

CEYLON *Today*

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DECEMBER, 1956

CEYLON TODAY

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CEYLON

Today

PUBLISHED BY THE CEYLON GOVERNMENT INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

December, 1956

Vol. V No. 12

All Editorial correspondence should be addressed to the Assistant Information Officer, Information Department, Senate Building, Colombo 1

The Prime Minister's Address to the United Nations' General Assembly in New York

THE Prime Minister, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike left Ceylon by air on Saturday, November 17, to lead the Ceylon delegation to the United Nations' General Assembly in New York. He was accompanied by Mrs. Bandaranaike; Mr. Gunasena de Soyza, Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Defence and External Affairs; and Mr. Duncan de Alwis, Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. Besides Mr. Bandaranaike, the other members of the delegation were the Ambassador for Ceylon in the United States of America, Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardena; Mr. D. W. Rajapathirana, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank; Mr. A. B. Perera, the Colombo lawyer; and Mr. Badiudin Mahmud, Principal of Zahira College, Gampola. The Prime Minister returned to the Island on December 9.

The following is the full text of the Ceylon Premier's address to the General Assembly on November 22:—

"As Prime Minister, and Minister for External Affairs of my country, I am indeed very pleased to have the opportunity of attending this, my first session of the General Assembly.

"I am pleased to be here for another reason; that is, that I come here fresh from the Conference at New Delhi of the Prime Ministers of the Colombo countries, whose

joint statement, issued after the New Delhi Conference, I find has been referred to on various occasions by several speakers.

"I welcome the opportunity of being able, where necessary, to explain to you more fully what we feel with regard to some of the important problems that you have been called upon to deal with at this time.

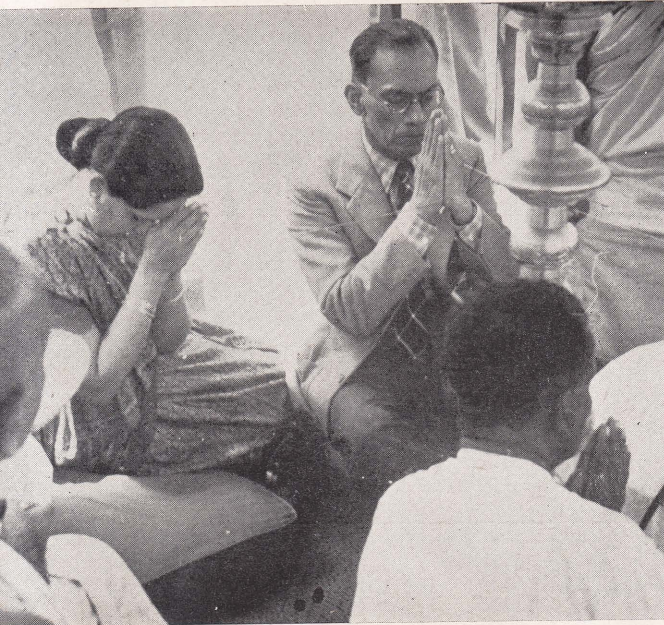
"At the outset, I wish, Mr. President*, to offer to you on behalf of the Ceylonese delegation our congratulations, on your election to this high office. I have no doubt that your long devotion to the ideals and the causes which this great Organisation represents and the recognition by representatives of your high qualities of devotion, ability and tact have been responsible for your election. Personally I have an especial pleasure in your election because your country is in the same region as mine, and between my country and yours there have been close and friendly cultural and other bonds for many centuries.

"My country, together with many others, languished in the anteroom of this Organisation for many years, before, by a signal stroke of statesmanship last year, sixteen countries were admitted to membership of the United Nations.

Awaiting Admission

"I regret that there are still countries which are awaiting admission, countries whose claims to such admission appear to many of us to be unquestioned, and whose admission

*The new President of the United Nations General Assembly is Prince Wan Waitayakon of Thailand.



The Ceylon Premier and his wife listen to pirith chanting at the Colombo Airport before their departure for New York

will undoubtedly make more fully representative the membership of this great world Organisation for peace. I hope that before long their claims will receive the consideration which is their due. Amongst them, I wish to mention in particular such countries as the People's Republic of China and Japan.

"I read with great interest the annual report of the Secretary-General. There are some matters of importance in which appreciable success has been achieved in the year under review. In certain others, valuable progress has been made . . . and in all I suppose it might be said that a certain degree of continuous activity appears to have been maintained.

"I should like to take this opportunity if it is not out of place, to congratulate the Secretary-General on the able, efficient and devoted manner in which he has been and is performing his functions, particularly during recent events. The Secretary-General, as the chief executive officer of the United Nations has greatly enhanced the reputation and prestige of the United Nations. I congratulate him and I congratulate ourselves on possessing an officer of such pre-eminent and distinguished qualities.

"I suppose it is true that the normal activities of the United Nations have been overshadowed by certain recent happenings subsequent to the period covered by the annual

report of the Secretary-General. I refer to happenings in Egypt and in Hungary. These events have provided, on the one hand, a crucial test for the United Nations and, on the other hand, a great opportunity. I should like to say that it is my opinion that the United Nations has emerged out of these crises with its reputation and prestige enhanced.

"I have heard, no doubt, many people here criticize the United Nations on the grounds that it is slow to act, that when it does act it cannot act effectively, that it sometimes tends to lose itself in diffused thinking . . . and still more diffused decisions. Those who criticize the United Nations should bear in mind that in all the circumstances of the case the United Nations has proved as successful, sometimes even more successful, than what one might have realistically expected. The United Nations is not a super-state possessed of forces, armed forces, capable of asserting its authority even over powerful members or non-members who may act contrary to the purposes of the United Nations. It can and does bring to bear in certain cases as it has done in the past, success, and in certain others at least a very salutary restraining influence.

"I naturally wish to say a few words on the two questions that are exercising our minds today: Suez and Hungary. I do not propose to delay you with a reiteration of the whole history that has led up to these tragic happenings.

Certain Facts

"IN the case of Suez, I wish briefly to recount certain facts that are important to the background of our thinking in this matter. The President of Egypt nationalized the Suez Canal Company. I do not find in any quarter a disposition seriously to question his right to do so. Although the manner in which it was done, the time in which it was done, may be considered expedient by some and incorrect by others the basic fact of his right to do so has not been questioned. If that is correct I consider that it follows as a corollary to the nationalisation of the Suez Canal Company that the power of operation of the Canal should also vest in Egypt.

"But that is not the whole story. There are important international interests in the Suez Canal that also need to be safeguarded—we are all agreed on that—interests that I feel could adequately have been safeguarded, while recognising the right of nationalisation and the right of control following thereon, by entering into a convention on somewhat similar lines to the Constantinople Convention of 1888, but with further provisions if you need it to provide for some consultative or advisory committee whose advice Egypt would have been compelled to seek in dealing with important matters of an operational nature. If there was a disagreement between the two, surely some machinery for arbitration in such instances could have been devised. "That would have been the most hopeful method of

procedure in order to obtain agreement, while satisfying what both sides claim to be certain fundamental needs. But the moment that a majority of the countries assembled at the London Conference decided on international control of the operation of the Canal, fundamental difficulties immediately arose. The mission to Egypt, led by the Prime Minister of Australia for discussions with Colonel Nasser, were bound, in the circumstances, to prove a failure. I cannot believe that anyone seriously contemplated that it could otherwise. Thereafter quite rightly, the Powers more immediately concerned referred this issue to the Security Council of the United Nations and an agreement on certain principles—no less, the six principles—by England, France and Egypt were unanimously endorsed by the Security Council.

