students or in some way closely connected with these seats of learning.

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<sup>176</sup>Effective in 1965, all school textbooks will be handled exclusively by the Department of Education. These books are written by selected teachers for each of the different subjects in the curriculum.



The Ministry of Education submitted a White Paper on Education in October, 1963, making education compulsory, free, and nationwide for all children between the ages of six and fourteen. At the age of fourteen years, the child is free to leave school if employment can be found, attend vocational school or secondary school. Religion is a required part of the curricula in all schools of Ceylon. It is a law that the child must be taught the religion of his parents, and that teaching must be done by a teacher of that religion. Further, "the head of the school shall be of the religion of the majority of the pupils of the school and teachers shall be in the same proportion as the pupils professing those religions in the school."<sup>177</sup> The White Paper proposed that the English language no longer be compulsory as a second language. Instead, a choice is offered among Sinhala, Tamil, or English. In any case, the child is introduced to the second language in the third grade. The cost of the national system of education is estimated at Rs. 350 million (US\$70 million).

There is one area which the Ceylon plan for education seems to have overlooked, a field made significant both by its absence from the national system and by its importance to the island. This is education in agriculture. By and large the younger people are seeking -- and for the most part unsuccessfully -- careers as public servants or in white-collar positions because of the prestige value and compensation.<sup>178</sup> For years there have been the School of Agriculture at Peradeniya for men, the

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<sup>177</sup>Ceylon Observer, October 23, 1963, p. 2.

<sup>178</sup>An excellent treatment on this subject will be found in Bryce Ryan, "Status, Achievement, and Education in Ceylon: An Historical Perspective", Journal of Asian Studies, XX, No. 4, (August, 1961).

Kundasale for women, and the University of Ceylon had a Faculty of Agriculture. Nevertheless, there appears to be hardly any encouragement toward agriculture by emphasizing dignity in connection with working the soil. Preoccupied with industrialization promotion, Ceylon has relegated agricultural education to a rather menial position. This is paradoxical not only because Ceylon has ancient roots in agrarianism, but even more because of the crying need for food supplies.

#### Appraisal

This has been a somewhat gloomy recapitulation of the resources of Ceylon, and the role of economic development. All developing countries have a very long list of problems, some of which will require decades of patience, effort, and cooperation to overcome.

Ceylon's administration of the development machinery has been a patchwork of procedures implemented in haphazard style to take care of only an immediate situation. Little thought has been given to the long-run consequences. Policies pertaining to utilization of resources in overall planning have been improvisations on a year to year basis. There have been all sorts of target plans, but a wide gap exists between these and the achievements. While some things have been accomplished, there are not enough to substantially affect improvements.

Taxation has had an adverse effect upon the developmental program. In any organized society, there must be taxes to produce revenue for the administration of all state services. Much good has come from state revenue in Ceylon. Social welfare services and subsidization of foodstuffs have helped the island's people avoid the crushing problems of poverty and

starvation found in some other countries. It has aided too in setting up the small industries giving employment to many people. But growth of an economy comes through a tax structure which is favorable to growth. This growth is stagnate in Ceylon. Direct and indirect taxation have intensified over the years to the extent that direct taxation yields now actually less than a few years ago. In 1955-1956 direct taxes provided 26.6 percent of the total revenue; in 1963-1964, they provided only 21.7 percent. Tax bases, tax rates, and other levies are so high at the present time that direct taxes are yielding less and less revenue. Ceylon is faced with diminishing returns in the field of direct taxation.

The tax structure has adversely affected development in other sectors also. A good estimate is that about 80 percent of the gross profits of estate companies is taken by the state in the form of taxation. Thus, very little is left to management to put back into the land rehabilitation in producing the main export-earning crops: tea, rubber, and coconuts. At the same time, little or no encouragement has been given the private sector in agriculture to expand holdings and new taxes have added discouragement. A quantity of good, cultivable land is still available, there is an over-supply of labor available, but capital is scarce. The effect upon the efficiency of future estate operations necessarily depends largely on new capital for replanting and expansion, but investment will not come under present conditions in Ceylon. Nor will it come while the threat of expropriation continues to permeate the private sector, whether estate or industrial.

Ceylon must begin a search for new export items in cottage crafts and encourage this sector through a reduction of export taxes. External trade generates a major force in economic development thus a concerted

drive must be made for new export markets. Continued industrial expansion is supplying the domestic consumer with a widening variety of goods. But export levies give little chance for some of these same products to be channeled into export markets due to the price factor; lower priced comparable products of other countries are stiff competition for the Ceylonese item whose price is inflated by export tariff. If Ceylon were to withdraw all duties on import of raw materials both the domestic and external markets for the manufactured products would perhaps increase substantially. Greater production in any sector is obviously going to increase employment. It is much more helpful to earn foreign exchange by exports rather than revenue from import duties. Of course, economic development cannot wait for exports to provide all the necessary leverage, but a stagnate domestic sector is very often the result of a weak export economy and poor trade policies. Ceylon's central problem here is the formulation of a tax base and tax rates which will not kill off enterprise, yet will provide revenue sources which will permit Ceylon to proceed with social and developmental projects to which it is already committed.

A much needed program is one by which the people are assured of full protection of their rights. At the same time, the people themselves must voluntarily accept responsibilities by which the development of an integrated society makes possible the goals of planning. The type of political structure -- in this case, democratic socialism -- is not too important. The devices of coercions and restraints are to be found in all political structures. What is important is the form these devices take. There is a vast difference between a work-stoppage in the developed country, and one in a country which is struggling in the developing

stage. A longshoremen's strike in the United States, unfortunate as it may be, does not have the crippling effect as does a port strike in Colombo. When organized labor unions have become appendages of political parties, rather than champions of protection against maltreatment of its members, the government and the country can totter on the brink of disaster. The ideology of a political party must be superseded by the ideology of economic development. Any political party in power must impose upon the population the costs of social development; where a people refuse to pay the costs, chaos is in the offing.

Economic development alone is not the key to all of Ceylon's problems. Instead, the key which will unlock Ceylon's future is the cooperative undertaking to realize the maximum of all resources; state institutions, organized labor, cooperative societies, the private sector, education for national unity, and private individuals.

## CHAPTER V

### THE POLITICS OF INTERNATIONALISM

Ceylon is part of a group of Asian and African states which claim membership in an international community commonly called the nonaligned countries. Unquestionably, the term "nonaligned" wants for a precise definition. Nonalignment differs from neutrality in the sense that the latter has a more direct application in time of war. According to international law, neutrality defines the status of a nation which refrains from participation in a war and maintains an impartial attitude toward the belligerents. Yet, the difference is one of degree rather than kind. Neutrality and nonalignment arise from unlimited sovereignty which allows a state to freely decide its position in international affairs. Sovereignty entitles the state to refrain from taking sides in any question arising among other states, and the right to remain aloof from any entangling alliances.

Nonalignment is a code of diplomatic behavior. It is a conditioned response to international relations whereby a small state, acknowledging itself as vulnerable to the retaliations of a major power, has no alternative other than to remain politically uncommitted to any other state or power bloc. Nonalignment is an attitude of the national mind. There is frank recognition that joining a military alliance does not automatically confer equality in status with a more powerful state. And it is

the premise that there is no single bright idea, such as military alliance, which will solve all the perplexing problems created by the frequently unpredictable inter-nation conduct in the complex modern world.

The Prime Minister of Ceylon, Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, during a foreign policy address to Parliament explained nonalignment in the following way.

It merely means, she said,

That each country that is nonaligned adopts independent judgments on foreign policy without being tied to the ideologies of opposing military power blocs. Nonaligned nations do not necessarily stand together on any given question. They are not even aligned as to regards to one another; or in relation to any particular dispute.<sup>179</sup>

There is no way to determine exactly when and where the concept of nonalignment was born, but certainly it was nourished at the Afro-Asian Conference in 1955. Commonly known as the Bandung Conference,<sup>180</sup> delegates representing 28 countries met in convention at Bandung, Indonesia. It was the first such intercontinental congress in history. Briefly, the objective were these: to encourage cooperation among the developing states in solving common economic and social problems, to determine the position of the Afro-Asian peoples in the world community, and to discuss the contributions which could be made by these people toward world peace. The latter topic received the lion's share of debate.

There was peace in Southeast Asia in 1955, although it was of the precarious sort. Korea had settled into a condition of armed truce, and

<sup>179</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, January 29, 1964, p. 3.

<sup>180</sup>The Conference was held in April, 1955. An excellent account of the proceedings is supplied by Russel H. Fifield, The Diplomacy of South-East Asia, 1945-1958 (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958). The text of the final communique will be found pp. 512-519. Some sidelights are covered by Carl T. Rowan, The Pitiful and The Proud (New York: Random House, 1956).

militarily at least the French had departed from Indo-China. Long range prospect for Asia included China's undeniable determination to assert major influence. Japan, meanwhile, had taken greater strides, under United States pressure, in the direction of self-defense and in 1954 had entered a mutual assistance agreement. American regional policies had as their over-riding objectives the containment -- and hopefully the elimination -- of the communist menace. The United States had left little doubt as to this goal when, in 1954, it had proposed the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization.

SEATO, with its purely military base, had been a source of apprehension among most Asian states.<sup>181</sup> The alliance was assessed as being an American-wrought ring of steel forged in the mistaken idea that guns and bayonets were the surest answer to preventing the spread of international communism. It was upon this premise that the then Prime Minister of Ceylon, Sir John Kotelawala, had suggested a conference of Asian heads-of-state<sup>182</sup> at Colombo in 1954. Burma, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan were invited to attend. It was the hope of the Prime Ministers that some substitute for SEATO might be found, an alternate which would be acceptable to the United States. This was not to be the case. SEATO materialized at Manila in September, creating an urgency among some Asian states as to the most judicious course in the conduct of their foreign affairs.

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<sup>181</sup>For some views toward SEATO by the various states see below.

<sup>182</sup>This conference was called the Asian Prime Ministers Conference. The first session at Colombo was held April 28-May 2, 1954, the Bogor session on December 28-29. The Prime Ministers attending were: U Nu (Burma), Kotelawala (Ceylon), Nehru (India), Sastroamidjojo (Indonesia), and Mohammed Ali (Pakistan).



The Prime Ministers reconvened at Bogor (Indonesia) in December and from this session materialized the larger conference at Bandung the following year.

At Bandung, Ceylon took, indirectly, its first step toward non-alignment. Kotelewala had been forced, under pressure from Parliament, to reject the invitation to join the organization. Parliament had held that the military principle of its character was not conducive to maintaining peace. Sir John, at Bandung, could not bring himself to disassociate his government with American-British regional policies. During conference debate, pro-Communist delegates hurled charges of "imperialism" at the United States and United Kingdom. In rebuttal, Kotelewala was vocal in defending his country's pro-Western attachment. He countered the imperialism charges by accusing the Soviet Union of subversion and neo-colonialism through ideology. He dwelled upon the thesis that if the West was guilty of imperialistic ventures then equally guilty, said the Prime Minister, was the U.S.S.R.

Later, in a report to Parliament on the Afro-Asian Conference, the Prime Minister reiterated the stand he had taken at Bandung. He interlaced his remarks with arguments as to the need of retaining British naval and air bases in Ceylon for security purposes. Yet, under questioning, the Prime Minister admitted that the Western powers might have found it more advantageous in the long run to have refrained from an alliance such as SEATO; to have sought instead measures other than those with military emphasis. He further admitted that the challenge of aspirations between East and West, backed with enormous military power on both sides, had the potential of unleashing a major confrontation.

Parliament weighed carefully the words of its Prime Minister. A coalition of voices in both the Senate and the House demanded reappraisal of Ceylon's position; these demands snowballed into a full-blown foreign policy debate. The moderates sought a middle-of-the-road course. The Opposition accused the government of purposely placing the country in an untenable position between East and West, in order that Western overlordship might be returned to govern the island under the facade of security against a mythical force. Some of Kotelewala's own political disciples broke party ranks and joined the Opposition. Anti-Western demonstrations, scattered but island-wide, steamrollered public opinion into a mandate to Parliament. The die had been cast. Ceylon completed its first step toward membership in the nonaligned community of Afro-Asian states.

#### Foreign Policy: Three Stages

Ceylon's foreign policy has come by way of a three-part evolutionary process. Stage one was the British Period, the interim from independence to 1956. The record was written mainly through institutional links with the United Kingdom; British statescraft furnished the guidelines, and British diplomats the know-how. The second stage is the Indian Period, from 1956 to 1961. The characteristic was the marked loosening of Britannic ties and increasing Indian influence in Ceylon's international affairs. Stage three -- the Ceylonese Period -- began in 1961. It was manifested by an assertiveness to prove Ceylon's foreign policy was its own and not that of any other country.

Ceylon's foreign relations has been a diary of curious, unpredictable maneuvers, at times frustrating to world capitals. During the

United National Party's control of government, 1948-1956, there was no question as to pro-Western ties. Yet Ceylon had found it expedient to cultivate Peking's friendship through commercial relations. Later, when the MEP took over administration, the late Prime Minister Solomon Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike stoutly denied to the world that his government was Communist oriented. But he left no doubt as to his intentions of securing economic and technical aid from whatsoever country offered it, Communist or otherwise. Ceylon demanded acquisition of British naval and air bases on the island, then accorded a rousing welcome to Chou En-lai on his first state visit to Ceylon in 1957. It refused to condemn Soviet action in Hungary. When its ambassador to the United Nations affixed his signature to the majority report which was critical of the U.S.S.R., he was censured by Colombo. Ceylon took the position that the China-Tibet affair was purely an internal problem; it sided with India over the matter of Goa, but refused to join India in condemning the Chinese during the border episode. It has received substantial economic assistance from the United States, but jeopardized future amounts by expropriating American foreign investments in Ceylon.

Ceylon's "neutralism" was not a spur-of-the-moment result of Parliamentary debate on foreign policy or of Bandung. It was, rather, the dredging of a new diplomatic channel upon which the machinery of world happenings had been at work for some time, events which had occupied the attention of all states. United States-U.S.S.R. relations were steadily worsening against a backdrop of the West's preoccupation with international Communism. Western military forces had been fought to a standstill in Korea thus giving new stature -- whether real or imagined -- to Asian

military power. The French had departed from Indo-China at the points of Asian bayonets. By May, 1955, the stability of Mac's government was no longer in question. SEATO had become a reality. Ceylon's trade relations with China were proving more fruitful. After Bandung, Moscow had taken to carving a new image in Ceylon. It advanced the island's membership in the United Nations -- a reversal of the attitude it had previously held -- and extended an offer of economic aid and assistance.

Ceylon rejected membership in the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization because of the military character of the alliance. In official circles, there was discussion about the fact that, at Manila, the matter of Asian security had been arbitrarily undertaken mainly by non-Asian nations. It was thought odd that a few countries would band together to protect Asian states even though the majority of the latter were obviously less than lukewarm to the idea. In view of this, it appeared that the colonial powers were really interested in maintaining their status in Asia, and deliberately obstructing national liberation.

The spiritual father of SEATO was the late U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. In signing the pact on September 8, 1954, he referred to it as an Asiatic Monroe Doctrine, the prime object of which was stopping any Communist campaign of intimidation by violence. Dulles' plan of creating a solid front was to fall short of its goal. The Philippines and Pakistan both welcomed membership. The former stated that it relied upon multilateral cooperative agreements for aid in resisting subversion and aggression by Communist countries. Pakistan recognized it as an instrument whereby its defense could be strengthened against any designs India might have in its quarrel with Pakistan over Kashmir. Among other countries,

the story was different. India reflected Ceylon's view that guns and bayonets were not the answer to whatever troubles international Communism might have in store for South-Southeast Asia. Cambodia questioned whether the alliance had not been conceived to satisfy the selfish interests of Western powers in an attempt to reestablish hegemony in the region. Burma thought SEATO to be a divisive rather than cohesive force, and saw no value in a military organization as an aid toward strengthening international associations. Indonesia thought it highly unlikely that SEATO could in any way help in solving the acute problems of poverty in Asian countries; and that the military aspect would increase tensions rather than lessen them. These were the views of some Asian states toward SEATO.

No single international event mentioned above was responsible for Ceylon's nonalignment. It would be difficult to measure the amount of influence each situation might have generated. There can be little question that the formation of SEATO contributed a disproportionate share since the alliance was directly involved in the East-West contest. Nevertheless, all joined together to spell out a new definition of Ceylon's "independence" which was, henceforth, to be applied in the fullest sense of the word.

#### Foreign Relations

The MEP coalition was victorious in the general election of 1956. The Party's political platform was built around "Ceylon for Ceylonese", the campaign oratory stressing the virtue of ridding Ceylon of the remnants of European colonialism. These "remnants" were almost entirely British: military installations, estates, and other enterprises. Given the temper of the Parliament -- and even more importantly that of the people -- toward

anything military, as expressed after Bandung, there was no reason to doubt that the primary targets for the MEP were the British naval base at Trincomalee and the Royal Air Force base at Katunayake. If the MEP had needed an excuse other than that of sovereign rights, Britain's role in Suez offered a most convenient argument. British ships bound for Suez refueled at Trincomalee; RAF planes stopping at Katunayake were suspected of operations against Egypt.

Political victory had come in May. Within sixty days, on July 6, London announced that it recognized the right of the Government of Ceylon to request transfer of Trincomalee and Katunayake. Ceylon's Parliament had taken the position that since the government was now dedicated to non-alignment, indefinite British occupation of the military installations could not be tolerated, and that as long as the British occupied these bases it gave the appearance that Ceylon was on the side of the Western powers. Under the Defense Agreement of November, 1947, concluded just prior to independence, Trincomalee and Katunayake were to remain under the Union Jack. No stipulation had been made as to the length of time this treaty was to remain in force.

Formal negotiations for transfer began March 29, 1957. In Colombo on June 7, it was announced that Trincomalee would become Ceylon property as of October 15, and Katunayake on November 1. Ceylon agreed to pay Rs. 22 million (approx. US\$4.4 million) as reimbursement for fixed assets. Withdrawal was to be completed over a three-year period. Britain accepted the loss of these extremely valuable assets in Ceylon as a fait accompli. The good manners of international diplomacy applied in the tradition of British statecraft. The transfer of Trincomalee, on the island's north-

east coast, ended 168 years of British overlordship of a seaport which Lord Nelson had described as the finest harbour in the world. It had been important to the Britannic rule of the Indian Ocean since the days of the East Indies Company; it had served as a naval base since 1898.

Whitehall has always taken pains to hold agitation to a minimum, regardless of the impact policy decisions by Ceylon may have upon British interests. Specifically, these interests are the private British investments in Ceylon, mainly tea and rubber estates. During the 1956 general election campaign, the MEP stated explicitly that nationalization of the estates was very much a part of its program. In March, 1957, Bandaranaike gave assurance to the membership of the Planters Association that his government "had no intention of taking over the plantations at once."<sup>183</sup> But he stated emphatically that estate nationalization, while certainly not a cure-all for the country's economic ills, nevertheless would serve in the transition from a colonial to a free economy. Ceylon's House of Representatives approved a bill in April, 1958, which provided the legislative machinery. A year later, in April, the Prime Minister pledged a delay of at least ten years.

So far, the government has honored the late Prime Minister's word. But, the prevailing question is -- when will estate nationalization take place? It is a topic of conversation wherever British interests gather. There is fear and frustration that soon all British enterprises will be driven off the island. There remains considerable doubt that government -- present or future -- will much longer abide by the Bandaranaike state-

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<sup>183</sup>For excerpts of this address see the Asian Recorder, V. III, No. 15 (Apr. 6-12, 1957), p. 1385.

ment of 1959. Skepticism runs high. The Ceylonization of trade has been discussed elsewhere.<sup>184</sup> British insurance companies are now prohibited from writing new policies, a move which has all but stopped an enterprise which had produced an annual revenue of roughly Rs. 1.4 billion (US\$280 million). Urging by Sir Michael Walker, the United Kingdom High Commissioner in Ceylon, that the government pay compensation to the British firms has been rejected by Ceylon's Finance Ministry, on the grounds that the Government has taken over only the business transactions not the property nor other assets. Therefore, no compensation was necessary. Foreign banks have come under new restrictions. The substance of these permit fewer loans for private operations among foreign entrepreneurs while encouraging an increasing number of loans in larger amounts to the small businesses operated by Ceylonese.

This, then, is the summary of Britain-Ceylon relations during the latter's seventeen years since independence. No problems of serious proportions have arisen. There have been irritants which have called for an exchange of diplomatic notes, but the wording has been temperate and quite conciliatory. Minor differences have had to do with some phase of international trade and were so insignificant that there is no need to mention them. There is no foretelling the future with respect to what attitude Britain will take when the day of estate nationalization arrives. Judging from the record, Her Majesty's Government will choose to be conciliatory and adopt an attitude based largely upon the concept of the Commonwealth of Nations.

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<sup>184</sup>See Chp. IV, pp. 127-130.



The Commonwealth gives the right to each member country to conduct its own foreign affairs policy and choose its own system of government. It does not impose a collective view upon its members by majority vote. The prevailing concept of the Commonwealth is one of free and independent action of its members.

Ceylon appears to be accepting less and less the values of this voluntary association of states. The government, from time to time, has rejected any strengthening of the institutional links. Ceylon continues to acknowledge, of course, the Queen as the Head of State. Other than this, hardly more than sentimental value, perhaps, attaches Ceylon to the idea of the Commonwealth. It, like the other associates, have a common ancestor in the late great British Empire. Sentimental attachment is, by and large, the only collective link which the members have in common.

There are several reasons for this seemingly withering away of the voluntary organization. Strategically, there is little protection afforded by the Commonwealth, that is not offset by the conflict of individual members belonging to different military alliances or the nonalignment community. Commonwealth trade is now less important than trade with Europe. The associated states have already formulated their own political systems and social disciplines. And there is little doubt that the Asian and African countries feel more at home in their own regional groupings, than in the Commonwealth. The prevention of a continuing dissolution of the organization was the major problem facing the Prime Ministers, or their deputies, at the 1964 meeting of the Commonwealth members. Sir Alec Douglas-Home said then, that Britain hoped for a new determination to give the Commonwealth new life and new meaning. Nothing of consequence evolved from

this meeting, except that ways would be sought to marshal collective resources toward bridging the gap between the developed and developing countries. Hopefully, something along the lines of the Colombo Plan could be set up with participation limited to the Commonwealth nations. The success of such cooperative efforts would indeed be laudible. It would not only provide the Commonwealth with an incentive to hold itself together, but it would perhaps militate against the steady drift of separatism by the states. Obviously, there is no way of foretelling the future success or failure of the plan. The key is, of course, mutual agreement among the participating nations to subordinate their immediate national interests to the welfare of the association's most needy members.