“What we fail to understand is this: why were not negotiations proceeded with on the basis of those agreed six principles to see how far agreement could be reached?”

The Governor-General says good-bye] to Mrs. Bandaranaike



I have yet to understand why either one side concerned, or the other, or both, failed to requisition the good offices of the United Nations in order to carry on those negotiations. The matter was referred to the Security Council of the United Nations in order to pursue the method of negotiation as against that of force, which had been threatened earlier. It had reached the point when those negotiations could take place on an agreed basis for discussion.

Intrusion

“WHY did they not take place? Why was it necessary to have the intrusion, before further discussion, of this unfortunate resort to force? Israel made an attack on Egyptian territory. Why pray? Because it had grievances in the past? Because it feared Egypt’s aggression or attacks in the future? Why was this particular moment chosen? I never choose to condemn anyone until condemnation is based on proof. But is it not somewhat difficult to escape from belief that the Israel action, followed by that of the Anglo-French forces, were not altogether unconnected with each other, that Israel, at the very least, may have thought, and in a moment of inspiration, that was a good moment for it to move and that attack by it then would produce action on the part of the British and French which would in fact amount to support of that?”

“However, as I said, I prefer not to attach motives to anybody. Until something is definitely proved, I prefer not to condemn anyone. It is a mistake to do so. But it does seem to me at least a rather strange coincidence that those events, in that order, should have so taken place; it is a very unfortunate coincidence. I am glad that the United Nations immediately dealt with the matter and arrived at certain decisions and that those decisions are now in the process of implementation.

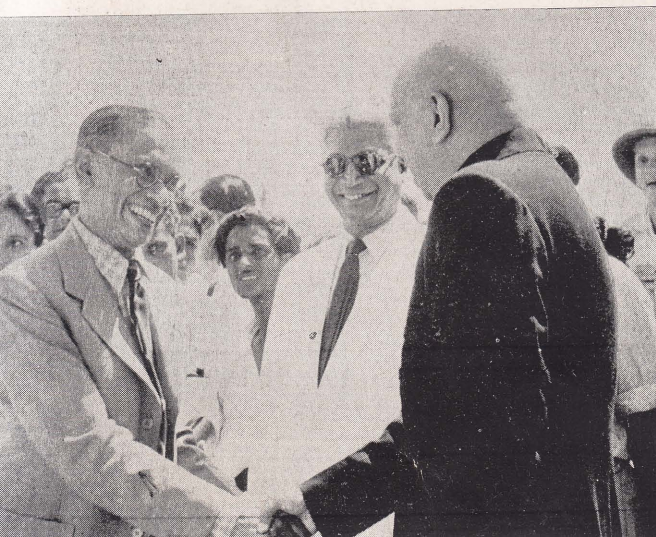
“May I say here that I appreciate very much the fact that even in principle England, France and Israel have accepted the decisions of the United Nations for a cease-fire and for a withdrawal. I only hope that those steps will materialise very quickly.

“I must tell the Assembly that it is my view, and the view of my colleagues, the other Asian Prime Ministers, that the position is still extremely delicate and dangerous. We do not feel that there is any occasion for undue complacency. I am glad that, substantially, a cease-fire has taken place. But the withdrawal has not yet taken place. A United Nations Emergency Force is already in the process of being established in Egypt in order to carry out the decisions of the United Nations in supervising a withdrawal of those forces. I say this, and I say it with all seriousness, that as long as foreign troops—be they Israeli, British or French—continue to remain on Egyptian territory, the position is



▲ Mr. Bandaranaike, prior to his departure for New York, bidding farewell at the Airport to Ministers of his Cabinet

▼ A hand-shake for Mr. Bandaranaike from the Governor-General, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, just before the Ceylon Premier emplaned for New York



one that is fraught with the greatest anger and one that may bring about results leading to a third world war.

Phased Withdrawal

"I wish to say that those forces must be withdrawn now without any delay. I wish to say that I think it would be very unwise to follow some principle of a phased withdrawal, a withdrawing of those forces in numbers according to the numbers of the United Nations Force who enter: a hundred United Nations troops going into Egypt and a hundred being withdrawn; two hundred United Nations troops going in and two hundred being withdrawn, and so on. There can be no greater mistake than that.

"The moment that even a token United Nations force is established on Egyptian territory, it will be sufficient occasion, in the interests of us all, for Israeli forces to be withdrawn behind the armistice line, and British and French forces to be withdrawn from Egyptian territory. I cannot conceive that either Egypt or Israel would make an assault upon forces of the United Nations. I just do not believe it. So that it is really not required for a large force of the United Nations to be present before those forces are withdrawn.

CEYLON TODAY

“The first and the most vital thing is a withdrawal of forces from Egyptian territory now as early as possible. If that does not happen, even if under the guise of “volunteers”—and we know what “volunteers” mean—other countries, in order to secure the observance of the decisions of the United Nations, take steps, I fear that the results may be very far-reaching and all our efforts so far be swept away in a moment.

“There is another important thing, of course : the early clearing of the Suez Canal. That is very important to all of us, particularly to my country. Most of the trade of Ceylon—seventy-five per cent. of it—passes through the Suez Canal. I take it that, not only for us but for other countries, Western as well as Asian, it is important that the Suez Canal be cleared as early as possible. I feel that it should be done under the auspices of the United Nations.

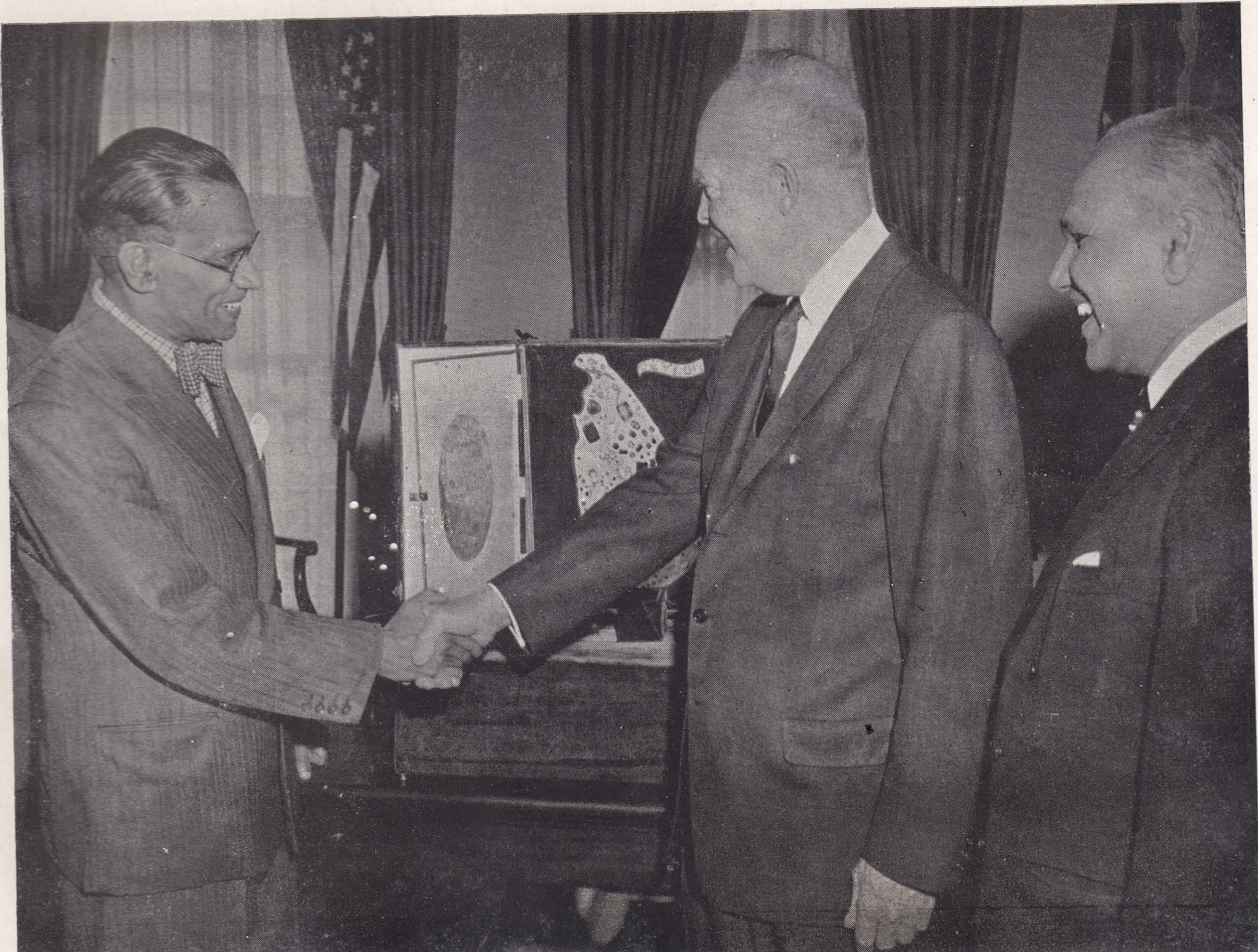
“There is one point regarding that matter, namely, whether the clearing of the Canal should start at once in full force, prior to any substantial withdrawal of foreign

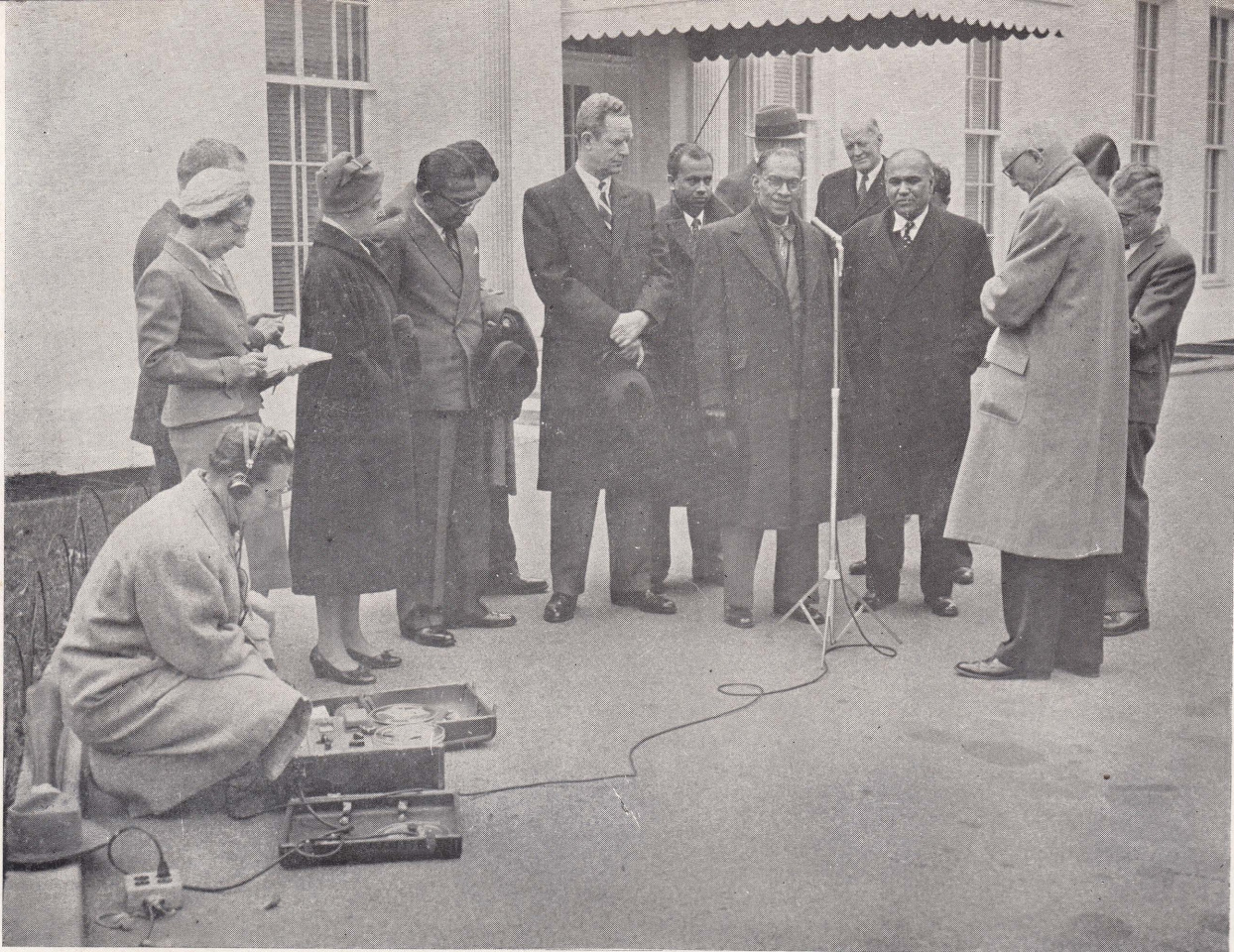
forces from Egyptian territory, or whether it should begin subsequent to that. I hope that such quibbles will not stand in the way of the practice of doing the thing that is necessary. I, personally, feel that a substantial withdrawal of foreign forces from Egyptian territory at once would greatly facilitate the further task of clearing up the Suez Canal. I am quite sure that Egypt—at least, this is my hope—will not object to the United Nations, under its flag, using whatever material and tackle—and it is rather specialised tackle which is required for this purpose—that are available, whatever source it happens to come from, in order to clear the Canal.

Six Principles

“THE withdrawal of foreign forces from Egypt immediately and the very quick clearing of the Suez Canal must then be followed by negotiations regarding the Canal on the basis of those six principles, which presumably still stand. Those are steps that are necessary to be taken at once. Those

The Ceylon Premier being greeted by President Eisenhower at the White House while Ceylon's Ambassador in the United States, Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardene (right), looks on. The Prime Minister presented Mr. Eisenhower with a gold, jewel-encrusted map (on table) of Ceylon.





The Ceylon Premier, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, recording a statement for broadcast to Ceylon, following his visit to President Eisenhower.

are the steps which I hope the United Nations will try to achieve in the course of its deliberations in the days to come.

“With regard to the general settlement of the rather complicated and complex affairs of Western Asia, that is another matter. I sincerely hope that sometime those troubles also can be settled, particularly those between Israel and its Arab neighbours. I trust that when the bitterness of these incidents has died down to some degree, it will be possible for those primarily concerned at least to have a talk about an honourable settlement of those differences. But I hope that that long-term process will not be mixed with the immediate needs that have arisen today out of this situation. I am not so optimistic as to believe that those differences can be settled at an early date; I do not believe so for a moment. First things come first, so let us deal with these first problems which I mentioned and which are essential to prevent the possibility—believe me, the probability—of a serious worsening

of a situation, which some may feel, superficially, is now assuaged. It is not so.

“I wish to say a few words about Hungary. There seemed to be a feeling in the minds of some people that some of our countries were indifferent, or even lukewarm, about certain happenings in Hungary. I wish strongly to repudiate this charge.