The second stage in the evolution of Ceylon's foreign policy was the reorientation in 1956 toward the neutralism of India in preference to the United Kingdom. In the Twelfth Session of the U.N. General Assembly in 1956, Ceylon's delegation had standing instructions to follow the lead of Indian spokesmen on all matters providing there were no contrary orders from Colombo. None came. This rubber-stamping of India's policies gave the appearance that Ceylon was an appendage of her neighbor rather than an independent country. India was the acknowledged chieftain and spokesman for the nonaligned community. The sheer size of the country gave it an importance in international status. Its policy of neutralism served as a rallying point for nonaligned states. At the time, then, India represented not only India but the neutralism of the Asian states.

India's eminent place in the nonaligned sphere was destroyed later by China's incursion of the Northeast Frontier area. The by-products of this event gave a new shading to India's position among the neutralists.

China's action had caused apprehension among the all Asian states, but India's loss of face among the nonaligned states came from its acceptance of military aid offered by the United Kingdom and United States. A later permissive Indian attitude toward the operation of the U.S. Seventh Fleet in the Indian Ocean seemed to confirm the suspicions of the nonaligned governments that India was unwilling to practice what it preached.<sup>185</sup> The acceptance of Western arms could hardly be called a tying of India to the Western camp, or a commitment to a military alliance. Nearly all countries continued to view India as an uncommitted state, nevertheless her image as the leader of the nonaligned community had been tarnished in the eyes of the Afro-Asian countries. The policies which India had propagated -- based upon the Panchshila<sup>186</sup> -- have failed through the lack of a collective mechanism for translating general policies to satisfy the indigenous needs of the variety of state styles. The individual states refuse to sacrifice nationalistic ideas for the larger benefit of creating a potent Third Force in international relations.

A major military engagement between Indian and Chinese forces on October 20, 1962 gave Ceylon the opportunity to display a truly assertive foreign policy. Its government sent out a call for an immediate conference<sup>187</sup> among all Asian states. Prime Minister Bandaranaike indicated

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<sup>185</sup>The diversity of Indian and Ceylon attitudes toward the U.S. Seventh Fleet appears below.

<sup>186</sup>Panchshila are the five principles of peace first spelled out in a treaty between India and China regarding Tibet in the spring of 1954. The principles are mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, nonaggression, noninterference in internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence.

<sup>187</sup>This was the Colombo Conference of 1962 which produced the Colombo Proposals. Both are fully examined below.

that Ceylon would accept the role as mediator if urged to do so. The suggestion for the conference and the mediation role both received an enthusiastic reception from throughout the region. The exception was India who was chagrined that Ceylon would choose to remain neutral in the dispute. The mediation efforts of Ceylon's Prime Minister was an expression of personal diplomacy, and it cast the foreign policy into an individuality all its own.

The great international issue between Ceylon and India is the one involving the people of Indian origin but resident in Ceylon, the "stateless" question. A legacy of the days of the British, it remains today essentially an external matter which requires solution through bilateral negotiations. Yet, both governments have made little effort toward affecting settlement.

The diary of bilateral negotiations on the "stateless" issue opened in July, 1939 in consequence of a resolution passed by an ad hoc committee of the All-India National Congress. British and Indian representatives met with Sinhalese nationalists in Colombo seeking just, honorable, and lasting solution. No progress was made. The matter was shelved during the war. Talks began anew in Delhi in December, 1949. The provisions of Ceylon's Indian and Pakistani Residents Citizenship Act<sup>188</sup> had furnished some optimism for a quick solution. However, in April, 1953, the High Commissioner for India in Ceylon, C.C. Desai, expressed his government's view that almost the entire estate labor population in Ceylon, though of Indian descent, were nevertheless Ceylon citizens and not Indian

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<sup>188</sup>The details of the Act have been discussed in Chp. III.

citizens whom India was morally or legally bound to take back. He said that if the Ceylon government did not consider these people Ceylon citizens, then they could be called nothing else than "stateless". It was Desai, then, who coined the term "stateless".

A new attempt at finding some sort of solution was made in 1954 during two meetings by the former Ceylon Prime Minister, Sir John Kotelawala and Nehru of India. A January conference invited an exchange of viewpoints; the meeting produced the Delhi Pact of 1954, signed October 10. The main point of this agreement was that persons of Indian origin, not registered as Ceylon citizens under the Indian and Pakistani Registration Act, could register as Indian citizens with the Indian High Commissioner in Ceylon. Ceylon, in turn, agreed to formulate an inducement scheme to encourage registration. The agreement contained little else. A joint communique took note that there was an acceptance, in principle, by both sides that the earliest possible settlement was of the greatest urgency, and that India and Ceylon would lend every effort to a continuing study of the entire problem. But neither in the Pact nor the communique was there the slightest indication of a quick and final answer.

There was another five year hiatus. In 1959, both Prime Ministers made official announcements that talks soon would begin again. The late President of India, Rajendra Prasad, was invited to Ceylon to inaugurate the Vidyalankara University, an institution for higher Buddhist ecclesiastical studies at Kelaniya. The matter of the stateless was broached unofficially on this occasion. Ceylon's Prime Minister, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike assured the Indian President that the problem of the people of Indian origin in Ceylon "would be resolved in a human and humane

way,"<sup>189</sup> but he warned that it would take time.

Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike having succeeded her husband as Prime Minister made her first state visit to India in December-January, 1960-1961. Neither she nor Nehru pressed the subject. Upon returning to Colombo, Mrs. Bandaranaike indicated that an official delegation would leave for Delhi for a round of preliminary talks on the matter of Indian estate labor in Ceylon. These preliminaries were to be followed by a ministerial delegation at a later date. Implementation of these plans failed to materialize.

Ceylon approached the Indian Government in July, 1962, with a rather unusual proposition. It requested a loan for financing a scheme<sup>190</sup> whereby the Ceylon government would make an outright financial gift to all families of Indian origin who permanently left Ceylon and returned to India. Each family would receive the sum of Rs. 2,500 (approx. US\$500). No official estimate was made public as to the exact amount involved in the request. Unofficially, it was said to be in the neighborhood of Rs. 40 crores<sup>191</sup> (approx. US\$80 million). The Hindu Weekly Review said that calculated "at the rate of Rs. 2,500 per family, Ceylon would need about Rs. 40 crores to repatriate the entire Indian population of Ceylon."<sup>192</sup> New Delhi merely verified receipt of the proposal. It was said at the

<sup>189</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, July 20, 1959, p. 16.

<sup>190</sup>This was the first of two payment plans which made gratuity payments. In the second of these, the maximum amount was reduced to Rs. 1,000. This one did not involve a loan request. The details of this one appears earlier here in Chapter III, pp. 88-89.

<sup>191</sup>One crore = 10 million rupees, approximately US\$2 million.

<sup>192</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, July 23, 1962, p. 2.

time that "the proposal [was] so preposterous it must have been returned without acknowledgment."<sup>193</sup>

In Colombo, meanwhile, there was a crop of rumors that talks between the two governments had reached an advanced stage. New Delhi promptly denied it. Speculations that a settlement was in the offing were rooted perhaps in Nehru's acceptance of an invitation to visit Ceylon to dedicate the Asian Ayurvedic Research Institute, a memorial to the former Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. During this official visit, Nehru invited the Ceylon Prime Minister to Delhi for more negotiations. The invitation, said Nehru, had been based on the fact that

The Government of India feels that the stateless persons in Ceylon are basically the responsibility of the Ceylon government, but it [India] has always been willing to discuss the matter with the Government of Ceylon in order to help the latter reach a satisfactory solution to the problem.<sup>194</sup>

By the mid-1960s, the solution seemed as distant and transcendental as a decade before. After Nehru's death in 1964, his successor Lal Bahadur Shastri reopened the files on the "stateless" question with an invitation to Sirimavo Bandaranaike for renewed negotiations. These were held the latter part of October, 1964, in New Delhi. Signatures were affixed to a new Indo-Ceylon agreement whereby Ceylon has agreed to give full citizenship rights to 300 thousand persons and their natural increase; India has agreed to absorb 525 thousand and their natural increase. This is to take place over the next fifteen years but the details, it appears, have not as yet been decided upon. There will still remain

<sup>193</sup>Ibid.

<sup>194</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, December 16, 1963, p. 13.

more than 150 thousand people whose fate is yet to be determined since, for one reason or the other, they do not fall within specific categories.

An exchange of letters between the two governments verified the agreement.

The relevant sections read as follows:

300,000 of these persons together with their natural increase in that number will be granted Ceylon citizenship by the Government of Ceylon; the Government of India will accept repatriation to India of 525,000 of these persons together with the natural increase in that number. The Government of India will confer citizenship on these persons.

The status and future of the remaining 150,000 of these persons will be subject matter of a separate agreement between the two Governments.<sup>195</sup>

In Ceylon, the pact was greeted with mixed emotions. The Ceylon Prime Minister upon her return to Colombo was accorded a vote of thanks in Parliament by her government supporters, who declared that "all honour and praise must go to the Prime Minister for solving a problem which had baffled her predecessors, and her name should go down in history in letters of gold".<sup>196</sup> The Ceylon Weekly Times commented in rather biting fashion that

Judging from such outbursts of joy, somebody who did not know the sober facts might well come to the conclusion that the last unwanted Indian had been sent packing, and the population now consisted solely of Ceylonese citizens, without one stateless individual to mar their joy.<sup>197</sup>

The "outburst of joy" was perhaps a little premature. The Prime Minister cautioned the Senate that the signing did not mean that the problem had been solved, and that the closest cooperation and collaboration was essential for the successful implementation. Clause 10 of the Agree-

<sup>195</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Nov. 4, 1964, p. 1.

<sup>196</sup>Ibid., Nov. 25, 1964, p. 7.

<sup>197</sup>Ibid.



ment outlines the machinery for implementation of the Pact. Two registers are to be prepared, one containing the names of the persons to whom Ceylon citizenship will be granted, the other the names of persons to whom India will grant citizenship. The lists are to be exchanged periodically between the governments. Delegations from India and Ceylon met in Colombo December 15-19 to work out the details in preparing the registers.

There is a great deal of pessimism as to the procedure and, for that matter, as to the entire plan. It is grounded in the historical fact that no wholly satisfactory solution has ever been offered. The 1954 detente proved itself illusory because it became bogged down at the administrative level and the avoidance of this is essential in the present agreement. It is, of course, one thing to reach an accord at the political level, quite a different matter to work out the details at the administrative level in the spirit of goodwill and accommodation. Whether or not India and Ceylon will reach mutual accord on the basis of the human aspect, or whether the two will argue over the legal points, is the undetermined quantum of the future implementation of the 1964 Pact.

The Indian government has repeatedly stated that it is an internal affair of Ceylon, and that India has no intention of meddling in the internal affairs of her southern neighbor. The fact is that India does not want, nor can ill afford, the addition of hundreds of thousands of people to her population through immigration. The problem of rehabilitation would be staggering. Ceylon, on the other hand, knows well that the matter unsolved mainly through an emigration process, protands a continuing explosive social situation which again might produce the excesses of the Sinhalese verses Tamil brutalities of 1958. The aims of both

governments is to limit as far as possible the number to whom citizenship will be granted. Figures made public in September, 1964, indicate that over a ten-year period some 134 thousand people of Indian origin had been granted Ceylon citizenship, while India had accepted thirty thousand, an infinitesimally small portion of the approximate 975 thousand people in question. Certainly, a more mutual accommodation must be made if ever a satisfactory solution is to be realized, taking into account the human aspect. These people are victims of history and, through no fault of their own, have become pawns in an international game. Pertinent to the present agreement, these questions must be answered: what criteria is to be used for deciding who is to belong to the 300,000 in Ceylon and the 525,000 in India? Who goes into the 150,000 whose status is still to be determined? What will happen if these people refuse to be pushed around? What happens if either Ceylon or India fail in its share of the obligations?

The "stateless" issue is the major friction area in Ceylon-India external relations. There have been other points of dispute, but none have ever reached a point of creating tension as that word is commonly used to denote a high degree of discord. Amity centers in the mutual sympathies for common problems, historical, and cultural ties. It is common for delegations from Colombo and New Delhi representing trade, cultural, and religious interests to cross and recross the Palk Strait, and be accorded the red-carpet treatment in the respective capitals. As an expression of goodwill, the Ceylon government appropriated Rs. 300 thousand for construction of a rest house for Buddhist pilgrims near the New Delhi railway station. At its official opening in November, 1960, Nehru paid glowing tribute to the solidarity of peace, friendship, and cooperation between the

two countries. To enlarge upon and make more manifest this spirit of harmony, the Indo-Ceylon Friendship Association was inaugurated the following October with words of delirious enthusiasum that together the two countries would always go forward arm-in-arm then and thereafter.

In Ceylon's relations with the U.S.S.R., there is nothing of particular interest. Between June, 1948, and December, 1955, the Soviet Union was responsible for preventing Ceylon's membership in the United Nations. The U.S.S.R. chose to veto in the Security Council the application of a number of countries which included Ceylon. It was a matter of East-West parity in voting strength within the General Assembly. Something of a "bloc-balance" had materialized by 1955.

For the past decade, the economic cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and Ceylon has been gradually strengthened through economic aid and technical assistance; in the cultural field, exhibitions, literature, science, health and education programs have contributed to the friendship. Politically, there is a common outlook toward peaceful coexistence reaffirmed during the Prime Minister's twenty-two day state visit to Moscow in October, 1963. Press coverage noted agreement on general disarmament and banning of testing of nuclear devices, and the

Strengthening of European security together with elimination of remnants of World War II, the conclusion of nonaggression pacts individually between the states and between the NATO countries and the Warsaw Treaty countries, and establishment of denuclearized zones in various parts of the world . . .<sup>198</sup>

The Soviet airline Aeroflot has been granted permission to use Ceylon airfields on its service between Moscow and Jakarta, and Buddhist monks make

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<sup>198</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Nov. 6, 1953, p. 3.

periodic visits to the Soviet Union and are always graciously received.

Panchshila has been the guiding spirit in international relations between Asian governments since Chou En-lai enunciated it at Bandung. The West has discounted it as pure propaganda -- still the impact of the Five Principles has been quite significant. Through Panchshila, Peking has attempted

To appeal to deep and widespread currents of feeling prevalent in much of Asia; anticolonialism and anti-Westernism; the desire to be left alone to concentrate on urgent domestic problems; a sense of weakness; a sincere desire for peace; a conviction that military alliances and bases increase rather than decrease the chances of conflict, a feeling that Asians have common bonds which they do not share with the West; and a belief in the desirability of nonalignment and the possibility of avoiding involvement in struggles among the great powers.<sup>199</sup>

Supposedly, the Five Principles are the guidelines for Peking's conduct in foreign affairs. Certainly they hold an extraordinary place for Ceylon as the basis for its diplomacy as emphasized at the time of the Chinese incursion into Tibet in 1959. In this episode, there was no question that Ceylon held natural concern for the suffering inflicted upon the lamas and the damage to monasteries in light of the religious ties with Tibetan Buddhism. But it was also the time of Indian influence over Ceylon diplomacy. Nehru took the position that the China-Tibet matter was an internal affair and instructed India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations that India accepted this premise. Ceylon adopted the same posture, instructing its mission accordingly. Prime Minister S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike told his House of Representatives that he "would not resist the conclusion that the Tibetan affair must be looked upon fundamentally

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<sup>199</sup>A. Doak Barnett, Communist China and Asia (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1960), p.101.

as an internal question of China."<sup>200</sup> And by way of elaboration, he said:

Legalistically, I do not think it could be seriously contested that Tibet is an internal affair of China. It is difficult to contest that position. I do not know what has happened there. But it seems to me that in carrying out the provisions of the Sino-Tibetan agreement of 1951, the Chinese pursued the objective of bringing Tibet into line with the rest of the area under Chinese influence and suzerainty and reducing Tibet to the same pattern as the rest of China.<sup>201</sup>

Ceylon's Ambassador to Moscow, G.P. Malalasekera, who was also President of the World Buddhist Fellowship, upon an invitation from Chou En-lai, paid personal calls upon the Chinese Premier in Peking and the Panchen Lama in Lhasa. He accepted the Chinese version while receiving solemn assurances that Buddhist rights would be protected. He was assured there was no intention of destroying the Buddhist regime in Tibet, and that the preachings of the philosophy would not be replaced by the Communist doctrine.

Ceylon's posture toward the China-India dispute followed almost exactly the same line as in the Sino-Tibetan matter. Whatever official criticism had been levelled at China was in no way a rebuke to that country, nor did it have a ring of sympathy for India. Rather, it was the premise that two major Asian countries were involved in something with the potential of a major military conflict. It was this possibility which was the basis for conference<sup>202</sup> at Colombo and an invitation to the Chinese Premier to visit Ceylon, which he accepted. Chou En-lai stopped in

<sup>200</sup>Ceylon, Ministry of Information, Ceylon News-Letter, May 12, 1959.

<sup>201</sup>Ibid.

<sup>202</sup>Below

Colombo on February 27-28, on the return journey from his tour of African countries, a sojourn which had created a great deal of interest in most world capitals. It was no secret that Peking was undertaking an ideological offensive in Africa directed at both the West and the Soviet Union. The anticolonial zeitgeist was regarded in many quarters as ideally suited to China's revolutionary line, and the instability of the African continent, where pro-Chinese elements were easily identifiable, indicated that China and Chinese ideas could have much political and emotional appeal.

From Ceylon's viewpoint however, Chou's visit to the island had a more parochial interest. It gave the government an opportunity to probe for a new approach in settling the India-China border problem. But it also offered the opportunity to discuss cultural and economic relations between Ceylon and The People's Republic of China. Chou had made his first state visit to Ceylon in 1957. Ceylon had recognized the Peking government in 1950, however, diplomatic relations were not established until 1956.<sup>203</sup> In this interim, a fairly large number of trade arrangements had been made involving, for the most part, the bartering of Ceylon rubber for China's rice.<sup>204</sup> The volume of trade had grown over the years, economic assistance which Peking made has increased, cultural exchanges have played a significant role, and international visits by Buddhist organizations have become commonplace.

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<sup>203</sup>The first Ceylon Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to China was Wilmot Abraham Perera. He arrived in Peking April 3, 1957. Currently, the post is held by Stephen Frederick de Silva who arrived in Peking on September 10, 1964.

<sup>204</sup>Ceylon's trade relations with China has been discussed in Chapter IV.

The text of the joint communique issued at the conclusion of Chou's visit stated opposition to colonialism in all forms and manifestations; that the newly independent countries should be aided in their endeavors to gain full economic independence as rapidly as possible; that the Premier and Prime Minister were of the view that aid should be given "without any political conditions or privileges, and on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, respect for sovereignty of the recipient countries, and non-interference in international affairs."<sup>205</sup> Mrs. Bandaranaike pledged her government's continued support for the "restoration of the People's Republic of China of its legitimate rights in the United Nations,"<sup>206</sup> and together they supported the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. On the matter of the Sino-Indian border dispute,

The two Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction that the situation along the Sino-Indian border had eased. The Chinese premier expressed thanks to Ceylon and the other Colombo Conference nations for their efforts of mediation between China and India, and expressed readiness to continue to seek direct negotiations with India on the basis of the Colombo Proposals for a peaceful settlement of the Sino-Indian boundary question. The Ceylon Prime Minister indicated that, together with the other Colombo Conference nations, Ceylon would continue her efforts to promote Sino-Indian reconciliation.<sup>207</sup>

The two state visits, 1957 and 1964, by Chou En-lai have been perhaps the outstanding feature of a decade of foreign relations between Ceylon and the People's Republic of China. Panchshila has been the base for mutual accommodation. Hardly would economic and cultural relations,

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<sup>205</sup>The text of the communique may be found in the Ceylon Sunday Observer, March 1, 1964, p. 1.

<sup>206</sup>Ibid.

<sup>207</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

which form the bulk of the relationship, be expected to create any major differences. However, aside from the official protocol which welcomed the Chinese Premier, unofficial sources noted a contrast between 1964 and 1957. The Ceylon Weekly Times said that

Much water has flowed since the Chinese Premier's last visit and the armed escort with which he is being provided for the duration of his stay . . . is perhaps the grimmest reminder of the swift transition that has taken place in the interval. There was . . . a touch of hero worship in the big welcome which the people of Ceylon accorded the Chinese Premier in 1957, a genuine warmth and spontaneity which may not be recaptured in the altered circumstances of the present time.<sup>208</sup>

What the future holds in the way of Sino-Ceylon foreign relations is a matter of conjecture. It seems unlikely that any great changes will come about, and nothing to the present time indicates that Peking has attempted to interfere with internal politics in Ceylon. The cultural ties, notably with Buddhism, have sustained the aura of friendship and cooperation. Nevertheless, the breach between Ceylon's Leftist organizations, respectively oriented toward Moscow and Peking, have created some tremors within the political structure and these, coupled with China's incursion of India's border, has put China in a different and rather uncomplimentary view.

#### The Colombo Proposals

The attitude of the average Ceylonese to the October, 1962 crossing of Chinese troops into Indian territory was one of dismay. Ceylon found itself in a dilemma. The episode was viewed with alarm as it had the making of a cataclysm in Asia. Officially, Ceylon made immediate

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<sup>208</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Feb. 26, 1964, p. 6.



overtures to both China and India offering itself as mediator in the dispute. Unofficially, it adopted the view that Peking was guilty of opportunist policies, of marching first and agreeing to talk afterwards. "Talk afterward" materialized in the Colombo Proposals in which Ceylon's Prime Minister, played a significant role, adding stature to Ceylon's declared policy of nonalignment.

By way of historical recapitulation, on October 20, 1962, Chinese troops commenced a relatively large scale attack on Indian border defense posts in the eastern and western sectors of India. The official statement regarding the attack as released by New Delhi read as follows:

The Chinese on October 19 night fired heavily on one of our posts in NEFA for about one hour. At about five in the morning (October 20) they opened with heavy mortars and machine gun fire and attacked in large numbers all our forward posts in Khigzemane and Dhola post area. Very heavy fighting is going on. The Chinese have concentrated very large forces in that area and they are being thrown into the attack.

Simultaneously on the western side on October 20 morning, the Chinese have launched attacks on our posts in the northern sector of Ladakh. Heavy fighting is also going on in this area. Supply dropping planes have on October 20 morning been attacked both in Ladakh and NEFA, but they have successfully returned to base. Chinese attacks in NEFA and Ladakh were premediated and concerted.<sup>209</sup>

This incident was the most serious in a long series of border crossings by the Chinese into Indian-held territory. In June, 1955, India had protested the unauthorized camping of a scouting party at Barahoti; in September of the same year, Chinese troops had moved into the area of Damzan. Both sites are in the northern reaches of the state of Uttar Pradesh. Since then, according to Indian sources, some forty different incursions had been made. Each occasion drew the usual diplomatic note

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<sup>209</sup>Embassy of India, Indiagram, No. 199, October 22, 1962.

of protest from New Delhi to Peking, the latter responding with denials and countercharges. The core of the issue is interpretation of boundaries on a series of maps, the lines of demarcations of which bring into dispute territorial claims. India relies upon maps of British origin with the distinctly drawn McMahon Line. China denies the validity of these, basing its claims on those maps held as legal by the Chiang Kai-shek government prior to 1950. China has never accepted the McMahon Line<sup>210</sup> as demarcation. Be that as it may, there is no reason to suppose that the border incidents were part of a purely territorial claim by China. In the larger context, it was an episode to give awareness to India of the existence of a major power on her borders. In world strategy, it was a reminder of the existence of that power, as well as a process, for influencing those countries along China's long frontiers.