Desperate Hurry

“WHAT happened? It will interest the Assembly to know that when the very first draft resolution regarding this Hungarian episode was introduced here, it was done in such a desperate hurry, it was sent from the Security Council to the General Assembly so quickly for a vote to be taken within a few hours, that some of us had no opportunity to bring our minds to bear on the problem or even to send instructions to our representatives here as to how they

were to vote. I was fast asleep in Colombo when an urgent cablegram from our permanent representative here was received by the Permanent Secretary, asking for instructions as a vote was going to be taken. I had not all the facts or data before me. I could not even get my office open in order to get such papers as were available there at that hour of the night.

"We are rather respectable in Colombo. We go to bed fairly early and we remain there till morning. What could I do? I instructed my Permanent Secretary to send off immediately a cablegram to our representative here, making certain general suggestions and asking him to consult with other groups with which we associate in taking action. We abstained from voting. That is how that abstention came about.

"Is it really not possible, when this World Organisation discusses subjects of paramount importance, to allow a certain reasonable measure of time for consideration and consultation before important decisions are arrived at? It seems to me a great pity if the urgency of the situation—if I may so call it—demands the taking of action in that horrid manner. That is what happened, I believe, that in the case of some other Asian countries also they had not time to issue instructions to their representatives or even to consider the matter. There seemed such a desperate haste to get something through—a desperate haste which I fail to understand. I do not think that the lapse of a few hours, twelve hours, would have made such an overwhelming difference to the case.

"With regard to the second resolution on Hungary that was moved here, it was like the proverbial curate's egg, good in parts and bad in parts. We agreed with the request that Russian troops be withdrawn from Budapest and from Hungary without any delay. We could not quite agree with that portion of the resolution that requested that free elections be held in Hungary under the vigilant eyes of United Nations observers. You will have noted what we said at Delhi. What we said there was that the Russian troops should be withdrawn and that Hungary should be left free to work out its own destiny. Why should we dictate to any country that it should have elections as we want it to have them? Surely, whether it is a Russian dictatorship in Hungary, an Anglo-French dictatorship in Egypt or even the dictatorship of the United Nations which militates against the sovereignty of a country, they are all, I think, equally unwise and undesirable.

Abstention

"WHAT were we to do with a draft resolution, part of which we agreed with and part we disagreed with? I asked my representative here to secure a separate vote on the separate parts. When the resolution as a whole was put

to the vote, we followed the only logical course; we abstained from voting, having expressed our views quite clearly and openly from this rostrum.

"The latest resolution, that proposed by Cuba, the debate on which I had the privilege of listening to here yesterday, was passed by a majority vote. Another resolution introduced by India, Ceylon and Indonesia was also passed. I leave it to the ingenuity of the Secretary-General to reconcile the two decisions. However, I feel that the resolution introduced by us was more reasonable and logical than certain aspects of the wording of the other resolution.

"The Assembly has also passed a resolution calling for relief in Hungary. We decided to recommend that to other countries and to do it ourselves, at the Delhi conference, and our Governments are doing it. My Government has voted for this a few days ago. We are a poor country but we have decided to give what we could give towards relief, in Hungary as well as in Egypt. Budapest needs relief, does not Port Said? They all need relief. If I may be forgiven for using the phrase—and I do not say it disparagingly of anyone—there is no fundamental difference, to my mind, between the thug or rowdy who deals a man one blow and the thug or rowdy who deals a man two blows. Fundamentally, both are worthy of condemnation. That was our attitude regarding Egypt and Hungary.

Wise Course

"HOWEVER, let us remember this. Mere dialectics are not sufficient in dealing with these situations. Let us learn the lessons which Egypt and Hungary teach us. Let us deal with the immediate, presiding problems, and let us gear up the world Organization, if we can, to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future. That seems to be the wise course to follow.

"We gain nothing by undue mutual recriminations and revilings. As a Buddhist, I remember the story of Buddha and the answer he gave to an opponent who came before him and abused him for hours. He listened to him patiently and said: "My dear friend, if you invite guests to a banquet and the guests do not come, what do you do with the food that is prepared?" "Oh," was the reply, "I and my family will consume the food if the guests do not arrive". So he said to the man who had abused him: "You have offered me your abuse. I am not receiving it. You can take it yourself".

"Mutual recriminations and the wounding of one another's feelings by sharp retorts and angry words will not help us very much. But there are certain things to which we cannot be blind. What have we to do now? I have suggested the immediate steps to be taken in Egypt and the immediate steps, on which the Assembly has decided, that should and must be taken in Hungary.



The Ceylon Premier (third from left) with Mr. Robert Murphy (second from left), Deputy Under-Secretary of State, and Mr. William Rountree (second from right), Assistant Secretary of State. Also in the picture are Ceylon's Ambassador to the United States, Mr. R. S. S. Gunawardene (extreme left), and the Permanent Secretary to the Ceylon Ministry of Defence and External Affairs, Mr. Gunasena de Soyya (extreme right).

"I would appeal to the Government of Hungary not to oppose the recommendation of this Assembly that some impartial observers go there in order to observe the situation and to discover the truth or otherwise of the charges that have been made on the one side and equally vehemently repudiated on the other. I appeal that that step be taken, and I appeal to the British, French and Israelis to withdraw their troops—as indeed they have agreed to do—now without any delay. In that way the good name of those countries, as well as, perhaps, world peace, will best be safeguarded.

"There is a further significance, of course, in these happenings, and I would draw your attention particularly to this. We of Asia who have suffered under imperialistic colonial rule for many centuries are, naturally, extremely sensitive towards anything approaching a resurgence of the spirit of imperialism and colonialism. I hope we are wrong, but we feel strongly that the happenings in Egypt, and perhaps the echo of those happenings in Hungary, are a manifestation once again of a certain resurgence of the spirit of colonialism, the desire of a strong Power to achieve its purposes and to impose its will, even by force, on a weaker Power.

"Are you surprised that we lay greater emphasis on Egypt than on Hungary? Far more dangers are inherent for the world in the Egyptian situation than in the Hungarian. We deplore both, of course. But this Assembly very rightly came to the conclusion that the problem of Egypt was a more urgent and serious one than that of Hungary, although both are to be condemned and deplored alike.

Not too Late

"YOU will see, therefore, the importance of these happenings and how strongly many of us—the vast majority of this Assembly—feel on these matters. It is not too late even now to put things right. It is not yet too late to remedy this situation, although I greatly fear that the bitterness created by these incidents will not be easily forgotten and will not be easily forgiven. But let us hope that the preservation of peace now and the lapse of time will again restore that confidence that has been so seriously and tragically shattered. We had got into the habit recently of believing that the great Powers of the world were united in upholding peace and decency in dealings between man and man, between nation and nation.

"We believed that this great Assembly provided the opportunity for all, great and small, to unite in achieving that objective. But when great Powers, permanent members of the Security Council, themselves act in a way that has brought on their heads the condemnation of this Assembly, can it not be realized how gravely that confidence is shattered, particularly in the minds of those of us who are small and weak and who had hoped that in this new world we would be able, without national or international brigandage and piracy, to work out our own destiny and to advance towards peace and happiness?

"Those are the results of these happenings. I have dealt with the two important problems of today, the problems of Egypt and Hungary—with the position as I see it and the steps that should be taken immediately and also perhaps in the not too distant future. I wish now to say a few words about Asia. There is some misunderstanding of the position of some of our Asian countries, and I wish to explain the position to you fairly.

"Many of our countries in Asia have re-emerged into freedom after three or four hundred years of colonial imperialist rule. In this epoch of newly-gained freedom, we find ourselves faced with a dual problem—a problem within a problem. First, there is the problem of converting a colonial society—politically, socially and economically—into a free society, and then there is the problem of effecting that conversion against a background of changing world conditions.

State of Flux

"THE world is in a state of change and flux today. The world is going through one of those rare occasions—they

happen at certain intervals—of a changeover from one society to another, from one civilization to another. We are living today, in fact, in a period of transition between two civilisations, the old and the new. During a period like this, all kinds of conflicts arise—ideological, national, economic, political. That has happened in the past, and in the past those conflicts were settled by some nice little war here or there. Today we cannot afford the luxury of war, for we all know what it means.

“Therefore, the task for us today is a far more difficult one than ever faced mankind before: to effect this transition to some form of stable human society, and to do it amid a welter of conflicts, with reasonable peace and with the avoidance of conflicts that burst out into war, for war is unthinkable today. This is an age when we have to live and let live, when we cannot afford to hate each other so much that we are prepared to sacrifice all mankind in the name of peace or for some other reason. We cannot afford to do that today. Within the limits of honour, of course, and those principles which we hold dear, we have to live and let live.

“That is the philosophy behind the doctrine of co-existence. We have to build up a new society for ourselves, as I have said which best suits the genius of our country. We should like to get some ideas and some principles from this side, and some from the other, until a coherent form of society is made up that suits our own people in the context of the changing world of today. That is why we do not range ourselves on the side of this Power-bloc or that Power-bloc. That is the philosophy of neutralism. It is not something dishonest; it is not a matter of sitting on the fence to see whether we can get the best of both worlds. It is a position that is inexorably thrust upon us by the circumstances of the case. It is a position that will be of great help in the world situation today, for we do provide a bridge over the gulf between the two opposing factions.

“We are supposed to be the “uncommitted” nations. I strongly object to that word. We are committed up to the hilt. We are committed to preserve decency in dealings between nations, we are committed to the cause of justice and freedom as much as anyone is. That, briefly is our position in Asia. I trust it will not be misunderstood.

Spirit of Man

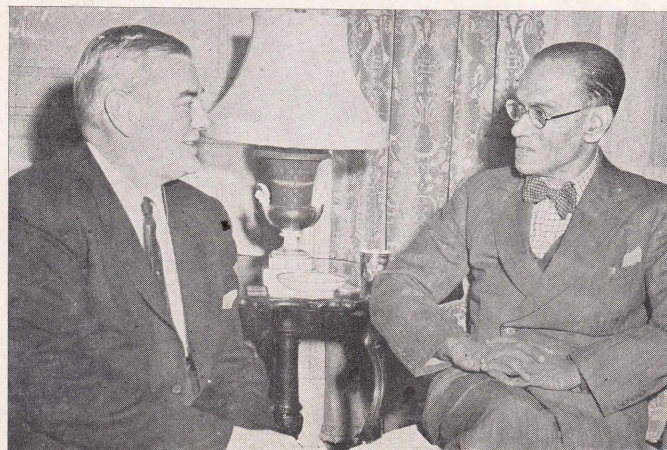
“SOMETIMES the feeling comes over me, as I am sure it does over many of us, that the fight is not worthwhile—that there is, in fact, no hope for mankind to escape the perplexities, problems, conflicts, hatreds and enmities that seem to be arising all about us. But sometimes when I feel like that I am fortified by the thought that through the dark fabric of human history there passes one golden thread

of unfailing strength and firmness—the unconquered, unconquerable spirit of man. It has manifested itself through the ages in various, diverse, different ways: first of all, the unconquerable spirit of man fighting for bare survival and existence; later, fighting for various causes—national causes may be, or the cause of justice, the cause of freedom or the pursuit of truth on the part of the great religious leaders down through history. Today it is needed in the cause of human friendship and of peace.

“What is peace? Peace is not merely a negative thing—the absence of one set of people trying to kill another set of people. No doubt the prevention of war is a necessary factor for peace, but peace, believe me, is something much more positive than that, for peace in its true sense means human understanding, human friendship and co-operation out of which, indeed, peace in its true form alone can rise. I look upon the United Nations as the one machine available to mankind today through which it can express this unconquerable spirit of man in its efforts to achieve that peace, friendship and collaboration.

“My country is a small one, a weak one and a poor one, but I venture to think that today, particularly in an Organisation such as this, the service that a country can render—that a Member can render—is not to be measured alone by the size of that country, its population, its power or its strength. This is an Organisation which expresses itself most effectively by bringing to bear a certain moral force—the collective moral force and decency of human beings. That is a task in which the weak as well as the strong can render a useful service, and I give the Assembly the assurance, on behalf of my country, that as far as we are concerned every endeavour that we can make in all sincerity to assist in the achievements of those noble ideals for which this Organisation stands will always be forthcoming in the fullest measure.”

The Ceylon Premier chatting with Mr. Herbert Hoover (Jnr.), acting Secretary of State, following a luncheon at Blair House in honour of Mr. Bandaranaike.





Mr. Clifford Buckley, Deputy Commissioner of the Australian Tea Bureau, handing over the shipment of gift tea from Ceylon, to Brigadier C. M. L. Elliott, Director of Housing and Catering for the Olympic Organising Committee.

Ceylon at the XVI Olympiad

CEYLON sent a team of one athlete and two boxers to the XVI Olympiad which was held in Melbourne, Australia, last month. The athlete was twenty-one-year-old Nagalingam Ethirveerasingham, while the boxers were the brothers Hema P. and Chandra P. Jayasuriya.

Both boxers were unplaced. H. P. Jayasuriya was beaten in the bantam-weight in the first round on points by Australia's Robert Bath, while C. P. Jayasuriya was beaten in the light-weight by Richard McTuggart of Great Britain.

(H. P. Jayasuriya is the Ceylon national champion and South-East Asian champion in his division, and was runner-up in the bantam-weight division at the second Asian Games. He represented Ceylon at the Olympic Games at Helsinki. C. P. Jayasuriya is the Ceylon national champion in his division, and was a bronze medallist in the feather-weight division at the second Asian Games.



N. Ethirveerasingham, Ceylon's champion high jumper



The Ceylon champion boxer, H. P. Jayasuriya, signing a tiny Australian admirer's autograph book during his visit to Melbourne to participate in the XVI Olympiad. With him are some of his Ceylonese friends. The Ceylon flag may be seen in the background.



▲ The Manager of the Ceylon Olympic team, Mr. Julian Grero (left) handing over an Olympic Ceylon Gift Tea Caddy to the British Chef-de-Mission, Mr. Sidney Duncan, and Mr. E. Clynes, Catering and Finance Manager.



▲ Three Ceylon journalists (left to right) Mr. Alexander Elikewela, Mr. Oscar Rajasooriya and Mr. Nissanka Fernando—interviewing the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Sir Frank Selleck (right) about Melbourne City's preparations for the Olympic Games.

He has defeated the champions of Burma, India, Pakistan and Japan.)

Ethirveerasingham, in the finals of the high-jump event, failed at 6 ft. 3½ in. and was thus not placed within the first six. In the qualifying trials, however, he commenced jumping at 5 ft. 7 in. and thereafter cleared 5 ft. 11½ in. and 6 ft. 2 in. at his first attempt. When the bar was raised to the qualifying height of 6 ft. 3½ in., he failed in his first jump but went over with the greatest of ease in his second.