Ceylon sent an immediate plea to Peking to desist from any further incidents. There is no way to determine what influence this may have had, but Peking declared a unilateral ceasefire on November 20, and followed with a withdrawal of troops. Ceylon, in turn, had followed its ceasefire appeal with the calling of an Asian "Little Summit" of nonaligned countries.

The Colombo Conference of 1962 opened on December 10, with delegations from Burma, Cambodia, Ghana, Indonesia, the United Arab Republic

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<sup>210</sup>The McMahon Line delimits the traditional northeast boundary of India with Tibet. It derives its name from Sir Henry McMahon, the British Plenipotentiary to the tripartite Simla Convention in 1913-1914, formalized by the Indo-Tibetan Agreements of March 24-25, 1914 and the Indo-Tibetan Convention of July, 1914. There is also a Burmese section of the Line however which to the present time at least the Chinese have accepted without the slightest modification. They have branded the India-China section as illegal and make claim to roughly 33,000 square miles of Indian territory south of the traditional line.

and, of course, Ceylon.<sup>211</sup> The purpose was not to consider the right or wrong of the problem, the merits or demerits. The Conference was held to provide a meeting ground for the exchange of views which, hopefully, would result in direct negotiations between the antagonists and lead to a peaceful settlement. Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike summed up the intentions of the Conference in these words:

We offer our good offices as friends to both sides in this conflict because we consider that any dispute however serious it may be and vital to the countries concerned is still not serious enough to justify a resort to war and the abandonment of our principles.<sup>212</sup>

Subandrio of Indonesia noted that the conflict "may well affect one thousand million people . . . affect African and Asian . . . and affect the entire Afro-Asian political structure."<sup>213</sup> Ne Win of Burma cautioned that the Conference must

Refrain from making any attempt to pass judgment in any way on the rights or wrongs, merits or demerits of the positions, being adhered to by the two parties to the dispute because if we tried to do that we should not only be compromising our positions as friendly and impartial neutrals and should therefore be doing a grievous disservice not only to ourselves and the cause of our endeavors, but, in the large sense, to India as well.<sup>214</sup>

An ad hoc committee was made up of delegates from Burma, Indonesia, and the U.A.R. to draft a set of proposals. These were transmitted to New Delhi and Peking for study prior to the arrival of the conference's

<sup>211</sup>Leading the delegations were: Ne Win, Pres. of the Revolutionary Council of Burma; Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, Dr. Subandrio, for Minister of Indonesia; Ghana's Minister of Justice, Kofi Asante Ofori-Atta; Ali Sabri, Pres. of the Council, UAR, and Prime Minister Bandaranaike of Ceylon.

<sup>212</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, Dec. 17, 1962, p. 2.

<sup>213</sup>Ibid.

<sup>214</sup>Ibid.

emissary, the Ceylon Prime Minister. These offered no final solution. They were to serve merely as a guide for direct negotiations. The substance of the proposals was roughly this: Chinese forces were to withdraw to those positions which had been held prior to the October 20 incursion. India's troops would remain at the line to which they had been pushed in the Ladakh area. This would create a demilitarized buffer zone of twelve-and-a-half miles, to be administered by civilian posts on both sides. The McMahon Line, in the eastern sector, would serve as a cease-fire boundary. In the northern, or middle, sector, with its string of buffer states, the border problem would be solved through peaceful means. Compliance with these points would amount, in effect, to the status quo antibellum. Negotiations between India and China could then proceed in an atmosphere as if nothing had happened.

New Delhi found the Proposals to be generally acceptable. It agreed in principal in the interest of peace but reminded the Colombo emissary<sup>215</sup> that China's failure to accept the proposals in toto would negate any possibility of discussing settlement. The suggestions made by the Colombo Conference were largely identical with those which Chou En-lai had made earlier to Nehru in a diplomatic note. Madame Bandaranaike presented the plan to Peking in early January, 1963. China found the proposals unacceptable. Vice-premier Po-I-Po termed them inequitable, inconsistent, unreasonable, and impractical. He claimed there were differing

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<sup>215</sup>The Prime Minister of Ceylon as the official emissary was accompanied on her missions by her Minister without Portfolio and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Defense and External Affairs, Felix R. Dias Bandaranaike, the Ambassador of Ceylon in China, A. B. Perera, and the Ambassador of Ceylon in Burma, G.S. Peiris. Felix Dias Bandaranaike is the nephew of the Prime Minister. Also among the official party was Mr. Ali Sabri (UAR) and Mr. Ofori-Atta (Ghana).

interpretations; but said these could be reconciled at the conference table. China suggested also that the conference reconvene and work toward a new formula for direct Sino-Indian talks. This idea found little favor among the participants. India flatly rejected this on the basis that China must first accept the old set of proposals before India would accept any new ones.

Over a two year period, to the end of 1964, nothing has been added to or subtracted from the dispute. Periodically, India accuses China of sporadic border violations. Peking flatly denies this. India has also made the charge that Chinese troops are concentrating in the Himalayan border of the small Indian protectorate state of Sikkim. Peking had replied "rubbish" -- or words to that effect. Meanwhile, the Colombo Conference participants, individually and collectively, continue to seek new avenues toward solution, having been given some encouragement in their efforts by a pledge from both antagonists that nothing would be done to further a deterioration of their relations. It need hardly be said that the situation remains far from stable.

An indictment of China by Ceylon would have served little purpose. It was forced to weigh its action in the context of the political and economic influence to which Ceylon is subject on the basis of power structures. The government did not try to hide the fact that in its opinion perhaps the wiser course for China would have been negotiations rather than military means; but once the deed had been done, there was nothing to be gained by condemnation. Nevertheless, from a variety of quarters in Ceylon had come expressions that the burden of proof to justify the incursions of Indian territory rested squarely with Peking. There were

public pleas to China not to take further steps which would drive India to the point of triggering an Asian war. Ceylon's press said that the disputed McMahon Line had been in existence for a long time, and that if China had any reason to demand a revision, the proper course would have been friendly negotiations. The Trotskyist party viewed the whole affair as a major disaster for the cause of Asian solidarity and the loss by China of much goodwill throughout Asia. The United National Party held that China was completely wrong in the matter and that the UNP would lend moral support to India, and accusing China's leaders of having trampled the letter and spirit of Panchshila.

The Colombo Conference, and Ceylon's attempt at mediation, had both positive and negative aspects. On the positive side, the proposals and mediation efforts were instrumental in maintaining a ceasefire in the NEFA and Ladakh areas. And, for the first time ever, a group of nonaligned countries took the lead in international mediation efforts to deal with major questions in the absence of India and wherein major Asian powers were involved. This could indicate a strikingly new role for the non-aligned community to future international quarrels. The conference was a manifestation of unity of purpose.

But, negatively, there was a lack of unity of approach. To be sure, the six-nation participants directed their efforts toward peace and, hopefully, a renewal of friendship between China and India. But the approach was hardly more than cautious compromise between the differing interests of those countries at the conference table. They could not divorce the problem from their own national interests; nor could they overlook the real comparative strengths, economic and military, of the

disputants. The United Arab Republic was alone among the conferees in openly defending India's position. It held out for a body of principles which would enable the disputing parties to meet face-to-face, at the same time drawing from both China and India some pledge that no further conquest would be made for territorial gains. Indonesia's primary interest was the maintaining of Afro-Asian solidarity; its large Chinese population has its share of Chinese Communist party members and these, working closely with the Communist Party of Indonesia, have become a rather powerful factor in Indonesia politics. Cambodia and Burma were conscious, and obviously so, of their powerful neighbor; neither could afford to risk military or economic pressures from Peking. Ghana viewed the conference in the context of the impact it could have on its own internal political situation. And the internal position was also of primary interest to Ceylon added, of course, to that ever important consideration of saving the philosophy of nonalignment. These varying points of view, each based upon a parochial interest, explain the failure of the Colombo countries to deliver individual and collective judgments openly.

#### Oil and the United States

Until 1962, for most Americans, Ceylon had been simply one of those far away places to which armchair adventurers roamed by way of pictorial magazine articles, a tiny speck on the world map, of little consequence in the American scheme of things. Personnel of America's armed forces had visited the island briefly during the war, bringing back descriptions of the land and people. The United States news media occasionally has brought to its publics sketchy coverage of miscellany events.

Politically, the United States established diplomatic relations with Ceylon concurrent with the latter's independence, appointing as its first ambassador

The hapless Maxwell H. Gluck of Manhattan, who, shortly before his departure for Ceylon, won nationwide jeers -- and new U.S. fame for Bandaranaike -- by admitting to the Senate that he could not 'call off' the Ceylonese Prime Minister's name.<sup>216</sup>

Since the early 1920s, American interests have poured relatively large amounts of capital into Ceylon for petroleum processing and distribution installations, and retail outlets. In 1961, notification of an impending takeover by the Ceylon government of these petroleum facilities was given Caltex (Ceylon) Ltd., Esso Standard Eastern, and British Shell International Petroleum.<sup>217</sup> The three companies had shared between them all import and distribution of the island's petroleum products for roughly forty years. "Before the takeover of assets, the markets in oil products was shared by the oil companies in proportion of approximately sixty percent by Shell, twenty percent by Caltex, and twenty percent by Esso".<sup>218</sup> The volume of Ceylon business was put at approximately five million barrels of petroleum products annually for Shell, 1.5 million barrels for Caltex and Esso respectively. It was an argument over oil which set Ceylon on a collision course with the United States.

The expropriation of the petroleum facilities was a part of the

<sup>216</sup>Time, Oct. 5, 1959, p. 32n.

<sup>217</sup>Caltex (Ceylon) Ltd., is a subsidiary of the California Texas Oil Corporation, owned jointly by Texaco, Inc., and Standard Oil Company of California; Esso Eastern is an affiliate of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey; the Shell Company of Ceylon is owned jointly by the Royal Dutch Shell Group and British Petroleum Company.

<sup>218</sup>"Ceylon's Dilemma", Far Eastern Economic Review, p. 211.



Ceylonization process. The political swing to democratic socialism in 1956 had left little doubt as to the possibility that foreign concerns in Ceylon would be nationalized. There was no reason to suppose that American assets would be by-passed. There was, then, at least some forewarning that American private investments would eventually become targets.<sup>219</sup> The notification of takeover intent was followed by the formation of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), a government owned and operated enterprise with the powers of expropriation. On April 28, 1962, the government announced that it was assuming ownership of 108 petrol service stations (58 Shell, 29 Caltex, 21 Esso), and followed this on May 11, by expropriating an additional thirty-five stations. The CPC eventually acquired 262 of the 525 service stations, formerly the properties of the oil companies, and arranged with the People's Bank and the Bank of Ceylon to give financial assistance to service station operators who wished to acquire the remainder, or 263, thereby making them quasi-independent owners. On May 15, pipelines, bunkering equipment, and distribution centers became the property of the CPC. The government said that since the oil companies would be losing approximately thirty percent of their business to the CPC, they no longer would require their full establishments, and that it would be a waste of money for the state corporation to organize completely new physical plants. Caltex with \$1 million worth of property in and near Colombo, said in London that the takeover had been carried out "to put

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<sup>219</sup>Perhaps the story of the nationalizing of foreign assets should be related in the chapter on "Resources", however, because of the international political implications between the U.S. and Ceylon, it seemed more appropriate to incorporate it in this chapter.

the government-owned Ceylon Petroleum Corporation in business."<sup>220</sup> This brought a retort from a spokesman at Ceylon's Embassy in London to the effect that only a small portion of the facilities were involved "and there was nothing to stop the company from carrying on."<sup>221</sup>

The companies could continue to sell oil in Ceylon, however, the import price had to be fixed upon cost, insurance, and freight (C.I.F.) plus five percent. Later, this "plus five percent" provision was cancelled leaving the alternatives of supplying more oil at cheaper rates or less oil at higher prices. The companies argued that they were already supplying products from the least expensive source, the Arabian Gulf.

Concurrent with the formation of the State Corporation, Ceylon entered a long-term barter plan with the Soviet Union, Rumania, and the United Arab Republic; oil for Ceylon exports. The new suppliers agreed upon a price of thirty-eight cents a gallon in selling to the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation; Caltex and Esso had set their cost alone at forty-eight cents per gallon. The Ceylon government estimated that at the price the Corporation would pay, there would be an annual saving of Rs. 22 million (approximately \$4.6 million) in foreign exchange.

The seizure of the properties produced an international storm between the United States and Ceylon. Economic facts were largely glossed over by the American news media in preference to what was generally termed

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<sup>220</sup>London Daily Express, May 15, 1962, p. 1.

<sup>221</sup>Ibid.

the Soviet oil offensive outside Europe.<sup>222</sup> The New York Journal American accused Ceylon of taking "U.S. \$ and property to help Russia."<sup>223</sup> The New York Times said that "Ceylon furnishes a good example of how easily and cheaply the Soviet Union may take over an established oil market from the big international petroleum companies."<sup>224</sup> The Los Angeles Herald Examiner editorialized that the affair "was not only an outrage against the companies but also against the American taxpayer."<sup>225</sup> An Associated Press dispatch of May 15, 1962 termed it a Ceylon-Russia plot. And in Congress, the line was taken that the seizure was an outrage, that the Government of the United States ought to take whatever steps were necessary to return the oil companies to the rightful owners.<sup>226</sup>

British assets were involved also. But Whitehall, having far more experience in matters such as this, adopted a more moderate attitude. The British press took a low-key approach. Said the London Times,

The fears expressed by the oil companies locally regarding oil suppliers from Russia were not subscribed to by their parent companies. The Corporation has signed an agreement with the Soviet export organization for supply of whatever oil Ceylon required until January, 1967 by which time Ceylon would have established its own refinery.<sup>227</sup>

The question of continued economic assistance to Ceylon was tied

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<sup>222</sup>See Congressional Record, 87th Cong., 2nd Sess, May 15, 1962, p. 7731.

<sup>223</sup>New York Journal American, May 23, 1962, p. 47.

<sup>224</sup>New York Times, June 17, 1962, p. 11.

<sup>225</sup>Los Angeles Herald Examiner, June 29, 1962, p. 17.

<sup>226</sup>See, for example, the speech by the Hon. John H. Rousselot (Calif.) in the House of Representatives on July 9, 1962, in the Congressional Record, 87th Cong., 2nd Sess., July 10, 1962, p. A5211.

<sup>227</sup>London Times, Feb. 27, 1963, p. 7c.

to oil during Congressional debate on the 1962 Foreign Aid Bill. Congress attached the Hickenlooper Amendment requiring the President to halt U.S. assistance to those countries which expropriate American property outright without adequate compensation, or through creeping expropriation tactics such as discriminatory taxation or operating restrictions.<sup>228</sup> The U.S. Ambassador in Ceylon, Miss Francis Willis, warned that American aid might be halted unless compensation was speedily given. The Prime Minister informed the Ambassador that the best form of aid the United States could give to small nations like Ceylon was "to abstain from interfering in their internal affairs."<sup>229</sup>

Aid and assistance was officially suspended as of midnight February 7, 1963, after a seven day extension of the original cutoff date, February 1. During that week, negotiations had looked rather promising but finally collapsed. Washington's decision was conveyed to Government House in Ceylon. The note said that the steps taken toward settlement were not regarded by the United States as sufficient, that the United States was required by law to suspend aid, but that it was prepared to consider negotiated settlement or submission to arbitration providing there was adequate assurance compensation would be in accordance with international law.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>228</sup>The Amendment gives considerable discretion to the President but in general provides that no foreign aid shall be given those countries which have expropriated American properties after Jan. 1, 1962 without adequate payments or without arrangement for prompt payment.

<sup>229</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, July 23, 1962, p. 15.

<sup>230</sup>See "United States Suspends Aid to Ceylon", Dept. of State Bulletin, March 4, 1963, p. 328. Also "Suspended Aid to Ceylon", Far Eastern Economic Review, Feb. 21, 1963, p. 409.

The Prime Minister said that "Ceylon would not barter its freedom for United States aid,"<sup>231</sup> and that the Government of Ceylon had

No option but to call off the negotiations with the oil companies and to proceed in strict accordance with the provisions of the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation Act. The Government of Ceylon must show as much respect for the laws of its Parliament as the United States Government feels obliged to accord its own laws.

.....  
 If there is a lesson that the people of [the] country must draw from this experience, it is that they must rely on their own endeavors and on their own resources in the main to promote the economic development of their country. The loss of United States aid would necessitate curtailment of [the] programme of economic development unless the people of this country [were] prepared to make the necessary sacrifice to continue with that programme in undiminished measure.<sup>232</sup>

Ceylon's Washington Charge d'Affaires, Jan O. N. Paulusz, denied that his country was trying to dodge settlement. Pointing out that the companies had not submitted their claims until January 24, he said it was "insufficient time for mutually satisfactory arrangements".<sup>233</sup> He added that there would have been criticism of the government if it "had been stampeded into a settlement."<sup>234</sup> Indeed there would have been. In March, political opposition accused the government of succumbing to blackmail by permitting the companies to continue any type of operations. There were demonstrations against the United States; and placards read "Yankee no, Ceylon yes", "Peace Corps, Leave us in peace", and "Willis ain't willing and we don't want Aunty Willis."

One obstacle toward compensation agreement was the interpretation

<sup>231</sup>Ceylon Sunday Observer, Feb. 3, 1963, p. 2.

<sup>232</sup>"Suspended Aid to Ceylon", Far Eastern Economic Review, pp. 409-410.

<sup>233</sup>New York Times, February 9, 1963, p. 2.

<sup>234</sup>Ibid.

of the word "adequate". AID Director Bell said the Government of Ceylon "had failed to offer adequate compensation."<sup>235</sup> But what exactly was meant by adequate compensation? It was the question of differences in property value estimates made by the companies and the Ceylon government. Caltex said its property was worth Rs. 9.25 million (US\$1.942 million), Esso claimed Rs. 7.05 million (US\$1.48 million) while British Shell set its figure at Rs. 24 million (US\$5 million),<sup>236</sup> for a total of Rs. 40.3 million (US\$8.5 million). The CPC placed a total value of Rs. 12 million (US\$2.52 million) on the three, thus a difference of approximately US\$6 million.

In early 1961, the Ceylon Parliament had passed a law under which all property evaluations were to be made on the worth of physical assets only, without regard to goodwill or other considerations. Where there were disagreements, the parties could submit the dispute to a tribunal appointed by the Governor-General. The decision of the tribunal is final; there is no recourse to higher courts. The American companies refused to accept the compensation figures offered by Ceylon, nor would they submit the matter to the tribunal.<sup>237</sup> They insisted upon a settlement according to standards dictated by international law. Late in 1964, the matter of

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<sup>235</sup>Ibid.

<sup>236</sup>The figures on the property value estimate vary in different sources. Those which appear here were taken from the Far Eastern Economic Review of February 14, 1963, p. 325. Rs. 1 equals US 21¢.

<sup>237</sup>The companies' attorneys challenged the legality of the compensation tribunal arguing that any tribunal wielding judicial powers must be appointed by the Judicial Service Commission whereas the ten man Oil Compensation Tribunal appointed by the government in September, 1963 was composed of members nominated by the then Minister of Commerce, Trade, and Industry, Mr. Maithripala Senanayake.

compensation had yet to be resolved. The CPC had offered to pay advances pending settlement. This had been rejected by Caltex and Esso because acceptance of partial payments might have jeopardized their case.

Major projects underway at the time of U.S. aid suspension included improvement of the Katunayake airport for use by jet aircraft, a malaria eradication program, construction of a science teachers' training college, building and equipping of a vocational training and trade testing center, and a traffic survey. Aid technicians were withdrawn during February, 1963, and on June 15 Washington ordered its Colombo assistance administrative offices closed.

The Voice of America and the Seventh Fleet have also been centers of controversy between Ceylon and the United States. The VOA has operated a transmitter on the island under an agreement which pre-dates 1956. Since 1960, arguments have increased against permitting the operation to continue.<sup>238</sup> The government has been urged to reconsider the present arrangements. The leader of the Marxist Lanka Sama Samaja Party, N.M. Perera, wants all "foreign reactionary organizations ejected from Ceylon",<sup>239</sup> Pieter Keuneman, the Communist Party spokesman maintains the VOA operation is "a clear breach of the declared nonaligned policy of the Government".<sup>240</sup> The United National Party has said the same facilities should be "granted

<sup>238</sup>The VOA has also been a center of political controversy in India. Negotiations were carried on between Washington and New Delhi from March to June, 1963, an agreement initialed. But details were unsatisfactory to New Delhi and in August, 1963, permission was refused by the Government of India. See the Hindu Weekly Review, August 19, 1963, p. 4.

<sup>239</sup>Ceylon Observer, Oct. 13, 1963, p. 1.

<sup>240</sup>Ibid.

to any foreign broadcasting organization, including Radio Moscow."<sup>241</sup>  
The future of the VOA in Ceylon is in doubt.

Further irritations were created by the U.S. Seventh Fleet in the Indian Ocean. The United States disclosed in December, 1963, the proposed cruise by certain ships, and requested of Ceylon the use of some port facilities. Specifically, the United States had requested clearance for the entry of the "Greenwich Bay" into the Port of Colombo. Ceylon queried the U.S. Department of State as to whether or not the Greenwich Bay carried nuclear weapons. Obviously, no answer was forthcoming since the declaration of a vessel's complement of armaments to a foreign country could conceivably be regarded as the disclosure of defense secrets. Ceylon rejected the clearance request.

In the foreign policy statement of January 24, 1964, in the Ceylon Senate, the Prime Minister explained her government's position. "In pursuance of the policy of the Government of Ceylon," said Mrs. Bandaranaike,

To oppose the further spread of nuclear weapons and to aid in the establishment of atom-free zones, my Government will, in the future deny entry into our seaports, airports and territorial waters of naval vessels and aircraft, carrying nuclear weapons as well as those equipped for nuclear warfare. . . . We appeal to the United States not to give effect to her intention to send naval vessels with nuclear capability to the Indian Ocean.<sup>242</sup>

The Ceylon Weekly Times said that

No nation in this area has sought the doubtful comfort of the presence of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, or of any foreign fleet, and none is likely to do so. If the Seventh Fleet must undertake a cruise or two, let these powerful ships with nuclear armaments use more familiar

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<sup>241</sup>Ibid.