Gift of pure Ceylon tea

ETHIRVEERASINGHAM'S highest jump in Ceylon, incidentally, is 6 ft. 6½ in. (6 ft. 7 in. unofficially). He flew to the Olympic Games at Melbourne from the United States where he had just begun to follow a four-year course in agricultural engineering at the University of California. He will be trained there by the University coach, Craig Dixon, a 1948 Olympic medallist.

The Ceylon team to Melbourne was accompanied by Mr. P. Julian Grero as manager. Mr. Danton Obeyesekera also went with the team as a result of his being invited to serve as a Boxing Commission judge at the Games. Mr. Eric LaBrooy represented the President of the Ceylon

(Continued on page 18)

▼ Mal and Mal Spence, the 20-year old twin Jamaican Olympic runners, enjoying a cup of tea supplied by the Ceylon tea industry.





Sifting gravel for gems in the Ratnapura District

The Arts and Crafts of Ceylon

ESME RANKINE

WHEN Ceylon was a sovereignty, the arts and crafts of the island were subsidized. Whole villages were given over to the pursuit of a particular craft. Traces of this still exist in the condition, well known, of specified districts specialising in specified crafts. From Galle, for instance, comes tortoise-shell ware, ebony elephants, and lace; from Kelaniya, pottery; from Kalutara, baskets; from Henawela, mats; from Kandy, silver and brass and lac, and so on. In some cases the name of the district has been given to the product.

The art of the Sinhalese craftsman of old was something that had come down to him. It was part of himself; absorbed into his fingers and his brain through generations of ancestors who had all done the same thing. Under a regime that encouraged aesthetic expression and gave the craftsman a definite place in its society, the arts

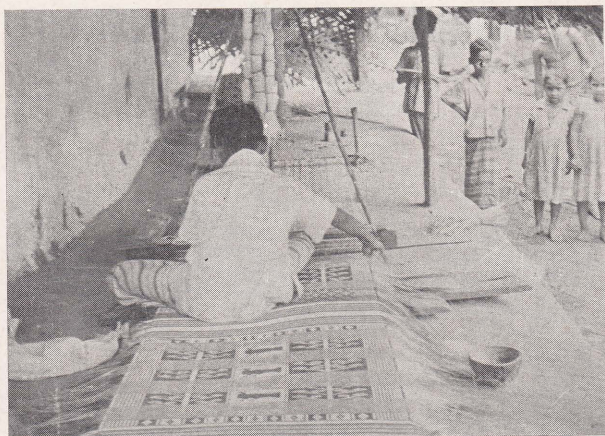


Indi-kola weavers at a village near Hikkaduwa ▶



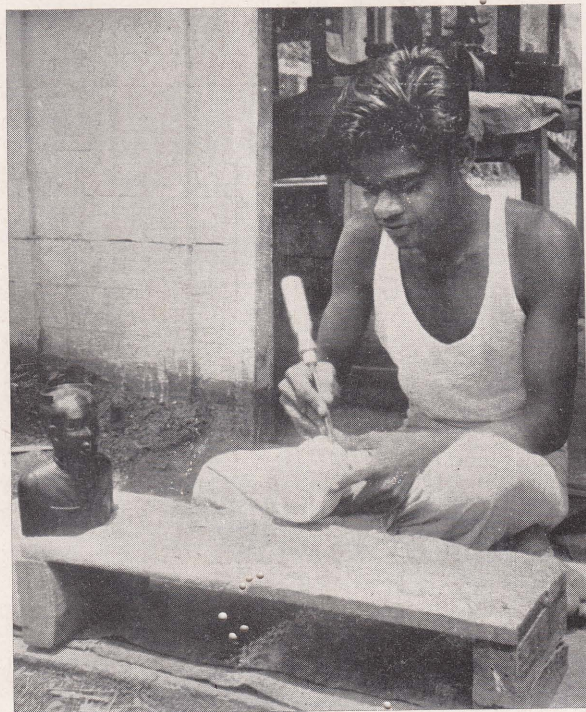
◀ Class of lac-work students at the Government College of Fine Arts, Colombo

▼ Weaving Dumbara mats at Henewela, near Matale



prospered. In a few temple libraries, and even fewer private collections, and in the traditional jewellery of old Sinhalese families, enough remains to astonish machine-acclimatised eyes that, with the means at his command, the craftsman of old should have accomplished such refinements. Nevertheless there is still to be seen the lonely craftsman toiling over his tools and the methods of his fathers, stubborn in his belief that art is a matter of creation, not technique. It is no longer his livelihood. For that he must find other means. Rising costs and lowering returns relegate his craft to a spare-time occupation. The methods used are primitive; equipment is of the simplest. Naturally, results are crude. Yet one has only to watch these men at work to understand that here is something that can hardly be trained into a man but must inevitably be the man himself.

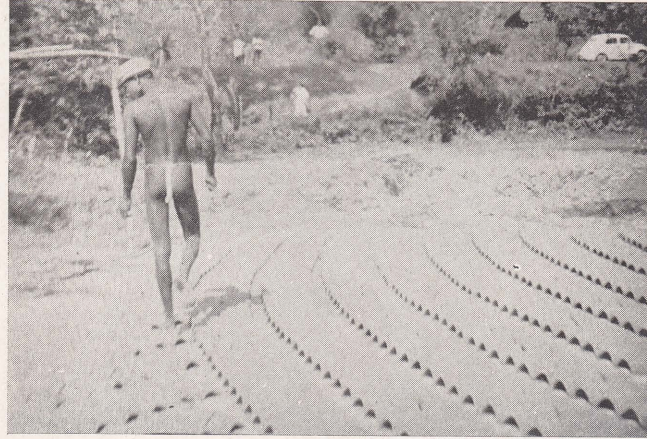
I have seen little boys, not more than ten years old, painting plaques, a brush in either hand and working opposite ways at once, which when finished were precisely exact on either side. There was no pattern set before the worker. He had nothing to guide him but the vision in his brain. The Dumbara mat weaver will sit on the floor with twists of coloured hemp suspended in



▲ Wood-carving (Mount Lavinia Hotel Road)

front of him and work in his designs without any further preparation. The lac-worker will warm

his lac till it can be drawn out in threads which are laid on with infallible accuracy, varying their thickness and changing from one colour to another; his thumb-nail his only "instrument", nipping, steadying into place, rubbing (to make the wavy lines that are a common feature of Kandyan lac-work), working the minutest pin-points of colour into a design that only he can see until it is finished. The brass or silver worker will use a pencil before he beats in his design, but that is the only concession he will make. Wedges, variously shaped, and a light hammer do the rest.



Tile-making on the Kandy road

he is carving, you will find it fitting exactly into the space allotted to it, even though the pattern is a repetition of a motif. Yet he will neither measure nor draw.

Lac-workers are also silver and brass workers and sometimes blacksmiths. Where a lacquered article needs further decoration, such decoration will be made by the same man. To engrave a handle or make the knife whose sheath he is lacquering, or otherwise complete the article he is decorating, is considered part of the lac-worker's trade.

Lac is the exudation of a species of bee. In the past, the trees they favoured (*cohn* and *masang*) were cultivated. Dyes (earth dyes) were extracted from local clays. Now both are imported.