<sup>242</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Jan. 29, 1964, p. 3.



waters where the U.S. Government has treaty obligations.

. . . . .  
 In view of the recent history and the ardent desire of nations in the area to be left completely out of the cold war, it would be tactless to try to show the U.S. flag in these regions. A U.S. fleet cruise would be as unwelcome as, say, a Red Fleet cruise, and we earnestly hope that, however peaceful the intention of the U.S. Government, it will not proceed with a plan which could only antagonize the nations of the region.<sup>243</sup>

The appeals were rejected by the United States. In April, 1964, a U.S. Navy carrier squadron quietly entered the Indian Ocean, marking the beginning of what was expected to be regular cruises by U.S. fleet units. The rejection of the appeals created a good deal of apprehension in Ceylon. Those who are, by political conviction, inclined to read sinister signs and motives into the least sign of American activities abroad saw the cruise as highly provocative leading to complications of one sort or the other, a threat to the independence of South-Southeast Asia countries, and an attempt to subvert the nonaligned and peaceful policies of those nations. In diplomatic circles, the question had arisen as to whether the policy in respect to the Greenwich Bay was applicable with regard to any nuclear powered or armed naval vessel or aircraft. The question was answered by the Prime Minister during the foreign policy debate of January 24.<sup>244</sup>

The controversy leaves little doubt that Ceylon will take the initiative in attempting the creation of a nuclear-free zone in the Indian Ocean area, an attempt which would be endorsed by the nonaligned states.

<sup>243</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>244</sup>In August, 1964, Ceylon's government decided against the use of its airports and seaports to American and British planes and ships going to Malaysia on military missions against Indonesia. Although Malaysia is a member of the Commonwealth, the decision resulted from the government's determination to preserve its policy of nonalignment.

The United Nations

Ceylon realized one of its fondest ambitions on December 15, 1955 with its admission to the United Nations. It has always regarded the U.N. as a positive factor for world peace and progress. Placing emphasis as it does on the value of moral force, Ceylon views this attribute as sufficiently strong today to be of considerable importance. Yet, at times Ceylon has questioned whether or not some governments have not diverted moral force -- both outside and within the organization -- into the selfish interest channels by constantly condemning other countries before the eyes of the world. These two premises -- recognition of the value of moral force and criticism of diverting this force -- have added additional strength to the nonalignment philosophy, and have set the guidelines for Ceylon's diplomatic relations within the United Nations. Ceylon predicates its position primarily on matters of colonialism, freedom of the individual, and movements which will safeguard international peace.

Ceylon has abstained from voting on issues where the term "aggressor" is stated or implied and will do so until such time as terms such as aggressor or aggression are defined by the international organization. To date, all attempts at definition have proven unsuccessful despite the efforts of the special 21-member committee established by the General Assembly on November 29, 1957.<sup>245</sup> In May, 1958, it was a sponsor and signatory of a resolution urging all governments to transmit reports to the General Assembly on steps taken by the individual governments to assure the pro-

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<sup>245</sup>Chronicle of the United Nations Activities, April 17, 1959, p. 1901. Ceylon was a member of the committee.

tection of human rights in their respective countries,<sup>246</sup> and a resolution which would assist in the "free flow of accurate and undistorted news and information",<sup>247</sup> among the developing countries.

On October 12, 1959, Ceylon together with twenty-four other countries abstained from voting on the procedural question as to whether the Sino-Tibetan matter should be made an agenda item in the General Assembly. Nine days later, it abstained again on the Malaya-Ireland Resolution which called for respect for the fundamental human rights of the Tibetan people and preservation of their distinctive cultural and religious life. Thus, the Government of Ceylon held strictly to a middle-of-the-road attitude. Whatever feelings it might have had in official circles, there was no expression of condemnation for the Chinese.

Ceylon has long championed the admission of the Chinese People's Republic to the U.N. It first became vocal on this subject at Bandung by suggesting a trusteeship for Formosa, either under the United Nations or the Colombo Powers, until such time as the Formosans were in a position to determine the type of government they desired. Ceylon brought before the General Assembly, in September, 1957, a proposal that the question of Formosa be placed in the hands of an ad hoc committee but that, in any case, a settlement carry with it the seating of the Chinese delegation. It urged direct United States-Chinese negotiations with a third party as mediator. In every session since 1956, Ceylon has favored China's membership. The government's attitude was succinctly set forth in the Weekly Times:

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<sup>246</sup>United Nations Review, V. 4, No. 11 (May, 1958), p. 29.

<sup>247</sup>Ibid., p. 60.

It is nonsense to try to pretend that Communist China does not exist. The People's Republic occupies an area of 3,768,100 square miles and has a population of about 700 million. By contrast, the "China" which the United States recognizes on the island of Taiwan has 13,890 square miles and a population under 12 million. It may for a time be inevitable that both "Chinas" should for a time be recognized by some powers, but it is surely the height of absurdity to try to ignore the most populous nation in the world whatever its ideology.<sup>248</sup>

In rebuttal to the United States' assertion that admission of China could only enhance Peking's ability to promote its announced goal of imposing communism through any means at hand, Ceylon takes the position that force and violence have been used also by non-communist countries throughout history, and that the U.S. policy of treating the world's largest nation as an outcast can only further irritate Peking.

During the discussions of the U.S.S.R.-Hungary episode, Ceylon served as a member of the special committee, along with Australia, Denmark, Tunisia, and Uruguay. The committee's report was made public in June of 1957. It declared that the uprising was spontaneous and that the U.S.S.R. had forcibly overthrown the legitimate government of Imre Nagy. Ceylon's representative, Ratnakirti S. S. Gunewardene<sup>249</sup> affixed his signature to the report. Immediately he faced severe criticism in Colombo. On July 2, the Ceylon Parliament moved a resolution of "No Confidence" in the Ambassador but the resolution was later withdrawn at the request of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike. Gunewardene defended his actions by saying that he had done his level best to be impartial during the committee's work, but that no sane man could have reached any other conclusion in face of the facts which obviated an overwhelming indictment of the U.S.S.R.

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<sup>248</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, Feb. 5, 1964, p. 6.

<sup>249</sup>Gunewardene was also Ambassador to the United States at this time.

Ceylon has been consistent in its efforts to bring about a degree of stability in Korea, an easing of tensions, and freer communications between the governments of the divided country. It recognizes that a de facto government exists above the 38th Parallel. It wants the U.N. to find some acceptable method which will enable all Koreans to meet as "kinsmen and as equals."<sup>250</sup> Ceylon seeks the withdrawal of all foreign military forces from Korea, and direct negotiations between the North and the South without the presence or help of any foreign country.

In the Egyptian-Israeli crisis, Ceylon's Ambassador Gunewardene in the General Assembly paid tribute to those member states which, in response to a resolution, ceased hostilities and withdrew their military force from Egyptian soil. He noted that the U.N. Emergency Force had been a significant factor in maintaining peace in that region. Yet, Gunewardene stressed that one of the major causes of tension in the Middle East was the rivalry between the two power blocs, and that alignment of countries through military pacts in any part of the world creates a climate of suspicion and distrust with consequent increase in international tension. When the question of Algeria arose, Ceylon refused to accept the French argument that Algeria was an integral part of France. It denied the right of any colonial power to declare any of its colonies an integral part of its metropolitan territory.

Obviously, Ceylon supported India in Goa in 1961. When seven countries sought to condemn India for aggression, Ceylon reiterated its abhorrence of violence and deprecated the use of arms. Nevertheless,

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<sup>250</sup>United Nations, United Nations Review, January, 1958, p. 51.

there was the overriding issue of Portugal's assertion of sovereign right over Goa which Ceylon would not accept based upon the fundamental proposition of human rights. India's action was seen as a liberation movement, freeing a part of Indian territory from domination by the last vestiges of Portuguese colonialism. G. P. Malalasekera,<sup>251</sup> Ceylon's representative to the U.N. at the time, said in the Security Council on December 18, 1961, that "Goa, Daman, and Diu are colonial territories which had no raison d'etre for a single day after the Indian Union took its place in the international community of states as a sovereign and free State."<sup>252</sup> Excoriating the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom in their calls for a ceasefire, the Ambassador said:

There is a basic identity of views between colonial powers and their views and attitude cohere in a natural and inescapable pattern. We are not therefore surprised that one group of powers are today demanding a ceasefire in Goa and that the same group are demanding a ceasefire in Katanga. It would appear that when military action undertaken for legitimate purposes seems to have a chance for success, ceasefire is called for in the name of international morality and a whole host of generous principles. But these same powers see no inconsistency between this attitude and the attitude of mind which creates military alliances, increases armaments, weapons and stock-piles of mass destruction.<sup>253</sup>

Ceylon took the initiative in bringing before the General Assembly the alleged violations of the rights of South Vietnam Buddhists under the Diem regime, and was instrumental in the formation of the fact-finding

<sup>251</sup>Dr. G. P. Malalasekera was at one time Ambassador to Moscow, and was for years the President of the All-Ceylon Buddhist Congress. He was later the Ceylon High Commissioner in London.

<sup>252</sup>Embassy of India, Indiagram, Dec. 20, 1961.

<sup>253</sup>Ibid.

United Nations mission<sup>254</sup> which went to Saigon. The mission and its presence in South Vietnam ended, of course, with the overthrow of Diem. In reference to that overthrow, Gunewardene refused to say that the United States was directly responsible for the coup. He did state in Colombo, however, that the "coup d'etat was led by 14 generals who, before they moved, were certain that the Americans would back them."<sup>255</sup>

During the Congo crisis, Ceylon sponsored a resolution which sought to authorize the U.N. Secretary General to use force if necessary to apprehend all foreign mercenaries and hostile elements in the Congo. As to Indonesia's quarrel with the Netherlands over West Irian, Ceylon sided with Indonesia.

It was said earlier here that Ceylon regards the United Nations as a positive factor for world peace and progress, and emphasizes the value of moral force. Still, there has been a strain of dissatisfaction with the international organization. Mainly, it is due to the inequality of Afro-Asian representation on the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The influx of the newly independent states began in 1955 but their voting strength was minimal in impact until 1963, the 18th Session. The election of Kenya and Zanzibar raised African membership to 35, bringing Afro-Asian representation to 58 excluding South Africa, Nationalist China, and Israel. In 1945 there had been thirteen Afro-Asian members

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<sup>254</sup>Dr. Carlos Sosa Rodriguez, of Venezuela, president of the General Assembly named the following members to the mission: Abdul Rahman Pazhwak (Afghanistan), Cyrio Da Costa (Brazil), Fernando Volio Jimenez (Costa Rica), Louis Ignacio-Pinto (Dahomey), Ahmed Taibi Benhima (Morocco), Matrikea Prasad Koirala (Nepal), and Gunewardene of Ceylon.

<sup>255</sup>New York Times, Nov. 6, 1963, p. 8.

out of a total of 51 U.N. member states. Throughout the 18th Session, Afro-Asian members made strong and consistent attempts to set aside the allocation of seats on the Security Council and other United Nations organs, seats which had been proportioned in 1946 when the European and Latin-American states held the majority. The increasing influence of Africa and Asia had made itself felt in 1961 when the Secretary General's post passed from Scandinavians into the hands of a Burmese, U Thant, and an Indian, Chakravarthi V. Narasimhan, became Thant's executive assistant replacing an American. Further, two Africans were made under-secretaries. The trend continued in the Session of 1962, with a considerable increase in secretariat posts filled by African and Asian staff members.

The fight for more places on United Nations organs has continued unabated. Three additional vice-presidencies were created by the Assembly so that in the 19th Session seven of the sixteen offices were reserved for members of the Afro-Asian contingents along with the chairmanships of three of the seven Assembly committees. Under a compromise in the 18th Session, the Latin American members agreed to support Afro-Asian proddings for four additional seats on the Economic and Social Council. Based upon these changes within the United Nations, there is little doubt that Ceylon is destined to play an increasingly important role in the world organization. It will have an increased voice in international affairs though, of course, that voice may be limited perhaps to the Eastern part of the world. Be that as it may, the future portends a significant role at least among Afro-Asian states.



### An Appraisal

Nonalignment as a code of international behavior is the characteristic of Ceylon's foreign policy. The expression nonalignment has a number of connotations. It denotes factual objectivity: a state realizing its own weakness among the powerful states of the world therefore desires to remain aloof from international intrigue. Nonalignment can also be a mark of approbrium: a small state is a target of criticism for its failure to concur in an international political ideology.

The English authoress Caroline Corner once noted that "The Oriental and Occidental may meet, but never mingle. Their minds view things from different angles. To the European, the way is the way of topsyturvydom; probably ours is to them."<sup>256</sup> This viewpoint has been expressed in any number of ways since East-West contact was first made centuries ago. Political independence in the mid-twentieth century has done nothing to change the assessment. The anti-colonial attitude engenders an opposition to many Western policies, especially military alliances. There is no objection to Western ideas per se. Countries recognize that no state can exist in isolation. They have never denied that the West has much to offer. Yet guns, bombs, and bayonets are reminiscent of old-style colonialism. Military alignments nevertheless represent an undesirable type of Western influence despite the solemn declarations of Western statesmen that the weapons are for the protection of a state's freedom.

There is little reason to suppose that Ceylon should be anything else other than sympathetic toward the policies and aims of the developing

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<sup>256</sup>Caroline Corner, Ceylon: Paradise of Adam, p. 320.

countries and Socialist states. It is quite understandable too that the West -- the United States in particular -- with stable social and political structures, and an economic-industrial-military coordinate second to none, should consider itself the earth's fixed center; that if other peoples hold contrary viewpoints then indeed there is something wrong with them. Perhaps the peoples of Asia and Africa have valid reasons for looking upon this attitude as one of gross presumption. It is an unrealistic assumption to suggest that there can be grounds for total harmony of interests between the West and the Afro-Asians. It is fallacious to think that the Sinhalese, Indians, Burmese, Cambodians, or Pakistanis or Thais should aspire to recreate themselves in another's image.

Ceylon's nonalignment philosophy has proved particularly irritating to the American government. The United States is apparently at a loss to explain why Ceylon should have decided on a course of action which jeopardized the economic interests of American-owned installations. There can be no question that U.S. foreign aid and assistance contributed greatly to the economic stability of Ceylon; therefore, the proper course -- according to the United States -- should have been one of gratefulness. The lack of this gratefulness was punished by the withdrawal of economic aid.

There is an antithesis of this premise. The United States, despite its measured success in the world leadership role, still must overcome the appearance of the "come lately" intruder in South-Southeast Asia. It disclaims, of course, any intention of influencing internal affairs through economic aid yet how does one logically explain the stoppage of the aid under circumstances pertinent in the case of Ceylon. The humani-

tarian factor has a way of receding rapidly into the background and being replaced by a "strings attached", pure self-interest manifestation.

The failure to adequately explain the intent of patrolling the Indian Ocean is another case in point. In Ceylon, there is a pathological fear of foreign bogeys. Thus, the entry of the U.S. Seventh Fleet into the Indian Ocean created much speculation, some bordering close to hysteria. There was the lack of dispassionate, factual approach by the Ceylon Government and people to the situation. There was no reason for panic; nor was there any reason for extending a welcome. Time and distance have lost their meanings in the present-day war calculations given the speed, range, and accuracy of missiles, and supersonic aircraft operating from both fixed and moving bases. The day of Gunboat Diplomacy is in limbo. If the United States had any intentions in the Indian Ocean, it would make little difference whether the Seventh Fleet was operating in the Indian Ocean or anywhere else on earth. The oceans and seaways of the world are international, open to all ships of whatever flags as long as these vessels are not engaged in piracy.

In answer to Ceylon's inquiry as to the intent of the Seventh Fleet, the Government of the United States would say only that it was a six-weeks exercise to prove that an extended operation could take place even in the absence of any naval base in the area upon which the fleet could rely. Such exercise is insurance against the day when, perhaps, Singapore and the Maldives might fall into China's hands, or be neutralized; and Pakistan's turning face toward China places in some doubt the guaranty of such bases as Karachi and Chitagong.

Gunboat Diplomacy died when Britain granted political independ-

ence to the island. Still, fear is a beguiling force in most quarters of Ceylon. The mere presence of a huge nuclear-armed fleet in the waters which surround or touch South-Southeast Asian countries make for vivid recall of by-gone days. The lessons of history have produced a close corollary between naval vessels and political changes, that those who hold the sea will eventually hold the land. In international waters, and in ports to which the vessels of foreign countries are invited, the "showing of the flag" is a worthy and courteous nautical tradition. Nevertheless, long will remain the memories of the infamous role in which the flag was shown, then planted upon the soil.

In conclusion, a philosophy of nonalignment differs only in that the approach to international relations is a means toward an end rather than an end in itself. The end, in the case of Ceylon, is being let alone in order that all efforts of government and people might be channeled to solving the island's internal problems. This does not mean isolation as isolation is impossible in the modern world. What it does mean, however, is no interference in the internal affairs of Ceylon, a condition virtually impossible if there is close affinity with a power bloc. Since independence, Ceylon's national mind has been one of deeply set beliefs for a working hypotheses about the kind of society the people of the island hope to build for themselves. Domestically, this requires the concentration on economic restoration and a solution to the enormous problems in a pluralistic society. Internationally, it means the refraining by Ceylon of interfering in the internal affairs of other states, and the plea that this be reciprocal by other governments in their attitudes toward Ceylon. As needs change, ideas change. As realities take new shapes, concepts

broaden to accommodate the changing realities. There is nothing absolute, nor sacred, nor mystical about nonalignment, peaceful coexistence, free world, or socialist solidarity. Each is an expression of naked interest, and when that interest changes the expressions must change also. Non-alignment is a manifestation of a progressive trend in international relations championed by new emerging forces; a manifestation of the confrontation between the old established and new nationalist forces.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE POLITICS OF POLITICS

Since 1956, Ceylon has been dedicated to democratic socialism. The ultimate goal is a welfare state. The general election of 1956 was a revolution for social justice. It was a summit which converged advocates of every shade of political philosophy into a powerful left-of-center electorate. The result was a high point in achievement for the lower middleclass Sinhala-speaking Ceylonese. It was more than an electoral episode; it was a political explosion ignited by a coalition of political parties, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP), the People's United Front. Still, there was none of the violence commonly associated with a revolution. The forces employed were campaign oratory, campaign promises, and voters trekking to the polls to cast secret ballots in the best democratic manners. The enfranchised electorate went to the voting places in May, 1956, to make known their preferences within the political fabric of a Parliamentary system. This fitting and proper procedure has a long history in Ceylon.

The people know well the power of the ballot and their rights to accept or reject government policies. Long contact with British Parliamentarism has given the island more of a political sophistication than any other country in the region. The people are articulate and competent

to judge, based upon a fairly long experience with elective forms for choosing leaders. Whatever criticism is aimed at the British for their myopia in the economic and social fields, they deserve plaudits for instilling in the Ceylonese a deep reverence for the sacredness of the ballot box.

### Constitutional History

Constitutional Law in Ceylon dates back to 1833. Eleven years earlier, the British Parliament had established an investigative body under Major (later Sir) William Colebrooke to examine the problem of the continuing financial deficits in the operations of British colonies. Ceylon, of course, fell under the probing efforts although not until 1829 did the Colebrooke Commission get around to the island. Meanwhile, in London, an increasing number of influential persons had begun taking interest in colonial affairs. Parliament was pressured to allow active participation by the colonial peoples in running their countries. The Constitution of 1833 was a direct result of British public opinion. While the Colebrooke Commission's recommendations may have had little affect upon relieving the budget strain, notable advances were made in constitutional government for Ceylon. Briefly, the whole island was brought under a unified administrative system where before distinctions had been made between Kandy and the coastal provinces. The Colonial Governor was provided with an Executive Council, an administrative assistance group of senior British officials. In addition, there was a Legislative Council of ten official and six nonofficial -- all governor appointees, who acted only in an advisory capacity. "Of the nonofficials three were Europeans,

one Sinhalese, one Tamil and one Burgher."<sup>257</sup>

For administrative purposes, the island was divided into five provinces: Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western, and Central. The supervisor of each province was a British government agent assisted by minor British officials and headmen of the villages. Later subdivisions created the Northwestern Province in 1844, the North-Central and Uva in 1886, and Sabaragamiwa in 1889. These nine provinces with district subdivisions still form the present day administrative units. The map on page 224 shows the geographical boundaries, the population of each, and the district subdivisions.

The years between 1833 and 1909 were largely ones of trial and error in Ceylon's political structure. A few changes were made in the Constitution. None of these were of any consequence, and were mostly for expediency due to growth of an estate economy. A nationalist movement began in Ceylon toward the end of the nineteenth century and during the first decade of the 1900s.

The coffee and tea plantations had been mainly due to the pioneering efforts of the European, but the development of the coconut estates and the exploitation of the plumbago mines were undertaken mainly by Ceylonese. This produced a new middle class, whose members had received English education for two or three generations and whose sons were achieving high positions in the public service and the professions. All this produced a new constitutional agitation, led by Sinhalese and Tamils. . . .<sup>258</sup>

This agitation produced a new Constitution in 1910 with only mild reforms, mainly an increase in the number of members of the Legislative Council.

The nationalist movement gathered steam during World War I. The

<sup>257</sup>Weerawardana, Ceylon and Her Citizens, p. 105.

<sup>258</sup>Jennings and Tambiah, The Dominion of Ceylon, p. 22.