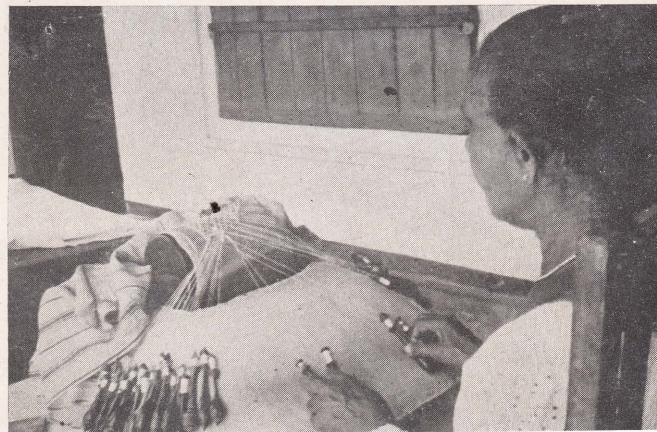


Lac-work at Hurikaduwa, near Matale

Lace-making (Mount Lavinia Hotel Road)

Astonishing Accuracy

THE wood carver will use a vice to hold his piece of wood, and will chisel, with astonishing accuracy, an elephant or decorative figure with no more than an occasional glance at his model. He may make it the same size, he may increase or decrease. The proportions will stay true. If it is a pattern



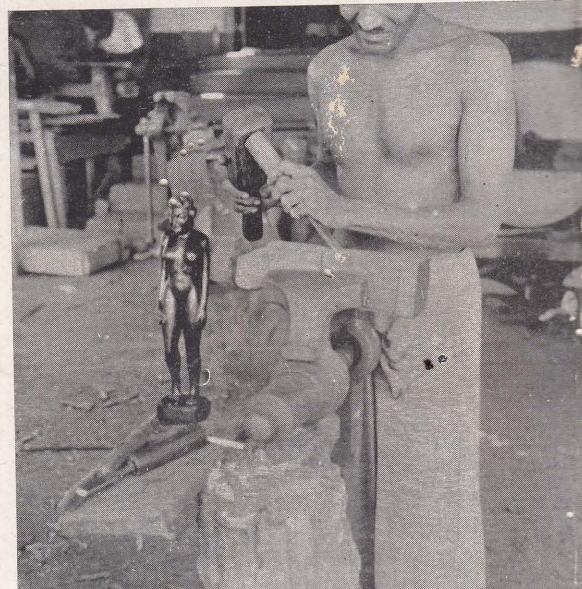


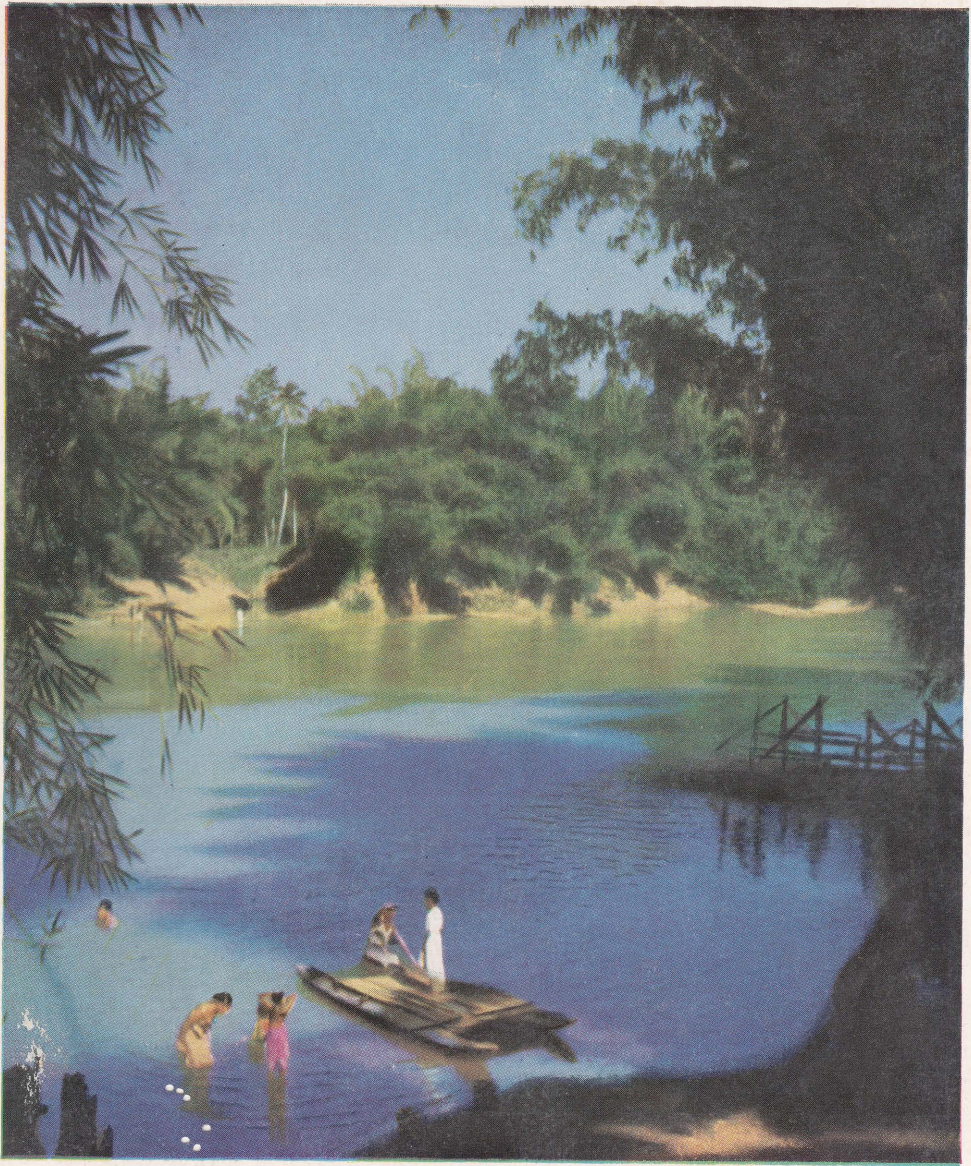
◀ Basket making



▲ “Niyapoten Vade” at Hurikaduwa, near Matale

▼ Wood-carving (Mount Lavinia Hotel Road)





Ceylon River Scene

The female insect, when about to spawn, remains stationary on the branch. Exudation takes place and forms a crust-like covering in which the insect and the space around it are embedded. The eggs when hatched become moths and leave the nest. Laying periods occur twice a year. (An experiment to re-introduce plantation made by the Agricultural Department about 1919 petered out, although these trees grow wild in the Ceylon jungles.)

The crude wax is warmed, strained, allowed to cool and powdered, and the dyes mixed in. The mixture is then beaten into slabs, keeping the colours distinct, and is ready for use.

There are two ways of working lac. One is on a turning lathe, the pattern laid on with cold lac straight from the slab. A simple form of patterning is the laying on of bands varying in thickness and colour. Less simply, the wooden base is completely covered with colour upon colour, and motifs picked out with a sharp point, relating the pressure of the hand to the colour intended. This requires great skill in operation.

The other way is to keep the lac on heat sufficient to enable it to be drawn out in threads and using the thumb-nail to control the design. This is known as *niyapoten vade* (*niyapota* : finger-nail) and is a speciality of the Matale district. The *niyapoten* worker will exhibit with pride the flattened thumb-nail that is the "caste" mark of a long heredity in this art.

Same Thickness

FOR brass articles that require moulding, a cast is made of clay, hardened, and covered with melted tallow to the same thickness that is required by the finished article. This is covered over again with clay. The whole is put into a furnace and the wax melted, poured out, and replaced by molten brass. The outer covering is then broken away and the cast withdrawn. Smoothing, polishing, and patterning is done subsequently. With flat articles like trays the patterning is done first, the sheet heated, and beaten into shape. No mould is used.

Silver crucibles are made of a mixture of burnt and crushed rice chaff and a kind of clay.