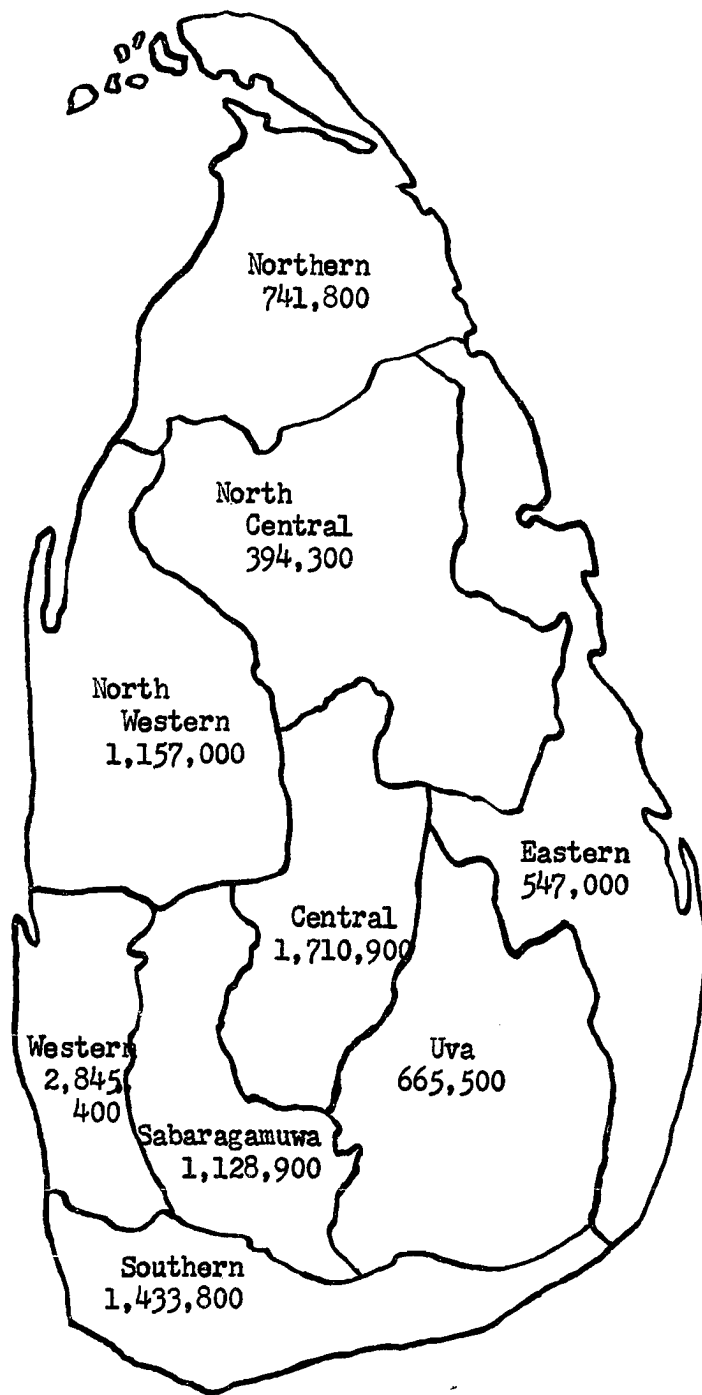


Fig. 8.--Boundaries of Provinces and Estimated Population of Each

Ceylon National Congress, a semi-political organization, was formed and led the way for further changes which were embodied in the Constitution of 1920, and again in another in 1924. The Governor still retained effective control of all legislation in 1924. His Executive Council consisted of the Colonial Secretary, Attorney-General, the Government Agent for the Western Province and other such members as the Governor appointed, thus giving him a clear majority in the Executive Council. In addition, he held broad powers over the Legislative Council. Under the 1924 Constitution, as previously,

There was the usual provision that no law, vote, or resolution imposing any tax or disposing of or charging any part of the public revenue could be passed unless proposed by the Governor. Further, if the Governor was of the opinion that the passing of any bill, resolution or vote was of paramount importance to the public interest, he could declare it to be of paramount importance in which case only the votes of the ex-officio members and nominated official members could be taken into consideration. The Governor was ex-officio President of the Legislative Council. . . .<sup>259</sup>

Meanwhile, early in the twentieth century, communal unrest had already begun to divide Ceylon's people. As tens of thousands of Tamil immigrants continued to pour onto the island from India, the Sinhalese demanded of the British restrictive measures to limit the flow. The Tamils and other minority groups presented some demands of their own, principally separate voting lists and a guaranteed number of representatives in the Legislative Council. The Tamils withdrew from the Ceylon National Congress in 1921 to form a separate society, Tamil Mahajana Sabha, Tamil National Congress, headquartered in Jaffna. The Ceylon National Congress became almost a totally Sinhalese organization. The division

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<sup>259</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

was mainly due to fears and frustrations among both communities. The political rift between Sinhalese and Tamils familiar today in Ceylon dates back, then, some forty-five years.

The British Parliament in 1927 appointed a special commission under Lord Donoughmore to visit Ceylon for the purpose of determining the success or failure of the 1924 Constitution. The Donoughmore Commission, as the investigating body was called, condemned the instrument as an unqualified failure. It had proven unsatisfactory both to the Ceylonese and the British because it had divorced power and responsibility in a number of areas. The Commission drew up a lengthy document which incorporated sweeping changes in the political fortunes of the Ceylonese. This was the Donoughmore Constitution of 1931.

The Donoughmore Constitution<sup>260</sup> was accepted by the Legislative Council by the narrow margin of two votes after long and bitter debate. By it, the people of Ceylon received a greater measure of self-government than existed anywhere in Asia at the time. The Constitution of 1931 made Ceylon the first Asian country with universal suffrage. Franchise was granted to all persons over twenty-one years of age. Certain eligibility requirements were retained for Englishmen and especially Tamil immigrants, mainly some indication of desire for permanent residency. In other words, intent to remain in Ceylon was a guiding factor. The Legislative Council was replaced with a State Council of fifty elected and eight nominated members. Prior to 1931 some 200 thousand people were eligible to vote for

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<sup>260</sup>For fuller details on the Donoughmore Commission and Constitution, see Jennings and Tambiah, The Dominion of Ceylon, pp. 26-43, also Sir Charles Jeffries, Ceylon: The Path to Independence (New York: Frederick Praeger, 1963), pp. 47-65.

candidates to the Legislative Council; that year the electorate numbered more than two million in electing candidates to the State Council. Literacy for the Sinhalese and Tamils was not a requirement for voting eligibility. Ballot boxes were colored to coincide with like colors assigned the candidates. Regarding the Donoughmore Constitution, Jennings and Tambiah in The Dominion of Ceylon point out that

It covered the awkward gap between representative government and responsible government. It enabled the Ceylonese Ministers to take some steps . . . which they thought necessary. It gave them a broad experience of the problems of government. It taught them the necessity for coordination and common action. There may be argument whether they could have taken complete responsibility in 1931; there was no doubt at all in 1945.<sup>261</sup>

The Donoughmore Constitution was operative between 1931 and 1947. In the interim, a number of changes were effected. A set of proposals dealing with autonomy was presented to Whitehall in 1938. No conclusion was forthcoming largely because of the irreconcilable demands of the Sinhalese with those of minority groups. World War II set aside any further negotiations, however, in 1941, Britain promised extensive reforms at the end of the war. But the Ceylonese continued agitation for self-government. As a result, London dispatched the Soulbury Commission to Ceylon in late 1944. Recommendations relating to the Ceylonese handling their internal affairs were published the following September, modified by a White Paper in October, and accepted by the Ceylon State Council in November, 1945. The recommendations were put into a form of a Constitution to become effective in 1947. This Constitution was short lived. The promise of the Dominion Status for February 4, 1948 gave Ceylon full political independence.

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<sup>261</sup>Jennings and Tambiah, The Dominion of Ceylon, p. 43.

Independence: The Early Years

The Ceylon Constitution<sup>262</sup> is modeled upon British parliamentary democracy. The fact that the independence of Ceylon and the competence of its Parliament are based upon the British structure in no way is a limiting device on its sovereign status. Legally and constitutionally, Ceylon may put an end to its British connection by proclaiming itself a Republic at any time it chooses. Much time has been spent in debate by Ceylon officials over this very question. As it now stands the Ceylon Prime Minister is the chief-of-government while the Head of the Ceylon State is Queen Elizabeth II of England. Her Majesty is represented in Ceylon by the Governor-General who receives his appointment from the Queen on the advice of her Ceylon Ministers. According to tradition, then, all power is in the hands of the Queen and her Parliament, i.e. the Parliament of Ceylon. The status of a Republic would remove this connection and would create the office of a President where now it is the Governor-General.

The Constitution of 1948 provided for a bicameral Parliament comprised of the British Monarch, represented by the Governor-General, a Senate of fifteen members, and a House of Representatives of 101 members. Of the latter, 95 were elected from territorial constituencies and six nominated by the Governor to represent those interests not adequately represented by elections. By 1959 the Senators numbered 30, half appointed

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<sup>262</sup>Two current sources on the current Constitution of Ceylon are Sir Ivor Jennings, The Constitution of Ceylon (London: Oxford Univ. Press, 1949), and S. Namasiviyam, Parliamentary Government in Ceylon, 1948-1958 (Colombo: K.V.G. de Silva & Sons, 1959).

by the Governor-General and half elected by the House of Representatives. One-third of the Senators retire every second year. The House has grown too. It has presently 157 members of whom only six are appointed by the Governor-General to insure representation of minority groups, the balance of 151 are elected for five-year terms. The Constitution restricts the Parliament from making any law which discriminates against any community or religious group. Either chamber may introduce bills except the money bill which must originate in the Lower House.

The control and general direction of the Government is almost solidly along the lines of the British pattern. The Cabinet is The Government. The leader of the largest party in the House is appointed by the Governor-General as the Prime Minister, and the Cabinet members must be or become members of either chamber of Parliament within four months after appointment as Cabinet personnel. At least two of these, including the Minister of Justice, must be members of the Senate. The Prime Minister is also the Minister of Defense and External Affairs.

In the United Kingdom with its tradition of Cabinet collective responsibility and secrecy of proceedings, such certainly is not the case in Ceylon. Disagreements among individual Cabinet members are openly discussed in public and in the press. In some cases, Cabinet members have publicly rebuked the Government while still holding Cabinet posts.

The first parliamentary elections in Ceylon were held in September, 1947. The United National Party captured 42 seats, the remaining 53 divided between all shades of political philosophy. Although not in the majority, the UNP was able to control Parliament mainly through some of the Independents, of which there were 21, and the Tamil Congress repre-

representatives who had won northern constituency seats. The first Prime Minister of Ceylon was Don Stephen Senanayake, deeply loved by the people because of his leadership in the independence movement. Senanayake was an aristocrat and a landowner, a Sinhalese and Buddhist. He drew support from all quarters since largely he was considered to have been the Father of his Country in Ceylon on a par, perhaps, with Washington in the United States. Sir Henry Monck Mason-Moore, the colonial Governor of Ceylon since 1944, became its first Governor-General.<sup>263</sup> Senanayake formed a Cabinet of 14 members, eleven from his own party, two independents, and one from the now defunct Labour Party.<sup>264</sup>

The feature of the election was the large number of 'independents' of whom there were 182, nearly twice as many as the number of United National Party candidates. In a sense, though, every candidate was an 'independent', for he depended more on his race, his religion, his caste, his family and his 'influence' than upon his party label.<sup>265</sup>

The UNP had in its ranks nearly all the members of the Old State Council. Its political program incorporated the following policies:

- 1) the country's wealth should be developed through the free-enterprise system;
- 2) the government should help private individuals in every way possible;
- 3) it invited foreign individuals and companies to invest in Ceylon's resources;

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<sup>263</sup>Sir Henry was succeeded by Lord Soulbury in 1949 who, in turn, was succeeded by Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, Ceylon's first Ceylonese Governor-General, in 1954.

<sup>264</sup>Members of the Labour Party were gradually absorbed by other political parties. It had been, however, the first organized political party in Ceylon having been formed in 1931.

<sup>265</sup>Jennings, The Constitution of Ceylon, p. 29.

- 4) social services were limited to the extent that Ceylon's resources would allow;
- 5) relations with Communist countries should be limited to trade alone.

The UNP rode out the first five years of political independence in good fashion. In the 1952 general elections, out of the 95 elective seats the UNP garnered 52. With the added strength of the independents and members of other parties, it was sure of 75 votes out of the total of 101 in Parliament. Part of this majority was due to the circumstances of the time. 1952 was still within the era of prosperity for the island. A Constitutional Amendment in 1949 had limited the franchise to Ceylon citizens, thereby removing large blocs of Tamil Indian votes because citizenship could not be proved. But of even greater consequence had been two other factors, totally unrelated. Don Stephen Senanayake had died on March 22, 1952, as a result of injuries sustained in a fall from his horse. His son, Dudley Senanayake, had been prevailed upon by the UNP to take his father's place as Prime Minister, which he reluctantly accepted. The people, remembering the senior's contribution to the country, gathered behind the younger man. The sympathy vote did much to aid the UNP's cause in the May general election. The other factor was the withdrawal from the Government of one Solomon West Ridgeway Bandaranaike, the leader of the Opposition forces in the House. Bandaranaike disbanded his Sinhala Maha Sabha group to reconstitute it with additional Sinhalese parliament members under the banner of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. This move actually aided the UNP. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party was socialist, but moderately so. Its formation attracted some members of the Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja



Party weakening the party as opposition to the UNP.

Dudley Senanayake resigned the Prime Ministership in 1953. He had little taste for politics to begin with, and his tenure in office had done nothing to stimulate his interest. His successor was Sir John Kotelewala. Sir John was a veteran of the State Council, a former Minister of Communications, and a cousin of Dudley. Kotelewala was generally well liked by the people, although he is given less than his due for some of his accomplishments. He brought Ceylon into the United Nations. He set the stage for renewal of negotiations of the Indo-Ceylon Pact, and had made his presence felt at Bandung as spokesman for his country.<sup>266</sup> But Sir John had the unfortunate habit of saying the wrong thing at the right time, of being unmindful of all of the implications of a statement which might make headlines in the press. In other words, he had the habit of often speaking first and thinking afterwards. Criticism aimed at this lack of forethought built gradually against him.

The United National Party was subjected to mounting criticism beginning about 1955. The party's parliamentary majority were doggedly obedient to the wishes of the Western countries. This earned for the UNP the accusation of too much respect for the former colonial master and its allies. Individual party members were preoccupied with preserving social positions and political prestige while setting aside important economic matters; the latter seemingly were of less importance than those of political nature. The party lost sight of the fire of nationalism which had

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<sup>266</sup>For Sir John's own assessment of his life and his administration see Sir John Kotelewala, An Asian Prime Minister's Story (London: G. G. Harrap, 1956).

been consuming the people for decades. There was little, if any, cultural pride in the heritage of the Sinhalese people among the UNP upper echelon. And it lacked the capacity of self-sacrifice, and a sureness of its mission, in not marshaling all sectors of the society for a concerted attack upon the deteriorating economic front. What the UNP did in fact carry out during its administration was the spirit and letter of the colonial regime which it had succeeded. In retrospect, this might have been predicted in 1948 although few people in Ceylon at the time cared to say so openly. The UNP lost the confidence of the minorities without winning over the large mass of Sinhalese. Sir John and the UNP miscalculated in calling for general elections in 1956, and went down to a crushing defeat.

#### The Social Justice "Revolution"

Great changes in history need the support of masses of people driven and propelled to free themselves from the shackles of want and insecurity. Unrest and discontent of the common man explodes under such goading slogans as "Liberty, Fraternity, Equality", or "Bread and Peace". In Ceylon, the slogan was Appa Auduwa, The Government Is Ours! The clarion call here, as elsewhere at other times in history, was social justice. On the island in 1956, it was sounded by the quick-witted, oxford educated, brilliant Sinhalese-Buddhist orator, Soloman West Ridgeway Bandaranaike.

S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike was no newcomer to the ranks of reformists nor to Ceylon's political scene. He had been active for more than thirty years in championing the cause of the ordinary people, as he frequently referred to the lower middleclass. He had been born to an aristocratic family in 1899. He had served in the State Council since 1931, as a

Minister in that body since 1936, and had been the leader of the nationalist movement, Sinhala Maha Sabha, since 1937. He carried his organization into the UNP at the time of independence, and was chosen as a leader of Ceylon's first House of Representatives. He was Minister of Health and Local Government in the D.S. Senanayake Cabinet, and withdrew to form his Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

Banda<sup>267</sup> had rallied around him those forces generally described as progressives which had coalesced to do political battle with the UNP. There were in the coalition differences in ideologies, outlooks, and emphases upon ways and means. Yet, this alliance of political parties and personalities were welded together by a common denominator: general opposition to a government which had ruled since 1948; a dissatisfaction with the pace of economic development; and a discontent with lip-service to democracy while, in practice, the fruits of democracy had been reserved for a small privileged class. The theme of social justice contained promises of social and economic changes through democratic socialism, a revival of the traditions of Sinhalese culture, Sinhala as the official language, and the return of Buddhism to its rightful and respected place.

The Sri Lanka Freedom Party was the core of Mahajana Eksath Peramuna (MEP), The People's United Front. The latter adopted the SLFP's Manifesto which was dedicated to the ultimate goal of a socialist state. The Manifesto proclaimed that on the economic front, in a country where a large majority of people were living in poverty and unemployment was growing increasingly grave, the only effective remedy was along the lines of socialist

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<sup>267</sup>He was affectionately known by this term.

principles. It said that politically the preservation and fostering of democratic ideals and freedoms were essential for true progress in the country, and for happiness of the people whose initiative and self-respect had been undermined by centuries of servitude. And that, culturally, the stature of a free people could be achieved only if there was a revival of Sinhalese pride. This revival included Sinhala as the national language, and stimulation of Buddhism so that it might again become a vital force in the life of the people. Bandaranaike lashed out at the wealthy landowners and foreign entrepreneurs who had amassed riches at the expense of the poor. He committed his party to the eventual takeover of all foreign owned estates, banking, insurance, and transport operations. Further, he declared that the MEP would give a respectable place to the workers through a series of welfare measures, a minimum wage, and an eight-hour working day.

The 1956 elections were held over a three day period, April 5, 7, and 10. Some 76 percent of the enfranchised electorate trooped to the polls and manifested their weariness with the long rule of the UNP. The United National Party managed to save only eight of the 95 elective seats being contested in the House. The MEP gathered up 52. Fourteen seats went to the Marxists; the Tamil party, the Federal Party took 10. The remaining eleven seats went to other minority parties and independents. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike assumed the office of the Prime Minister on April 12. The third Parliament of Ceylon was opened eight days later.

There is little reason here to spend time on the events occurring during the Bandaranaike premiership. These have been taken up in appropriate places in preceding chapters. There was the passage of the Sinhala

Only Act, the assumption of control over the former British bases of Trincomalee and Katunayake, the civil unrest between Sinhalese and Tamil, the threats of expropriation of estates and other foreign investments, and the avowed policy of nonalignment.

The Coalition fell apart on May 18, 1959, creating the gravest crisis in the life of the three-year government. It was the result of a rift between the moderate socialist wing, the SLFP, and the small but aggressive Marxist group, the Viplavakari Lanka Sama Samaja Party (VLSSP), the Revolutionary Socialist Party. As part of the alliance forged during the 1956 campaign, the leader of the VLSSP, Philip Gunawardena, had secured the important portfolio of Minister of Food, Agriculture, and Cooperatives. His chief lieutenant, P.H. William de Silva, a somewhat lesser revolutionary but convinced Marxist nevertheless, became Minister of Industries. Largely through Gunawardena's forceful determination, the VLSSP was able to play a role in government out of proportion to the party's size.

The VLSSP had been the first of three Marxist oriented groups to gain a place in the government. It is a splinter group of the main Trotskyist Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) and is also independent of the Communist Party of Ceylon (CCP). Pressures within the Government forced the resignation from the Cabinet in 1959 of both Gunawardena and de Silva. Three other Marxist party members joined the exodus as did seven members of Bandaranaike's own SLFP. Dissension within the Cabinet had been growing for months. Gunawardena had successfully launched a major expansion in the Cooperative program. He had been instrumental in the expropriation of the public bus transportation system and cargo handling in the Colombo

port, and had continued to demand the immediate nationalization of estates. The latter was resisted by the Prime Minister and his party. The conflict which produced the Cabinet crisis was Gunawardena's proposal for a giant Cooperative Development Bank whose dictatorial powers would have infiltrated into the commercial banking system.

On previous occasions when tempers had flared over other Gunawardena proposals, the Prime Minister had managed to hold the Cabinet together with assuring words, pointing out that "in a coalition Government differences of opinion were natural and in fact bound to occur. It was up to the [Minister] to resolve the differences as and when they occurred and work them out."<sup>268</sup> But this approach was of no avail in the May incident. Ten ministers of the 15-member Cabinet conveyed to Bandaranaike their refusal to attend future Cabinet meetings unless and until Gunawardena was forced to resign. The latter was accused of using his position to push the country toward Communism which the other Ministers, as Social Democrats, found intolerable. Banda reallocated ministerial duties leaving Gunawardena with only the Department of Agriculture. There was nothing that could conceal the fact that Gunawardena was being demoted. The Minister protested and argued for a revocation of the order which Bandaranaike refused. Gunawardena was out! The Prime Minister set to work reshuffling his Cabinet,<sup>269</sup> then went to the people to assure them of his sincerity for their welfare, and to ask for

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<sup>268</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, Apr. 27, 1959, p. 3.

<sup>269</sup>Two Acting Ministers were sworn in on May 20. J.C. Munasinha, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industries, took the oath as acting head of the Ministry, and C.P. de Silva took over the Ministry of Agriculture in addition to the Ministry of Land and Land Development which he already held.

their continued confidence. Banda said

Politically we are democratic, as we believe the democratic way of life is most suitable for human progress. Economically, we believe in the socialist approach, as we are of the opinion that it is only in this way that justice can be done to the mass of people. The third factor in our policy is our belief that cultural and religious values must be preserved and fostered. It will thus be seen that we are opposed to both Communism and Fascism, to capitalism and materialism. Our party is against any attempt to impose any of these on the people of this country.<sup>270</sup>

Had Bandaranaike not possessed the leadership qualities of a tried-and-proven statesman and politician, his Government might have toppled. As it was, the Cabinet crisis was just another passing event in the history of a country trying to find itself.

#### Mourning and Interim

The official residence of Prime Minister Bandaranaike, a rambling bungalow on Colombo's Rosemead Place, became a house of death on September 26, 1959. Twenty-four hours before, on a Friday morning, Banda had stood on his tree shaded veranda participating in a daily unofficial ceremony -- an early morning audience with anyone who wished to call upon him to register complaints or request favors. That morning at Rosemead Place, things were a little busier than usual. The Prime Minister was preparing for his departure to the United States to attend a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, and for conferences with President Eisenhower and Secretary of State, Christian A. Herter. He had concluded the finalizing of plans with the U.S. Ambassador Bernard Gufler.

On the veranda, Bandaranaike had finished a brief conversation with a man dressed in the saffron robe of a Buddhist monk. Another visitor,

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<sup>270</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, May 25, 1959, p. 6.

similarly attired, came forward to address him. As the Prime Minister bowed to greet the man in the familiar Buddhist salutation, the caller fired four shots from a .45 calibre pistol. A panel of surgeons worked over the bullet-riddled Bandaranaike for more than five hours. He gained consciousness long enough to request his countrymen to remain calm and show compassion for his attacker. The 60-year-old Prime Minister of Ceylon died the following morning in Colombo General Hospital about 8 a.m., some 22 hours after the shooting. He was laid to rest on Thursday, October 1, at his country home in Horagolla, after lying in state for three days.

The assassin was a 43-year-old medical practitioner of Ayurvedic healing, Talduwe Somarama Thero. Ayurvedic medicine employs an ancient and secret process of herb compounds, hot compresses, and body massage. Thero himself was brought down with a bullet in his thigh by a residence sentry. He was removed to a hospital where some thirty police safeguarded the assassin against the rising hatreds of a shocked people. He was later brought to trial and he paid for his act by hanging in 1962.

The murder of the Prime Minister was pointless and avoidable. It could be traced to the deeply rooted conflict between the Eastern and Western concepts of economics, government, and even science. It was the result of a personal grudge, which Thero later admitted, between himself and the Prime Minister. On the evening of the day he was shot, Bandaranaike was scheduled to review some recommendations which had been made by Colombo Plan consultants relative to medical practices in Ceylon. The Eastern Ayurvedic practitioners feared the Western-educated Prime Minister might give precedence to Western medical procedures.



Today, in Ceylon, perhaps as much as 75 percent of the population resort to Ayurvedic treatment. Long before the advance of Western medical science, Ayurvedic practitioners had taken care of the health of the Ceylonese. The progress was stagnated during the period of foreign domination, nevertheless it has stood the test of time. There are perhaps as many as 15 thousand Ayurvedic physicians in Ceylon. Few have modernized their procedures to any extent except insofar as using modern equipment for the manufacture of the drugs and oils. The physicians have organized themselves to make demands upon the government for more and more facilities by which to develop their healing art.

The shots which felled the Prime Minister were to have political echoes throughout the island for the next six months. Governor-General Oliver Goonetilleke declared a state of emergency. He named as the new Prime Minister Wijayananda Dahanayake, the Minister of Education in the Bandaranaike Cabinet. Like his predecessor, Dahanayake had behind him a long career in politics. Earlier in his life he had attempted to combine teaching with politics. Finding he could not engage in both at one and the same time, he gave up teaching. He had been a member of the State Council, and in 1947 had contested the Parliamentary elections as a member of the Trotskyist Party. Dahanayake became disenchanted with the Marxist cause, threw off the label, and formed a short-lived organization called a "Language Front". He joined hands with the Bandaranaike coalition in 1956 and as the Minister of Education scored some notable achievements in the field. He hails from a middleclass family unlike his predecessors who had aristocratic backgrounds. His preference for walking barefooted and wearing home spun cloth garments had endeared him to the

people long before Dahanayake became the Prime Minister. Within a few hours after he took office, Dahanayake went to the people assuring them there would be no alteration in the policies pursued by Bandaranaike, and that the emergency would be lifted as soon as things returned to normalcy. The Government requested newspapers and radio to emphasize that Bandaranaike, who turned from Christianity to Buddhism many years ago, had been slain by a Buddhist monk. The new Prime Minister urged his people to set their minds and hearts to work to maintain the policies and programs of the previous administration.

Endearing oneself to the people for sincerity and simplicity was one thing; the image of a leader of people was quite something else. Within two months of the day he took office, Dahanayake was to concede that his dissension ridden Government might be forced out in the near future. It was to come quicker than even he expected. The Prime Minister was supposed to keep the caretaker government going until May of 1961 when, normally, another general election was due. But Wijayananda Dahanayake could not claim a personal affection in the hearts and minds of the people which anywhere equaled that which they had felt for Banda. The country was edging toward chaos. The Ten-Year Plan presented by the preceding Government had failed to impress the people because of its vagueness and slow rate of implementation. Accentuating the economic difficulties were the communal frustrations and bitterness which still claimed Ceylon's society after the 1958 riots. And politically, there was a division between the moderates, the conservatives, and the Marxists.

Early in October, the Prime Minister was met with vociferous demands for a full investigation of the Bandaranaike murder. In the Senate,

the leader of the Opposition UNP, E.B. Wikramanayake, demanded the formation of a special commission with wide powers in order to determine whether the assassination was politically inspired or the senseless act of a madman. In the face of a rising wave of public opinion against the Buddhist clergy, the Government ordered a rigorous press censorship. The regulations prohibited publication of any matter involving the government, including the proceedings of Cabinet meetings, the assassination investigation, or anything which might cause contempt or disaffection for the Government. The censorship extended to a news blackout for all dispatches from Ceylon to news media abroad. All this was done, it was explained, to check the spread of loose and intemperate talk. The newspapers adopted a symbolic protest by leaving editorial columns blank and withholding publication of those semi-official and official reports which would not have violated the regulations.

Meanwhile, the police net had spread to suspected accomplices of the assassin. By the latter part of November, seven persons had been taken into custody including Talduwe Somarama Thero and the Minister of Local Government and Housing, Mrs. Vimala Wijewadene. The latter had been dismissed from the Government a few days earlier on the allegations that she had close contact with the assailant. Mrs. Wijewadene had been the first woman Minister in any Ceylon Cabinet. Fifty-one years of age, she came from a family which had pioneered efforts to restore to pristine glory the historic Buddhist temple at Kelaniya, a short distance from Colombo. She was connected with the politics of the College of Ayurvedic as was another suspect, the chief incumbent Buddhist priest of the Kelaniya temple, Mapitigama Buddharakhita Thero.

Also caught in the web of circumstances was Ceylon's Finance Minister, Stanley de Zoysa. He resigned on November 22, in the face of mounting criticism against his continuance as Minister after the arrest of his elder brother for alleged complicity in the murder. The brother was later released after it was established that he had had no connection with the case. Another brother, Sidney de Zoysa, Deputy Inspector-General of Police, was forced to resign under pressure of the Opposition party for what was considered to be controversial statements concerning the assassination inquiry. While this was going on, the Cabinet moved to repeal the suspension of the death penalty which had been in effect through an administrative order of April, 1956.

In the meantime, Ceylon's political picture had become complete confusion. Parliamentary privilege had enabled the Opposition to make unsubstantiated charges against the Government and the Prime Minister. N.M. Perera, the leader of the Marxist Opposition, said in the House of Representatives that Dahanayake himself was suspect. In reply, Dahanayake stated he was prepared to submit himself to an investigation by an unofficial committee, and that if the committee found him involved in any way then, but only then, would he resign. The Prime Minister further said he was determined to hold the Government together until the end of the term and call for a new election at its normal time, April, 1961. Perera replied that "whether Mr. Dahanayake wished it or not, he would be compelled by force of circumstances, to go before the country early next year [1960] at the latest."<sup>271</sup>

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<sup>271</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, Nov. 9, 1959, p. 4.

The Government survived its first crucial trial of strength in November by a margin of five votes after a stormy debate over a censure motion which involved the question of complicity. The vote count was 48-43. The six nominated members in the House voting with the Government. These six took the view that a dissolution of Parliament should be prevented since a general election held in the atmosphere prevailing at the time would only produce uncontrollable situations.

The debate on the censure vote intensified the crisis. Dahanayake stayed in office by a slim margin yet the figures were rather misleading. It indicated too that about one-half of the members of Parliament wanted a clean sweep of the government. The Marxist Opposition and the Conservative Opposition, the UNP led by Dudley Senanyake, kept hammering upon the theme of the Government's complicity in Bandaranaike's death. The question was not whether Dahanayake could remain in office -- but rather how long. In less than a month, opposition forces maneuvered another vote on a censure motion. This time the Government received 46 votes including the six of the nominated members.

The "how long" was answered on December 1, 1959. The Governor-General issued a proclamation dissolving Parliament on the advice of the Prime Minister, fixing March 19, 1960 as election day for the new Parliament.<sup>272</sup> Dahanayake resigned from the SLFP to set up his own political group, the Democratic Party. He remained, of course, the nominal chief of the caretaker government. Dahanayake had been in office just 70 days. One reason he gave for requesting dissolution of his Government was that he

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<sup>272</sup>Under new legislation the House membership was increased to 157 effective with the March convening.

"did not want his throat cut in broad daylight."<sup>273</sup> In quick succession the Governor-General fired the Ministers of Home Affairs, Health, Transport, Labour, Cultural Affairs, and the parliamentary secretary to the Transport Ministry. Stanley de Zoysa was brought back into the lame-duck Cabinet as Minister of Health and Commerce. Five more Ministers were dismissed in January. No reason has ever been given for this wholesale dismissal.

With the announced date of March 19 for new elections, political parties began forming all over Ceylon. By the time election day rolled around, voters could take their choice of 23 different party labels and 898 candidates. The policies and platforms of most parties were vague; the supporters were few in number. But one of these newly formed groups was to have an indelible influence upon the future. Since the death of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, the presidency of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party had remained vacant. Party members could never agree on accepting Dahanayake as its head. SLFP leaders prevailed upon Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the wife of the late Prime Minister, to accept the presidency. She refused. The post was given to C.P. de Silva, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands in the Dahanayake Cabinet. Meanwhile, a new political party -- Samagi Lanka Bandaranaike Party -- had been formed. At the inaugural meeting Mrs. Bandaranaike was invited to contest for the seat in her husband's constituency left vacant since his death. Mrs. Bandaranaike accepted. The outcome was a foregone conclusion. Also on the political spectrum, Dudley Senanayake reappeared to lead the United National Party, having become its head after the defeat in 1956.

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<sup>273</sup>New York Times, Dec. 8, 1959, p. 6.

What the 1960 elections meant was that it would be a contest first between five of the 23 parties offering candidates and, second, a rather crucial test as to whether or not national leadership by way of the ballot box could last given the philosophies of the political contestants. The five parties were the SLFP, UNP, and three Marxist groups: Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Communist Party, and Mahajana Eksath Peramuna, now very far to the left. The latter, it will be recalled had broken away from the LSSP and had joined the Bandaranaike United Front in 1956. Then they broke away from it in 1959. It now reappeared as an independent group under the old label, MEP. In addition to the candidates which bore party tags, there were 175 contestants who claimed to be Independents.

Approximately 3.2 million voters chose the UNP over the SLFP by roughly 135 thousand ballots. In the House, it gave the UNP a slim 4-seat edge, 50-46. The three Marxists parties got 23 seats. The number of candidates from each party and the number of seats won will be found in Table 11, page 248.

Dudley Senanayake was sworn in as Premier of Ceylon on March 21. He was promised the support of 31 members outside his UNP, including the All-Tamil Federal Party which had won 15 seats. Later, however, the Federal Party chief, S.J.V. Chelvanayakam withdrew the backing when Senanayake would not come to an agreement with the Federalists in their political demands and general aims. The strength in the UNP at this time was its moderate conservatism as opposed to the extreme conservatism of Dahanayake's Lanka Prajatantra Party (Lanka Democratic Party). Perhaps the most telling decision made at the polls was the people's determination that the country should steer a moderate course, proven by the preponderant number

of votes cast for the moderate parties, UNP and SLFP, and withheld from the extremists. But the real test of strength was yet to come. The Governor-General convened Ceylon's Fourth Parliament on March 30. The Throne Speech set forth the intentions of Senanayake's UNP as to administration policies during the ensuing five years. It reiterated generally the planks in the campaign platform: pro-West attitudes, free enterprise, and the like. And it promised some relief through social welfare. Senanayake by way of the Throne Speech attempted to please all. He pleased no one. On April 22, the House passed a No Confidence vote, 86-61. The Governor-General dissolved Parliament and set new elections for July 20.

#### Madame Prime Minister

Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike was the widow of the late Prime Minister. She was 44-years-old at the time her husband was struck down. She is a Buddhist, and the mother of three children.<sup>274</sup> While her husband lived, her activities in politics had been limited entirely to wifely interests in his political fortunes, his successes and failures. After his death, Sirimavo Bandaranaike had refused the presidency of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party but did accept, somewhat reluctantly, the invitation to contest the constituency seat her husband had held. She had won handedly in the March, 1960, election. After the debacle of that Parliament, Mrs. Bandaranaike was prevailed upon again to accept the presidency of the SLFP. This time she accepted. She was revered by a large section of the people; particularly worshipped by the peasants.

Mrs. Bandaranaike led her party's bid for power in the July elections

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<sup>274</sup>She has one son, Anura, and two daughters, Sunethra and Chandrika.



based on the policies and programs of her late husband. The executive committee of the SLFP entered into a no-contest agreement with the Trotskyists, led by Dr. N.M. Perera, and the Communists led by one Pieter Keuneman. The election evolved into a straight fight between the United National Party on one side, the SLFP, Trotskyists, and Communists on the other. It was "no contest" in another way. The SLFP won 75 seats, a near majority of 151 elective seats at stake. In addition, there were guarantees of support by the six SLFP appointed members, and a sizable number of independents. Sirimavo Bandaranaike became Madame Prime Minister -- the first woman in history to hold a Prime Ministership.

The power at the polls which the SLFP commanded, based largely upon the magic of the Bandaranaike name, is amply demonstrated in the following table which compares the March and July elections.

TABLE 11  
1960 GENERAL ELECTIONS RESULTS\*

<u>Parties</u>	<u>No. of Candidates</u>		<u>Seats Won</u>	
	<u>March</u>	<u>July</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>July</u>
UNP	127	128	50	30
SLFP	108	98	46	75
Federal	19	21	15	16
LSSP	101	21	10	12
Communist	53	7	3	4
MEP	89	55	10	3
Tamil Congress	8	10	1	1
Independents	175	39	7	6
Other	219	8	9	4
	—	—	—	—
Totals	898	387	151	151

Total Number of Votes Polled: March - 3,189,246, July - 3,031,787

\*Source: D.K. Pangnekar, "The Nationalist Revolution in Ceylon", Pacific Affairs, XXXIII, No. 4 (Dec. 1960), p. 372.

The Prime Minister formed her Cabinet solely from members of her own party unlike previously where some representation had been given to a partial cross-section. The Government pledged itself to carry out the policies of democratic socialism in internal affairs and an international program of nonalignment; in both substance and procedure, the Bandaranaike ways and means of administrating Ceylon.

The events which have taken place during Madame Bandaranaike's administration appear in appropriate places throughout this work. In summary, the SLFP followed a course of democratic socialism: nationalization of schools, banking, insurance, and petroleum importation and distribution; the fostering of state corporations and the public sector; and programs to quicken the pace of economic development. On the international front, the SLFP has held steadily to nonalignment and played an instrumental role in the India-China border disputes. Some of Ceylon's problems have been settled; many have not. And those which have defied solution have reached into the very political structure of Ceylon.

The Federal Party is the common foe of all other Ceylon political parties. It has an all-Tamil membership. Its representatives in Parliament are elected entirely from constituencies in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, for decades the stronghold of the Tamil speaking people. The battle cry is parity for the Tamil language with Sinhala, and regional autonomy which would transform the island into a federal state. During the years of the two Bandaranaike administrations, the Federal Party has staged civil disobedience campaigns which have centered around the language issue. This controversy had been marked with blood and violence in 1958 and had subsided only under a state of emergency which had ended in

March, 1959. Approximately two years later, on April 17, 1961, a new state of emergency was proclaimed, the reason for which was, again, the language issue. The implementation of the Official Language Act at most levels in governmental administration became effective January 1, 1961. The Tamils responded by scattered acts of violence amid increasing tensions island-wide. The 1961 state of emergency brought in the military to maintain law and order and curfews were imposed upon several towns. This time the emergency lasted until May 1, 1963 -- a total of 743 days.

Satyagraha (non-violent campaign) has been a potent and dangerous weapon in the hands of the Tamils. It has been a disruptive force in the day-to-day economic operations of the state and a hindrance to economic development. But it was precisely because of the dangerous element that cooler heads among Federal Party members presented opposition when, after the lifting of the emergency, more radical elements called for another satyagraha. Past experience had taught that non-violence deteriorates into violence. Communal campaigns so far have failed to produce any benefits. At the present time, there is no indication that civil disobedience actions will again be undertaken. But the Federal Party has now stepped up its campaign for an autonomous Tamil state. Within the party itself there is opposition to this idea. Some members accept the minority status as a fait accompli and urge cooperation with the Sinhalese in working toward a united country. But there are others who claim that the suppression and persecution tactics of the Sinhalese leaders and people deter any effort for a united Ceylon; that the only course open is safeguarding the interests of the Tamil minority, their language and culture, through a Federal Republic. The end of this unfortunate situation is nowhere in sight.

Eighteen months after Mrs. Bandaranaike took over the Premiership, there was a threat of a coup to overthrow the government and set up an authoritarian regime. The plot was uncovered by government officials on January 27. It resulted in the arrest of several senior police and army officers. Within a few weeks, a total of 29 persons had been taken into custody. It was disclosed later that authorities discovered a cache of arms and some 65 thousand rounds of ammunition. The Government introduced and Parliament passed new legislation -- the Criminal Law (Special Provisions) Bill -- which provided for the detention and trial of the alleged plotters. In substance, the Act sought to redefine and enlarge the concept of conspiracy in Ceylon Criminal Law, made the provisions retroactive to January 1, in order to cover the alleged coup, and gave to the Minister of Justice the power to nominate three judges from among the Supreme Court's judiciary to try this particular offense.

The section of the Act which granted the nominating power to the Minister of Justice ran into considerable difficulty. The trial itself began on July 18, 1962. In opening argument, the defense counsel maintained that the bench was not competent to hear the cases since the nominations of the judges was a judicial function, and that the conferring of such a power upon the Minister of Justice was tantamount to interference with the judicial function and therefore unconstitutional. The question as to whether or not the defendants could receive a fair trial was not an issue; the entire matter was one of constitutionality. In October, the three Supreme Court judges ruled on the defense arguments. The presiding judge, T.S. Fernando who read the decision, overruled several objections raised by the defense, but upheld the defense in that portion of the Act

by which the judges were nominated by the Minister of Justice.

The Government thereupon instituted new legislation which enabled the Chief Justice to nominate the trial judges. It became law in December and preliminary hearings got underway in January, 1963. The trial has been a long drawn-out affair not yet concluded at the end of 1964. Some of the accused were released for lack of evidence, a few were found to have had no part in the attempted coup. Seventeen of the original 29 suspects were still being detained roughly three years after they had been taken into custody.

Perhaps a few words here about the Judiciary of Ceylon would be in order. The Supreme Court is composed of the Chief Justice and nine other justices who have appellate and review jurisdiction in civil cases for which it is the highest court. It has original jurisdiction in some criminal cases; exclusive jurisdiction in more serious criminal offenses. Its decisions in criminal matters may be appealed to the Criminal Court of Appeals. In addition, there are the Commissioners of Assize who are judicial officers appointed by the Governor-General who, at his discretion, may hold any session, or part thereof, of the Supreme Court. The final judicial authority for Ceylon as for some of the other Commonwealth members is the Privy Council, however, this is hardly anything more than a structural formality. Nearly all judicial matters are now handled by Ceylon's judiciary system.

The interrogation connected with the 1962 coup episode reached into several high places including the office of the Governor-General. However innocent he may have been of any participation, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke resigned on February 26, 1962. The Ceylon Cabinet advised London

to accept the resignation. According to some unconfirmed reports, Sir Oliver's name is alleged to have been brought up by the suspects during questioning. The Governor-General voluntarily submitted to investigation. The dominant Minister in the Cabinet at that time, Felix Dais Bandaranaike, who is a nephew of the Prime Minister, stated that it was not the contention of the Government that Sir Oliver was guilty of anything. Nevertheless, Ceylon's officials made no overtures to have the Governor-General change his mind about resigning. For one thing, he could have no longer functioned properly in his capacity as representative of Head of State being as he was in the center of political controversy. And politically, he belonged to the "old guard". His appointment as Governor-General had been made in 1954 when the island's government was still dominated by men of his type. Sir Oliver was a former member of the British Civil Service, a Christian, English-educated. Because his duties were mostly ceremonial, he was allowed to stay on as Governor-General although he had been since 1956 somewhat out of place in the nationalist, Sinhalese, Buddhist environment. Goonetilleke, just as his predecessor Sir John Kotelawala had done, left Ceylon to settle in Britain.

The present Governor-General of Ceylon, William Gopallawa, was appointed on March 2, 1962. He is of the newer school of political philosophy which dominates Ceylon, Democratic Socialism. Gopallawa is a Buddhist, a former Ambassador to the United States and China, and the father-in-law of one of the brothers of Sirimavo Bandaranaike.

The Bandaranaike regime has had some uneasy times despite its heavy majority in Parliament and its general acceptance by the people. At three by-elections held on June 28, 1962, there were no changes in the

parliamentary strength. But in August the Government was on the verge of toppling when the then Finance Minister Felix Dias Bandaranaike included in his Budget proposals a cut of one pound per person in the weekly subsidized rice ration. The greatest opposition arose from within the SLFP membership of Parliament, and passage of the Budget was only ensured after withdrawal of the proposal. Mr. Bandaranaike resigned his post as Finance Minister and, later, also resigned as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Defense and External Affairs.<sup>275</sup>

The task of being Finance Minister in Ceylon is by no means an easy one. As a matter of fact, Ceylon has had, from time to time, some difficulty in keeping a Finance Minister. Felix Bandaranaike resigned in August, 1962. The portfolio was given to Charles Percival de Silva who already had in his care Agriculture, Lands and Power. De Silva gave up the Finance Ministry and was succeeded by P.B.G. Kalugalla, who was also the Minister of Transport and Works. Kalugalla finally had consented only after three other senior Ministers had earlier declined the portfolio. He managed to weather his critics until the latter part of May, 1963, when a Cabinet reshuffle made him the Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs. Tikiri Banda Ilangaratne became the Finance Minister. Felix Bandaranaike was back in as Minister of Agriculture, Food, and Cooperative Development, and Charles P. de Silva became once again the Minister of Lands, Irrigation, and Power.

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<sup>275</sup>It is perhaps helpful to note again that the Prime Minister of Ceylon is also the Minister of Defense and External Affairs, and that Felix Bandaranaike was the nephew of the Prime Minister. In his capacity as Parliamentary Secretary he served for 25 months. It is often stated that even though Mrs. Bandaranaike has a mind of her own in shaping policies, nevertheless the power behind the Prime Minister is her nephew.



While all of these things -- the Tamil problem, the coup, and Cabinet instability -- had been going on, there was mounting criticism against the government from another quarter outside official circles, the Fourth Estate. Legislation, commonly referred to as the Press Bill, had been introduced in Parliament. It was designed to give the Government extensive control over the island's newspapers. The government's charges of press irresponsibility date back to another administration under another Bandaranaike. In May, 1959, during a speech, the late Prime Minister had proposed the appointment of a commission of inquiry to look into the position of the press in Ceylon. He said that he disapproved of what could conceivably be called monopolistic practices, and that

In various ways this Press monopoly, if it does not approve of a Government elected to power by the people, can by various exaggerations, distortions, and misrepresentations, create an almost impossible position for such a Government.<sup>276</sup>

Although S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike had taken issue with newspaper practices, he was nevertheless a staunch defender of the freedom of the press. His solution to breaking the "monopoly" was not government control, but encouraging establishment of independent newspapers to offer competition to the seven daily papers published by two groups.<sup>277</sup>

The press vs. government battle began anew when the SLFP returned to power in July, 1960. During the Throne Speech opening the Fifth Parliament, reference was made to legislation to break the monopoly. Thereafter

<sup>276</sup>Hindu Weekly Review, May 25, 1959, p. 10.