These are the village methods. Employing them, it is not surprising that the rural craftsman lives and dies a very poor man.

Government interest in reawakening the ancient arts has created a network all over the island of modernized training centres, and societies run on a co-operative basis through which trainees can ensure a means of livelihood. The Department of Cottage Industries is a by-product of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The system is elaborate and covers all the various aspects of the indigenous arts and crafts of the island. The policy is to eliminate middlemen. To this end, trainees when they finish their course are encouraged to form their own societies. Assistance in the form of equipment, demonstrators to give technical advice and act as administrative secretaries, and loans on easy repayment terms are provided in the initial stages.

The training system covers three aspects, centres, schools, and workshops. The first two are training institutions, the centre for short-term training calculated to provide spare-time earning capacity, the school for extended training as a means of livelihood. The weaving school, for instance, is a two-year course covering both theory and practice. The workshop is a purely commercial institution into which the output from the schools is absorbed.

Where the raw material is provided by the workers the articles made are treated as their property; where material is provided by the Government, profits are divided. The intention underlying Government policy is to teach the peasant the principle of co-operation and to provide him with a market for his product. Selling centres have been established in Colombo and Kandy.

Government assistance is not only to societies. It is extended equally to individuals when they are in remote areas where the population is small. Financial assistance, on certain guarantees, is made available.

It seems strange that with the cry for vocational education at present occupying so much attention, the facilities for training that are already inherent in this Department are not more fully utilised.

Hundred Families

THE interested visitor who has not too much time to spare will find that the Kandy road offers fair opportunities for seeing these craftsmen at work. At Weboda, turning off from near the 13th mile, there is a village of a little over a hundred families who are all blacksmiths. A smaller community of gold and silversmiths also work here. Tile making, pottery, cane weaving, mats and coir industries may be seen along the main road; in the Kandy district lac, metal workers, wood carvers, and stone masons. Kandy is famous for lac and silver filigree work.

And at Embekke, not many miles away on the Gampola road, may be seen some 14th century wood carving that is a fine example of Sinhalese work at its best.

In Kegalle, a power-loom weaving industry has been set up for the first time. In Ratnapura and up to Rakwana gemming is the chief

occupation. The stones are cut and set, however, in Beruwela, which is on the Galle road. Stone cutting is an art almost entirely confined to Muslims. Beruwela was at one time a prosperous trading port. It is a curious thing, but stonecutting as an art has never been too much favoured by the Sinhalese.

Outside Galle is tortoise-shell, wood carving, and lace. But in recent times Galle has come to the Mt. Lavinia Hotel road in Colombo, which makes things easier for the sight-seer. In Velona, twelve miles from Colombo on the coast road, the Government Research Institute is worth a visit. Here scientific methods are applied to the art of the villager, and modern techniques experimented for results.

The College of Fine Arts in Colombo is another Government training institute that is giving far-reaching results. The accent here is on training instructors.

In addition there are several voluntary and semi-voluntary institutions—the Lanka Mahila Samitiya is perhaps the most comprehensive, taking in as it does not only the encouragement of rural handicrafts but every aspect of domestic welfare—interested in keeping the natural arts of the Island alive.

CEYLON AT THE XVI OLYMPIAD

(Continued from page 12)

Olympic and Commonwealth Games Association and also led the local press delegation.

Ceylon's participation in the Olympic Games also took the form of a gift of pure Ceylon tea, donated by the tea industry of Ceylon to the Olympic Organising Committee. The consignment of 2,000 lb. was composed of 30 half chests of a special Olympic blend of Ceylon tea, and went

in the Himalaya. Each chest was marked in gay colours with several sets of the Olympic ring emblem and the words, "Finest Ceylon Tea: Olympic Games Gift Tea from Ceylon". The gift was received in Melbourne by the Australian Tea Bureau and distributed through the Olympic Organising Committee to the several groups of competitors as well as to the staff and visitors.

THE CEYLON GOVERNMENT INFORMATION DEPARTMENT FILM UNIT

Films Produced and Released Recently

Newsreview No. 82

New Premier and Cabinet
Earl Mountbatten arrives
Earl Mountbatten calls on the Prime Minister
Countess Mountbatten inspects Ambulance Brigade
Rifle Association Annual Meet
"Mr. Ceylon" Contest
UNESCO Symposium
Opening of Parliament

Newsreview No. 83

Reception to Sacred Relics of Arahath Moggalliputta
Tissa
Cycle Race, All-Ceylon Cyclists' Association

Newsreview No. 84

Buddha Jayanthi Celebrations in Ceylon

Newsreview No. 85

Pineapple Canning Factory opened
Police Passing-out Parade
Exposition of Relics in Kandy
Foundation Stone Laying of Pilgrims' Rest
Arrival of Mr. Robert Menzies, Prime Minister of Australia

Newsreview No. 86

Poson Celebrations in Anuradhapura
Prime Minister's departure to London
Reception to Premier by Colombo Municipal Council

Newsreview No. 87

Ordination Ceremony
P. M.'s return from U. K.
Olympic trials
Brownies, St. Bridget's Convent
Mannequin Parade

Newsreview No. 88

Judo Display by Japanese expert
Field Day at Hanwella
Monsoon Regatta, Colombo-Madras
Opening of New Town Hall, Galle
Police Sports Meet

Newsreview No. 89

Schools' Folk Song and Dance Display
25th Anniversary, Army Medical Corps
F. A. O. Boats
Vietnamese Health Educators
U. S. Medical Aid
Irrigation Officers' Meeting
Rover Moot

Newsreview No. 90

Traffic Games organised by The Shell Co. of Ceylon Ltd.
Mechanised Fishing Boats, Negombo
Sports Meet, Royal College
Tennis
Old Crocks

Latest Films Produced and Released

Newsreview No. 91

Last rites to a Mahanayake
Buddhist Art Exhibition, Colombo
Hockey Tournament
Yacht Race, Colombo-Madras
Sports Star of the Year
Volley-Ball

Newsreview No. 92

Jayanthi Celebrations at Mahiyangana
Students' International Conference
Football, Pakistan-Ceylon
Railway Coaches and new Engine being built
A. A. A. Meet
Pancha Kalyani Beauty Contest

Newsreview No. 93 (Sinhalese only)

Old Crocks' Rally
Fishing Boats with Engines
Nittambuwa Savings Week
Co-operative Rally
Buddhist Centre
Radio Ceylon New Control Panel

Newsreview No. 94

Visit of H. R. H. the Duke of Edinburgh
Netball
Table Tennis
Passing-out Parade
Boxing

Newsreview No. 95 (Sinhalese only)

Wap Magul, Kamburupitiya

Unloading of CARE Milk
Volley-Ball, Central Schools
Animal Lovers' Day
Central School Sports Meet
Presentation of Cricket Shield
Prophet Mohamed's Birthday
Colombo Plan Gift of Cinema Vans to Agricultural Department
Health Week, Kirindiwela
Ruhunu Dance

Newsreview No. 96

U. N. Meeting of non-Governmental Organisations
Malwatte, Act of Appointment
Construction of Mace and Presentation to Senate
Engineers' Visit to Kelani Bridge
Handicrafts—Maharagama School
St. John's Ambulance Brigade
Wrestling

DOCUMENTARIES

(1) "Art and Architecture of Ceylon"

This film surveys Art and Architecture in Ceylon from about the 3rd century B. C. to modern times.

(2) "The Visit of Their Imperial Highnesses The Prince and Princess Mikasa of Japan to Ceylon"

Shows arrival in Colombo and visits to Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Sigiriya and the Kandy Perahera.

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