<sup>277</sup>The Lake House group publishes Ceylon Daily News and Ceylon Observer in English, Dinamina, Janata in Sinhala, Thinakaran in Tamil. The Times group publishes the Times of Ceylon in English, and Lankadipa in Sinhalese. The combined daily circulation is approximately 267 thousand, the combined Sunday circulation is approximately 239 thousand.

on three occasions when bills were introduced, wiser counsels within the SLFP prevailed and authoritarian interference with the press was stalled. The fourth time such legislation was tabled, in May, 1962, it was accepted in principle. In brief, it proposed a Press Council and set forth conditions under which the newspaper business in Ceylon could be carried on. The Council would have wide discretionary powers over what could or could not appear in print, could force disclosure of news sources by journalists, could license or withhold such license for the practice of journalism, and had the power to stipulate and impose penalties in case of violation of any part of the Bill. The Council was to be composed of eleven members: a Minister and four others appointed by the Governor-General, two each appointed by the House of Representatives and Journalists Association of Ceylon, and one each by the Senate and the University.

The fourth version while accepted in principle ran into delaying tactics by the UNP, the Federal Party, some independents, and some moderates of the SLFP. This fourth draft was finally withdrawn. The Government created a three-member Press Commission to investigate every facet of newspaper publishing in Ceylon and recommend appropriate controls. In the meantime, forces opposing such legislation were joined by the powerful Buddhist National Front in a concerted drive to defeat, on thirteen different occasions, any type of government interference. In June, 1964, Prime Minister Bandaranaike stated that the Press would have to be taken over by the government as there could be no toleration of reactionary elements obstructing the implementation of the socialist policies. She then added,

The Government had to fight against the pressures of foreign and local reactionary forces in addition to the capitalist press, which was disseminating false propaganda against the Government and misleading the masses. . . .<sup>278</sup>

In September, 1964, the Government decided to try again. This was the fourteenth attempt to push through the House a bill to control the press. In summary, this draft provided for both a five-man Press Council and seven-man Press Tribunal; one to set the standards of the publishing business, the other to act as a court where breaches in the law would be tried and penalties imposed. The penalties were rather stiff. Section 9 of the draft stated,

Punishments up to a maximum of Rs. 10,000 for defamation, and Rs. 5,000 and/or two years' imprisonment for other breaches of the law would be imposed by the tribunal. Final appeal will be allowed to the Supreme Court. Every editor and every director to be held culpable for a breach of the law. Any editor or member of the editorial staff will not be entitled to retain counsel, but a litigant may retain counsel with the approval of the council or the tribunal.<sup>279</sup> (Emphasis mine)

But there was an earlier section of the draft which demanded even more attention. Section 5 stated,

Weeklies to be excluded from the provisions of the new legislation. This includes weekly publications or dailies published by political parties, or any party organizations recognized as a political party, papers by religious organizations and trade unions. Sunday papers of the national newspapers will come within the purview of the council.<sup>280</sup>

In effect, the combination of the Press Council and the Tribunal would have been a creature created by the Government which only it, and more specifically the Prime Minister, could control. The Council would be

<sup>278</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, June 17, 1964, p. 2.

<sup>279</sup>Ibid., Sept. 2, 1964, p. 3.

<sup>280</sup>Ibid.

given the power to decide what was or was not in the public interest. The Leader of the UNP Opposition, Dudley Senanayake, said on the floor of the House, that it was "an endeavor to shield wrong-doers, guilty of bribery, corruption and nepotism, and to prevent the knowledge of these shameful acts from seeping through to the people".<sup>281</sup> The combined opposition argued that this Press Bill -- any Press Bill -- was nothing less than an instrument for the suppression of criticism of the government. This charge was carried to municipal, urban and town councils through village committees. The Bandaranaike Government during its four years in office, moving from crisis to crisis, had had public opinion on its side. People and the press were critical of the administration yet accepted the leadership of Madame Prime Minister and her Sri Lanka Freedom Party. But by June, 1964, the Government had shown a flagrant disregard for this public opinion regarding both the news media and another element -- the Marxist political parties. The failure to heed the voices of the people who had duly elected that government started it well on its way to an appointed end.

#### Last Days of a Regime

There is the old trite expression about "handwriting on the wall" decreeing an impending event. If ever the cliché was applicable to political events, it had been apropos to Ceylon in 1956 and again in 1964. Parliamentary debates in the House had been proving less of a method for compromise than merciless assaults upon the majority party. Opposition parties had used the floor as a propaganda platform denouncing the Govern-

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<sup>281</sup>Ibid.

ment for what it called undemocratic methods, dictatorial policies, and sinister means to still the voice of the people. The Opposition had managed to slow down business to the extent that by mid-March the House had before it 38 Bills and 108 Regulations. Some of these dealt with the Press Commission, debate over which might have brought about a No-Confidence vote.

Without any warning, the Government prorogued Parliament on March 13, 1964, until July 10. The step caught offguard the MPs and people alike; it dismayed the former and shocked the latter. The Government explained the action as necessary in order that Parliament and government agencies would have "a breathing space to concentrate on implementation of certain urgent measures for the benefit of the community".<sup>282</sup> Much more likely however it was to avoid the No-Confidence vote and thus prevent the fall of the Government. Appeals from Parliament members to the Governor-General for summoning Parliament immediately brought no response. At the time of prorogation, there was speculation as to what eventually would happen in the political structure, whether a dictatorship, coalition, national government, or dissolution would follow. The SLFP chose the second -- coalition.

Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike on May 10 went before the 213-member SLFP Executive Committee to ask approval of a merger with the Marxists. Said the Prime Minister,

In accordance with the responsibility entrusted to me by the Cabinet to explore the possibilities of setting up a national government or a coalition government for the purpose of safeguarding the social, cultural, political and economic victories achieved in 1956 with the

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<sup>282</sup>Ibid., Mar. 18, 1964, p. 1.

unity and cooperation of the progressive and socialist parties and groups under the leadership of the late Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, and for the purpose of further consolidating and strengthening those victories, and to defeat the power of the capitalist and colonialist forces and strengthen the forces of democratic socialism in this country, it being realized that the setting up of a national government is against the policies of our party, I therefore seek the mandate of this meeting to give the necessary powers to the Prime Minister and the Cabinet to set up a coalition government with those progressive forces willing to accept the basic policies of our party and enter into an electoral agreement with those parties for the next election.<sup>283</sup>

The Prime Minister received the green light from the Executive Committee for a coalition with the United Left Front, itself a coalition of the three Marxists parties. The spokesman for the ULF was N.M. Perera who came into the Government as Minister of Finance. Two minor figures in the LSSP took over the Ministeries of Communications and Public Works.

Dr. Perera is a popular and respected leader among Ceylon's organized labor. He has sound knowledge of finance and international trade, is a distinguished graduate in economics of the London School of Economics, and holds two doctorates -- Philosophy and Science -- conferred by London University. Dr. Perera entered politics in 1936 in a successful bid for the State Council. In the First Parliament and again in the MEP coalition he was influential as a leader of the Opposition. As the new Finance Minister, Perera promised legislation which would help create a progressive society and lay the foundation for a truly socialist state.

Parliament reconvened on July 3, 1964, after a four-month suspension, the longest prorogation period in the history of Ceylon's Parliaments.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>283</sup>Ibid., May 13, 1964, p. 1.

<sup>284</sup>Under the Ceylon Constitution, no Parliament may be prorogued for longer than four months.

In the Throne Speech, the Government presented broad economic measures, as suggested by Perera, to implement the program of socialist development.

A summary of the measures were as follows:

- 1) The Government would utilize more intensively national and foreign banking services in order to assist national development.
- 2) The proposed State Trade Organization would continue the importation of all essential goods and exports. The importation of goods other than those handled by this organization will be progressively limited to Ceylonese nationals.
- 3) The state-owned Cooperative Wholesale Establishment would have a monopoly over the wholesale distribution of goods under a decentralization scheme. Every article will have a fixed price.
- 4) The Government would set up workers' advisory committees with powers to investigate corruption in government institutions, including state corporations.
- 5) Vigilance committees, with powers to advise on the organization of work to the needs of the people and on the elimination of bureaucracy and inefficiency, were to be established in government, local government, and semi-governmental institutions.
- 6) People's committees were to be set up with legal powers to investigate corrupt practices in the distribution of commodities.
- 7) Legislation would be introduced to replace the monopolistic owners of daily newspapers by a broad-based ownership.
- 8) As a step to improve the efficiency, and to coordinate the functions, of the Port Commission and the Port (Cargo)

Corporation, the possibility of creating a single Port Authority was being examined.

- 9) There would be a new rehabilitation scheme to subsidize replanting of exhausted cocoa lands.
- 10) A bill would be introduced to control the acquisition of land by non-Ceylonese.
- 11) A bill would ensure priority of Ceylonese in employment.

The Throne Speech contained the following words of the Prime Minister:

In 1956, under the leadership of the late Mr. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, the foundation was laid for the progress of this country along socialist lines. To carry forward this victory of the common people in the social, cultural, political and economic spheres and to develop and strengthen the struggle against reactionaries and colonial elements by securing the fullest support of the working people, I have broadened the base of My Government by the formation of a coalition government on the 11th of June, 1964. This step has evoked widespread and universal acceptance and enthusiasm of the wide mass of people.<sup>285</sup>

The "widespread and universal acceptance and enthusiasm" was a bit of wishful thinking on the part of Madame Prime Minister.

During the formation stage of the coalition, Ceylon's press was noncommittal as to predicting the outcome. While not condemning the merger, the press did remind its readers of the result of the MFP coalition in 1956-1959. In other words, it was a wait-and-see attitude. No one had long to wait. In November, the Government introduced two Press Bills -- the Ceylon Press Bill and the Newspaper Corporation of Ceylon Bill. The first contained much the same material as earlier drafts: the appointment of a Press Council to tender advice on matters relating to the press, and the setting up of a Press Tribunal to investigate violations and to conduct

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<sup>285</sup>Ceylon Weekly Times, July 8, 1964, p. 1.



the trials of offenders. The Newspaper Corporation of Ceylon Bill was to establish a state corporation, empowered to carry on the business of publishing newspapers.

The Second Readings of the Bills were scheduled for December 9. The Opposition led by the UNP, and joined by the SLFP moderate wing and some independents, forestalled action and forced a rescheduling for February 2, 1965. The power structure was building against the SLFP-ULF Bandaranaike coalition.

At the Colombo Town Hall on Saturday, November 29, a Buddhist rally was held to protest against the press takeover by the Government. To add color, Buddhist flags and the Lion Flags were prominently displayed. The largest gathering of bhikkhus in recent years crowded into the auditorium. The gist of the protest can be summed up in the opening statement.

The Maha Sangha of this country must boycott the Prime Minister and all her ministers. They should not be invited to any of the temples in the country and should not be helped by the Sangha in any of their moves.

At the next general election the Sangha should mobilize public opinion against the nominees of the government. These measures should be taken if the government persists in its move to take over the Press and continues the insults to the Sangha.<sup>286</sup>

The Sangha feared threats and intimidation by the Trotskyists if the latter gained the power of government, and from all appearances it seemed entirely likely that such would be the case. Perera and the LSSP had tangled verbally with the Buddhist priests on past occasions. Even though promises had been made that under the Coalition Government the "proper place" of the Maha Sangha and Buddhism would be respected, the Sangha had characterized these as nebulous quantities. The Sangha had noted the perils in the

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<sup>286</sup> Ibid., Dec. 2, 1964, p. 1.

Press Bills and on more than one occasion had implored the Prime Minister to withdraw them. There had been a mounting crisis within the SLFP ranks since the time overtures were first made to the LSSP. Although the party's Executive Committee had endorsed the move, there was a large segment of the SLFP who disagreed. These as a group joined with other dissenters. The anti-Coalition drive gathered together all those forces of democratic values which have been deeply rooted in the traditions of Ceylon.

On the night of December 3, the debate on the Address of Thanks to the sixth Throne Speech was concluding. The Minister of Land, Irrigation and Power -- Charles P. de Silva -- rose from his seat of Government benches and crossed the aisle to join the Opposition. Thirteen others followed him. An Admendment amounting to a rejection of a motion of Thanks to the Throne Speech was offered by the UNP. The Admendment was adopted 74-73. It was a vote of No Confidence in the Government. The regime of Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike was ended.

Parliament was dissolved on December 17. The Governor-General set new elections for March 22, 1965, and summoned a new Parliament to meet on April 5.

#### Appraisal

It would seem superfluous to dwell at length upon an appraisal of the politics of Ceylon in light of the events as set forth in this chapter. A question arising here is whether or not the Parliamentary system in Ceylon has been successful. The answer is a qualified "No" -- in the sense that it has not proven to be all that has been hoped for when measured against its prototype, the British standard. The fault

lies not with the structure per se, but with the actors within that structure. If the term underdeveloped is applied to Ceylon in the economic sense, even more appropriate is its application to Ceylon's political system. All political parties are dedicated to the elimination of poverty, the development of the economic sector, and increasing prestige for the country among the world's states. Yet, no party has allowed itself the luxury of flexibility in programs over the short run in order to gain a greater responsiveness to its cause over the long haul. The Ceylon governments have been unable to generate sufficient direction and drive for their programs in order to insure accommodation of the social, economic, and political changes necessary for stability.

Political struggles in Ceylon have followed the pattern of demagogues enmeshing themselves in slogans which incite communal antagonisms for the sole purpose of getting the vote. Once in power there is no alternative other than to fulfill the obligations of carrying out promises made explicit by the slogans, thus furthering communalisms. Opposition forces in any number of governments usually offer a choice among conservatism or progressivism, at least some alternative in a program current at the time. This is not true in Ceylon. All of its political parties claim dedication to the philosophy of democratic socialism, including now even the United National Party, once a wellspring of conservatism. Therefore, the electorate has merely to choose which party will give the people more in welfare, more in subsidies, with the least amount of effort expended by the people.

State corporations and boards are created only secondarily for the need of administering an economic sector. These are, instead, bureau-

cratic stepchildren whose primary purpose are white collar, well paying positions for friends and relatives. And the Opposition also takes every advantage of the restlessness of the people by dwelling upon the epithets of "sinister moves" and "dictatorship" by the Government -- words which fall gratingly upon the ears of the electorate, a people dedicated, as are the people of Ceylon, to parliamentary democracy. And they are dedicated to the parliamentary system. During the past 33 years, experience has taught them the importance of free elections and universal suffrage, and the importance of being able to freely choose their leaders.

As to whether or not the Parliamentary system has been a success in the past, a more pertinent question perhaps has to do with whether it can continue to function in Ceylon in the future. Here again no pat generalization can be made. Under currently existing circumstances, the future does not appear too bright. Again the uncompromising attitude of the political parties comes to the fore, and the inflexibility results in confused thinking among politicians. Two examples will perhaps suffice. There is hardly any question that the Sirimavo Bandaranaike Government died by its own hand. In this case it was the split in the SLFP ranks over coalition with the LSSP and the matter of the press. As to the coalition, it may well be that the Government thought that by bringing the United Left Front into the administration peace in the labor picture might be bought. The ULF does represent a huge voting strength of 1.05 million workers. But the voting strength is somewhat misleading as evidenced by the number of Marxist Parties members in the House at the time. The Trotskyists had 12, the Communist Party 4, and the MEP 3, a total of 19 in the 157-member body. The SLFP held 73 seats. The possibility of peace

on the labor front was indeed a high price for the sacrifice of party harmony. And, there was no guarantee that such peace would be a reality. The Marxist parties themselves were divided between Moscow-liners and pro-Peking. Somewhat recently the Ceylon Federation of Trade Unions had split into two because the President and the General Secretary were on opposite sides in the Moscow-Peking political dispute. This breach still existed at the time of the SLFP-ULF Coalition.

The SLFP was also split over the matter of control of the country's newspapers. The anti-Press legislation was introduced for the purpose of stilling the criticism of the administration. The Government's argument as to monopoly of the Press was a nebulous one. There are multiple groups operating the daily and weekly papers, and there is nothing in the statute books or elsewhere which prevents anyone from setting up a newspaper publishing business in Ceylon. It is worth noting also that a Press Council, if one was required, could well have been structured with a membership consisting solely of members of the Fourth Estate with one member of the Cabinet acting in an advisory capacity on press matters which might better serve the stability of a government. The Press in any democratic country is regarded as an extension of the freedom to disagree, even criticize. It was this freedom which was under threat with the Press Bills.

Elsewhere among political parties, the Federal Party continues to divide the island's people. Ceylon is of course guilty of Sinhalese communalism. But the Tamil party leaders make no effort to gain the goodwill of the majority. They have devotion to a cause to be sure, but the manifestation of this devotion is found in satyagraha and the rather out-

rageous demand for a separate, autonomous Tamil state. Such actions can only intimidate the Sinhalese more, alienating still further the moral question of sympathy and humanitarianism. Too many Tamil leaders are also confused in their thinking. Nowhere, at any time, have they carried their fight on a reasonable and constructive basis by which to convince the masses of their just cause.

Ceylon has reached a fork in that political road which will determine its future. It can forget its petty social grievances through the sense of compromise, display an effort to make the Parliamentary system a success, forget about slogans, and find a general cooperative attitude in building the future state structure. Or, it can continue as in the past with its rigidity toward political ideologies, its preference with subsidies and welfare over and above economic survival, and remain socially divided because of mythology and historical events. The people themselves hold the political instrument for the nationalizing process in their hands. The use of politics will determine the result: nationalism or perhaps disaster.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE POLITICS OF NATIONALIZING

The twentieth century is the Age of Asian Nationalism. It is a virus of pride in nation and heritage, which has been sweeping across the East infecting all countries, large and small. It attacked the Western-imposed political and economic systems, then continued on to carry the ideologies of race and color to exaggerated heights. People have awakened from a long period of enforced social sleep to find new energy in the facts or fancies of their heritage, in their real or imagined histories. The nation-state was to become an end in itself. The combined activity and efforts of all its people were to find expression in a great unified outpouring in order to regain the sense of traditional values, customs, and institutions. In eighteenth century Europe, nationalism was the product of the Age of Enlightenment; in twentieth century Asia, it was the spirit of political independence, economic development, and cultural promotion.

The philosophy of nationalism is the unity of people with every organism of the nation-state. It decrees upon all the people conformity to the cultural and social patterns of the majority community, a standardization of thought and behavior. It has the dichotomous properties of being personal and concrete, yet impersonal and abstract. Nationalism is

authoritarian in its precept as it is a discipline which imposes upon the people a list of directives without regard to the individual's will or need. It has no other purpose other than to override the communal factors of village, class, language, and race through the fostering of loyalty to the society of the state. Thereby, it increases the strength and importance of the state, gaining self-respect among other states of the world. Nationalism can generally be considered a power of good.

Conversely, it is also a power of bad. It can stir up nationalistic sentiments for selfish ends, thereby becoming a powerful mechanism of destruction in the hands of chauvinistic leaders who use it as a weapon of propaganda to sustain leadership. Nationalism can create suspicion and fear wherein separate communities isolate themselves into self-centered little worlds with inbred cultures. The society then frequently becomes convulsed by ethnic warfare preferring conflict to cooperation; the opponents are the unlikes of the different races and cultures.

The politics of nationalizing are the instruments for the unification of a society.

To the present time, these instruments have proved unworkable in the hands of the people of Ceylon for the Ceylonese are a fragmented, disturbed society. Their history since 1948 has been one of conflict between ideals and realities. It is the product of trials and attempts, errors and failures. Perhaps the word "chaos" is most appropriate to the internal condition of Ceylon. Ghosts of the colonial past hold sway over the island, haunting the people with memories of humiliation and bondage. The Ceylonese have counteracted through an over-accentuated revival of indigenous cultural traits. This has pushed the people into the present with hardly



any motivation other than a display of disdain for a bygone epoch. This emotional shibboleth, joined with the disappointment of realities arising from the trials and errors of an independent emerging nation-state, finds a terminal in a deep sense of frustration and inadequacy.

A basic problem is Ceylon's avowed disassociation with the Western era while, at the same time, adopting Western styles in the political and economic spheres. To clarify, successive governments have not adapted plans to local conditions. They have instead adopted either the doctrine or the pattern by which programs have been implemented in other states. The politico-economic system of Ceylon is Democratic Socialism. The ideology presupposes a society wherein poverty and ignorance are eliminated, wherein property and privilege in any form occupy a well-defined and limited place, wherein all citizens have an equal opportunity, and wherein ethical and spiritual values contribute to the enrichment of the individual and communal life. Within this framework, an economy of abundance will materialize by virtue of the fullest and most effective utilization of human materials and resources. Democratic Socialism assures the well-being of the individual through equal opportunity and a just share of the fruits of progress, because all disparities and exploitation are eliminated. All of this is brought about through constitutional means, and with the consent of the people.

The "social justice" revolution in Ceylon was the acceptance of the institutions through which democratic socialism functions. The constitutional arrangements were a matter of course, a routine approach in the political process. The economic phase was something quite different. Ceylon had approached economic development with a forceful determination

to realize the harvest which had eluded the people in former years. But instead of adapting methods to suit parochial conditions, the leadership chose to adopt Western techniques. Here is where the engines of economic development and social harmony have been derailed. It has been adoption rather than adaptation which has interfered with the structuring of the economic and social systems based upon the problems indigenous to Ceylon.

Nearly all styles of democratic socialism have been tried with the exception of Ceylon Democratic Socialism. The Ceylonese live in an independent country, the government of which has gone to extremes in disassociating the island with anything foreign. Yet, the people have been forced to choose from among Western styles for their economic guidelines. In 1948, the United National Party embarked upon a capitalism-free enterprise course, the prototype of which was the nineteenth century laissez-faire philosophy. To have chosen such a course was not unusual, since the lessons Ceylon had learned about economic history were firmly grounded in the doctrine which had built power and prestige for other peoples. Where the doctrine had proved workable elsewhere, such was not to be the case for Ceylon; the resources were different, the tools were different, the people were different.

The MEP coalition found it politically expedient to copy the relatively recent model of the British welfare state. Given the political fortunes of the MEP, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party had little trouble in expanding the welfare state philosophy. It was evident that the people wanted more of everything, and satisfying the people is the thing which keeps a political party in power. Meanwhile, the UNP, realizing its earlier mistakes, have now altered its course to one of democratic socialism

of the type now familiar in the United States: a type of free enterprise but with rigid government control over a variety of sectors, and the hypothesis of equality for all people. The three Marxists parties in Ceylon offer the people democratic socialism transplanted from the U.S.S.R. The Federal Party, preoccupied with other issues, has yet to decide which type is best.

There may be some slight variations in Ceylon from these prototypes, but the differences are so slight they make little impression upon the people. The Ceylonese have really very little choice as to the type of democratic socialism best for Ceylon. The alternatives are limited to parroting Great Britain, the United States, or the U.S.S.R. So far, none of these have done much to help in fulfilling the aspirations of the Ceylonese. Given the highly personal character of politics in Ceylon, no political party has found it convenient to put interests of the country above party interests. Although it is true that to be an actor in government one must be both politician and statesman, emphasis continues to be placed upon the former rather than the latter. The voter has been bribed with welfare programs and subsidies. On the rare occasion when an attempt has been made to bring some rationale into these programs, opposition forces have antagonized groups against groups through obsessions of wealth differences, alleged monopolies, and private enterprise. In practically every instance, parties have sought to extract purely political advantage from the issues. Preoccupied with maintaining status, political rewards have been substituted for statesmanship and patriotism. Preeminently important in the political process is finding local solutions to local problems. A requisite for the nationalizing operation is exploring new avenues

whereby public debate can be staged without creating further disunity among the communities.

Another instrument for use in Ceylon's nationalizing process is Buddhism. Ceylon governments have dwelt upon the "return of Buddhism to its rightful place" while refuting the idea that Buddhism should become the state religion. The "rightful place" of Buddhism is hardly possible without its becoming a state religion. Historically, its place was its predominance as a guide to kings and peasants alike. The philosophy was the major unifier for centuries prior to the coming of the European. There is no reason to suppose that, as a national religion, it could not once again fulfill this function since the European's departure. National forms of religions and national churches are found in other parts of the world. Italy, Spain, Ireland are dedicated to Catholicism; Islam is the state religion of Syria, Iran, Egypt, and other Middle East countries; and the national church of England, Norway, Scotland, and Finland, enjoy special privileges. There are more. In the connecting structure of political administration with Buddhism, perhaps Ceylon's pattern of democratic socialism would be a socialism based upon Buddhism. It would restore Buddhism to its rightful place, it would not be a patterning of an imported product, and it would be a socialism having purely local application for solving the local problems of Ceylon.

Is Ceylon susceptible to Marxism? The answer is a quite unsatisfying, "That depends!" In spite of the factionalism of Ceylon's political parties, it has been possible to maintain Cabinets whose authority has not been seriously challenged except through the constitutional and parliamentary process. Ceylon has an enviable record of orderly and peaceful

elections. The voters show a high degree of maturity. Election authorities have a creditable tradition of maintaining law and order. Every precaution has been taken to reduce the possibility of incident. In the vicinity of the polling places no flags may be displayed, no political party booths erected, meetings are banned immediately before polling, all of which is an attempt to stage fair and peaceful elections. In the general elections and in the numerous local elections, there has been hardly any violence. But, all of this does not obscure the fact that a change could come to the advantage of extremism from the Left.

Ceylon is the only country in the world with an organized Trotskyist party. It has the majority membership of the three Marxists parties. The ideology of the three is the same; the difference is one of degree and personal disagreements between the leaders rather than doctrine. The Communist Party was formed in a split with the LSSP during World War II, after the German invasion of the U.S.S.R. The Trotskyist majority continued to denounce war as a struggle between imperialists; the Communist minority favored support of Britain. This division continued after the war. The third party is another minority wing of the LSSP, the Viplavakari Lanka Sama Samaja Party (VLSSP), more revolutionary than its parent organization.

An attitude is fairly general in Ceylon that if the LSSP should gain power, its approach to politics and economics would be more moderate than that of the Communist party. Its showing at the polls has been somewhat unimpressive. It has, up to now, largely a history of no-contest arrangements with the SLFP. As to the 1964 coalition, it would be indeed difficult to determine the weight of this merger affecting dissolution of the Bandaranaike Government in light of another issue, the Press Bills.

As to the language issue and the Indian "stateless", the Marxists argue for fairness to the Tamil people. They do not talk about parity in language; but they propose settlement through implementation of administrative regulations. Marxists assure the Tamils of a reversal of the process of humiliation, and preservation of cultural traits. Thus, economic and social changes could obviate changes in Ceylon's political structure.

Up to now, neither the UNP or SLFP have had to face the question of polemical attitudes of the younger people toward the present system. The time is rapidly approaching. Since 1960 when the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 years of age, roughly one million new voters have been added to the register. Given the discontentment, the younger generation may well express itself by giving preference to that political party which guarantees greater security, irrespective of the means. Within the narrow confines of the family and village relationships, fast fading into limbo is the authoritarianism which has been the traditional product of centuries of the family-caste-village complex. There was a rather humble acquiescence to the political power structure of the village and thus a strong sense of obligation. Where there is this deviation in the social habits of the younger generation, there is reason to suppose that deviation can also be reflected on the political spectrum. Elected politicians must still secure the support of the people. The masses who will count most toward future electoral support are those who are now frustrated by unemployment and lack of security today. There is nothing in the present political structure of Ceylon which negates the possibility of another revolution of social justice like that of 1956. Should another occur, it may prove to be even more extreme. Economic and social changes certainly

do make a change in the political picture, but economic and social stagnation produce the same result.

One of the keys to a successful nationalizing process is the solution to the Tamil problem. Ceylon needs a national government which assures the Tamil population of representation in the Cabinet such as a Ministry of Tamil Affairs. In addition, at least two of the nominated members of Parliament should be Tamil. The Ministry of Tamil Affairs could be a liaison between the government and the Tamil people. It would give the psychological assurance that the Tamils too have a voice in government. There is an immature approach to realities on both sides. Tamil grievances are based on the feeling of being second class citizens. The righting of wrongs perpetrated on minority races is always the precondition of national unity, the principal device for national progress. A solution to this critical problem in Ceylon cannot be found overnight. But somewhere a start must be made, which will demonstrate the good intentions of the government toward relieving the anxieties of the minority. Representation in government and encouragement of the Tamil cultural activities would, at least, start the healing process of the deep sores which continue to afflict the Ceylon society.

The matter of languages is another case in point where the disdain of the past has been linked with the inept use of a political instrument, the "Sinhala Only" Act. No one would deny Ceylon the right to a national language. Every country in the world has a lingual identification, and within this linguistic macrocosm are the microcosms of dialects. In Ceylon, there is no reason to grant the Tamil language parity status with Sinhala. But, it is an injustice to deny a community its own language

tie with identity. If the country decides upon one language for administrative purposes, there is no reason why it should not be able to do so. This is particularly true when the preponderant majority of the people obviously desire it. This, however, does not give the government the right to withhold from its citizens the knowledge and use of a communication media of any segment of the population.

The Tamil and English languages both have been the victims of political misadventures, launched through emotionalism. It is a ludicrous premise that all of Ceylon's current social ills would somehow disappear, if only all the people were coerced into speaking one tongue. It hardly needs be stated that all languages, whatsoever their origins, are storehouses of knowledge. A language -- any language -- is a transmission belt for the dissemination of understanding. Language does not ask the color of a man's skin, his status in life, the country he belongs to, or the God he believes in. It is there for all to use; to accept concepts contained therein, or to reject them, or to modify them.

It is ironical that the Ceylon government while propagating the philosophy of world peace -- and Ceylon is genuinely dedicated to world peace -- at the same time should attempt to narrow the channels of communications which, by so doing, might lessen the chances for peace. Of all the roads to mutual concord between nation-states, the most important is the clear understanding of another's language. If a language is not understood, neither are the people understood, nor what they are thinking. There is no other way to comprehend what is going on in the minds of men without knowledgable communication. The rather interesting speculation arises as to how peace could be obtained if all countries would permit the



use of its indigenous language to the exclusion of all others, including the prohibition in institutions of learning.

It is a false assumption to claim that by permitting the use of only one language, while prohibiting all others, the result will be unification of a people. Far more urgent is the permeation of a feeling of belonging, a comradeship with other citizens, and the charge of responsibility for completing an assigned task. In the worldwide steps of progression, perhaps the most notable feature has been the growing unity of mankind. If this trend is to continue, there is need for transmission of ideas and ideals which belong to different races and cultures.

No one people have a monopoly on wisdom. Ceylon has within its power to share with the world the great literature of the Sinhala language. It can assure itself an ease of transition into its national language for all communities by adapting the Roman script, already familiar to Ceylonese, to Sinhala. The psychological inhibition of the unfamiliar Sinhala script would thus be eliminated. Nothing here suggests that the latter be discarded; but there is hardly any logical reason to deny a Sinhala script-Roman script existence, side by side.

A change in outlook by the Tamils is also imperative in their attitude toward the government. The Federal Party, which claims to represent the Tamil-speaking people, has done nothing to help relieve Sinhalese-Tamil conflicts. The demand for a separate state is nothing short of political suicide. The continued pursuit of this completely unrealistic goal is totally repugnant to majority sentiment. It takes two to federate, and the federal state idea can never win the support of the Sinhalese. Such demands will continue to alienate the majority toward the Tamils.

The Federal Party refuses to recognize that a considerable portion of the Sinhalese realize as legitimate the grievances of the Tamil population, and are sympathetic to the Tamil cause. But as it now stands, the Tamils have achieved nothing except furthering Sinhalese antagonisms toward them by reason of the Tamil-led boycotts, civil disobedience campaigns, and the demand for a separate Tamil state.

The Ceylonese are engaged in a conflict between traditional values and institutions on the one hand and on the other, with customs and attitudes acquired by contact with the Western world. The conflict comes from an attempt to salvage the best of both and amalgamate the two. It is a noble undertaking, but is bound to bring the different communities into collision. Herein lies the root cause for the tardiness of economic development. It is not that the means of development are missing, but that the instruments chosen have been ineptly applied.

The adoption of a foreign species rather than adaptation was mentioned above in connection with Ceylon's democratic socialism. The same holds true in the matters of resources and industrialization. The general discontent on the part of the people with the different Plans can be attributed to nothing else other than planning has become devoid of meaning. It is fine to talk about industrialization and "catching up" with other countries as long as the necessities of living are plentiful and at prices which purchasers can afford. Small gains in the supply of economic needs, coupled with minor decreases in the cost of living, represent to the people some progress and will, in turn, generate enthusiasm and cooperation in the developmental process. But, if it requires increasingly greater individual output of time and energy to purchase the necessities, the

question arises as to whether or not it is worth it. If the workers would produce enough, the major economic problems would be solved. But increased production comes through incentives for the worker. Where the taxes continue to increase, and where the unit of currency buys less and less, it is hardly likely that the worker will voluntarily expend greater effort in producing. All countries must industrialize not only for present and future production for domestic consumers, but for the state's protection as well. Western empires have disappeared, of course, from the Asian area. Nevertheless, the small states are still vulnerable to the facts of international politics under which trade boycott and similar methods can wreck an economy.

One of the peculiarities of the general development program in Ceylon has been the lack of attention given the agricultural sector. Generally, there has been no incentive to increase production despite the island's ever-mounting requirements of food for the expanding population. In the case of Ceylon, there would be nothing wrong in the nationalization of paddy lands, providing of course the administering agency was made up of capable agriculturalists. A substantial reduction in taxes on tea, rubber, and coconuts would place these products in a more competitive category on world markets. The loss of tax revenues would surely be replaced by greater income to the government through foreign exchange earnings. And it might be found profitable to institute a forced savings plan in lieu of the heavy tax burden. There is benefit in the psychological factor that the people are loaning money to the government for the general welfare and be assured of its return someday. But it makes little sense to erect a factory to manufacture machine tools or anything else for export where the

product meets stiff competition in the world market if, at the same time, the country is forced into using the earned foreign exchange for importing necessary items which could be produced more cheaply at home. Food and cloth are but two examples of the imports.

The agricultural and industrial sectors must be given some suitable incentives through lower taxation, and other means which will make them want to produce more. At the same time, the consumer must reap benefits through lower living costs. The worker is the consumer. If that worker is associated in even a small way in management, it gives him a sense of responsibility and participation in the maximizing of production whether increased harvests, more cloth, or more cement for better housing. There is much concern over the numerical increase of population, a matter which occupies the attention of many national and international agencies. Ceylon has also established Planned Parenthood clinics. The program has had some success, but it is only a partial answer. There will always be increasing numbers of people. It is for these that employment opportunities must be found today and tomorrow. People are wealth in any country. Combined with the natural resources, agricultural and mineral, an industrialized Ceylon is on the horizon, providing the social problem is first solved, followed by cooperative efforts between government and people to work together.

One of the dilemmas of small emerging states is finding an appropriate relationship to other states. These developing entities have been criticized by a variety of foreign sources for the policy of nonalignment, and for being critical of the actions of others while being powerless when disputes arise in their own backyards.

The only defense which Ceylon has for its nonaligned posture is that it views nonalignment as a moral concept. Nonalignment can hardly be defined in any way other than in the broad terms of world peace and morality among nations. Nonaligned nations do assume moral postures. Ceylon is an impartial critic and arbiter. It might well take the lead in championing the idea of a permanent organization for mediation and arbitration for disputes among the neutralist countries. One thing which all of these have in common is the outlook toward peace. Individually, none can influence world affairs since their weight in international affairs is in direct relation to country, size, population, economic and military strength. But since the one thing which holds the nonaligned countries together now is the common outlook, collectively these countries could be a dynamic force in world affairs if a permanent organization became a actuality.

It is hoped Ceylon will not forego its current international policy. Alignment, economically and/or militarily, with any powerful nation can only transfer the country to a satellite rank and therefore, in substance, return Ceylon to dependent status. Its membership in the United Nations can have meaning for Ceylon only if it continues to judge each issue on individual merit and not from the view of the Cold War impact.

In conclusion, no people can claim the ultimate in perfection for their governmental system. Whatever degree of perfection has been attained, it is due to the qualities of that system in the parochial setting with attention given to the people's aspirations, wants, and needs. Governments are always in the experimental stage, augmenting and impro-

vising according to altering circumstances within a country. The changes are made not according to some classic or doctrinaire philosophy but, instead, according to the indigenous problems. Ceylon might adapt the words of Alexander Pope's An Essay On Man, "For forms of government let fools contest; whate'er is best administered is best." The administration of the government must satisfy the people with whom rest the politics -- the instruments -- of nationalizing.

Happiness and prosperity have continued to elude the Ceylonese. They have permitted the scars of indignities and humiliation inflicted by the past to become a program of retribution for the present. The people and their government have not been able to bridge what is to them the Dark Ages of colonialism, but feel themselves still the inferiors thus creating an emotional blockade toward cooperation. They cannot effectively perform the functions of the nationalizing process, no matter how much they would like to, as long as they fail to realize that the price of nationalism is courage, free inquiry, and a respect for individual rights.

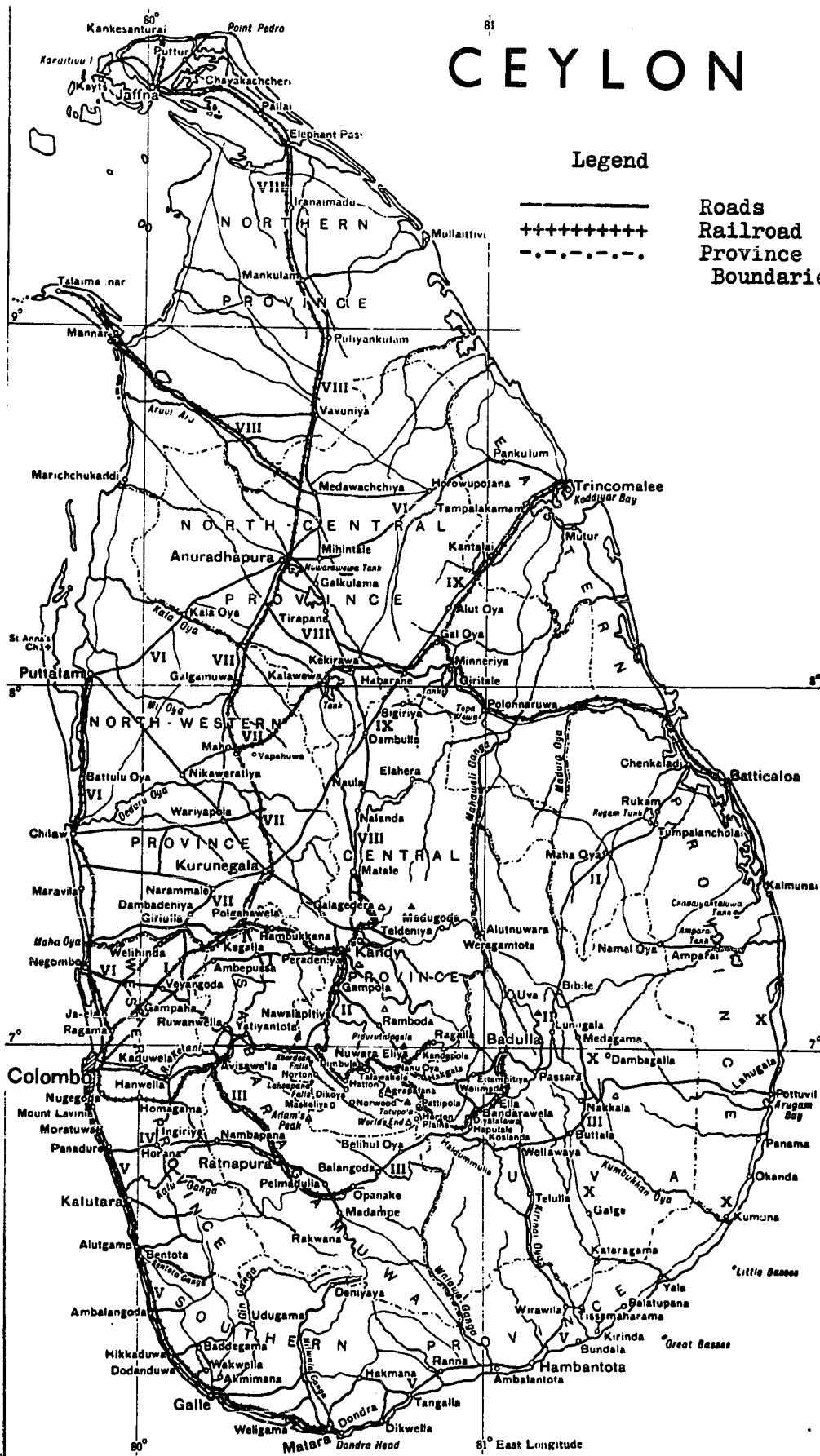
The politics of nationalizing is the transcending of the barriers of nationality, race, creed, and class. It is breaking through the strictures of community parochialisms.

Lanka -- The Island -- has an enviable history of an admired land, and its people have a noble heritage on which to grow. When all the people will voluntarily consolidate to set about the task of reenforcing their identity as the proud People of Ceylon then Lanka's place in time and history will again be momentous.

# CEYLON

## Legend

- Roads
- +++++ Railroad
- .-.-.- Province Boundaries



**APPENDIX**



## APPENDIX I

### The National Flag of Ceylon

The Heraldic Lion Flag (page 10) is said to have had its origin as a stone carving over a gateway to the Sanchi Stupa in India, built by Asoka in the third century B.C. It also appears on the walls of caves at Dambulla (see Fig. 6, page 56) in frescoes depicting the conflict between King Duttha Gamani and Elara in the second century B.C. The flag also flew over what is now Kotte during the coronation of King Parakrama Bahu VI.

Its more contemporary importance rests in the fact that it was the royal standard of the last King of Kandy, Sri Wickrama Raja Sinha. It was this flag which was lowered on March 2, 1815, when the British assumed control of the kingdom, then taken to London to gather dust in the archives. The Lion Flag was never used, or even mentioned, by the British government for 130 years.

The subject of a national flag became a topic of controversy among the Ceylonese as independence neared. An ad hoc committee was formed to consider the design for a national flag. Some very old drawings and crude color plates of the Lion Flag were found among public and private possessions. The Sinhalese desired adoption of the original pattern. Minority groups accepted the Lion Flag with some modification; some Tamil leaders wanted a wholly new symbol. The ancient Lion Flag of Lanka was finally agreed upon, but with two vertical strips, green and saffron, added in deference to the minority groups on the island. The ho-leaves in the corners of the flag appear in the original and denote that Lanka was a Buddhist kingdom.

## APPENDIX II

### The Kew Letters Written By The Prince of Orange to the Governors of Dutch possessions, February 7, 1795

(Note: To my knowledge, the English translations of the following appear nowhere else in American sources. The Kew Letters are known in Dutch history as the Kew Circulars. With relevance to Ceylon, the translation by Colvin de Silva (page 39) will be found in the Ceylon Literary Register, 3rd series, vol. I, p. 110. The communications to the Governor and the Commanding Officer by Sea at the Cape of Good Hope were more elusive. The Public Record Office and the India Office of Commonwealth Relations, London, could shed no light on the whereabouts of the Letters. East India Company papers in the Chatham Papers contain no relevant material for 1795. My search led me to the public records of the Government of the Netherlands, and finally to the company of Algemeen Rijksarchief, publishers, at the Hague. They proved most helpful in forwarding English translations from Dutch records contained in G. McCall Theal, Records of the Cape Colony, 1793-1796 (London: 1897), p. 28, and J. Rodway, History of British Guiana, 1782-1833, vol. II, (Georgetown, Demerara, 1893), p. 72. The translations from these sources follow.)

Order from the PRINCE OF ORANGE to the GOVERNOR OF THE CAPE OF  
GOOD HOPE.

Kew, February 7, 1795.

TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

We have thought it right to write to you by this opportunity, and to charge you to admit into the Fort under your command such Troops as may be sent thither on the Part of His Brit. Majesty, and to receive into Table and False Bays and other Harbours and Places where Ships can remain with Safety all Ships of War, Frigates or Armed Vessels that may be sent from His said Brit. Majesty, and to look upon them as Troops & Ships of a Power in Friendship and Alliance with Their High Mightiness, & that come to prevent the Colony from being invaded by the French.

(Signed) W.Pr. of ORANGE.

By Command of His Highness, In the Absence of the Private Secretary.

(Signed) J.W. BOEJENK.

Order from the PRINCE OF ORANGE to the COMMANDING OFFICER BY SEA  
AT THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

Kew, February 7, 1795.

TO THE COMMANDING OFFICER BY SEA AT THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

We have thought it necessary hereby to write to you and order you to admit into the Road of the Cape of Good Hope and into False Bay such Ships of War, Frigates or armed Vessels as may be sent thither on the part of His Britannic Majesty, as Ships or a Power who is in Friendship and Alliance with Their High Mightinesses, to prevent the Colony from being invaded by the French; and you will put yourself under the Orders of the Commanding Officer of the said Ships if he is older or higher in rank than yourself, and not oppose him in case he should put any Troops on Shore for the Defense of the Forts.

(Signed) W.Pr. of ORANGE.

By His Highness's Command in the Absence of the Private Secretary.

(Signed) J.W. BOEJENK.

At the same time a letter was delivered to the Governor from the Prince, dated Kew, February 7th 1795, which ran as follows:

"We have thought it necessary by these, to command you, in Demerara as well as Essequebo, to admit the forces which may be sent there by His Britannic Majesty; and, in the rivers, such men-of-war, frigates, or other armed vessels, as may be sent there by His Majesty of Great Britain, and to consider them as forces and vessels in friendship and alliance with their High Mightinesses the States General of the United Netherlands, coming there to prevent the colony from being invaded by the French".

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